About the Journal

Overview

Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities (JSSH) is the official journal of Universiti Putra Malaysia published by UPM Press. It is an open-access online scientific journal which is free of charge. It publishes the scientific outputs. It neither accepts nor commissions third party content.

Recognized internationally as the leading peer-reviewed interdisciplinary journal devoted to the publication of original papers, it serves as a forum for practical approaches to improving quality in issues pertaining to social and behavioural sciences as well as the humanities.

JSSH is a **quarterly** (*March, June, September* and *December*) periodical that considers for publication original articles as per its scope. The journal publishes in **English** and it is open to authors around the world regardless of the nationality.

The Journal is available world-wide.

Aims and scope

Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities aims to develop as a pioneer journal for the social sciences with a focus on emerging issues pertaining to the social and behavioural sciences as well as the humanities.

Areas relevant to the scope of the journal include Social Sciences—Accounting, anthropology, Archaeology and history, Architecture and habitat, Consumer and family economics, Economics, Education, Finance, Geography, Law, Management studies, Media and communication studies, Political sciences and public policy, Population studies, Psychology, Sociology, Technology management, Tourism; Humanities—Arts and culture, Dance, Historical and civilisation studies, Language and Linguistics, Literature, Music, Philosophy, Religious studies, Sports.

History

Pertanika was founded in 1978. A decision was made in 1992 to streamline Pertanika into three journals as Journal of Tropical Agricultural Science, Journal of Science & Technology, and **Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities** to meet the need for specialised journals in areas of study aligned with the interdisciplinary strengths of the university.

After almost 25 years, as an interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities, the revamped journal focuses on research in social and behavioural sciences as well as the humanities, particularly in the Asia Pacific region.

Goal of *Pertanika*

Our goal is to bring the highest quality research to the widest possible audience.

Quality

We aim for excellence, sustained by a responsible and professional approach to journal publishing. Submissions are guaranteed to receive a decision within 14 weeks. The elapsed time from submission to publication for the articles averages 5-6 months.

Abstracting and indexing of *Pertanika*

The journal is indexed in SCOPUS (Elsevier), Clarivate-Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)-Web of Science, BIOSIS, National Agricultural Science (NAL), Google Scholar, MyCite, ISC. In addition, Pertanika JSSH is recipient of "CREAM" Award conferred by Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), Malaysia.

Future vision

We are continuously improving access to our journal archives, content, and research services. We have the drive to realise exciting new horizons that will benefit not only the academic community, but society itself.

Citing journal articles

The abbreviation for *Pertanika* Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities is *Pertanika J. Soc. Sci. Hum.*

Publication policy

Pertanika policy prohibits an author from submitting the same manuscript for concurrent consideration by two or more publications. It prohibits as well publication of any manuscript that has already been published either in whole or substantial part elsewhere. It also does not permit publication of manuscript that has been published in full in Proceedings.

Code of Ethics

The Pertanika Journals and Universiti Putra Malaysia takes seriously the responsibility of all of its journal publications to reflect the highest in publication ethics. Thus all journals and journal editors are expected to abide by the Journal's codes of ethics. Refer to Pertanika's **Code of Ethics** for full details, or visit the Journal's web link at http://www.pertanika.upm.edu.my/code_of_ethics.php

International Standard Serial Number (ISSN)

An ISSN is an 8-digit code used to identify periodicals such as journals of all kinds and on all media–print and electronic. All Pertanika journals have ISSN as well as an e-ISSN.

Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities: ISSN 0128-7702 *(Print)*; ISSN 2231-8534 *(Online)*.

Lag time

A decision on acceptance or rejection of a manuscript is reached in 3 to 4 months (average 14 weeks). The elapsed time from submission to publication for the articles averages 5-6 months.

Authorship

Authors are not permitted to add or remove any names from the authorship provided at the time of initial submission without the consent of the Journal's Chief Executive Editor.

Manuscript preparation

Refer to Pertanika's **INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS** at the back of this journal.

Most scientific papers are prepared according to a format called IMRAD. The term represents the first letters of the words **I**ntroduction, **M**aterials and Methods, **R**esults, **A**nd, **D**iscussion. IMRAD is simply a more 'defined' version of the "IBC" [Introduction, Body, Conclusion] format used for all academic writing. IMRAD indicates a pattern or format rather than a complete list of headings or components of research papers; the missing parts of a paper are: *Title, Authors, Keywords, Abstract, Conclusions*, and *References*. Additionally, some papers include Acknowledgments and Appendices.

The *Introduction* explains the scope and objective of the study in the light of current knowledge on the subject; the *Materials and Methods* describes how the study was conducted; the *Results* section reports what was found in the study; and the *Discussion* section explains meaning and significance of the results and provides suggestions for future directions of research. The manuscript must be prepared according to the Journal's **INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS**.

Editorial process

Authors are notified with an acknowledgement containing a *Manuscript ID* on receipt of a manuscript, and upon the editorial decision regarding publication.

Pertanika follows a **double-blind peer-review** process. Manuscripts deemed suitable for publication are usually sent to reviewers. Authors are encouraged to suggest names of at least three potential reviewers at the time of submission of their manuscript to Pertanika, but the editors will make the final choice. The editors are not, however, bound by these suggestions.

Notification of the editorial decision is usually provided within ten to fourteen weeks from the receipt of manuscript. Publication of solicited manuscripts is not guaranteed. In most cases, manuscripts are accepted conditionally, pending an author's revision of the material.

The Journal's peer-review

In the peer-review process, three referees independently evaluate the scientific quality of the submitted manuscripts.

Peer reviewers are experts chosen by journal editors to provide written assessment of the **strengths** and **weaknesses** of written research, with the aim of improving the reporting of research and identifying the most appropriate and highest quality material for the journal.

Operating and review process

What happens to a manuscript once it is submitted to *Pertanika*? Typically, there are seven steps to the editorial review process:

1. The Journal's Chief Executive Editor (CEE) and the Editorial Board Members examine the paper to determine whether it is appropriate for the journal and should be reviewed. If not appropriate, the manuscript is rejected outright and the author is informed.

2. The CEE sends the article-identifying information having been removed, to three reviewers who are specialists in the subject matter represented by the article. The CEE requests them to complete the review in three weeks.

    Comments to authors are about the appropriateness and adequacy of the theoretical or conceptual framework, literature review, method, results and discussion, and conclusions. Reviewers often include suggestions for strengthening of the manuscript. Comments to the editor are in the nature of the significance of the work and its potential contribution to the field.

3. The CEE, in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief (EiC), examines the reviews and decides whether to reject the manuscript, invites the author(s) to revise and resubmit the manuscript. The CEE may seek additional reviews. Final acceptance or rejection rests with the CEE and EiC, who reserve the right to refuse any material for publication. In rare instances, the manuscript is accepted with almost no revision. Almost without exception, reviewers' comments (to the author) are forwarded to the author. If a revision is indicated, the editor provides guidelines for attending to the reviewers' suggestions and perhaps additional advice about revising the manuscript.

4. The authors decide whether and how to address the reviewers' comments and criticisms and the editor's concerns. The authors return a revised version of the paper to the chief executive editor along with specific information describing how they have answered' the concerns of the reviewers and the editor, usually in a tabular form. The author(s) may also submit a rebuttal if there is a need especially when the author disagrees with certain comments provided by reviewer(s).

5. The CEE sends the revised paper out for re-review. Typically, at least one of the original reviewers will be asked to examine the article.

6. When the reviewers have completed their work, the CEE in consultation with the EiC and Editorial Board Members examine their comments and decide whether the paper is ready to be published, needs another round of revisions, or should be rejected.

7. If the decision is to accept, an acceptance letter is sent to all the author(s), the paper is sent to the Press. The article should appear in print in approximately three months.

The Publisher ensures that the paper adheres to the correct style (in-text citations, the reference list, and tables are typical areas of concern, clarity, and grammar). The authors are asked to respond to any minor queries by the Publisher. Following these corrections, page proofs are mailed to the corresponding authors for their final approval. At this point, **only essential changes are accepted**. Finally, the article appears in the pages of the Journal and is posted on-line.

ABSTRACTING AND INDEXING OF PERTANIKA JOURNALS

The journal is indexed in SCOPUS (Elsevier), Clarivate-Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), BIOSIS, National Agricultural Science (NAL), Google Scholar, MyCite, ISC. In addition, Pertanika JSSH is recipient of "CREAM" Award conferred by Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), Malaysia.

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Capturing the Past and Shaping the Future through Language

Preface

We are glad to present this Special Issue of Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities. It is a compilation of 21 research articles from scholars who hail from Malaysia, Indonesia, Iran, the Philippines, China, South Korea, Jordan, Comoros, Singapore and Bangladesh. The papers were carefully selected from a total of 38 full papers submitted to the 8th International Language Learning Conference (8th ILLC) 2019, held from 16 to 18 July at the Eastern & Oriental Hotel in George Town, Penang, Malaysia. The conference was organised by the School of Languages, Literacies and Translation, Universiti Sains Malaysia. The theme of this Special Issue is 'Capturing the Past and Shaping the Future through Language' and the areas covered include (but are not limited to) language teaching and learning, language testing and assessment, linguistics, literature, cross-cultural communication, translation and interpretation, and discourse analysis studies. Each paper published in this issue underwent Pertanika's stringent peer-review process involving a minimum of two reviewers comprising internal as well as external referees. The journal is of prestigious standing and is a point of reference for authors, scholars and researchers both in Malaysia and across the globe.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the contributors as well as the reviewers for the effort and expertise that they have invested in making this Special Issue a success. We would also like to thank Pertanika's Editor-in-Chief, the Chief Executive Editor, and their dedicated publication team for their advice and dedication with respect to maximising the quality of this issue. It is hoped that this publication will benefit all relevant stakeholders and further enhance the quality of future research in the areas mentioned.

Guest Editors
Tengku Sepora Tengku Mahadi *(Prof. Dr.)*
Debbita Tan Ai Lin *(Dr.)*

Flipped Teaching with CALL Media in EFL Writing Course: Indonesian EFL Writing Teachers' Reflection

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ABSTRACT

This study was aimed at (1) elaborating the EFL writing teachers' perceptions about their experiences after implementing the flipped teaching method with CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) in teaching EFL (English as a Foreign Language) writing course, (2) explaining how flipped teaching with CALL motivates teachers, and (3) explaining how flipped teaching with CALL motivates students and develops students' autonomous learning. Fifteen Indonesian EFL teachers and 150 EFL students from 5 private universities in East Java, participated in this case study. The data yielded from this study were gathered through reflective teaching journal, in-depth interview, and focus group interview, and then, were analyzed descriptively. The findings show that there were three main phases of teachers' perceptions. First, they were optimistic that flipped teaching would run well in their EFL writing class. Second, the teachers' perception shifted from having high optimism to caution. Third, the teachers' positive perceptions arose after implementing flipped teaching with CALL for several meetings. This study also uncovered that the activities of flipped teaching could motivate the teachers to implement this method. The learning environments, challenging activities created by teachers, and the use of technology in the flipped classroom can boost the students' motivation and autonomous learning.

Keywords: Autonomous learning, CALL, EFL writing, flipped teaching, teachers' reflection

INTRODUCTION

Flipped teaching also known as the flipped classroom, is a relatively new concept in education that has recently become famous all over the world, including in Indonesia. It becomes even more famous in this 4.0 era since it is a part of blended learning that uses technology in its implementation. It has been applied in various fields of education, including English education. Flipped teaching is practically referred to as the lesson input being conducted by the students at home and using class time to share and apply knowledge (Hamciuc & Roux, 2014). Flipped teaching means inverting the instructional learning in which the students do homework in class and classwork at home (Lage et al., 2000). Further, Lage et al. (2000) elaborated that in the context of the traditional classroom, a lecture was given by teachers during class time and the students were engaged in reading, writing, and problem-solving tasks outside the classroom. On the contrary, in a flipped teaching, students can use pre-recorded videos in the flipped classroom and then use the lesson time to answer questions, work together, discuss questions and concepts, and solve problems. Essentially, the students undertake classwork at home in a flip model to create an inverted classroom (Webb et al., 2014).

The integration of CALL and TELL into the flipped teaching model enables the teaching and learning process to be transferred to the location to wherever the internet or Wi-Fi connection exists. Thus, the flipped teaching model changes the definition of the walled classroom and develops a boundless classroom (Webb et al., 2014). This is in line with 21st century learning (Assessment & Teaching 21st Century Skills, 2012) which integrates second language acquisition (SLA) constructivist theories and behaviourists principles of teaching and learning. This flipped teaching with CALL is also supposed to enable learner autonomy since learner autonomy can be developed through the individual-cognitive and social-interactive process (Little, 1991).

There are a number of studies investigating the implementation of flipped teaching (Basal, 2015; Doman & Webb, 2014; McNally et al., 2017; Webb et al., 2014; Wood, n.d.; Zainuddin & Attaran, 2016). Basal (2015) investigated the implementation of a flipped classroom into an English language class. Further, he recommended the integration of the Learning Management System (LMS) into a flipped teaching process. Webb et al. (2014) also conducted a study on flipping EFL courses among Chinese university students. Their study focused on how the flipped classroom changed the students' view on learning and uncovering the teachers' experience and perception about the flipped classroom. Further, Webb and Doman (2016) also investigated the influence of flipped classroom on students' learning outcomes in EFL/ESL contexts. Their study uncovered that a flipped classroom had a positive influence on students learning outcomes in EFL/ESL learning. To date, there has been little investigation dealing with the analysis of how the EFL writing

teachers perceive their experiences on the implementation of flipped teaching with CALL in EFL writing class; and how the flipped teaching with CALL could motivate both teachers and students and develop students' autonomous learning.

To fulfil the gaps from those previous studies, this study investigated EFL writing teachers' reflection from 5 private universities in Indonesia after implementing a flipped teaching model with CALL in EFL writing class. Those teachers used three different media of CALL, that is LMS (Schoology), weblogs, and YouTube video. Besides, some of the teachers also integrated automated feedback program, that is Grammarly software, as a tool to evaluate students' work. From the identified research problems above, the research questions of this study were formulated as follows.

RQ1: How do the EFL teachers perceive their experiences in the implementation of flipped teaching with CALL in an EFL writing course?

RQ2: How does flipped teaching with CALL motivate teachers?

RQ3: How does flipped teaching with CALL motivates students to develop students' autonomous learning?

From the above research questions, this study was intended to achieve (1) elaborating the EFL writing teachers' perceptions about their experiences after implementing the flipped teaching method with CALL in teaching EFL writing course, (2) explaining how flipped teaching with CALL motivates teachers, and (3) explaining how flipped

teaching with CALL motivates students and develops students' autonomous learning.

Literature Review

Several studies have investigated flipped teaching in the teaching and learning process. From those studies, it can be concluded that there are 4 major trends of studies in the field. The first trend is investigating the students' perceptions of the implementation of flipped teaching (Challob et al., 2016; Kang, 2015; Li et al., 2015; Melor & Salehi, 2012; Sohrabi & Iraj, 2016; Webb & Doman, 2016). The second trend is focused on examining the teaching media or teaching techniques that can be integrated with flipped teaching (Hung, 2015; Lacher & Lewis, 2015; Sohrabi & Iraj, 2016; Xu, 2013). The third trend is about the potentiality of flipped teaching to improve students' learning outcomes or performances, motivation, and autonomous learning (Hamciuc & Roux, 2014; Sampson et al., 2018; Thai et al., 2017; Webb & Doman, 2016). The last trend is describing a step-by-step design and theoretical underpinnings of flipped teaching (Bauer-Ramazani et al., 2016; Nazarenko, 2015; Talbert, 2012; Wang & Zhang, 2013). To date, there has been little investigation dealing with the problems that have been mentioned in the research questions above. Therefore, to fulfil the gaps, this study was conducted.

Studies about students' perception towards the implementation of flipped teaching have been overwhelmingly positive. Roach (2014) conducted a research

on the implementation of flipped teaching in a microeconomics course in more than one semester and revealed that students' perception towards the implementation of flipped teaching were positive. They were in favour of the flipped teaching model and they also asserted that the instructional design is beneficial for them. Another study was conducted by Zhai et al. (2017). They investigated the experiential learning perspective on students' satisfaction model in a flipped classroom context. The results of the study revealed that the students asserted that flipped teaching was worthwhile.

Studies focusing on the integration of teaching media or teaching techniques into flipped teaching also can be easily found. Li et al. (2015) examined the integration of a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) and flipped classroom practice. The findings showed that it was feasible and applicable to integrate MOOC and flipped classrooms. A study by Evseeva and Solozhenko (2015) also investigated the integration of flipped classrooms with technology. The use of technology in a flipped classroom could maximize the effectiveness of the flipped classroom. The use of technology in the learning process enhances students' motivation and improves their academic performance.

There are also a number of studies dealing with the potentiality of the flipped classroom to improve students' learning outcomes or performances, motivation, and autonomous learning. Kvashnina and Martynko (2016) conducted an analysis of the potentiality of the flipped classroom in

ESL teaching. The results showed that a flipped classroom gave significant benefits not only in students' performance on the course but also students' motivation and autonomous learning. Han (2015) and Zainuddin and Perera (2019) specifically studied the relatedness of the flipped classroom with learner autonomy. The results highlighted the correlation between the two aspects. Several other studies (Butt, 2014; Findlay-Thompson, 2014; Missildine et al., 2014) also investigated the effectiveness of a flipped classroom. The results of those studies also revealed that the implementation of the flipped classroom was promising.

The study describing a step-by-step design and theoretical underpinnings of flipped teaching was conducted by Bauer-Ramazani et al. (2016). They asserted that the implementation of a flipped classroom needed four pillars namely flexible environment, learning culture, intentional content, and professional educator. Another study was also conducted by Basal (2015). He elaborated that flipped classroom had two learning environments, outside and inside the classroom. In order to make the flipped classroom effective, both sides must be perfectly integrated by following four steps. The first step is for teachers. It is planning what will the students do in each environment in detail. The second step is choosing appropriate activities based on the learners' needs. The third step is determining how to integrate tasks and activities for those two environments. The last step is using a learning management system (LMS)

and presenting all activities in an organized way.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

To achieve the purposes of this study, a case study research design was used. Yin (2003) elaborated that a case study was used in many situations to contribute to our knowledge of the individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomena. Therefore, the researchers used the case study in order to make the aims of the study well-achieved.

Research Participants and Context

This study involved 15 EFL writing teachers and 150 EFL students from 5 private universities in East Java. There were 3 EFL writing teachers and 50 EFL students from each university. These universities have English Education Department which trains pre-service English teachers for secondary schools (Junior High Schools and Senior High Schools). To participate in this study, the participants should have ever implemented and experienced a flipped teaching method with CALL media in their EFL writing class, for at least, in one semester. The 15 teachers used three different media of CALL, that is LMS (Schoology), weblogs, and YouTube videos. Besides, some of the teachers also integrated automated feedback program, that is Grammarly software, as a tool to evaluate students' work.

This study was conducted in the context of Indonesian higher education. In the English Education Department, the EFL writing course is a compulsory subject (Ghufron et al., 2016). EFL writing course might have different names in each university, for example, Writing I versus Paragraph Writing, Writing II versus Descriptive and Narrative Writing, and so forth. However, the learning outcomes are similar. Mostly, the EFL writing course is taught in the first and second year of the study. EFL writing course is taught in stages based on the level of complexity. It means that a student can take a higher level of EFL writing course if he/she had already passed the previous level, for example, Writing I course is a prerequisite for students if they want to take Writing II course. A face-to-face meeting is conducted once a week for 100 minutes. There are 16 meetings in one semester. The course that was studied is the *Expository and Narrative Writing Course*. This course was taught in the second grade of the English Education Department. The number of students who participated in this course was 50 students from each university. Therefore, there were 150 students altogether from the 5 universities. The learning materials or contents of the course were about expository essay writing (in the first-half semester) and argumentative essay writing (in the second-half semester). During the classroom, the students were asked to discuss what they have read and watched outside the classroom via CALL media. Then, they wrote essays based on

the materials they learned during the out-of-class meeting.

Data Collection Techniques

To achieve the purposes of this study, the data were gathered by using three instruments namely reflective teaching journals, in-depth interviews, and focus group interviews. Reflective teaching journal is the teachers' writing to reflect on their teaching and learning process and, then, draw feedback from their previous teaching experience in order to improve their classroom practices (Zulfikar & Mujiburrahman, 2018). Teachers, in this context, are the first person to do what? Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000) stated that the first person's narratives provided a "rich, compelling, and informative source of evidence about the process of adult second language acquisition".

Further, an in-depth interview was also conducted with the teachers. Data from the interviews were recorded, collected, and transcribed for analysis. This in-depth interview mainly focused on how the teachers perceived their experience in the implementation of flipped teaching and how flipped teaching with CALL motivated both teachers and students and developed students' autonomous learning.

The focus group interviews were done by the researchers to gather information from students dealing with motivation and learner autonomy. The questions of focus group interviews were written down in the form of an interview protocol. The interview protocol for focus group interviews was in the form of specific questions list referring to the students' motivation and learner autonomy. The specific questions were written to result in similar answers from the different groups. There were 5 different groups from 5 different universities involving in this study. During its implementation, the focus group interviews were led by a highly trained moderator to lessen the problem of reliability. Since there were 5 universities involved in this study, there were also five groups that were formed for a focus group interview. So, there was 1 group from each university.

The Technique of Data Analysis

Since the data were in the form of qualitative, they were analyzed descriptively by following Creswell's (2012) principles. This analysis initially consists of developing a general sense of the data, and then coding description and themes about the central phenomenon (Ghufron & Ermawati, 2018). The researchers first collect data and then prepare it for data analysis. This analysis initially consists of developing a general sense of the data, and then coding description and themes about the central phenomenon. In this study, coding schemes were used to gain a more detailed perspective about what was occurring based on the purpose of the study. These coding schemes helped to analyze the transcripts of the participants. In this study, the qualitative data were coded separately by two analysts. The use of multiple analysts was to evaluate the reliability of coding at least in relation to important issues and topics.

RESULTS

EFL Writing Teachers' Perceptions on the Implementation of Flipped Teaching with CALL in Teaching EFL Writing Course

The data about teachers' perceptions of the implementation of flipped teaching with CALL were taken from the teachers' reflective teaching journals. The results of the teachers' reflection are presented as follows.

A High Optimism of Flipped Teaching before Its Implementation. From the reflective teaching journal, it was revealed that all of the teachers had positive thoughts on flipped teaching with CALL in EFL writing class. They had a high optimism that the teaching and learning process will be successful. They assumed that after out-of-class activities, the students would be ready once they entered the class. Then, the teacher could start a discussion and direct the students to do writing practice. Further, they thought that the use of flipped teaching with the integration of technology would positively affect students' EFL writing performances. This view can be seen from these following excerpts:

*"Firstly, **I was really confident** that my class will be successful. My students, who are net generations, **will be enthusiastic** to use the application of Schoology in this expository and argumentative writing course. Moreover, **they can easily access the learning materials** wherever and whenever. …………".* (Teacher 4).

*"**I have a positive thought** on the implementation of flipped teaching with CALL media. The students' writing performance **will significantly be improved** after implementing this learning model. The students are net generations and most of them like online reading. Therefore, **the use of weblogs can facilitate the students** in their out-of-class activities. ……".* (Teacher 7).

Shifting from Optimism to Caution in Implementing Flipped Teaching with CALL. The teachers' perception of the flipped teaching they experienced was moving away from a high optimism to caution. This shifting perception was started after the third meeting in which the teachers found that the flipped teaching that they had implemented from the first until the third meeting was not running well. This shifting perception was due to the difficulties they faced during the implementation of flipped teaching with CALL. Unanticipated condition by the teachers was one of the causes of the difficulties. The examples of the unanticipated condition were the students' lack of mastery of technology, the students' financial condition to provide internet access at home, and students' poor English proficiency. Almost all teachers have a similar problem in dealing with students' poor English proficiency. This view can be seen from these following excerpts.

*"**Unfortunately**, a **contradictory scenario from the initial assumption happened** during the implementation of*

*flipped teaching with CALL. Some **problems arose** during a face-to-face meeting in the EFL writing class. Some **students were not ready** to conduct a discussion due to their incapability to access Youtube videos at their homes. They reported that **they do not have an internet connection** because of their financial condition. ………….. Another problem was also **some students have low linguistics mastery**. Even though they could easily access the online material, the **could not fully understand** it due to their poor ability of English proficiency"*. (Teacher 1).

*"During the in-class activity, **an unpredictable condition happened**. Some **students still did not understand the material** provided in the online course. This is because **they have low English proficiency**. However, the thing that surprised me is when some students admitted that **they still do not have a Schoology account**, even though I have already given the access code to my course. Therefore, they still **could not access the learning materials** I provided in my Schoology account. When I further asked them the reason, they frankly said that **they could not make their own 'Schoology'** account due to their lack of mastery of technology…………..".* (Teacher 4).

The Rise of the Teachers' Optimistic Level in Implementing Flipped Teaching with CALL. A positive perception of teachers came after they implemented the flipped teaching with CALL for one semester. They asserted that flipped teaching with CALL is feasible and applicable in the EFL writing course. After learning from the experience at the beginning of the semester when they first implemented the method, they started to anticipate the negative possibilities that will possibly occur in the next phase of implementation. The major problems that were previously occurred could be significantly decreased. The problem of lack of internet connection, lack of mastery of technology, and poor linguistics mastery could be minimized. The in-class discussion was carried out actively. The teachers' role as facilitators could be optimally carried out, and the writing practice in class could be accommodated well. This view can be seen from the following excerpts.

*"After implementing this method for one semester, I finally **feel optimist which I first ever felt** at the beginning of the semester. …. Some of the students who did not have internet access at home **did their out-of-class activities with their friends who have internet access** at home. Some of them also tried to **do their activities in places that provide free Wi-Fi access**. ……… Therefore, after several meetings, **the problem was no longer exist in my class**. …….. To deal with the students having poor English mastery, **I suggested to them to make a group discussion** during outside class activities. Surprisingly, this really works for them"*. (Teacher 1).

*"**My worry about flipped teaching starts to decrease** when I understand the problem, especially with students' poor*

*linguistics mastery. …….. After several meetings, **I manage to cope with that problem** by **asking them to have a group learning** outside the class. ……. At last, I think that implementing **flipped teaching is really helpful** for me. It is **applicable** for the EFL writing course".* (Teacher 7).

In summary, there are three main phases of teachers' perceptions. First, before they implemented flipped teaching, they were optimistic that flipped teaching will run well in their EFL writing class. Their optimism was also supported by the integration of CALL accompanying flipped teaching. This will make the students more engaged in the teaching and learning process since they are the Net generations. Second, the teachers' perception shifted from having high optimism to caution. This is due to some problems faced by the teachers during its implementation. They were surprised by some unanticipated conditions which lead to teachers' worrying about the teaching and learning process since it was not optimally carried out. Third, the teachers' positive perceptions arose after implementing flipped teaching with CALL for several meetings. The teachers had been aware of the problems and the effects that would possibly occur in their teaching and learning process. Therefore, all negative possibilities could be anticipated and solved.

How Flipped Teaching with CALL Motivates Teachers. From the data yielded from the teachers' reflective teaching journals and in-depth interviews, it is uncovered that the activities of flipped teaching can motivate the teachers to implement this method. 'Flipping' enhances the in-class experience in some ways, making it more dynamic because it was less teacher-centred and focused on more student-centred activities during the actual class period. The teachers also asserted that flipping saved the amount of class time; the students had more time to do class discussion and writing practice. The teachers also mentioned that the students got a lot more time practising EFL writing outside the classroom. Flipping seemed to improve collaboration among the students. They worked collaboratively to finish writing assignments in class as well as out of class. The role of teachers as facilitators could be optimally carried out. Flipping also helped teachers to inspire their teaching and creativity. The following are the excerpts of the reflective teaching journal.

*"The thing that makes me motivated in flipped teaching is **the teaching activities** itself. The activities in flipped teaching are student-centred. The students can get a new experience from in-class activities such as group discussion. Therefore, I could also save my energy during in-class activities".* (Teacher 12).

*"I am encouraged to implement this method because **flipping can save the amount of class time**. Group work and practice-based learning can be implemented in the class. That also challenges me and other teachers to creatively **create challenging learning activities** for students.*

Therefore, I could do my job as facilitator optimally". (Teacher 14).

The results of the in-depth interview also revealed similar information with reflective teaching journals. The following is the interview excerpts.

*"For me, I am really **enthusiastic about flipping activities**. I can **create challenging activities** for my students in every face-to-face meeting. I don't need to always do lecturing activity"*. (Teacher 14).

*"During flipped teaching, I like to **challenge my students with creative learning activities** during in-class activities. ...... That's why **I always feel motivated** with flipped teaching"*. (Teacher 15).

How Flipped Teaching with CALL Motivates Students and Develops Students' Autonomous Learning. From the teachers' reflective teaching journals, in-depth interview with teachers and compared with focus group interview with students, it is revealed that learning environments, challenging activities created by teachers, and the use of technology in the flipped classroom can satisfy students' needs for competence, autonomous learning, and their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Those opinions can be found in the following excerpts of teachers' reflective teaching journal as follows:

*"………. However, after several times, the **students looked really enjoy** their activities. They **enjoyed outside class activities** when they had to learn online materials from Youtube. ..., when they are asked to evaluate their own writing using the 'Grammarly' program, **they were enthusiastic and becoming independent learners**. They **have high self-discipline** which was manifested during in-class activities, such as group discussion, writing practice, and self-evaluation of their writing using an automated feedback program"*. (Teacher 10).

*"Students finally **could enjoy the teaching and learning process**. They were **enthusiastic** when they did a group discussion in the class. They also said that when they learned the online materials through weblogs, they **could independently learn** by themselves. When they worked in a group, they were **aware of their own responsibilities**. All in all, every activity in flipped teaching **makes them more engaged in learning** and **develop their autonomous learning**"*. (Teacher 13).

The above opinions were also supported by statements by other teachers from an in-depth interview. The followings are the interview excerpts:

*"I think it is because **flipped teaching can give them a different learning method**. …….. Moreover, **the learning environment is also different**. During outside activities, they **can choose their own time and place for learning**. Moreover, the use of different media such as Youtube videos and*

the 'Grammarly' program can **_increase their motivation_** *and make them become* **_autonomous learners"_**. (Teacher 3).

"Emmm... It's **_because of the challenging activities_** *in flipped teaching. For example, in my class, when the students were asked to use the Schoology,* **_they seemed enthusiastic"_**. (Teacher 6).

In addition, the results of a focus group interview with students dealing with the students' motivation revealed that it increased significantly after they experienced the flipped teaching method. They asserted that the teachers' way of teaching the course was challenging. The students were challenged with the various activities outside and inside the class. They also asserted that in-class learning that integrated technology and innovative method made them more motivated. The in-class activities were not dull since the activities were always different from one meeting to another. Dealing with flipped learning, they stated that the use of online applications could make their motivation higher. The following is the interview excerpt.

".... The things that make us motivated are **_challenging learning activities_**. *The teacher always sets different activities day-by-day. Another thing that motivates us is* **_the use of technology_** *in the teaching and learning process and outside the class. ......".* (Student from group 1).

Another group added that they were motivated in the flipped class learning since it was a new method for them. They usually learn everything in the class, starting from listening to the teacher's explanation, doing tasks, and submitting the task. After they were introduced to the flipped teaching, they got a new experience that materials could be learned outside the class with exciting media such as watching videos, reading online articles, and so forth.

Further, the results of focus group interviews dealing with learner autonomy are described as follows. Generally, they stated that after experiencing the flipped teaching method in the EFL writing course, they started to raise their independent learning. When the teachers instructed them to learn and understand the teaching materials during out-of-class activities, most of them would do it as good as possible. For instance, they would watch YouTube videos based on the links given by the teachers and understand the materials explained in the video. They also took crucial points and some difficulties they found from the videos.

Another example was when the teachers instructed them to join online courses through Schoology Apps for their out-of-class activities. They always followed the teachers' instruction. They did the online quizzes provided through the Apps. The following is the interview excerpt.

"We think that **_since our teacher introduced the flipped teaching method in writing course, we were urged to learn independently_**. *When they asked us to learn materials through watching YouTube videos,*

we always did it well. ……". (Student from group 3).

The students from group 4 also added the following statements.

*"Since the teacher **introduced us with Schoology Apps** and instructed us to use it for our out-of-class activities, we **started to learn independently**. ……".* (Student from group 4).

DISCUSSIONS

This study was conducted to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How do the EFL Writing Teachers' Perceive their Experiences on the Implementation of Flipped Teaching with CALL in Teaching EFL Writing Course?

There are a number of studies which assert that the integration of technology into teaching and learning process could positively affect teaching and learning practice (Chappelle, 2004; Jafarian et al., 2012; Wang, 2008). One of the teaching methods that integrate technology is flipped teaching. A number of studies show the positive perception of flipped teaching and it could bring positive effects on students' performance in which it can lead to teachers' optimism to implement flipped teaching method (Al-Ibrahim, 2019; Rotellar & Cain, 2016; Zhai et al., 2017; Zainuddin & Attaran, 2016). This study also revealed the teachers' positive perception of the implementation of flipped teaching with CALL media in teaching EFL writing course. However, based on the results of this study, initially, the teachers were optimistic that flipped teaching would run well in their EFL writing class. However, the teachers' perception shifted from having high optimism to caution. This is due to some problems faced by the teachers during its implementation.

They were surprised by some unanticipated conditions which led to teachers' worry about the teaching and learning process since it was not optimally carried out. Fortunately, after they implemented flipped teaching for several times, the teachers' positive perception arose again. The teachers had been aware of the problems and the effects that would possibly occur in their teaching and learning process. Therefore, all negative possibilities could be anticipated and solved. These findings are in line with studies conducted by Doman and Webb (2014), Webb and Doman (2016), and Webb et al. (2014). Meanwhile, the study conducted by Deutsch (2010) investigated teachers' experiences with implementing technology in blended learning courses. From the study, three themes were found in Deutsch's study dealing with teachers' perceptions about blended learning namely frustration, facilitation of instruction and learning, and social connectedness.

Although there are some studies revealing that the teachers have positive perceptions about flipped teaching, there are still some drawbacks of flipped teaching that were worth mentioning. Teachers need time to make an adjustment before they can smoothly run the flipped teaching. Inoue

(2012) described this as the 'internalization' process. Initially, when the teachers firstly implemented flipped teaching, they felt worried since they faced some obstacles that would affect the teaching and learning process. The source of the obstacles comes from students, such as poor English proficiency, lack of mastery of technology, and so forth. Meanwhile, the flipped situation in which the students are asked to learn online materials at home makes them feel that they have more homework outside of class because they are getting used to a new kind of learning environment (Wang, 2017; Wang & Zhang, 2013).

Another drawback of flipped teaching is time management. Flipped teaching needs more time for teaching preparation. For example, teachers must prepare online materials like weblogs, LMS, or YouTube videos. Besides, creating challenging in-class activities also takes time. It is pivotal in flipped teaching in order to reduce the students' boredom. Roehl et al. (2013) stated that creating learning materials that integrated the use of new technology took up more of teachers' time than traditional class preparation. In non-flipped teaching, teachers may simply create a PowerPoint for presenting the materials, or they may simply edit the PowerPoint they have before to update the information or correct the mistakes. Meanwhile, in a flipped teaching class, it is not as simple as that. However, even though flipped teaching takes more of teachers' time, most of them never think that this is a serious problem. They argue that the preparation only takes time for the initial

process. However, during in-class activities, they will save their energy and time because they do not need to do lecturing.

RQ2: How does Flipped Teaching with CALL Motivate Teachers?

The results of this study uncovered that the activities of flipped teaching can motivate the teachers to implement this method. It makes in-class activities more dynamic, saves the amount of class time, provides students more time to do class discussion and writing practice, provides students more time for practising EFL writing outside the classroom, and improves collaboration among the students. Therefore, the role of teachers as facilitators can be optimally carried out. Flipping also helped teachers to inspire their teaching and creativity. Ash (2012) mentioned that most educators who implemented the technique said that there were various ways to "flip" a classroom. Some teachers assign a video for homework, while others allow students to watch those videos in class. Still, others make videos for the lesson but do not require students to watch them at all, giving students a variety of resources and allowing them to choose what they utilize to learn the required information.

RQ3: How does Flipped Teaching with CALL Motivates Students Develop Students' Autonomous Learning?

From the results of the study, it is revealed that learning environments, challenging activities created by teachers, and the use of technology in the flipped classroom can satisfy students' needs for

competence, autonomous learning, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. This result was also supported by the studies conducted by Abeysekera and Dawson (2015), Hamciuc and Roux (2014), Nazarenko (2015), Oraif (2018), Wulandari (2017), and Zuo (2016). Nazarenko (2015) stated that students' motivation could be achieved by the professionalism and creativity of a teacher, who took into account individual characteristics of the students and suggested such kinds of learning activities that would be challenging and interesting for students.

Zuo (2016) stated that the flipped classroom approach stimulated students to invest more effort prior to instruction and during class, learners participated in communicative language exercises more enthusiastically. As a result, conceivable progress has been made in learners' performance. Wulandari (2017) also conducted a study about the implementation of the flipped classroom learning model in Language Teaching Media (LTM) to foster fifth-semester students' learning autonomy in English Teacher Education Study Program. Through the implementation of the flipped classroom using the Learning Management System (LMS), it is revealed that flipped classrooms indicated positive perception in fostering learning autonomy in terms of planning, classroom engagement, and self-evaluation.

However, there still some drawbacks in dealing with flipped teaching and students. First, the sustainability of learner autonomy is unclear. The semester ended when students' motivation was at its peak,

which explains their active participation. There is no guarantee that students would have maintained the same level of learner autonomy by the end of a long semester. Second, another uncertainty is raised by the cause of learner autonomy. There is a possibility that there were hidden factors, which are motivation, social environment, and learning materials (Han, 2015; Kemala, 2016), beyond the flipped classroom structure itself that influenced learner autonomy.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study show that flipped teaching with CALL media in the EFL writing course is feasible and applicable. It can motivate both teachers and learners and build the students' autonomous learning aptitude/ability/etc. It can make in-class learning more effective. The principles of student-centred learning could be accommodated successfully. The role of teachers as facilitators was carried out well. However, teachers should carefully prepare and design the material or task before it is uploaded to the online media. Besides, teachers should ensure that the material is easily accessible by the students and the students should have capability or skill in accessing the material through CALL media.

Future studies exploring EFL-based teaching should include analysis of the learning materials used in flipped teaching, such as videos and other pedagogical materials. A recommendation should be compiled and validated with data from students that present their beliefs on the

efficacy of these materials for sites and materials which are best suited for university students.

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Adult Learners' Perceptions on Acquiring Communicative Malay Language Proficiency as a Foreign or Second Language and Attitude towards Mobile Learning: A Preliminary Study

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to understand learners' perceptions of acquiring Communicative Malay Language (CML) proficiency as well as to explore the current use and potential of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL). This descriptive, qualitative, preliminary study involved a total of 10 randomly selected participants who had learnt CML beforehand. Questions for the semi-structured interviews used for data collection in the study were divided into four sections: demographic profile information, perceptions of language literacy, learning challenges, and attitudes towards learning technology. The interview data were reported using the thick description technique. Based on the findings, it was found that most of these learners preferred to learn only the communicative language over the formal language. In addition, all of the participants were able to read and write basic CML, but most of the participants were not able to communicate effectively. The findings also show that most of the participants utilized mobile applications in learning CML. However, only a few useful mobile apps were available for this language, and most of the mobile apps focussed only on vocabulary acquisition and sentence structure and did not deliberately cater to their oral communication needs.

Keywords: Adult learning, andragogy, Malay as a foreign language, mobile-assisted language learning, self-directed learning

INTRODUCTION

Today, due to the rise of local and foreign investments, Malaysia is becoming one of the best selections for international expatriates seeking better education, healthcare, and accommodation (Yusof, 2018). This has led to the adaptation and assimilation of expatriates into the local community.

Conventionally, language has been the key factor for a better assimilation process. In Malaysia, there has been an emergence of courses for communicative Malay language (CML) as a foreign or second language. Based on De Bot et al.'s (1991) distinction in the definition of second and foreign language teaching, this study views second language as a non-native language that is learnt as a mean of second dominant communication outside the classroom, while a foreign language refers to a language that is learnt but not to be used as a dominant language.

Although the Malay language has been known as an easy communicative language to be learnt (Omar, 1998), for adult learners, learning language differs in some aspects. According to Kormos and Csizér (2008), adult learners typically have clearer goals in language learning compared to young learners. Generally, adults rely on self-directed learning (Boyer et al., 2014). The study of self-directed learning style has become more in-depth to the extent that the term andragogy was introduced. This term was proposed by Knowles (1978) in contrast to pedagogy which refers to the art and science of adult learning (Merriam, 2001).

In language learning, adults are able to choose and decide the level of language competency that suits their needs (Smith & Strong, 2009). Generally, adult learners' main objective in learning a language is to be able to master oral communication due to their needs in communicating with a second or foreign language community (Arthur & Beaton, 2000). In order to become competent in communication, these learners must acquire a certain level of language proficiency. Therefore, learner's proficiency to verbally communicate is considered as a natural outcome of language learning (Gorkaltseva et al., 2015). This proficiency is characterized by learners' fluency to speak like native speakers. Hence, the scope of this study is to understand adult CML learners' perceptions of acquiring CML proficiency which enables them to fluently communicate with locals.

In light of its importance in education, Blackley and Sheffield (2015) revisited the term andragogy and bound the term 'digital andragogy' with reference to the implementation of technology to facilitate adult learners who prefered personalized and flexible learning. Within the scope of language learning, the implementation of mobile application technology has led to an ever-growing number of innovations in making language learning cheaper and easier as it is accessible anytime and anywhere with the help of the internet (Kukulska-Hulme, 2012). Today, the enhanced features of smartphones have boosted mobile assisted language learning. The bite-size design of language activities has allowed students to

consider mobile applications as prominent revision tools for testing themselves (Qian et al., 2018). However, although increasing evidence on the effectiveness of mobile language learning is available, research is still lacking in regard to CML learning. Therefore, another aim of this study is to explore the trend of mobile-assisted language learning within the scope of CML learning.

Literature Review

Fluency in Second or Foreign Language. According to Sadiku (2015), fluency encompasses four language skills, which are reading, writing, speaking and listening. These skills are grouped into two main communication proficiencies which are oral and written communication. According to Sadiku (2015), despite the importance of these four skills, not all adult students are able to master them in foreign language learning. This is due to the values these learners put on each skill. Since adults tend to employ self-directed learning, they are free to choose which skills they need the most. Sadiku (2015), however, did not argue a comparison on the importance between the mentioned two groups of proficiencies among learners, notwithstanding the fact that a learner might be better at one proficiency group compared to another. For instance, some learners are able to speak a foreign language without disconcerting proper pronunciation (Afshar & Asakereh, 2016). Afshar and Asakereh's (2016) explanation has also led to the question of whether adults tend to acquire all four skills at different

levels. In the context of this study, it is possible for an adult learner to learn CML but still face difficulty in some language skills. In other words, a student may be able to read Malay, but not be able to write. As it was previously argued by Sadiku (2015) that not all of the four language skills learnt by a student can be mastered at the equivalent level, it is important for this study to reveal which among these four skills is the hardest to be acquired as well as to understand the challenges faced by students in striving to attain sufficient proficiency either in written or oral communication.

Self-Directed Learning. Self-directed learning refers to a learning process in which individuals take their own initiatives in diagnosing learning needs, formulating learning goals and finding ways to utilize resources in order to achieve learning outcomes (Boyer et al., 2006). According to Manning (2007), adult learners are keen to informal yet transparent learning, apart from opportunities to practice their new skills. They also favour immediate feedback on their learning process. This is based on Knowles's (1978) theory, which postulates that adults consider themselves to be successful in learning when they are highly motivated and able to instantaneously put the knowledge they have acquired into a practical application (Manning, 2007). Manning's (2007) explanation is parallel to the context of this study. Based on the explanation given, it can be said that adults' self-directed learning style may affect their level of language proficiency.

In other words, learners get to choose their preferred learning methods and resources in order to assist in their language acquisition process. Therefore, there is the possibility that an adult learner would put more focus and investment on the learning resources of certain skills over others. Thus, by conducting this study, we could understand which learning methods and resources they prefer to utilize in order to receive better outcomes in the language skills under consideration.

Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL). Cho et al. (2018) conducted a meta-analysis on the trend of Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and concluded that mobile phones were now a daily life item and being used as hand-held computers to support learning activities and making it easier for language learning to take place anywhere. Besides that, Chinnery (2006) stated that the potential of mobile learning had been more extensive since it allowed learners to study or practice manageable chunks of information in any place on their own time and pace, thereby taking advantage of its convenience.

In the scope of MALL studies, most research was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of employing mobile devices in language learning and explored the design of mobile applications that can maximize the advantages of employing new technologies (Cho et al., 2018). Nonetheless, Godwin-Jones (2011) mentioned that not all language learning applications were high in quality. According to Godwin-Jones (2011), users should be the ones deciding what and how an app should be utilized in order to achieve their learning goals. This would pave the way for application developers and educators to design productive language learning applications (Godwin-Jones, 2011). Thus, it is important in this study to determine the perceptions and preferences of learners in order to determine the ideal type of mobile app that suits their learning needs, especially in the context of CML learning.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of adult learners' experiences in learning CML which may impact their acquisition of the four language skills, as explained previously. It is also important to understand how learners view and experience the integration of technology, specifically mobile applications. Therefore, based on the previous literature discussed above, this study employed a qualitative method to scrutinize learner experiences in order to fulfil the following objectives:

1. Determine which language proficiency skill is needed the most among learners.
2. Determine which language skills learners struggle with the most.
3. Explore the current use and the potential of mobile applications in assisting CML learners.

This is a descriptive, qualitative research study involving a total of 10 participants who learnt CML beforehand. All of the participants were randomly recruited from various language centres in Kuala Lumpur via emails and phone calls. Since this research viewed the use of

mobile applications as assistive materials in language learning, purposeful sampling technique was employed in which the criterion determined for participation before launching the study was that all of the participants were voluntarily enrolled in CML classes. The participants were then individually interviewed at their preferred premises in a casual manner.

Essentially, The semi-structured interview was divided into four (4) main parts, beginning with the demographic section, followed by learners' perceptions of their own self-rated language literacy, which was divided into four (4) sub-section which are reading skill, speaking skill, listening skill, and writing skill. The third section comprised items pertaining to learners' motivation in learning CML, and the last section was on their attitudes toward learning technology. As for the last section, the interview session was extended for in-depth discussions on the potential and the usefulness of mobile applications to support a learner's learning process.

After the interview sessions were completed, the first step of data analysis was to transcribe all the interviews into text. The interview data was then reported using the thick description technique (Denzin, 1989). This study presents a detailed discussion of findings in order to provide a better understanding of the integration of mobile applications with CML lessons.

RESULTS

The goal of this analysis was not to generalize the aforementioned phenomenon but to deeply understand the real needs of the learners. The term "informant" is used

here, as the learners in this study informed us of their perceptions and experiences in learning CML.

Demographical Profile

Table 1 shows that most of the informants (N = 8) were professionals working in Malaysia, while only one informant was not working and another one was a homemaker. The data also shows that only one informant was from Asia, one informant was from Middle Eastern, while the rest were westerners.

Based on the interviews, it was found that Informant 2 and Informant 3 were born in Malaysia but were raised in Singapore and Britain, respectively. The informants also admitted that they still had some relatives living in Malaysia and this may have affected the way they learnt the Malay language compared to other informants. Informant 7, on the other hand, was not born in Malaysia but moved to Malaysia when he was a child. However, the informant mentioned that he was not able to speak the language as he was studying at the international school and lived in the international community, he then moved to the USA, where he lived for 10 years before coming back to Malaysia in 2017.

Perceptions of Language Literacy

The following findings are associated with informants' perceptions on each language proficiency skill.

Reading Skill. For reading, most of the students perceived this skill as the easiest skill to master in learning CML. Most informants reported that they could read and

Table 1

Demographic profile of informants

Informant	Country	Age range	Career background	Duration of learning
Informant 1	Ireland (UK)	45-54 years	Professional	More than 9 months
Informant 2	England (UK)	35-44 years	Homemaker	More than 9 months
Informant 3	Singapore	45-54 years	Professional	More than 3 months
Informant 4	USA	35-44 years	Not-working	More than 3 years
Informant 5	Australia	45-54 years	Professional	More than 9 months
Informant 6	Scotland (UK)	35-44 years	Professional	More than 9 months
Informant 7	Yemen	25-34 years	Professional	More than 9 months
Informant 8	Switzerland	25-34 years	Professional	More than 9 months
Informant 9	USA	45-54 years	Professional	More than 3 years
Informant 10	Australia	25-34 years	Professional	More than 9 months

pronounce Malay words easily regardless of their ability to understand the meaning of the words. Nonetheless, Informants 2, 8, 9 and 10 were still working on reading and pronouncing words containing digraphs such as '*nga*', '*ngi*', '*nya*' and '*nyi*' as well as words with the '*kh*' (/x/) and '*gh*' (/ɣ/) sounds, which typically originate from the sounds of Arabic loan words.

Based on the interview, it was found that Informant 8 was aware of the mistakes he made whenever he had to pronounce words with digraphs. However, due to his unfamiliarity as well as lack of exposure to phonetic aspects of Malay language pronunciation (given that his native language was German), Informant 8 would only be able to pronounce the closest sound that he could produce. Informant 8's difficulty in pronouncing Malay language digraphs can be explained by McLelland's (2006) research on German digraph

sounds. According to McLelland (2006), digraph words in German also involve the concept of diphthongs, which makes the understanding of the sounds quite complicated to comprehend. This is due to the strong phonetic nature of the umlaut in German, which is typically described as an 'intermediate sound' and characterized as subtler, smaller and with rounded mouth movement. This is in contrast to Malay language digraphs, which typically involve nasal pressure and tongue movement rather than solid mouth movement, thus making it harder for learners to observe the source of the sound being produced.

Informant 6, who had reached the advanced level in learning CML, also agreed that he was also having difficulty in pronouncing digraphs. The word "*nyanyi*" (meaning: to sing) is a combination of two digraphs. Although Informant 6 reported a high frequency of reading practice, he

admitted that whenever he had to read aloud the digraph words, he sometimes pronounced them without the dighraph letter, for example, the word "*nyanyi*" becomes "*nani*".

Informant 9, on the other hand, specifically mentioned that he was still struggling with the sound of the letter 'C' in written Malay language, mistakenly using it with the 'K' pronunciation. For example, the 'C' in the word "*kecuali*' (meaning: except for) is a voiceless palato-alveolar affricate and thus pronounced as /Č/ in Malay language. This contrasts with the sound of the letter 'C' in English that has the phonetic values of voiceless velar stop /k/ and voiceless alveolar fricative /s/.

Overall, the informants reported that they practised their reading skills with the textbook used in their classrooms, and four informants (N = 4) were able to read WhatsApp messages and signboards written in basic Malay language. Informant 6 reported that he was able to read magazines and newspapers as he was getting better at conjugating Malay words. Apart from that, all of the informants were able to recognize the words they had learnt when they read them, however, some of them were not able to instantaneously process the meanings of words when reading.

Speaking Skill. The interview data revealed that all of the informants believed that shops were the best locations to practice basic CML speaking skills. In addition, Informants 4, 6, 7, 9, and 10 mentioned that they managed to have simple conversations with taxi or Grab drivers. As for Informant 6, he was able to practice this skill the most as he was working with a lot of local Malay subordinates. Informant 6 added that he used every opportunity he could find to speak the Malay language, and he insisted that his local acquaintances speak the Malay language with him. The situation had enabled him to speak spontaneously with a bit of slang and mixed language as practised by locals.

All of the informants were also able to have spontaneous conversations if they involved with less complex and simple responses, except for Informants 3 and 9, who reported that they were unable to have spontaneous conversations with the locals due to the fact that they were still in the process of acquiring the vocabulary and were not ready to use it yet as it would take time to put words into verbal actions. The transcription data also reveal that a few of the informants felt anxious when a local started to converse with them. In particular, Informant 2 felt anxious because she wanted to be able to respond with correct grammar, while Informant 8 only felt anxious when speaking to a local stranger who he had just met because he did not want to make any mistakes.

These findings were parallel to Krashen's affective filter concept (Liu, 2015) that learners' language development is affected by a psychological filter that can be symbolized as a 'wall' which either assists or hinders the acquisition process. From Informant 8's statement, we can deduce that his filter was lowered when

he spoke with his close local friends, who did not make him worried about making mistakes. However, when he met a new local acquaintance, he would feel anxious to start a conversation in Malay.

It was the same situation with Informant 2, who was greatly concerned about good grammatical structure. She was aware that she looked like a local Malay since she had a Malay bloodline and still had some relatives living in Johor, Malaysia. This impression of her consequentially caused the locals to speak colloquial Malay with her although she had just met them for the first time. Informant 2 believed it was a good opportunity to practice speaking, but since she knew that she could not respond in colloquial Malay, which disregards formal grammatical structure, she refrained from immediately responding in Malay. This opportunity eventually became an imposing filter, which stopped her from speaking the language.

This experience contrasts with Informant 5's, who believed that making mistakes is part of the learning process. Apart from that, Informant 5 indicated optimism about his learning process during the interview session. Informant 5 reported that he relied on daily communication with his Filipino maid, who had lived in Malaysia for more than seven (7) years. Although she did not speak properly structured Malay language, Informant 5 believed that she had indirectly assisted him to acquire some vocabulary which he could replicate and accordingly integrate with the knowledge that he gained from the CML classes he joined.

The situation faced by Informant 5 matches the criteria of the imitative speaking technique known as shadowing (Hsieh et al., 2013). According to Hsieh et al. (2017), this technique has been shown to improve learners' phoneme acquisition as it requires learners to immediately vocalise them in speech. Hsieh et al. (2017) added that this technique was distinct from oral reading and rote repetition, which had been widely practised in many foreign language learning situations. This technique enables students to imitate the way the language is spoken, contextually.

However, imitating a non-native in order to speak Malay could produce a different result. This is said based on Chomsky's (1986) well-known linguistic theory which emphasizes the linguistic intuition of an ideal native speaker (Tsou & Chen, 2019). Tsou and Chen (2019), who conducted a study on learners' preferences between native and non-native educators, reported that most learners prefered to learn with native speakers as they provided more in-depth knowledge of language proficiency. Nonetheless, Informant 5's situation was not so much about proficiency but was more focused on the opportunity to see how his maid, who was a non-Malay, spoke with local Malays, which was significant as he socialised with a limited number of locals.

Listening Skill. The data revealed that Informants 1, 2, 5, and 9 were already able to listen to Malay language radio stations although they were not able to grasp all the words being spoken while Informant 4 was already able to listen to

Malay language songs. Informants 6, 7, 8 and 9 mentioned that they listened to random people talking, and although they could not grasp each word, they were still able to get the messages. Most of the informants reported that they used audio assistive material such as listening discs or online conversation audios either given by the teacher, or self-supplied in order to develop the skill. The informants were able to recognize each word they had learnt by repetitively listening to the audio.

Informant 6, who was at the advanced level, could listen to and instantaneously understand the meanings of each word being said. He also stated that he strengthened his listening skills by utilizing an online website. Informant 6 added that he depended on visual help in listening to people, thus he thought it was easier to listen to a local speaking during face-to-face interaction compared to a telephone conversation with nothing but the voice of the speaker.

Parallel to Informant 6's explanation, there were also some informants who were able to listen properly provided that the speed of the speech was slower than the usual. Informant 8, who thought he was able to sharpen his listening skill due to the fact that he was working with his local subordinates, also emphasized that he was only able to listen to local Malays speaking in the standard variety of the language and found it hard to listen to some other dialects of Malay language.

It was a different scenario for Informant 2, who was able to return to her hometown in Johor every school break when she was growing up. The informant believed that her listening skill was easier to master due to her time spent listening to her Malay relatives speaking. During the interview, Informant 2 also reported that she could listen better when a non-local was speaking the Malay language. For example, she noticed that her Indonesian cleaners uttered the sounds of words more clearly than local people.

Across all of the responses given by all of the informants, there are some notable findings to be highlighted here. Firstly, it was found that clear, unambiguous pronunciation of local native speakers is crucial to assist in learner listening skill development. This clear pronunciation includes speed, dialects, and minimum external noise. The overall findings are aligned with Bloomfield et al.'s (2010) findings that speaker accent, pauses, speed rate, and noise distortion could affect second language learner comprehension. In this case, multiple hearing or repetition in listening improves understanding (Bloomfield et al., 2010). This correlates with most of the responses acquired from the informants involved in this study.

Writing Skill. The findings for this category of skill synchronizes with reading skills. It was fairly easy for all of the informants to write what they had already learnt. Informant 9 believed that he did not have any problem with spelling due to the phonetic basis of the spelling system used for the Malay language. Nonetheless, Informant 2 stated that she was still struggling with the spelling

and the sentence structure, while Informant 8 reported that he was not able to spell digraph words correctly.

Informant 1 and 4, who worked in a field that required them to associate with the government sector, reported that they were very anxious about the official language whenever they needed to write to government agencies. This was due to their writing skill, which they considered to be at the conversational level. However, Informants 8 and 10 were not concerned about writing mistakes. Informant 8 admitted that although he always made a lot of spelling mistakes when texting with his local friends, he never felt embarrassed due to their positive supports. Not only that, most of the informants also reported low levels of anxiety and concern in making mistakes. This was because most learners perceived that this skill was the least applied in their daily lives.

The findings for this skill reveal that all learners were aware of the distinction between formal Malay language and conversational Malay language. All of them also reported that they noticed the complexity of Malay language prefix and suffix conjugation but were not taught at the beginner level. Most of the informants also agreed that their main learning objective was to converse rather than for writing sentences, and this caused them to disregard proper conjugation as they were aware that the locals did not converse with conjugations in their sentences. Therefore, all of the informants perceived that formal language learning was not necessary.

This finding reflects the aforementioned self-directed learning style among adult learners who are responsible for their learning. This finding clearly shows that informants were able to decide which language proficiency they should neglect or focus on, based on their needs. The situation presented through the interview is empirical proof that adult learners' needs greatly impact their language proficiency level.

The Importance of Language Literacy Skills

Table 2 shows the rank of Malay language literacy skills from the most important to the least important as perceived by the informants.

Based on Table 2, it is found that all of the informants considered their oral communication skills to be more important compared to their written communication skills. The table also shows that eight (8) informants perceived listening to be the most important skill that impacted their oral communication with the locals. In the context of this study, the finding could have been affected by the fact that the informants were adults, and a prominent defining characteristic of a productive adult is the ability to communicate effectively. According to McLaren (2019), effective oral communication plays a crucial role in enhancing self-confidence, assisting formulation, structuring and the presentation of successful and meaningful arguments.

In the scope of this study, it must be highlighted that most of the informants were attached to corporate and professional

Table 2

The rank of the importance of language literacy skills

Informants	The rank of the importance of language literacy skills
	(The most important to the least important)
Informant 1	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing
Informant 2	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing
Informant 3	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing
Informant 4	Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing
Informant 5	Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing
Informant 6	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing
Informant 7	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing
Informant 8	Listening, Speaking, Writing, Reading
Informant 9	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing
Informant 10	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing

entities and oral communication was seen as required for daily interaction. This directly impacted the respondent rankings of language literacy skill as shown in Table 2. In addition, the overall finding is also aligned with Kurita (2012), who argued that listening is the most crucial skill to be developed in language learning. However, Kurita (2012) also mentioned that listening was the most challenging language skill to be learnt among second language learners. This could probably be due to inefficiency in the teaching process (Kurita, 2012). Kurita (2012) also added that listening involved more effort from students because of the overlapping purposes of listening, which were the acquisition of words and comprehension of the real meaning of utterances.

Learning Challenges

The most prominent response received from all of the informants was that they were all aware that they had to make time to learn CML despite their busy schedules. All of the informants agreed that they were responsible for the time spent on their learning and needed to allocate time to practice the language. However, they admitted that there were no strong, concrete forces acting on them to do so. This is an understandable situation as Malaysia is a country that does not impose the national language as a compulsory need for non-Malaysian residents.

Another crucial finding of the interviews is that most of the informants found it was hard to find opportunities to practice CML. This was due to the community they lived in. All of the informants lived in a city where everybody was able to converse in English. This situation hindered the learning process that was supposed to take place in public contexts.

Informants 6 and 7, however, provided different views on this matter. They were

aware of the fact that most locals would speak English to them given that they did not look like Malaysians. However, as for Informant 6, himself, he would ensure that the locals spoke the Malay language with him by responding to them in the Malay language. Informant 7 also reported that he would start having a small talk in Malay in order to hint to his friends that he wanted to speak in the Malay language.

This situation is empirical evidence supporting Ismail's (2017) study, who argued that although learners were given classroom drills, their ability to converse in real-world situations would still be very low. This is because they would only be able to acquire a certain degree of writing and reading skills in the language but would be lost regarding listening and speaking skills in contextual social discourse due to their lack of exposure to an authentic communicative environment. Ismail (2017) added that one of the contributing factors to the situation was the dominance of the social background in the community. For example, in Malaysia, all of the learners were categorized as expatriates, and it is common for local Malaysians to have the impression that they need to speak English with them, thus hindering the learning process.

Attitude towards Learning Technology

Based on the conducted interviews, all of the informants had previously learnt other languages. This shows that these informants had experienced foreign language learning and therefore were able to apply their previous personal learning strategies in learning CML. All informants reported that they had utilized assistive materials apart from the ones given in class such as tapes, and those available on the internet. However, when they were asked if they had used any mobile applications in learning previous languages, Informants 3, 5, 6, and 8 responded that they had not since mobile applications and smartphones did not exist at the time when they were learning those languages.

All informants, except for Informant 3, confirmed the use of mobile applications as one of their CML's assistive learning materials. Although Informant 3 did not use any mobile applications, he was open to any suggestions to use mobile applications as he was not aware if there were any applications available for CML learning. Table 3 shows the mobile applications used by the informants when they were learning foreign languages, including CML.

In-depth discussions were conducted during the interview sessions in order to deeply understand the most suitable mobile applications in assisting adult learners' language learning process. Overall, all of the informants were aware of the MALL technology and they were all positive about the use of mobile applications as part of their extramural learning activities. It was also found that most of the informants were utilizing mobile apps in order to improve their oral communication skills, especially listening skills. However, they believed that the existing mobile apps did not cater much to their needs in learning CML. Most of the

Table 3

The mobile applications used in assisting CML learning

Informant	The mobile application used in assisting CML learning
Informant 1	Dictionary App, CitCat
Informant 2	Duolingo
Informant 3	-
Informant 4	iTalki, Memrise
Informant 5	L-Lingo
Informant 6	L-Lingo
Informant 7	Duolingo
Informant 8	Flashcard App
Informant 9	Rosseta Stone, Duolingo, WordPower, Malaysia Vocabulary
Informant 10	L-Lingo, Duolingo

informants suggested that there should be a mobile app focusing on bottom-up listening comprehension which eventually builds up to common daily conversations.

The informants' suggestions are presumably based on the learning challenges they faced, as discussed previously. Since their main hurdle was to be able to participate in conversations among the locals, they were looking for alternatives that could replicate real-world conversations. It was also clear that most informants preferred situational dialogues to be key elements of the MALL. This could be the result of their perceptions of the importance of listening comprehension as they wanted to be able to listen and capture the meanings of the words effectively.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings from the conducted interviews found that most of the informants perceived that CML is easy to be learnt. However, all of the informants agreed that they needed to put more focus on perfecting their oral proficiency, which comprises listening and speaking skills. The discussions that took place on the usefulness of mobile applications also provided insight into the research findings. Overall, none of the informants was negative about the utilization of mobile applications in CML learning. When they were asked to clarify more on the preferred strategies to develop a mobile application, all of the informants were more concerned about the functionality over the features and designs of the applications. Apart from that, the findings reveal that informants were looking forward to having any assistive-learning technology that would help them to develop their CML listening skill. The fact that they were surrounded by English speaking locals made it hard for them to practice their listening skill. Besides that, informants also noticed that locals in Malaysia are from various states with various dialects and speeds of speaking. At this point, most

of the informants agreed to have a sort of application that would expose them to daily conversations rather than learning words and short phrases. This finding is parallel to Kim's (2018), who stated that most of the current empirical studies on the usefulness of mobile applications had been limited to grammar learning, vocabulary acquisition, writing and speaking development, only.

Another prominent finding arising from this study is that all of the informants were aware of having self-determination in allocating time for perfecting their language fluency. This is an ironic finding as most of the informants admitted that it was hard for them to allocate time to practice their fluency as this was typically affected by other daily activities. This inability to manage their time to practice CML does not correlate to their motivation level, but to the obligatory nature of the learning.

Limitations

This study, however, is limited to a small, voluntary sample of research informants. Since all informants were highly motivated in learning CML, this may have affected the findings of the research, narrowing the experiences and perceptions in learning CML. Therefore, it is suggested that future research include various motivational levels in understanding learners' experiences and perceptions. Besides that, other additional research on the usefulness of mobile applications in learning CML is also needed. Future research should also include the experiences of foreigners working in labour sectors in Malaysia, which would probably result in a different scope of needs in self-directed learning.

CONCLUSION

In summary, all participants were positive towards their learning process in acquiring Communicative Malay Language (CML). However, these learners preferred to only learn communicative over the formal version of the language. This was due to their personal needs to socialize and to promote a good impression among the local community. All of the participants were able to read and write basic Malay, but most of the participants were not able to communicate spontaneously and effectively. This is due to their inability to capture the words when they were listening to locals speaking. The findings also show that most of the informants utilized mobile applications in learning CML and other foreign languages to improve their proficiency, apart from the drills conducted in the classroom. This has shown that learners depend on the use of mobile applications when encountering challenges in their learning process. However, at the time of the study, there were only a few useful mobile apps for this specific language subject, and most of the mobile apps focussed on vocabulary acquisition and sentence structure, not catering to their current literacy needs, which was listening. Overall, this study concludes that:

1. Adult learners prefer to put more effort into acquiring oral proficiency in CML.

2. Adult learners accentuate their focal-point of learning in listening skills.

3. Adult learners positively perceive mobile-assisted language learning.

4. Adult learners prefer to have a mobile application catering to listening comprehension in CML.

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Narratives of English Language Teachers on the Implementation of School-Based Assessment (SBA) in Sarawak, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Malaysia has followed other countries such as Australia, Finland, and the United Kingdom in adopting school-based assessment (SBA). SBA was introduced to the Malaysian education system in 2011 with the rationale of reducing examination-oriented learning among students; effectively evaluate students' learning; and provide a systematic way of assessing, recording and reporting students' learning. Numerous studies have highlighted various complaints, issues, and challenges in the implementation of SBA among English language teachers in West Malaysia but only a few studies have been conducted in East Malaysia. This paper thus seeks to shed light on and provide a comparative qualitative study of, perspectives, implementation, issues, and problems faced by English language teachers in East Malaysia. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve English teachers (N = 12) teaching in the lower secondary forms of public national schools in the Kuching and Samarahan area of Sarawak. Interview questions were designed based on Stake's Countenance Model of Evaluation (1967) and encompassed three key criteria of evaluation, which were antecedents prior to implementation, transactions during, and outcomes of the program. All interviews were coded and clustered according to

themes. The findings suggest that a lack of training and clear policy direction hampered the initial implementation of SBA. However, most teachers reported that since its implementation, the policy had gained greater clarity with greater support now provided by the Ministry of Education through the provision of further training opportunities.

INTRODUCTION

Education systems around the world are going through reforms, with school-based assessments (SBA) being a key part of those reforms (Bennet, 2011). Fullan (2011) noted that there was a real focus now at raising student performance and closing the gap between higher and lower-performing groups. The change has also shifted the way students are assessed from high stakes standardized testing to SBA systems.

Recognizing that nationwide high stakes testing through various exams such as the Primary School Evaluation Test or *Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah* (UPSR), Lower Secondary School Assessment or *Penilaian Menengah Rendah* (PMR) and Malaysian Certificate of Education Test or *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (SPM) potentially created passive teachers and students who concentrated on rote learning, the Ministry of Education (MoE) introduced the SBA system in 2011 as part of the changes to

the education system as highlighted in the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2012). Also, part of the changes to the education system, the PMR, was abolished in 2013 and replaced with the Form Three Assessment or *Pentaksiran Tingkatan Tiga* otherwise known as PT3 beginning 2014 ("Do you know", 2016).

The SBA comprises five components which are a centralized assessment, school assessment, physical assessment and co-curricular activities; and psychometric assessment (Yusof, 2013). In the English language classroom, SBA is carried out by teachers throughout the teaching and learning process. It is conducted both formally as a summative exam as well as a series of formative assessments. Teachers conduct a number of formative assessments biannually, e.g. a portfolio to demonstrate their learning or a class presentation. These tasks would be graded by the teacher and students will receive a school assessment subject score at the end of their Form 3 studies. A summative exam will also be conducted at the end of their Form 3 and a centralized assessment score will be awarded based on the students' performance in that exam. The reports of the centralized assessment and school assessment are combined at the end of the school year (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2012). The SBA is planned, administered, scored and reported based on the procedures as prescribed by the Malaysian Examination Syndicate (MES) (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2011).

Research Problem and Aims

This paper thus seeks to report the perceptions of English teachers towards SBA in secondary schools through semi-structured in-depth interviews with English teachers in the state of Sarawak, Malaysia. As it has now been over 7 years since its implementation, it would be apt to better understand the implementation of the program through the lens of the English teachers. Specifically, this paper seeks to document the perspective of English teachers as to whether the shift to SBA in the English classroom has allowed students to communicate confidently, proficiently, competently and provided a fair and accurate assessment of students' language proficiency as intended in the Secondary School Standards-Based Curriculum or *Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah (*KSSM).

To summarize, the objectives of the study are to identify 1) the overall views of English language teachers on the implementation of SBA in their school; 2) the practices of SBA by English teachers in the classroom; 3) the challenges faced by English teachers in implementing SBA.

Research Significance

While there has been a number of research on the evaluation of the SBA from various aspects (Lim & Chew, 2019; Majid, 2011; Malakolunthu & Sim, 2010; Salmiah, 2013; Sidek & Salleh, 2010), one commonality is that the research focus has been on the implementation of the SBA system in West Malaysia but few have looked into its implementation in East Malaysia. To highlight this disparity, an extensive literature review search showed that over the last decade, only one unpublished master's thesis (Nik Fauzi, 2016) has been written on the implementation of SBA in the English language classroom in Sarawak. Furthermore, teachers have questioned whether they can cope with the implementation, 'PT3 system a nightmare to teachers, students' ("PT3 a nightmare", 2014). Other concerns such as motivation of students to learn after implementation, effective implementation of the system, adequate training of teachers in regards to having SBA been frequently mentioned in newspaper articles ("PBS utamakan guru, pelajar" [PBS prioritized teacher, student], 2014). Additionally, the perception of teachers is important as teachers are not only the primary implementers of policy but are also the primary feedback providers on how to improve policy (Yavuz Konokman et al., 2017).

Table 1 shows the total number of schools and students in Sarawak. Given a large number of government schools (n = 184), almost 10% of the total number of secondary schools in Malaysia (MoE, 2018), students and teachers in the state of Sarawak, yet research has been lacking on the implementation of SBA, this paper thus becomes an insight and a starting point to further research in the state. Findings between this research study and those in peninsular Malaysia could also differ as Sarawak had only agreed to change the medium of instruction of subjects from

Table 1

Sarawak school statistics (2010)

Schools	Number of students
Government & Government-aided Primary schools	1,265
Government and Government-aided Secondary schools	184
Students in Government & Government-aided Primary schools	289,315
Students in Government & Government-aided Secondary schools	No data recorded
Teachers in Government and Government-aided Primary schools	24,960
Teachers in Government and Government-aided Secondary schools	15,536

English to Bahasa Malaysia for government schools in 1973, 10 years after Sarawak joined the Federation of Malaysia (Ting, 2003).

Literature Review

The assessment of students' achievement has always been an important aspect of education. In recent years, there has been increased attention and focus on the various methods a teacher can employ to assess students. In a world that demands new knowledge, skills and behaviours that are not clearly defined, traditional methods of assessments may not cater to the needs of a proper evaluation (Segers et al., 2003). Questions of whether traditional summative based assessments accurately assess students' learning are often heard (William, 2011). Van Lier (2004) went even further to suggest standardized tests as dehumanizing and oppressive pseudo-assessments as he too argued that such tests could dominate the curriculum, taking control over the

content and pacing of instruction away from the teacher and encouraging teaching to become more test-like. Thus, Birenbaum (2003) argued that the shift in need meant that a new assessment culture that embeds assessment in the teaching and learning process became necessary. Sadler (1989) argued that various assessments in the classroom should be employed as a strategy to assist students to identify gaps between their present achievements and desired goals.

SBA is seen as a medium to acquire generic competencies, encourage learning and maintain standards (Joughin & Macdonald, 2003). With SBA, teachers can assess various areas of students' performance which could not be assessed in a typical public examination (Davison, 2007). The introduction of SBA may also reduce the pressure faced by students in high stakes testing (Esther, 2012). With SBA, assessments can be in the form of both summative and formative assessments which can, therefore, encompass all

three types of assessments which are an assessment of learning, assessment as learning and assessment for learning. Earl (2003) defined the assessment of learning as assessments that were used to certify learning for reporting to students, parents, schools and the government. It takes place usually at the end of the unit, program or year of study. Assessment for learning is any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting students' learning (Black et al., 2004). Lastly, assessment as learning is a term used to describe the role of students in monitoring and directing their own learning (Hayward, 2015). Thus, students monitor their learning and use feedback from this monitoring to make changes to what they understand.

In the UK, Black and William (1998a) argued that school teachers needed to have a deep understanding of formative assessment. Black and William's (1998b, 1999) further research and more recently Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2005) showed that the use of formative assessment in the classroom could lead to substantial gains in students' achievement. In fact, OECD (2005) argued that achievement gained through formative assessment in the classroom had been characterized as among the largest ever reported for educational interventions. It was also found that formative assessments were very effective in developing students' "learning to learn" skills.

However, many countries and educational systems have suffered from implementation issues. It was only after large investments into teacher education by Finland and Sweden, that these countries have begun to see the successful implementation of SBA in the English class (Reyneke, 2016) whereas Hong Kong is still confronted by serious implementation challenges (Qian, 2014).

As English allows mobility in multilingual and multicultural contexts for learners, it is important that the focus of teaching and assessing high level linguistic and critical thinking skills is emphasized when teaching English. Brindley (1998) identified three common types of issues and problems that were faced in school-based assessments namely political issues, to do with the purposes and intended use of the assessment; technical issues, to do with validity and reliability; and practical issues, to do with the means by which the assessment was put into practice.

One of the major challenges highlighted by Reyneke (2016) was to link assessments to the curriculum and integrate assessment into the instructional process to promote high level cognitive and affective learner developments within the English classroom. She argued that SBA was supposed to drive learning, provide knowledge and proficiency to students and assess students. If there is a strict alignment of the curriculum with the preparation for end-of-year examinations or summative tests, then the SBA implementation may not be as effective as it was intended.

In June 2010, then Education Minister of Malaysia, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin

stated that the current learning system in Malaysia was seen as too exam-oriented and failed to provide holistic education to its students ("PMR may be abolished", 2010a). SBA was thus introduced to the public after roundtable discussions with various stakeholders ("PMR ready", 2010b). This shift is important to promote assessment as integral to the teaching and learning process and establish a classroom discourse on the assessment that facilitates teaching and learning and at the same time promotes self-assessment. Some have also attributed the testing culture to a lack of English proficiency among the students. Koo (2008) blamed the high stakes testing culture in the education system for the lack of proficiency among the Malaysian students. She argued that the discourse of 'privileging examination' was dominant across Malaysian education system whereby it had been reported that teachers tended to concentrate on the teaching of grammar at the expense of communicative aspects of language learning instead. Certain language skills are also prioritized over others depending on whether they are tested in examinations. Furthermore, English is seen as a subject, in which teachers often focus on the mechanics of the language without making connections to how it is used in real-life communication events. As an example, reading and writing skills together with grammar are often emphasized as these are items that are tested in school examinations as well as nationwide high stakes testing (Abdul Rahman, 2005).

To ensure that SBA is conducted fairly and effectively, the Malaysian Examination Syndicate (MES) implemented a framework that includes four aspects, i.e. moderation, mentoring, monitoring and tracking (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2012). Without proper quality assurance processes, teachers may feel non-committed and lackadaisical in conducting the proper evaluation and assessment methods as required by the MoE (Tan, 2010). The objectives of moderation within the SBA context is to standardize understanding towards assignment expectations and scoring criteria, standardize school assessment scores given by teachers based on the performance standard statements, descriptors and evidence as provided in the performance standard document (PSD), standardize centralized assessment scores given by teachers based on the scoring criteria prescribed for the assignment, standardize tools, materials and situations according to prescribed scores in order to produce standard scores, ensure validity and reliability of scores in SBA implementation by school teachers, ensure that awarded scores match the students' ability and performance and ensure that scores awarded are fair to all students (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2012).

Yusof (2013) stated that through a series of monitoring activities at various levels, questionnaires, dialogues and small studies conducted by the MES, they found various issues with the implementation of the SBA system in schools. Firstly, they found that school administrators and teachers were still having difficulty accepting the changes

made in the policy. They also found that teachers lacked adequate skills especially in developing various assessment instruments other than the tests which they were used to. Thirdly, class sizes were also not ideal in which teachers who taught classes in excess of 50 students were having a hard time organizing and managing learner-centred activities and assessments that catered to individual differences.

In terms of training and workshops given to teachers in preparation for the implementation of SBA, Yusof (2013) highlighted that the training might not be effective enough as there might be a dilution of information during the information transfer between trainer and trainee. Information is further diluted when it is transferred from one section to another. Cascading training models are not hands-on, so teachers cannot practice during the training due to a short period of time, and the training is not conducted in-situ, within a real school setting (Chan & Gurnam, 2011). However, Green (2014) explained that while many issues with assessment literacy may exist, teachers could improve on their current practice if given the right training and motivation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As this paper examines the perceptions of English teachers on the implementation of SBA, a descriptive study was conducted. A semi-structured in-depth individual interview was conducted by the researcher on 12 (N = 12) secondary school English teachers who were currently teaching in lower secondary forms (Form 1 to Form 3) in two sub-districts, Kuching city, and Samarahan in Sarawak.

To ensure the questions were guided and properly framed, Stake's (1967) Countenance Model for evaluation was used as the framework to evaluate the implementation practices and perceptions of SBA. Stake's countenance model is unique as it provides description and judgment based on data collected. It is able to report how different stakeholders perceive the implementation and responds to the need for further information on the SBA system in Malaysia. Additionally, the formulation of questions in the interview schedule was conducted via corroborating information through the triangulation of multiple data sources. Here, an extensive literature review was conducted to shed light on the issues surrounding SBA implementation and the underlying perspectives. This helped the researcher to form questions that are relevant to the Malaysian context of SBA implementation and also avoids questions that could be biased or not meaningful to the study. Draft interview schedules were sent to the teachers and academicians and they were asked to comment on the credibility, relevance, and accuracy of the questions. The interview questions were pilot tested on three (N = 3) teachers who were not part of the main study. The questions were further refined based on their opinions and feedback.

Through the use of this model, the study was able to evaluate the learning outcomes, the impact of SBA implementation on

various stakeholders, immediate and also expected long term outcomes of SBA. Three sets of data were evaluated by looking at the different lenses of antecedents, transactions, and outcomes. Antecedents evaluate the conditions existing before implementation which can include any condition related to outcome (Stake, 1967). Transactions are successive engagements or dynamic encounters in the process of instruction (Popham, 1993). Transactions evaluate activities that occur during the implementation forms a two or more ways relationship with various parties, e.g. transactions that occur between teachers and students, students and students, etc. Outcomes provide a detailed observation after a period of time and judge the outcomes against external standards, e.g. comparing findings from other studies. Thus this model is useful as it provides extensive evidence to evaluate the success of the implementation (Hamm, 1985) of SBA by documenting all plausible links between all components of the system which, therefore, also presents an in-depth view on its implementation. Figure 1 below displays the main sections and subsections of the interview schedule.

Interviews took an hour on average and were audio-recorded. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed both inductively and deductively to identify the themes that emerged based on the research questions.

The researchers sent out invitation letters to schools, requesting for English teachers, who had a minimum of four years of experience teaching English, in Forms 1 to 3, to participate. The invitation was sent to 31 public-national type schools in the sub-divisions of Kuching city and Samarahan in the district of Sarawak. To ensure maximum variation of interviewees

Antecedents: Teachers' personal background and knowledge of assessment practices

• Teachers' years of experience in teaching Form 1 - 3 English and their acceptance of SBA.
• Personal evaluation of differences between the curriculum and assessment practices of PMR and SBA.
• The adequacy of centralized and in house training provided in their own experience.

Transaction: Teachers' practices in administering SBA in the English classroom

• Teachers' practices in planning English language lessons.
• Teachers' practices in developing and administering SBA in the English classroom.
• Teachers' practices in scoring, reporting and analyzing SBA in the English classroom.

Outcomes: Teachers' overall views on the implementation of SBA

• Self-evaluation of teachers' skills and ability to conduct SBA
• Perceptions of different stakeholders within their own school context on SBA
• Perceived opinions of students towards SBA implementation
• Perceived support, general administration, coordination and monitoring of SBA implementation at their school
• Challenges faced by teachers in implementing SBA in their school
• Areas of improvement for more effective SBA policy implementation.

Figure 1. Sections and subsections of the interview schedule

and to identify if there are any differences in knowledge, practices, issues, and challenges faced by these teachers in the different types of schools, the sample of the study was stratified to include: types of schools, gender, ethnicity, years of teaching experience and administrative position held (if any). A total of 13 teachers from 12 different public government secondary schools responded to the request for an interview, thus the researchers decided to select one teacher from every school. Based on the selection criteria mentioned above, 12 (N = 12) teachers were chosen. Table 2 displays the demographic data of the sample.

Demographic data indicated that out of the 12 respondents, 33% of them were male and 67% were females. This was reflective of the population where 65% of teachers in Sarawak were females (Jabatan

Pendidikan Negeri Sarawak, 2019). As for ethnic groups, 25% of the interviewees were Malay, 41.6% were Chinese, and the remaining 33.4% were local Sarawakian natives. 33% of the teachers currently hold or have held administrative positions (head of English subject, head of district marking, head of school level moderation, and head of the form) while the other interviewees were teachers who did not or have not held administrative positions. All interviewees possessed a Bachelor's degree and had a minimum of 6 years of teaching experience and were teaching English in lower secondary forms.

The teachers were selected from various range of factors with the intention of comparing the similarities or differences between how teachers from different demographics view the implementation

Table 2

Breakdown of teacher interviewee demographics

Teacher	Gender	Age range	Ethnicity	District	Teaching experience (years)
T1	M	26-30	Chinese	Kuching	6
T2	F	36-40	Malay	Samarahan	13
T3	F	36-40	Iban	Kuching	14
T4	M	41-45	Chinese	Samarahan	20
T5	F	26-30	Malay	Kuching	7
T6	F	31-35	Chinese	Samarahan	12
T7	F	56-60	Bidayuh	Kuching	34
T8	F	31-35	Chinese	Kuching	11
T9	F	41-45	Bidayuh	Kuching	19
T10	F	51-55	Iban	Kuching	32
T11	M	26-30	Chinese	Samarahan	6
T12	F	36-40	Malay	Kuching	16

of the SBA system through their own experiences and context. Each individual would represent a unique case study. As Robson (2002) aptly remarked, it was more often than not more appropriate to study more than a single case. Yin (1994) explained that multiple case studies provided us with analytic generalization which could not be made through statistical generalization from questionnaire data. As SBA is still fairly new, as the full implementation of SBA for lower secondary only began in 2014, teachers would be the most knowledgeable, most concerned, and most affected with the system compared to other stakeholders. Salmiah (2013) further argued that teachers were seen as the most important stakeholder in ensuring the success of the SBA implementation.

RESULTS

Antecedents: Training

The findings suggest that the interviewees had varying experience in receiving training and workshops pertaining to the implementation of SBA. 58% of the interviewees did not attend any centralized training but were only given in-house training. Thus the teachers were not trained first hand by experienced trainers but by a teacher from their school who had attended the centralized training. To illustrate, one teacher, T1 complained about the cascading training model, questioning its effectiveness: "often times when the teachers are sent for training, they have to replicate the workshop back in school, the material that they deliver

may have already been watered-down." T11 added that the quality of the in-house training conducted in school was questionable as the training time was very short: "The teachers who go for the centralized training do it over a few days or even a week. At the district level, teachers have to digest everything in one or two days." This suggests that certain information or content may have been left out due to time constraints.

To further illustrate the problem of training, T4 noted that limited amounts of training were provided: "I don't think there are many pieces of training over the last few years. I have only attended one and I had to ask colleagues from other schools for more information". T7 whom at the time of initial implementation of SBA was teaching in higher forms highlighted that teachers who were teaching higher forms in the past but were reassigned to teach lower forms, later on, were very disadvantaged as they did not get the opportunity to attend such training: "I taught different forms, form 4 and 5 when SBA was first implemented. When I went back to teach Form 3 there was no longer any training provided for SBA so I had to look for my own resources. I looked for friends and colleagues who had done the training before."

Furthermore, another teacher, T9 reported that although she had attended the training, she did not grasp the pedagogies of implementing SBA and formative assessments: "I attended a workshop on designing formative assessments where we were only asked to create activities and do presentations, micro-teaching, and people

started to comment on their own practice. I am still not clear about how formative assessment really works."

Antecedents: Fairness

All (100%) the interview respondents were in agreement that the SBA and the new PT3 were a fairer way to assess the students. T11 explained, "SBA does empower the teachers. We can test our students in school as we know our students better and they won't feel so nervous or scared that the assessment will be conducted in a very formal setting." T10 elaborated, "I think SBA is more genuine. We test all four skills of the students in SBA and this is better than PMR with just one test. Proficiency should be gauged on all four skills to be fair. I think that SBA is fair." Additionally, T4 added, "looking at the learning process, I think the change from PMR to SBA and PT3 was necessary. The assessment in terms of language skills is more. We can get more accurate feedback from the test compared to the PMR."

Furthermore, T10 added "for PMR, whenever we finish a topic taught, we will find the reference book to find exercises for students to complete. The questions were similar to the exams, it was teaching to the test. With SBA, I think about what activities can engage students and measure their ability. Teachers have to set up the questions appropriate for each skill tested and for what content, and although it is a lot of work I really love it." However, other teachers have also reported difficulties in implementing effective formative assessments in the

classroom. T3 explains that while it is ideal to conduct formative assessments in the classroom, he cannot do it very often as they have limited time to complete the syllabus before the final PT3 exam. He explains, "my class is a mixed ability class so some students will find the assessment activities boring, while the poorer ones will struggle. We don't have a teacher assistant and we have discipline issues to handle. Having the activities will just disrupt learning."

Transactions: Class Sizes and Feedback

An integral part of SBA is the use of formative assessments in the classroom with feedback from teachers used for the continuous improvement of students. Eighty-three (83)% of teachers interviewed admitted that it had not always been feasible to provide meaningful and detailed feedback to students. Firstly, most teachers have noted a large class size being a hindrance. T1 illustrated: "I wish I could. I don't give as much feedback to my students as I should… Class size is another hindrance, we get 35 to 40 in a class. Students need to also be taught what to do with the feedback they get." T12 pointed out that the number of classes that a teacher needed to handle could also be an issue, "I am teaching 3 classes and it's close to 100 students. If you have 3 English classes a day, you might mark about 100 pieces of exercise and give feedback. And that is not the only subject you teach because you may teach other subjects also." Other teachers such as T3 claimed that feedback was also hard to give due to time constraints. T3 explained: "I have to rush through the

syllabus and activities. It is very hard to find the time, have a discussion and feedback one-on-one with them. It would be good if we could do that with the students on a personal basis."

To ease giving feedback to students, 58% of interviewees preferred to give selective feedback or general feedback. Less individual feedback was provided but more collective feedback was given to the class instead. T4 stated she typically gave feedback in groups, "Taking into consideration only 35 minutes of class, we have to give feedback in groups, especially for group activities. If they want individual feedback, they have to see me personally." T7, on the other hand, provided selective feedback. She stated: "I provide individual feedback only to very good students. For mediocre ones, sometimes they get left out. Kind of pity but I can't really give individual attention to all. However, I try to give as much feedback to the class as a whole." Most teachers have called for a reduction in class sizes to less than 30 students per class as they find it hard to give effective feedback with large class sizes.

Transactions: Marking and Moderation

Overall responses indicated that moderation of in-class informal formative assessments was not conducted. However, when it came to the official school-based assessments, moderation was considered to be important and was conducted. T2 argued that with moderation, teachers would be more careful with their marking as they know that a fellow teacher will be looking at the scores

and any large discrepancies would be highlighted. T11, a senior teacher who was also a division head moderator agreed that moderation is effective in ensuring that teachers mark fairly. She added, "When I moderated schools, I'm a neutral party and marked fairly. Compared with the score their teacher awarded, there wasn't much of a difference. Any difference was minuscule. This is good as it confirms that we are marking fairly."

However, T6 argued that moderation did not always yield an accurate representation. She illustrated: "moderation is basically taking a few scripts and getting another teacher to mark it. The discrepancies in marks could be in the scripts that were not chosen." Ultimately, while the moderation process could be flawed, all teachers see the benefits. T10 highlighted, "Without moderation, in some schools, the students might get 85 or 80 for a particular assessment but could get a lower result in another school for the same assessment. I think it's not nice in terms of integrity." T4 added: "moderation is only done for centralized assessments. For school assessments, the teacher's marked assessments are supposed to be moderated by the head of the subject, but this was not done in my school. They don't have time to come and monitor the class either."

Outcomes: Stakeholder Support and Beliefs

Overall, all teachers had highlighted that their school management had been supportive of implementing SBA if albeit to comply with

government policy. T11 pointed out that her principal had encouraged better formative assessment practices by promoting group-like seating in the classroom. She quipped: "My principal doesn't want classes to be in lecture-style settings" while T3 pointed out that "the school is being supportive because they have to but at least they are giving us the support that we need". T7 added that the principal had to support the policy implementation because if not, "this policy would not work".

Similarly, the interviewees felt there were mixed opinions by parents on SBA implementation. Some parents understand and support SBA while others do not. Most parents trust the teachers in conducting SBA and providing fair marking to the students. T2 highlighted: "In my school, very little parents actually care about new policies like SBA. Many are not very highly educated and lack internet access and some may be too busy to care about what their children are doing or what their assessments are like." T4 thought "parents do not understand the importance of the SBA and because in SBA, the score and weight are not part of the external examination (PT3)" therefore less emphasis is placed on SBA.

T8 mentioned that "different parents have differing opinions when it came to conducting SBA. Some parents thought that it was not good while some thought otherwise because the students were so close to the teacher so this could be seen as an advantage (to score better marks)." Furthermore, she added that within Asian contexts, parents typically did not interfere

or question teachers as they felt that it would be disrespectful. T8 states: "in Asian countries, questioning the teacher will affect the relationship between the parents and the teacher so they rarely do it." In some circumstances, as T1 suggested, "parents may not be well educated and may not understand the policy at all. They cannot determine whether SBA is a better policy nor do they care much about it."

DISCUSSIONS

In general, all English teachers in this study were aware of the benefits and challenges in the implementation of SBA. A lack of clear or coherent instruction from the MOE hampered the initial implementation of the policy. This has also impacted not only the English subject but also other subjects such as mathematics (Lim & Chew, 2019). In this study, teachers strongly believed that the underlying principle of SBA was beneficial in improving teaching and learning quality. They, however, did also note that physical constraints, scepticism from stakeholders, lack of training and follow-up support hampered the implementation of SBA. One such constraint was with giving feedback in which teachers felt burdened and unable to provide good individual feedback to students due to the number of students. Other issues included the need to complete the syllabus, heavy teaching load, and administrative duties. The MOE should consider reducing the workload of the teachers or reduce class sizes to ensure better SBA implementation.

Teachers also reported huge consternation over the training provided.

A large majority of teachers did not attend centralized training and were only provided short in-house training by teachers who did. Very often, centralized training would last for 3 days to a week whereas the in-house training conducted at school level ranged from half a day to 2 days. This they felt was not adequate and that more training opportunities would be welcomed. The lack of adequate training also led to different interpretations and practices of SBA. As Stiggins (2004) had highlighted, a major reason why SBA had failed in schools was due to the lack of formal, high-quality training given to teachers and administrators. He argued that for decades, governments sought to separate assessment from instruction, to show objectivity and third party evidence of learning. However, governments and training institutions have largely ignored assessment training for teachers and teacher licensing laws in the United States of America as an example, have failed to require competence in the assessment as a condition of licensure to teach. Proper implementation requires that teachers be adequately trained to plan, conduct, evaluate and provide proper feedback. Respondents noted that an increase in workshops, via centralized training or online training modules could help teachers in better understanding the policy and methods in implementing effective assessment practices. This will require the MOE, district and state education departments to monitor and provide continuous training that is necessary in order to make SBA a

successful implementation. Hudson et al. (2019) argued that the implementation of good policy involved investing in skills and competencies that would be sustainable in meeting future implementation challenges. Training, peer learning, information, and guidance are all key capacity building criteria for effective policy implementation. Additionally, curriculum content for teacher trainees should be reviewed to emphasize more on classroom assessment practices.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, it can be seen that parents have mixed views in regard to the SBA policy. As such, more could be done to better educate parents on the benefits and importance of the policy. Cromey and Hanson (2000) argued that there needed to be a shared vision and understanding among all school stakeholders for effective policy implementation. As parents may not be aware of the benefits of the policy, the school management must be proactive in disseminating information through parent-teacher association meetings. Parents must be convinced that the SBA is a better and fairer way of gauging students' performance. They need to move away from the perception that standardized tests are the only measure to test students' abilities. Interview findings also indicate that while proper moderation process was put in place for the marking of the PT3 exam paper, monitoring of the SBA school assessments which should usually be conducted by the head of the English language panel of each school was rarely done. As mentioned by T2 above, teachers

should provide fair and reliable marking and poor marking could have led to large discrepancies between marks attained by students in the SBA and in the PT3 exam.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have shared the implementation of the School-Based Assessment (SBA) policy implementation in secondary schools in Kuching, Sarawak. Based on the findings, similar responses were recorded between the studies in West Malaysia (Majid, 2011; Malakolunthu & Sim, 2010; Salmiah, 2013; Sidek & Salleh, 2010) and the findings found in this study. The cascading training model has proven to be less effective than desired thus teacher's ability to conduct proper SBA implementation has been hampered. Follow up training programs have also been lacking. Adequate knowledge must be acquired by teachers and guiding teachers on best practices will enhance the teaching and learning experience. Lack of physical resources such as projectors and large student to teacher ratios have also caused teachers consternation. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Research, Sarawak is aware since 2017 that the classrooms need to be better digitally equipped to enhance learning (Dayak Daily, 2018) and they have since admitted that 1,020 out of the total 1,457 schools in the state were identified as dilapidated ("Tripartite committee to manage", 2019). However, repairs and upgrades to schools have yet to begin even due to financing issues between the local and federal governments (New

Sarawak Tribune, 2019). The researchers hope that the funding is expedited to improve the current classroom conditions that hamper better implementation of SBA. Proper implementation of SBA would mean teachers are well informed and well trained in SBA and are able to take advantage of assessment results in making crucial instructional decisions. It is hoped that the issues highlighted in this study will be scrutinized and improvements to the SBA policy will be implemented in the future.

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Non-Recognition of the Indigenous Community in Malaysian Media: Perspectives from the *Orang Asli* and Stakeholders

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ABSTRACT

This study presents the findings of interviews conducted on the *Orang Asli* and stakeholders concerning the issue of representation of the community in media. The main objective of this research was to investigate the views and opinions of the community and stakeholders concerning the portrayal of the *Orang Asli* community in local newspapers. Interviews were conducted with members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), personnel from the Department of *Orang Asli* Development (JAKOA), journalists from mainstream Malaysian newspapers and *Orang Asli* individuals. Findings revealed that a number of opposing views could be traced in terms of the prejudiced treatment given to the community in media. The NGO members and the *Orang Asli* individual unanimously advocated the various plights faced by the *Orang Asli* community in their daily lives, apart from being discriminated in the media. On the contrary, JAKOA members and journalists interviewed rebutted the claim that discriminatory projection of the community existed in the selected newspaper. Such contrary findings call for more studies investigating the portrayal of the community in the media to be undertaken.

INTRODUCTION

The media possess the power to depict the central images of multiple social groups (Creedon, 1998). Information on the minorities that people from certain societies

are exposed to is usually based on the images and narratives constructed by the media. Media representation has the capability to affect the perceptions of diverse groups as negative portrayals are commonly linked to negative attitudes and positive portrayals are usually associated with positive attributes of the minorities concerned. Allan and Seaton (1999) believed that media representation of the minorities could play a central role in the image construction process of these minority groups, and as a result, affected the predisposition that the majority had had toward them.

In simple terms, common forms of the mass media such as the newspapers, radio channels and television broadcasts act as key players in influencing public opinion about minorities (van Dijk, 2000). In this context, a news article possesses the capability to determine the majority's perception and attitude toward the minorities the most since it is the most widely read and discussed genre.

The patterns of representation of the indigenous community tend to depict them in an unfavourable and adverse manner. Meadows (2001) stipulated that the media coverage of indigenous people had often revolved around stereotypical images that had been overtly discriminatory. A report by the Australian Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples in 1996 concluded that the indigenous people and the issues concerning them were often ruled out from the media altogether. On occasions when they were being reported on, their voices

were often misinterpreted and portrayed stereotypically as pathetic victims, angry warriors or noble environmentalists.

On a local front, research carried out by Jamal and Manan (2016), David et al. (2010), and Loh (2011) on the projection of the *Orang Asli* showed that the depictions of the community in the media had been negative and prejudiced. To add, the condition and state of the *Orang Asli* community have been studied by a considerable number of sociological and anthropological researchers including Nicholas et al. (2010) and Baer (1999), who had reflected the community's poor and impoverished state of living. On another note, the *Orang Asli* are also reported to be discriminated by the mainstream society itself (Bowen, 2000) and their voices purportedly muted in the media.

Much work conducted on the issue of representation focuses solely on text analysis and fails to provide a proper channel for the voice of the discriminated subject (Orang Asli) and other stakeholders to be heard concerning the issue of misrepresentation. This paper acts as supplementary evidence to text analysis (which has repeatedly proven the existence of discrimination) in reinforcing the notion of discrimination of the community in media. Considering that as a context, this paper integrates an attempt by the researcher in interviewing the subject of this study, the *Orang Asli* as well as stakeholders to get an overall impression from the *Orang Asli* community and the stakeholders over the projection of the community in media.

Literature Review

The *Orang Asli* as People. The *Orang Asli* expression refers to the indigenous minorities residing in Peninsular Malaysia. They are commonly known as the early descendants of inhabitants of the peninsula before the establishment of the Malay Kingdoms. The *Orang Asli* community comprises approximately 150,000 people - representing less than 1% of the total population of Malaysia. Anthropologists and historians describe the *Orang Asli* community as consisting of three major groups; the Negrito (Semang), the Senoi and the Aboriginal Malay. Each group is further divided into six subgroups. The term *Orang Asli* which literally translates into 'Original People' is the official name for the people of the indigenous minorities in Peninsular Malaysia (Lye, 2011).

As highlighted in Section 3 of the Aboriginal Peoples Act (1954), the term '*Orang Asli*' may be defined as:

> "[…] Any person whose male parent is or was a member of an aboriginal ethnic group, who speaks an aboriginal language and habitually follows an aboriginal way of life and aboriginal customs and beliefs, and includes a descendant through males of such persons;

> Any person of any race adopted when an infant by aborigines who have been brought up as an aborigine, habitually speaks an aboriginal language, habitually follows an aboriginal way of life and aboriginal customs and beliefs and is a member of an aboriginal community; or

> The child of any union between an aboriginal female and a male of another race provided that the child habitually speaks an aboriginal language habitually follows an aboriginal way of life and aboriginal customs and beliefs and is a member of an aboriginal community […]."

The *Orang Asli* today has been demoted to become the most impoverished in terms of living status reports (Nicholas et al., 2010). In statistics provided in the Government's 10th Malaysia Plan (2011-2015) (The Economic Planning Unit, 2010), almost 50% of the 29,990 *Orang Asli* households in existence live below the poverty line while 19% (5700) of the same households are deemed to be in the hardcore poor category. Their level of poverty is usually expressed in the lack of basic amenities and infrastructure in their villages. Although improvements have been made in the provision of amenities in recent years, the *Orang Asli* still lag behind the rest of the other communities in Malaysia in terms of access to basic infrastructure (this includes access to electricity, potable water and proper roads). Anyone who observes *Orang Asli* affairs and the *Orang Asli* themselves will find it evident that they are no longer in control of their own lives with the perception that they are a backward community and need the direction and largesse of the government.

This perception has been formed through the expressed objective of the government in 'integrating the *Orang Asli* into the mainstream community' taking into context that they are incapable of developing themselves and need to be governed (Ibrahim, 1989). Such executive administration over the *Orang Asli* is carried out through the *Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli* (JAKOA), a government agency that is responsible for matters related to the *Orang Asli*. The *Orang Asli* consider themselves as the most marginalised ethnic group in Malaysia today - experiencing the highest poverty rates, suffering disproportionately poor health conditions, tolerating the lack of basic infrastructure and amenities, and having limited access to political power are indications of their lack of a special status as an indigenous community of the country (Lim, 1998). This is a recurring scenario despite the positive obligations that the Constitution provides for the *Orang Asli* community.

Media and Discrimination. According to van Dijk (1993), the mass media play a fundamental role in the reproduction of discrimination in contemporary society as much as their role in the reproduction of modern societies. No discourse can be as influential as it is without the mediating and sometimes reinforcing functions of the press, radio and television. The powerful role played by the media also incorporates the function to shape the social cognition of society at large. In the field of ethnic affairs, for example, the role played by the media in the cognitive, social and communicative process is essential as it is both ideological and also structural (Hall, 2003). The immediate effects of specific messages to specific audiences under specific circumstances of the media (especially news media) are significant, especially on the structures and contents of the social cognition of groups (van Dijk, 1993). Put simply, the news media become the most important source of information and beliefs applicable informing the interpretative framework for specific types of social and public relations, including those in the field of ethnic relations.

The media play a central role in reproducing discrimination due to its relations with other elite institutions and because of the power they possess in structuring, shaping and changing the minds of the general public. In the scope of ethnic affairs, for instance, the power of media is exceptional due to the fact that large segments of the dominant communities do not have access to information regarding ethnic affairs as they only possess few or no immediate experiences with members of the minority groups (van Dijk, 1987). Thus, the media face no competition in its communicative functionalities with regard to ethnic affairs. Preferential media access and their social cognition authority on ethnic affairs may actually be influencing factors in its selection of topics, the choice of news actors, quotation patterns, style, prominence, the way the minorities are depicted and described, and also the overall features of the news article itself (Kneebone, 1985). Since the dominant groups are most

likely to maintain their affluence, they will instead resort to representing the minorities in a negative manner, while at the same time contrasting with positive representations of their own selves. This symbolic polarisation, as to how van Dijk (1993) puts it, is known as the division between 'us' and 'them,' and is an important theme in managing the ethnic consensus among the members of the public at large.

On a local front, the focus of the Malaysian media has always been on the aspects of nation-building, social cohesion, and responsible journalism (Kenyon & Marjoribanks, 2007) as opposed to other facets such as freedom of information or critical engagement. The local media is said to be at the moment, facing some very real constraints as Freedom House (2011) via its consistent assessment regime has declared the Malaysian media politically 'not free.' In its annual survey on press freedom, Reporters Without Borders (2012) had not only downgraded the liberty of the press but had also indicted the Malaysian press of obstructing or censoring critical opinion in their write-ups. One major structural problem which surrounds this scenario is the reality that the majority of Malaysian print and broadcast media organizations are closely bound to the political regime (Weiss, 2012).

Past Studies. In the coverage of ethnic affairs, a collective of experiences and research by scholars have repeatedly shown evidence that the dominant media have always perpetuated stereotypes of and prejudice toward minority groups in various

degrees and extents (Snorgrass & Wooty, 1985; van Dijk, 1989). In his analysis of the portrayal of the black people in the United States, Johnson (1991) examined the performance of the local media in Boston and found a significant lack of news reports that challenged racial stereotypes. White newsmakers were more likely to report news that aligned with their preconceptions of the blacks, such as them being drug pushers, thieves, dirty, violent and is only involved in sports or entertainment. The whites are instead presented as being more in control and powerful when they are portrayed alongside the blacks. In addition, the media often only cite the remarks of the whites on racial matters. A remarkable conclusion of this study is the fact that the concept of 'discrimination' still remains a taboo with the press and euphemisms such as 'disadvantaged' and 'underprivileged' is commonly used to denote the victims of discrimination.

The main conclusions of scholars after more than three decades of extensive and strenuous research on the association between the press and the ethnic minority groups are neither ambiguous nor contradictory (van Dijk, 2000). Although the press had been blatant in the past and is more subtle today, they indeed remain as the main rival of the ethnic minorities. This is because they assume the role of ambassadors of the dominant group, and have consistently limited the access to either centre-staging the views of the ethnic minority groups or depicting them in positive ways. The definition of minorities

has always been negative and stereotypical as they are constantly viewed as problematic or threatening and are commonly associated with unconstructive themes such as crime, violence, conflicts with the dominant group, unacceptable cultural differences and other forms of deviance. The extensive focus has always been on the explicit racialized forms of conflict whereas the press fails to take into consideration the deeper social, political and economic causes and backgrounds that might have caused these conflicts (van Dijk, 1993). From the viewpoint of 'the elites and the dominant groups,' the minorities are generally categorised as 'them' and opposed to 'us.' Similarly, events in the ethnic communities continue to be defined by the dominant authorities such as the police and the politicians, where the voices of the minorities are often overshadowed.

The conclusion drawn from the arguments above provides the fundamental background of this study that focuses on the largely neglected *Orang Asli* and the details of their representation in the media, what are the viewpoints and perspectives from the *Orang Asli* and stakeholders themselves?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The researchers analysed the findings of informal interviews to get an overall impression from the *Orang Asli* community and the stakeholders over the issue of representation of the community in media. This process involved substantiating evidence from different individuals or types of data such as interviews and observational field notes (Creswell, 2012). Interviews were conducted with ten stakeholders whom among them include members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), personnel from the Department of *Orang Asli* Development (JAKOA), journalists from mainstream Malaysian newspapers and *Orang Asli* individuals.

The interview approach used a one-to-one basis and this approach was specifically chosen as it is ideal for the interviewees who are articulate and are able to share their views and ideas comfortably (Creswell, 2005). The interviews were conducted via e-mail due to predicaments arising in terms of time allocation, accessibility of individuals, financial issues and logistics. Five open-ended questions were constructed for each group of participants. Asmussen & Creswell (1995) posited that in qualitative research, an interviewer might ask more than four questions and this statement justified the selection of five questions for the interview. In addition to the questions, probes (defined as sub-questions that are posed to extract added information from the respondent) were also used to encourage better clarification and explanation from the interviewees. Open-ended questions were specifically chosen as they allow better responses from the respondents in expressing their views (Creswell, 2012). Table 1 presents the interview questions designed for the *Orang Asli* and the corresponding explanations which elucidate their validity.

The interview questions for the journalists, NGO members and the JAKOA personnel and their justifications in the selection of the questions are displayed in Table 2.

Table 1

Interview questions for the Orang Asli and their justifications

Interview question	Explanation / Justification
Do you read the newspaper?	The first question serves as the ice-breaker and helps relax the interviewees. This question is important to pin-point if the person reads the newspaper as there is no rationale in interviewing someone who does not.
How often do you find news related to the *Orang Asli* appearing in the newspaper?	The second question is vital in the sense that it requires the opinion of the *Orang Asli* on the coverage offered by the media about their community.
Do you feel that newspapers play a role in constructing people's actions and thoughts toward the *Orang Asli* community?	Question 3 seeks to answer the questions on whether the ideology people have towards the *Orang Asli* is constructed through the news.
Are you contented with the way the *Orang Asli* are being depicted in the newspaper?	This question is asked to inquire about the overall impression that the community has on the issue of representation in the media.
If no, can you identify the ways of reporting that you are dissatisfied within the newspaper?	This question is asked to see if the *Orang Asli* can identify one or more ways of reporting which they are unhappy about.

Table 2

Interview questions for the stakeholders and their justifications

Interview question	Explanation / Justification
Do you feel that discrimination towards the *Orang Asli* community is still present in our country and if yes, how serious of a problem is it?	This question is asked to distinguish if the person is aware of the prevalence of discrimination toward the community and the extent of this problem.
Do you feel that you have directly or indirectly played a part in the construction and sustenance of public view on the *Orang Asli* community? If yes, in what way?	Question 2 is posed to inquire if the person agrees to accept responsibility in helping construct public opinion on the *Orang Asli.*
What will your view be on the notion that the *Orang Asli* community is negatively portrayed in the press?	This question is relevant as it attempts to answer whether the respondents agree to the idea of misrepresentation of the *Orang Asli* in media.
Do you think that any of the news which appears in newspapers with regard to the *Orang Asli* constitutes discrimination?	The outcome of this question will be a cue towards the idea that the news appearing in newspapers contain elements of discrimination.

Table 2 *(Continued)*

Interview question	Explanation / Justification
Do you feel that the *Orang Asli* community deserves equal opportunities as compared to the other citizens of the country?	This question is constructed to procure the views of the press team on providing equal opportunities to the *Orang Asli* community.

Ethical considerations and initiatives were carefully observed prior to conducting the interviews. The researcher had obtained an approval letter from the course faculty to undertake data collection. Prior to conducting the interviews on the *Orang Asli* and the JAKOA personnel, permission was obtained as well from the Department of *Orang Asli* Development (JAKOA). In presenting the outcome of the interviews, the identity of the respondents will be kept confidential (Asmussen & Creswell, 1995). Table 3 below summarizes the cycle of procedures prior to conducting the interviews.

An interview protocol that will contain the questions that are to be posed and adequate spaces for taking additional notes was structured to help the researcher compose the entire interview process. The interview protocol template was adapted from Asmussen & Creswell (1995).

Data Analysis Procedure

The interviews are hoped to provide a platform for the voices of *Orang Asli* to be heard. The interviews were conducted via email due to time and financial constraints. Preparation for the interview transcripts was a straightforward task as it only involved

Table 3

Respondent selection process

No.	Step	Explanation
1	Setting the frame	The first step undertaken was locating suitable informants or respondents who are the typical group under study (Creswell, 2009). As such, a purposive sampling technique was used to include participants who are directly involved in the issue being raised in this study; the representation of the *Orang Asli* community in a local newspaper. Those selected were active researchers (individuals who had a plausible history of research and publications on the *Orang Asli*), NGO members, JAKOA personnel (those who were directly or indirectly involved in implementing policies for the *Orang Asli*), journalists (individuals who were directly involved in the publication of news about *Orang Asli*) and finally the *Orang Asli* themselves (*Orang Asli* individuals who read newspaper).

Table 3 *(Continued)*

No.	Step	Explanation
2	Locating the respondents	Locating the respondents differed according to the group they belong to: i. JAKOA personnel - Prior written permission was sent to the JAKOA head office located in Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur. Upon approval, the officers were located through the staff directory found in the official portal of the *Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli* (JAKOA) website (www.jakoa.gov.my). Emails were sent out to three personnel inquiring their willingness to participate in the study and upon agreement, follow-up emails were sent. ii. Journalists - Potential respondents were contacted via the emails provided in the 'Contact Us' section of selected newspaper webpages. Similar to other groups of participants, emails attached with informed consent were sent before the interviews were conducted. iii. *Orang Asli* individuals and NGO members - *Orang Asli* individuals and NGO members were located through searches in Facebook Groups bearing the *Orang Asli* name. Precisely, searches were done on the "Group *Orang Asli* Malaysia". Messages were sent out via the personal messaging service on Facebook to establish contact with potential respondents. The researcher purposely chose Facebook users as it was assumed that they were educated and thus would be able to answer the interview questions. The participation of these individuals was voluntary.
3	Collecting and storing data	The entire interview conversations in the emails were saved in both soft and hard copy, however, information-bearing the name of the respondents and their email addresses were kept hidden for ethical concerns.

printing the emails and compiling the printed copies. However, certain limitations existed as the email interview transcripts may lack paralinguistic cues such as intonation and pauses. The researcher adapted Chesler's (1987) approach to analysing the interview transcripts. Chesler provides a seven-step sequential analysis, however, according to Ball (2011), the first four steps in the approach are sufficient to analyse certain emerging themes or answers related to the research questions posed. The four steps are described in Table 4.

The key findings of the interview data will be discussed in the following subsection.

Table 4

Steps in analysing interview data

No.	Step	Description
1	Underline key terms	In the first step, the transcripts were read and key terms that seemed prevalent in the verbatim were underlined. The terms underlined were those that were deemed important and relevant to the research questions.
2	Restate key phrases	Secondly, the underlined key terms were restated using words as close as possible near the margin of the text. This is crucial to so that it will be easier for the researcher to go back to the comments without having to go through the long scripts repeatedly.
3	Reduce the phrase	The third step involved the researcher reducing the verbatim by placing recurring ideas together. The comments by respondents were clustered together according to similarities. Strauss & Corbin (1988) stress that a researcher's knowledge and experience play an important role during the grouping of the comments.
4	Generalisation	The final step adhered by the researcher was generalizing the cluster of data extracted from the transcripts in order to provide meaning.

RESULTS

Analysis of Interview Data from JAKOA Personnel

In this discussion, the respondents will be labelled as JAKOA1 and JAKOA2 and both replied to all questions asked. When enquired if discrimination towards the *Orang Asli* community was still present in the country, JAKOA1 mentioned that there was no discrimination owing to the fact that JAKOA was persistently looking after the community. JAKOA2, on the contrary, admitted that if discrimination was present, the only possible explanation to the notion was that the community themselves might perhaps feel that they were being discriminated against. The second question asked revolved around their role and responsibility towards shaping people's view on the community and both agreed to the fact that they did play a role in constituting the public's view towards the community, and further mentioned that many projects were being implemented for the betterment of the community.

When asked if the *Orang Asli* community was negatively portrayed in the press, JAKOA1 posited that:

> *"An interesting question indeed. Of course, I have seen some writing by researchers who say that the community is negatively shown in media. As for my opinion, I think not all the news is bad, of course, there are positive writings about them too."*

JAKOA2 agreed that no discriminative news was reported about the community, and what was usually portrayed in media were the many projects and development schemes implemented by the department. Adding on, JAKOA2 revealed that news usually report sensational news, and *Orang Asli* might be subjected to that as well.

The respondents were further asked if they think that any news in media relating to the *Orang Asli* community constituted discrimination and both of them were uncertain about the response. However, both respondents assured that JAKOA eradicated the thoughts of discrimination and only focused on bringing the community on par with the rest of the mainstream citizens of the country. Lastly, JAKOA1 and JAKOA2 agreed to the point that the community possessed every right to enjoy equal opportunities as compared to other citizens of the country.

Analysis of Interview Data from Members of Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO)

Two members of the non-governmental organisation participated in the interview. For easier identification, they will be labelled as NGO1 and NGO2 throughout the discussion. Both respondents accepted that the *Orang Asli* are projected to biasness in this country and deemed the issue to be particularly severe. NGO1 mentioned that:

> *"It's indeed very serious. They are not treated as the original people of the land. They are more bumiputra than all of us!"*

Both respondents admitted the role they played in constituting the public view on the *Orang Asli* community. NGO1 mentioned bringing the community to the University of Malaya to present a talk and posting about the community in his Facebook account. NGO2 resorted to creating a Facebook page dedicated to the community and uploading posts about the community in order to change the misconception mainstream people had on the community. As for question 3, NGO1 claimed that the projection of *Orang Asli* in the media as being negative and depiction of the community as destroyers of the forest, drunkard, rebellious, lazy, uneducated and dirty was redundant. NGO2, on the other hand, mentioned that despite the negative portrayal (owing to the ownership of media agencies), occurrences of positive projection did exist.

NGO1 and NGO2 agreed to the idea that the prejudiced depiction of the community is present, and felt that the *Orang Asli* community deserves an equal opportunity as citizens of the country. NGO2 mentioned:

> *"Yes. They deserve equal opportunities. After all, they are the original people of Malaysia. Some of them are still living in a deplorable condition. Together with the government, JAKOA, we, the more fortunate Malaysians, have the moral obligation to help them to live a better lifestyle."*

To conclude, the responses from the NGO members have largely supported that there have been instances of projecting the community as with negative labels such

as poor, uneducated, drunkards and also intruders which tallies with the views of the respondents and also findings of previous research (Lim, 1998; Nicholas et al., 2000).

Analysis of Interview Data from Journalists

Two journalists participated in this study and they will be coded as SJ1 and SJ2 in this discussion. Responding to the question of whether the discrimination towards the *Orang Asli* community was still present in the country, SJ1 denied by mentioning that the country was moving towards an equal front. In contrast, SJ2 admitted that subtle discrimination existed towards the community such as using the term 'Sakai' and 'Jakun' as derogatory terms, however disagreed that open discernment towards the community existed. Asked whether they played a part in establishing the society's outlook on the community, SJ1 agreed by saying that:

> *"I feel that as a journalist due to me being involved in the distribution of information, I have played a part in influencing the people's view on the Orang Asli community in the sense of educating and enlightening the general populace on the status, well-being and the condition of the Orang Asli community."*

However, SJ2 refuted the prerogative saying that "I'm just a reporter". When asked about their view regarding the adverse projection of the community in the press, two contradicting statements from SJ1 and SJ2 are observed. According to SJ1, the press portrayed the community in a neutral way and further reiterated by saying that people are entitled to their own opinion of what the press shows. SJ2, on the other hand, mentioned that the *Orang Asli* community is not being portrayed enough rather than being negatively portrayed.

Responding to the question of whether any reports appearing in newspaper constituted discrimination towards the community, rebuttal could be observed from both the journalists whereby both disagreed with the existence of discriminative features in the reports published. One of the respondents demanded the researcher to present examples and proofs that discriminatory practices existed in the projection of the community. Responding to the question of whether the community deserved an equal opportunity as compared to the other citizens of the country, SJ1 mentioned that:

> *"Of course the Orang Asli deserves an equal standing as the rest of the citizens of this country and they already are being treated equally. They have equal rights to as any other citizen by rights of the Constitution of Malaysia."*

SJ2 agreed to the question but further commented that the *Orang Asli* community might need affirmative actions to place them on a parallel track with the other races in the country. In summary, it is prevalent that both journalists agreed to the idea that similar and equal treatment should be given to the *Orang Asli* community. However,

both refuted the claim that reports published about the *Orang Asli* community comprised elements of biasness.

Analysis of Interview Data from Orang Asli Individuals

Four *Orang Asli* individuals participated in this interview and they will be coded as OA1, OA2, OA3, and OA4. All respondents admitted to reading newspapers, and respondent OA2 mentioned that:

> *"Yes, if compared with other English medium newspapers because "The Star" is easy to understand. The interesting segments I like to read are like local and world news, economic, career advancement, sport & recreation and other quality articles or reports."*

When inquired about the frequency of news relating to *Orang Asli* appearing in newspapers, OA1 related that 'not much news' was covered by the newspaper due to the non-existence of sensational news relating to the community. On the other hand, OA2 admitted that the frequency of news about *Orang Asli* was intermittent, while OA3 and OA4 mentioned that it was very rare for news concerning the community appearing in the newspapers. OA4 further reiterated that the hesitancy might be due to the fact that newspapers 'are controlled by the government" and thus any publishing of news concerning the community must be done to safeguard their (the government) importance.

Asked whether the newspapers played a role in establishing people's engagements and judgments towards the *Orang Asli*, OA2 specified that:

> *"Yes, I absolutely agree with that statement but, unfortunately, the majority of our newspaper does not play such role and they are very much satisfied with their own agenda and sometimes manipulate the event for their own benefit. The newspaper should become a medium to interact with people from different backgrounds to give precise and correct information to some issues especially aspects of our origin, locality, cultures, custom, healing power and etc. I think the public does not know and maybe want to know what the Orang Asli community is. What they know about Orang Asli from others' points of view."*

Respondents believed that the mainstream community relied on newspapers in accessing news and updates about *Orang Asli* and they approved the idea that newspapers played a central role in projecting the image and identity of the *Orang Asli* community towards the public.

The respondents further voiced their discontentment with the ways the *Orang Asli* community was illustrated in newspapers. Understanding that the journalists, reporters and editors did have duties to perform, OA1 felt that they must adhere to the etiquette of writing as well. OA4 further reiterated that:

> *"I do not agree at all because sometimes newspaper can be*

dishonest, the reporter or editor edit news about the Orang Asli affairs. There is news published that is different from the real story. A serious issue is written playfully so readers are not attracted to read. Many Orang Asli leader fights for their land and is not published in newspapers or given attention."

The respondents supported the idea that most of the time, news reports were edited and altered to denote ideas that aligned with the ideology of the newspapers and the final product that was presented in the news form strictly adhered to what was meant to be shared with the public. The respondents were asked to identify ways of reporting which contain preconception in the newspaper and some of the feedbacks received were:

OA1:"For instance, on February 9, 2010, the news article wrote by Chan Li Leen - 'Dept: *Orang Asli* was trying to kill tiger, not collect petai'. The title itself has pictured a thousand words about *Orang Asli* itself. When I saw this title, I chuckled and one word came out from my mouth which is 'Idiot". If I as *Orang Asli* can detect this, how about others who read this article? I bet there are many describable words for it."

OA4:"Most newspapers like The Star doesn't report the real thing about *Orang Asli.* Reporters are not attentive. For example, I am not happy about this news with the title '*Orang Asli* steals motorcycle'. It tells like every *Orang Asli* steals a motorcycle. They should write the name of

the person, and not the race. If other races steal, the title will be 'Man steal motorcycle. The unsuitable title gives a bad impression of *Orang Asli."*

Other respondents reiterated that the *Orang Asli* was constantly presented as 'underprivileged, poor and uneducated', and a ream of news reports depicted them as being left behind when compared to other races in the country. One respondent stated that the community was depicted as constantly needing help from others and respondent OA2 called for the discriminatory depiction of *Orang Asli* to discontinue and urged the newspapers to publish positive news relating to the community. The interview with the *Orang Asli* community managed to gather their thoughts about the issue researched and also provided space and opportunity for their voices to be heard.

DISCUSSIONS

In analyzing the interview data, a number of opposing views can be traced. Firstly, the JAKOA personnel interviewed mentioned the non-existence of discrimination towards the community, and their responses glorify deeds of JAKOA towards developing the community.

Strong opposition from journalists is apparent in the interview whereby both respondents resiliently rebutted almost all the questions asked. Besides disproving the claim that the news appearing in newspapers contained elements of discrimination, one of the journalists further demanded proofs and evidence. This result is afore-predicted,

as van Dijk (1998) posited that journalists rarely admitted their writings and views to contain any element of biasness.

Interviewing the NGO members forecasted some general ideas about the community from the perspectives of other citizens of the country. Both respondents unanimously advocated the plights faced by the *Orang Asli* in their daily lives, apart from being discriminated in the media. Various initiatives, ranging from real-life assistance to online-based posts were taken by the NGO members to further publicize the predicaments faced by the community.

Upon interviewing the *Orang Asli* individuals, responses given showed the dilemmas and quandaries faced by the community. All the respondents agreed that their community is discriminated against, especially in the news media. They appeared deeply articulate, and much discontentment over the way they are being handled in the media was noted in their utterances. As a final point, two opposing views emerged from the interviews: JAKOA members and journalists who disagreed with the view saying that the community is being discriminated against and, the admittance by NGO members and *Orang Asli* individuals themselves who agreed on the existence of biasness towards the community.

CONCLUSION

One of the many problems encountered in resisting racial inequalities, particularly in a consecrated institution such as the newspaper is the inherent denial among individuals that certain parts of the views and decisions

reported do in fact consume elements of discrimination (van Dijk, 1998). He further argued that discriminatory groups seldom admit that they were in fact prejudiced. In addition, journalists and editors rarely perceive that their views, opinions, and writings may contain biased elements. van Dijk (1998) added that the denial of being biased was usually a defensive strategy employed by the elites and people in power to enhance in-group preservation through positive self-representation. This unequal system of dominance hypothesizes an ideological view that discrimination is an oppressive strategy employed by the elites to bolster their own power (Mills, 1997).

Future studies will need to establish the specific portrayal of the Orang Asli community in Malaysian media, such as conducting a comparative portrayal of the community in different forms of media and inspecting the recent themes reported about the community. The results will lead to a better understanding of how, why, and under what circumstances the community is discriminated against. Newspapers in Malaysia possess the ability to structure, shape and change the ideology about the community presented to the mainstream public. In addition, a majority of the dominant communities do not possess first-hand knowledge about the *Orang Asli* community and depend on the media to get to know them. Thus, the media faces no competitors in terms of communicating about the ethnic group to the general public. Presenting the *Orang Asli* in a disapproving manner might influence the minds of the

readers to stereotype the community the same way they have been stereotyped in the media. As such, these findings raise the hope of solving a problem that vexed social scientists - reducing discrimination of the indigenous community. By empowering people to break the prejudice habit, this study takes an important step toward resolving the paradox of ongoing discrimination in a nation founded on the principle of equality. The media should play a fundamental role in combatting discrimination as the media is not only responsible for creating prejudice in society, but also has the power to help reverse and decrease prejudice. As such, this study strongly calls for any practices of discrimination of the community in media to discontinue.

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Classroom Culture in English Classes of the Mindanao State University -Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography (MSU-TCTO): Prospect for Institutionalizing Ambitious Teaching

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the classroom culture of language teachers of the Collegiate Department of the Mindanao State University - Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography with the aim of institutionalizing ambitious teaching in the classrooms. Ambitious teaching is defined as not only understanding where your students are coming from, but also holding very high expectations of them. It is to engage children in not only building foundational skills but also building problem-solving skills and higher-order thinking skills. Fourteen language teachers self-evaluated their respective classroom culture using the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument for Classrooms (OCAI-C). This was cross-validated by the 185 students enrolled in their English classes using the same questionnaire. The OCAI-C categorizes the classroom focus into 6 dimensions namely dominant characteristics, teacher's attention, classroom management, classroom glue, strategic emphasis, and criteria for success. Each dimension was evaluated in terms of 4 classroom culture classifications which are building relationships, continuous improvement, high expectations, and a stable environment. The results show that the Mindanao State University - Tawi-Tawi

College of Technology and Oceanography (MSU-TCTO) language teachers were more focused on building relationships, which suggested that their classroom affinity was more on developing mutual trust, care, and sense of belongingness, support, and respect. The MSU-TCTO classroom culture was more focused on developing foundational skills. Nevertheless, there was evidence that language classes had already ventured beyond building relationships. Thus, institutionalizing Ambitious Teaching in English classes is attainable, but it entails persistent reshaping of the teacher's focus to set high learning expectations.

INTRODUCTION

It is stipulated in the handbook of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED, 2014) that with the advent of globalization, the Philippines has shifted its focus of education from an input-based, teacher-centred instruction paradigm to an outcome-based, learner-centred educational model to address the pressing need for producing globally-competitive and well-equipped learners. This is the view of the Outcome-based Education (OBE), which the Philippine Commission on Higher Education (CHED) defines as an approach that focuses and organizes the educational system around what is essential for all learners to know, value, and be able to do to achieve a desired level of competence.

The Mindanao State University - Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography (MSU-TCTO), located at Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, Philippines, as one of the higher education institution under the supervision of CHED, has adopted the OBE; however, to date, teachers have yet to completely transitioned their teaching methodologies towards the new educational framework. With this, Ambitious Teaching is studied as it is tailored towards OBE. While OBE focuses on the end result, Ambitious Teaching is concerned with the processes to achieve the desired learning goal. One of the factors that should be considered in the class is the classroom culture that teachers nurture. An Ambitious Teaching classroom is described as allowing the learner to freely explore beyond the targeted learning outcomes. Coupled with high-quality teaching, this will provide students opportunities to engage in rigorous academic work and accomplish more than what they are expected to achieve (Lampert et al., 2010).

Quinn et al. (2014) categorized the classroom culture into 6 dimensions as (i) *classroom characteristics* which either student-centred, innovative, lively and enthusiastic place, results-oriented or an orderly structured place; (ii) *the classroom glue* which refers to the kind of student outcome that was established from the teaching and learning processes; (iii) *teachers attention* or the kind of attention given by the teachers to students; (iv) *classroom management*; (v) *strategic emphasis*, which is the learning processes

employed by the teacher to achieve the desired learning goal; and (vi) *criteria for success*, the teacher's standards of what his/her students should achieve in the class.

Classroom culture is one of the components for developing ambitious teaching, a pedagogical approach that gives prominence to holistic high-quality learning and higher-order thinking skills. Ambitious teaching is commonly applied in the fields of sciences and mathematics. However, the potential for applying such a pedagogical model in English language teaching has to be explored. All courses and degree programs in the Philippine Higher Education curricula use English as a medium of instruction.

Research Problem and Aims

Outcome-based education, as designed by the CHED in the Philippine setting, is a learning paradigm aimed at achieving higher-order learning. In the OBE, the class should be designed in such a way that the teaching strategies and classroom settings are focused on attaining the desired outcomes. However, it is up for the teachers to choose which among the teaching strategies and approaches are suited to attain the specific learning goal. To date, there are no studies conducted which establish the instructional practices and approaches of the language teachers in MSU-TCTO. Are the teacher's lessons and instructional practices intended just to occupy learners for the day or are they designed to develop learner's critical thinking skills and make informed decisions? Are the classrooms

organized to make high impact interactions? The classroom practices, teaching methods, strategies and techniques that teacher's practices define the culture nurtured in their classes. Thus, the study scrutinizes the current state of language teaching in MSU-TCTO especially on attaining outcome-based education in the Philippine setting.

The research is focused on 1) determining the current and preferred classroom culture of the language teachers and students in MSU-TCTO; 2) identifying the dominant classroom characteristics, teacher attention, classroom management, classroom glue, strategic emphasis, and criteria of success that English language teachers promote in their classes; and 3) exploring the prospect of language teachers to shift from their current instructional practices to ambitious teaching.

Research Significance

This study hopes to improve teaching and learning processes and outcomes in teaching English as a language in institutions of higher learning in the Philippine context. Specifically, this study provides relevant data that could be used as a basis for institutionalizing Ambitious Teaching as a means of improving the current teaching-learning standards. Institutionalization of such a teaching paradigm would enhance the capability of the school to introduce Ambitious Teaching as a means of achieving an OBE framework as required by the Commission on Higher Education of the Philippines. The study also offers a new teaching paradigm to teachers in order

for them to be attuned with 21st-century educational principles. The results of this study could provide input and feedback to the administrators on the policies and standards that should be adopted to realize the educational goal for excellence.

Literature Review

MSU-TCTO as an Institution of Higher Learning. At present, State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines and abroad are trying their best to be called Center of Excellence (COE) and/ or Center of Development (COD). As one of the SUCs and HEIs in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), Philippines, the Mindanao State University - Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography (MSU-TCTO) has grown into an institution of academic excellence. MSU-TCTO is among the 11 major campuses of the Mindanao State University System created by RA No. 6060 on August 4, 1969, to meet the growing demands of the Mindanao, Sulu, and Palawan (MINSUPALA) region. The mandates of the University System are (1) to perform the traditional functions of a university in instruction, research and extension service; (2) to help accelerate the program of integration among peoples of southern Philippines, particularly the Muslims and other cultural minorities; and (3) to provide trained manpower skills and technical know-how for the economic development of the MINSUPALA region. Furthermore, MSU's vision is to be a premier

supra-regional university committed to the social, political and economic development of Mindanao while achieving international recognition as a leading institution of higher learning (Mindanao State University, 2007).

Recently, per CHED instruction to the HEIs, the MSU-TCTO adopted the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) framework. CHED is committed to developing competency-based learning standards that comply with existing international standards when applicable (for instance outcomes-based education for fields like engineering and maritime education) to achieve quality and enable more effective integration of the intellectual discipline, ethos, and values associated with liberal education. CHED defines outcomes-based education (OBE) as an approach that focuses and organizes the educational system around what is essential for all learners to know, value, and be able to do to achieve a desired level of competence. OBE is open to incorporating discipline-based learning areas that currently structure HEI curricula (Commission on Higher Education, 2014).

Ambitious Teaching. In support of the OBE system in the Philippines, ambitious teaching could be very helpful as it is a student-centred teaching approach that aims to develop higher-order thinking skills. Ambitious teaching deliberately aims to get all kinds of students-across ethnic, racial, class, and gender categories-not only to acquire but also to understand and use knowledge to solve authentic problems. Inherent to ambitious teaching are the seven principles which are anchor

learning; use students' ideas and experiences as resources; authorize students to use practices for a purpose; foster productive discourse; scaffold talk, writing and participation; make thinking visible in other to "work on ideas" together, and build complex and cumulative understandings over time; as the core stance for ambitious teaching. The principles of high-quality teaching are teachers understand that the children are sense makers; teachers must design instruction for all children to do rigorous academic work in school and to have equitable access to learning; teacher's instruction requires clear learning goals; teachers must know and connect with their students as individuals and as learners; teachers must be responsive to the requirements of the school and community environments; the measure of good teaching is students' learning; the teachers represent the nature of discipline with integrity, and the teachers engage their students in reflecting on their own learning. Moreover, ambitious teaching requires that teachers teach in response to what students do as they engage in problem-solving performances, all the while holding students accountable to learning goals that include procedural fluency, strategic competence, adaptive reasoning, and productive dispositions (Kazemi et al., 2009).

It is elaborated during the Massive Open Online Course Camp of the University of Michigan (Leading Ambitious Teaching and Learning, 2017) that beyond the straightforward transfer of facts and skills, ambitious teaching has teachers and students making meaning of rich academic content, co-engaging in authentic practical and intellectual puzzles, and creating new knowledge and capabilities in themselves and others. Globally, ambitious teaching sits at the very centre of policy-driven educational improvement efforts, with schools and systems pressed to engage students in "deeper learning" and the development of 21st-century skills.

Further, literacy is considered ambitious when the teachers were planning with one another, bringing in families and the community and giving opportunities for kids to connect outside the classroom. Within the classrooms, there were some buddy reading and kids were applying or finding problems outside the school. The kids wrote every day as their writing experience. There is an ambitious literacy environment when the teachers help the learners analyze the text and talk to each other and engage in the text. The teachers help them learn how they can form an argument or express an opinion of a text (Duke, 2017).

In Beecher Community District's Vision for Ambitious Teaching of Reading Instruction, the instructional implications of ambitious teaching of reading instructions are 1) explicit instruction of essential practices for effective reading instruction; 2) recognize the role that motivation plays in students' reading by modelling for students how to engage with complex texts that do and do not interest them; 3) enable active constructions of meaning through performance reading responses such as gesture, mime, vocal intonation,

characterization, and dramatization; and 4) construct a collaborative environment that builds on the strengths of individual students (Aurino et al., 2017).

It is believed that the students will respond positively to high expectations when they are clearly defined (Mike, 2017). Secondly, students can reach high expectations, regardless of where they start, with appropriate support. Teachers should set high expectations for all students about what they will learn, how to demonstrate understanding and application, and how they will be assessed. Students will come to our schools with different stories, backgrounds, and skill levels. The teachers must consistently adhere to high expectations and provide support as needed to help all students achieve.

Also, Hassrick et al. (2017) said in their book entitled, *The Ambitious Elementary School* that teachers perceived parents as parents not just for their own child, but also for partners in the overarching goal of providing ambitious literacy instruction for all students at the school.

Realizing ambitious teaching entails many aspects to consider and one of these is assessing the kind of classroom culture that a teacher has shaped in his/her classes. Classroom culture involves creating an environment where students feel safe and free to be involved in worthwhile activities which are considered as the foundation for better learning. For the students to learn, they must feel safe, engaged, connected, and supported in their classrooms and schools. These conditions of learning are the

elements of a school's climate that students experience personally since they contribute to student's achievement and success (Point to Point, 2018; Waldman, 2016).

Therefore, with the preceding discussions on ambitious teaching, Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) and the educational vision of MSU-TCTO on academic excellence and higher learning, institutionalizing ambitious teaching in MSU-TCTO would be advantageous. The related literature and studies cited here showed that ambitious instruction runs in the whole gamut of instructional processes. It involves ambitious leadership, ambitious instruction, and ambitious teaching and learning.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted at the Mindanao State University - Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography (MSU-TCTO) located at Sanga-Sanga, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi. The Philippines. MSU-TCTO, a state-run university with complete basic and advanced education, is one of the eleven campuses of the Mindanao State University System (MSUS). The campus is situated in a rural island community in the southern Philippines. This study used a descriptive quantitative-qualitative design. A quantitative design was used since the "Now" and the "Preferred" classroom cultures in relation to ambitious teaching were measured using a 100-point scoring system. In all aspects of this study, the design was mostly descriptive since there was no attempt to generalize the results in

a larger population. The paper exhaustively describes the currently practised and the desired classroom cultures of English language classes.

The Research Respondents

Two groups of respondents were asked to evaluate the "now" and their "preferred" classroom culture. The first group consisted of the 14 faculty members of the Language Department of the College of Arts and Sciences and the language teachers of the College of Education of the Mindanao State University - Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography, Philippines, who had at least one English subject taught during the Second Semester of AY 2017-2018. The second set of respondents was college students who were enrolled in a language class of the language teacher-respondents during the same semester. 14 classes were purposely chosen comprising a total of 185 student-respondents. The "now" classroom culture refers to the culture that the English teacher currently espouses in their English classes while the "preferred" is their preference or aspirations on what and how an ideal English class should be.

Research Instrument

The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument for Classrooms (OCAI-C) adapted from Quinn et al. (2014), serves as the main instrument of the research. The OCAI-C depicts various attributes and characteristics of a classroom which is categorized into six dimensions which are 1) dominant classroom characteristics; 2) teacher attention; 3) classroom management; 4) classroom glue; 5) strategic emphasis; and 6) criteria for success.

Each dimension has four alternatives that represent four types of classroom culture focus which are building relationships, stable environment, continuous improvement and high expectations. The respondents were to divide the 100 points among those four alternatives, depending on the extent to which each alternative is similar to the classroom characteristics that are currently prevailing for the "now" classroom culture and the type of classroom environment that the respondents envisioned or hoped to be like for the "preferred" classroom culture. Higher points are given to the alternative that is most similar to the classroom attribute of the "now" and "preferred" classroom. The respondents may assign any combination of points, provided that the total score for each dimension is 100 points.

Data Gathering Procedure

The study administered the OCAI-C twice. The first cycle was the respondents' assessment of the "now" classroom culture. After a week, the same instruments were administered to the same set of respondents for the "preferred" classroom culture. This was done to avoid the possibility of a theoretical rating by simply comparing their "now" and "preferred" responses.

The gathering of data in each stage was done simultaneously among the English teachers to avoid comparing of notes and influencing the scoring of other teacher-respondents. Similar data gathering scheme

was applied in the case of the student respondents. Data gathering was done four weeks before the end of the semester to give ample time to the students to observe and experience the culture that their English teachers promoted in their respective classes.

Statistical Treatment and Analysis of Data

The "now" and "preferred" classroom culture were statistically analyzed using the scoring system by Quinn et al. (2014). As proposed by the authors, the indicators were grouped corresponding to the building relationships, stable environment, continuous improvement, and high expectations classroom culture focus as shown in Figure 1. Their averages are plotted in a quadrant. Each quadrant represents the four classroom culture focus. The dots (corresponding to the overall averaged score in each quadrant) were connected. The yellow quadrant represents a classroom culture that is focused on building relationship, green indicates a classroom culture open to change or continuous improvement, the red quadrant indicates that the teacher is in control and students are expected to obey thereby creating a stable environment, and the blue represents high expectations wherein students are expected to achieve more than what is required. A rectangular plot that is skewed towards a certain quadrant describes a classroom culture.

Lastly, the prospect of MSU-TCTO Language teachers to shift from their current instruction to ambitious teaching was attained through a comparison between the current and preferred classroom culture. The comparison focuses as to whether or not the shift from current to a preferred culture, which closely resembles ambitious teaching.
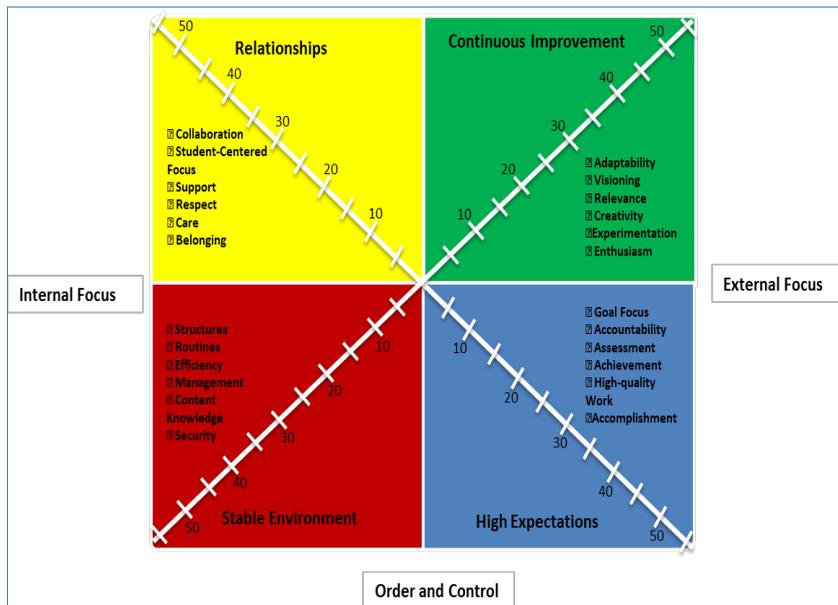
Figure 1. Quadrant used for plotting of scores of classroom culture by Quinn et al. (2014)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The classroom culture in English classes of MSU-TCTO was being judged using the Assessment of Language Classroom Culture towards ambitious teaching (Quinn et al., 2014) as the assessment tool. The tool comprises the attributes of the 4 classroom cultures which are building relationships, stable environment, continuous improvement, and high expectations. These 4classroom culture attributes are further characterized in terms of 6 classroom dimensions, such as dominant classroom characteristics, teacher attention, classroom management, classroom glue, strategic emphasis, and criteria for success.

Two groups of responses apportioned a 100-point score to each dimension, in which an attribute that closely resembled the "now" or "current" classroom characteristics were given higher scores. The same instrument and procedure were used to evaluate the "preferred" classroom culture.

On Classroom Culture as Assessed by the Students

The succeeding tables present the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture as perceived by the respondents. "Now" classroom culture is the current setting of how a classroom operates and its attributes that characterized such culture as established by the language teachers, while the "preferred" classroom culture represents one's aspiration of how a classroom flourishes and achieves students' expectations.

Table 1 presents the mean score of the four classroom culture in each of the six classroom dimensions of the "Now" classroom culture as rated by the 185 student-respondents. The results show that from the point of view of the students, the present classroom culture as employed by their language teachers is focused more on building relationships. This culture is manifested in five dimensions, namely dominant characteristics, teacher attention, classroom management, classroom glue, and strategic emphasis of their present language classes. Note that the mean scores of the 5 dimensions ranging from 29.63 to 32.36 are higher compared to the other classroom culture focus. This suggests that the emphasis of current language classes is on mentoring, facilitating and supporting the students where they felt like they belong to an extended family. For them, learning in the classroom accelerates because of caring, openness and mutual trust between students and teachers. In such a case, learning outcomes are concentrated mostly on developing students' social and emotional support, which is often a characteristic of a culture in a closely-knit society. On criteria of success, however, students perceived that their language teachers had set high expectations in their current language class. As shown in Table 1, the highest rating along this dimension falls on high expectations having a mean score of 25.03. This implies that the students felt that their language teachers were focused on goals and had high expectations for the quality of their work. This simply suggests that, at present, teachers are trying their best to make their students achieve higher learning apart from developing foundational skills.

Table 1

Students' mean rating on the "now" classroom culture of English language classes disaggregated by classroom culture dimensions

Classroom culture dimensions	"Now" classroom culture focus			
	Building a relationship	Continuous improvement	High expectations	Stable environment
Dominant characteristics	29.63	25.85	22.98	21.53
Teacher attention	32.36	24.98	20.86	21.79
Classroom management	31.33	22.45	25.30	20.92
Classroom glue	31.51	24.51	24.49	19.51
Strategic emphasis	29.64	26.74	22.29	21.38
Criteria of success	21.19	24.26	25.03	21.51

As shown in Figure 2, the rectangular plot of the criteria of success dimension (in red colour) is skewed towards the blue quadrant as compared to the other five dimensions which are all skewed towards the yellow quadrant. Note that the yellow quadrant represents a classroom culture geared towards building relationships while the blue quadrant characterizes high expectations.

As to the preferred classroom culture by the students, the mean responses summarised in Table 2 closely resemble their "now" classroom culture evaluation. Though in the previous result on "now" classroom culture, particularly on the criteria of success that portrays a classroom culture that sets high expectations, the students would like their classroom to flourish fully to building relationships in all classroom culture dimensions. It is evident in Table 2 that the highest ratings in all classroom culture dimensions fall under a classroom culture that builds relationships. The results

suggest that students are more favourable to classrooms that adhere to a sense of belongingness, respect, support and care. MSU-TCTO students prefer to focus more on social and interpersonal skills but with a higher learning goal on the criteria for success.

The diagram presented in Figure 3 clearly depicts an identical scoring of the six classroom culture dimensions. Scores of each dimension almost coincide in all quadrants representing the classroom focus. The diagram further shows that the rectangular plots of the six classroom culture dimensions are skewed towards the yellow quadrant describing a "preferred" classroom culture inclined towards building relationships. Nevertheless, it can be noted that the lowest mean scores in both the "now" and "preferred" classroom cultures are in a stable environment. This implies that apart from building relationships, the second prevailing and preferred classroom culture is either towards continuous improvement
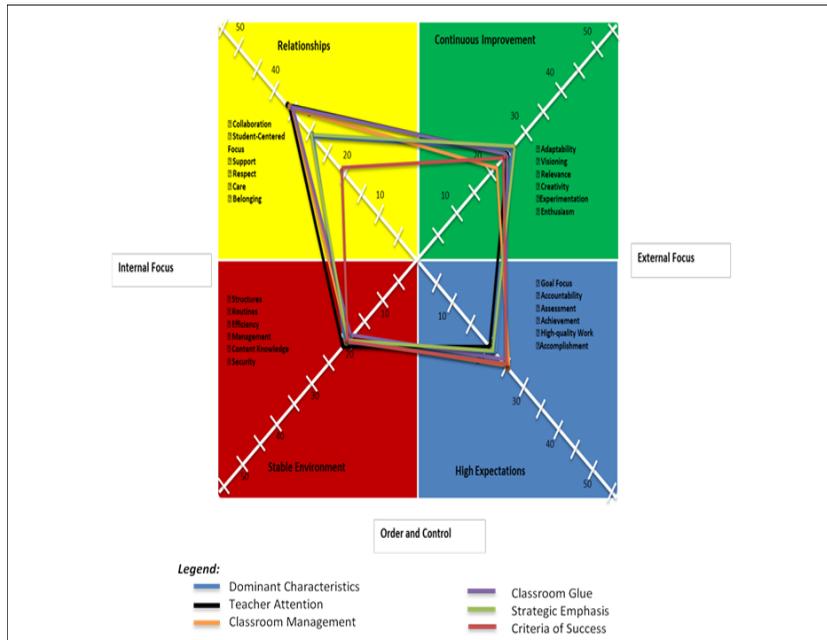
Figure 2. Diagram on the "now" classroom culture of English classes disaggregated by classroom culture dimensions as rated by the student

Table 2

Students' mean rating on the "preferred" classroom culture of English language classes disaggregated by classroom culture dimensions

Classroom culture dimensions	"Preferred" classroom culture			
	Building relationship	Continuous improvement	High expectations	Stable environment
Dominant characteristics	30.00	24.74	22.75	22.51
Teacher attention	30.16	25.84	22.46	21.54
Classroom management	30.32	23.65	24.51	21.51
Classroom glue	30.00	23.73	24.81	21.46
Strategic emphasis	29.78	25.51	23.03	21.68
Criteria of success	28.59	23.86	25.05	22.49
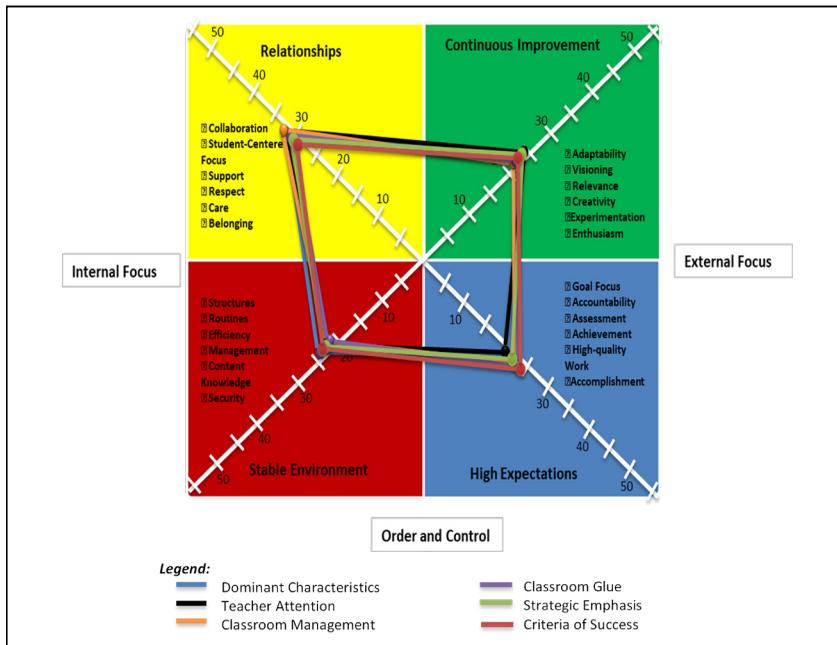
Figure 3. Diagram on the "preferred" classroom culture in English classes disaggregated by classroom culture dimensions as rated by the students

or high expectations. The prospect for shifting from internal focus (building relationships) to external focus (continuous improvement and high expectation) could still be achievable.

The overall students' mean aggregate rating on the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture as presented in Table 3 elaborates on the trend described above. Generally, the students' current and desired classroom cultures on the six dimensions are almost identically distributed. In the "now", they assessed their classroom culture as building a relationship with a mean percentage score of 30.61 which is also closely similar to their assessment in the "preferred" with a mean score of 29.81. Ranked second is the continuous improvement followed by high expectations while the stable environment is consistently

at the bottom for both the "now" and "preferred" classroom assessments. This is explained by the previous results in which the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture by this group are almost identical. This implies that students prefer to retain the status quo.

Figure 4 shows the overall "now" and "preferred" classroom cultures of the students. The black and rectangular box in the diagram represents the "now" while the red depicts the "preferred" classroom cultures. It could be noticed that the two plots almost overlapped in the diagram depicting similarities of the students' "now" and "preferred" cultures. Figure 4 further shows that the two rectangular plots are both skewed to building relationship quadrant followed by continuous improvement and close behind is the high expectations

Table 3

Overall students' rating on the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture in their English language classes

Classroom culture focus	Now	Preferred
Building a relationship	30.61	29.81
Continuous improvement	24.80	24.56
High expectation	23.49	23.77
Stable environment	21.11	21.86

classroom culture. Further analyses were made to examine how individual students rated the current and preferred classroom cultures of their language classes. This was done by identifying the dominant classroom culture focus which respondents rated the highest. In case of tie scores in two or more classroom focus, the score is classified as "multiple domains". The results are summarized in Table 4.

Of the 185 student-respondents, 112 rated building relationships as the current classroom culture of language classes in MSU-TCTO. This constitutes almost one-third (60.5%) of the total population. A small proportion of the respondents rate the current language classroom as high expectations (12.4%), followed by continuous improvement with 9.2%. The individual ratings conform to the earlier findings which showed that the current classroom culture is on building a relationship. However, a number of student respondents (13.5%) judge their language classes to have multiple focuses.

Figure 4. The diagram on the students' overall dominant rating on the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture in their English classes

Table 4

Percentage distribution of students' overall dominant rating on the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture in their English language classes

Classroom culture focus	Now		Preferred	
	Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
Building relationship	112	60.5	98	53.0
Continuous improvement	17	9.2	25	13.5
High expectation	23	**12.4**	18	**9.7**
Stable environment	8	**4.3**	10	**5.4**
Multiple domain focus	25	**13.5**	34	**18.4**
Total	185	**100.0**	185	**100.0**

On Classroom Culture as Assessed by the Language Teacher

This section presents two independent ratings by the language teachers' classroom culture - one as they currently practised and the other as they wish for their students to flourish and exceed expectations. Table 5 shows the mean scores given by the teachers on their current teaching practice or culture. It is observed that their currently existing classroom culture along the six dimensions is focused on building a relationship, except strategic emphasis. The result is closely similar to their students' evaluation as discussed in the previous section. This suggests that most of what they are employing right now concerns most on developing students' affective learning domain in language teaching. Their dominant classroom culture is geared towards building a relationship with mean average scores of 32.5 on dominant classroom

Table 5

Teachers' mean rating on the "now" classroom culture of English language classes disaggregated by classroom culture dimensions

Classroom culture dimensions	"Now" classroom culture			
	Building relationship	Continuous improvement	High expectations	Stable environment
Dominant classroom characteristics	32.5	24.3	27.1	16.1
Teacher attention	34.4	21.1	22.5	20.0
Classroom management	37.1	23.2	21.4	18.2
Classroom glue	29.6	22.9	28.2	19.3
Strategic emphasis	26.1	31.1	26.4	16.4
Criteria of success	31.8	25.4	25.7	17.1

characteristics; teacher attention, 34.4; classroom management, 37.1; classroom glue, 29.6; and 31.8 for the criteria of success. However, on strategic emphasis, language teachers are currently inclined towards the continuous improvement of their students with a mean score of 31.1. This confirms the earlier students' evaluation of the "now" classroom culture where developing relational skills dominate in English language classes. Nonetheless, teachers believed that their emphasis is to build a continuous improvement of the students in and outside the classroom.

The graphical representation of the current classroom culture as self-rated by the language teachers is shown in Figure 5 .

Distinct from the rest is the light green rectangular plot which is skewed towards the continuous improvement (green quadrant). However other classroom dimensions are slanted to building relationships (yellow quadrant). Moreover, it is also visible that most of the plots of most dimensions are explicitly a little skewed towards the blue quadrant which represents a culture that aims for high expectations on students indicating that the said classroom practice is also observed by teachers although not the most dominant. The preferred classroom culture by the teachers as presented in Table 6 closely resembles their currently practised culture. Highlighted numerical figures in the table below exemplify the highest average score by dimension.

Of the 6 dimensions, the language teachers hoped to shift their classroom focus from building relationships towards continuous improvement specifically on dominant classroom characteristics (31.8), classroom glue (28.4) and strategic emphasis (32.5). However, the teachers prefer to retain their current classroom to
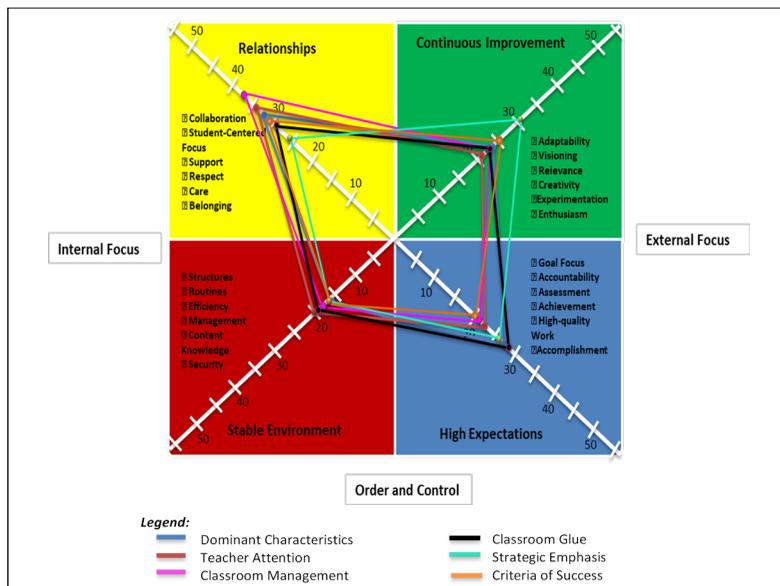
Figure 5. The diagram on the "now" classroom culture in English classes as rated by the language teachers

simply building relations along with teacher attention (32.0), classroom management (33.7) and criteria for success (28.2). The above result is presented in Figure 6. Four of the rectangular plots portraying classroom characteristics, classroom glue and strategic emphasis are distinguishably slanted towards the quadrant for continuous improvement while the teacher's attention, classroom management and criteria for success are skewed in the direction of the yellow quadrant (building relationship).

Table 6

Teachers' mean rating on the "preferred" classroom culture of English language classes disaggregated by classroom culture dimensions

Classroom culture dimensions	"Preferred" Classroom Culture			
	Building relationship	Continuous improvement	High expectations	Stable environment
Dominant classroom characteristics	30.4	31.8	23.9	13.9
Teacher attention	32.0	29.6	20.9	17.5
Classroom management	33.7	27.4	22.1	16.8
Classroom glue	27.9	28.4	26.4	17.3
Strategic emphasis	22.5	32.5	27.1	17.9
Criteria of success	28.2	27.9	25.0	18.0
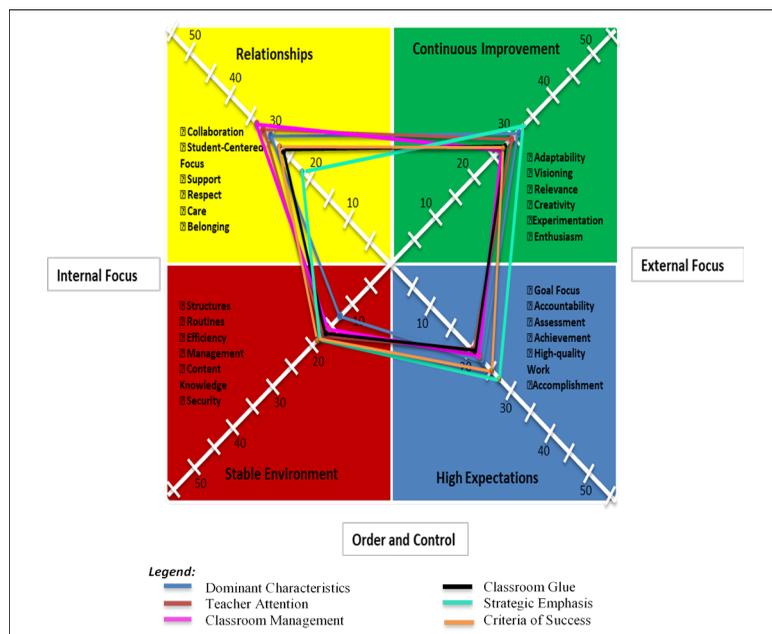
Figure 6. The diagram on the "preferred" classroom culture in English classes as rated by the teachers

To examine the overall prevailing classroom culture of teachers, the combined average scores of all classroom dimensions of the current and preferred classroom focus were obtained and the results are summarized in Table 7. Overwhelmingly, *building relationships* emerged as the main classroom focus of language teachers at present. Of the 4 classroom focus, *building relationship* topped the rest having a mean score of 32.3 followed by high expectation with 25.2, continuous improvement with 24.6 points and stable environment with 17.19. In general, teachers' focus is on basic learning skills. That is, despite the mandate of the CHED to introduce OBE, the present learning outcomes are still lower than what is desired.

In contrast, the language teachers' aspiration for their classroom is slightly different from what is currently practised. The overall mean scores between building relationships and continuous improvement only differ by 0.5 in which the latter is higher. This means that they are equally favourable for a classroom that builds a relationship (29.1) but at the same time continuously aspire for improvement (29.6). The results show that while there are

indications teachers wish to elevate learning goals to a higher level, they are equally glued to basic learning skills.

The visual of the overall classroom focus scores in Figure 7 evidently displays that the "now" classroom culture (black) of the language teachers is skewed towards the yellow quadrant which is on building a relationship. On the contrary, the "preferred" classroom culture is almost equally skewed towards the yellow and green quadrants. Similar to the analyses made on the students' assessment, the distribution of the teachers' individual dominant responses along the 4 classroom culture focus is tallied and the results are summarized in Table 8. The result provides a glimpse of how the 14 language teacher respondents assess their current and desired classroom environment.

Parallel to the earlier results, more than three-fourths (78.57%) rated their current classroom as focusing on building relationships. As opposed to the current culture, teachers have no unanimity on their views as to how language classes prosper in the future. Although only 35.71% said they would like to retain the culture of building relationships, the remaining proportion of teachers are dispersed to continuous

Table 7

Overall teachers' mean rating on the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture in their English language classes

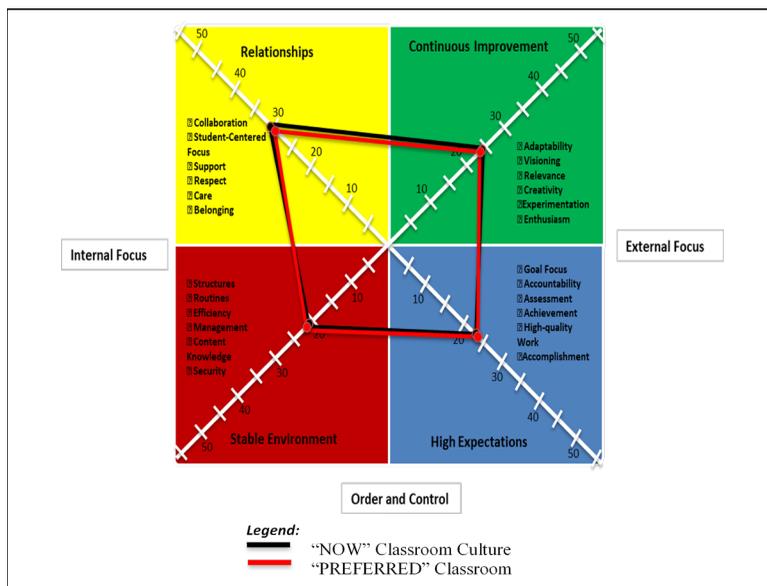| Classroom culture focus	Now	Preferred
Building a relationship	32.3	29.1
Continuous improvement	24.6	29.6
High expectations	25.2	24.3
Stable environment	17.9	17.0
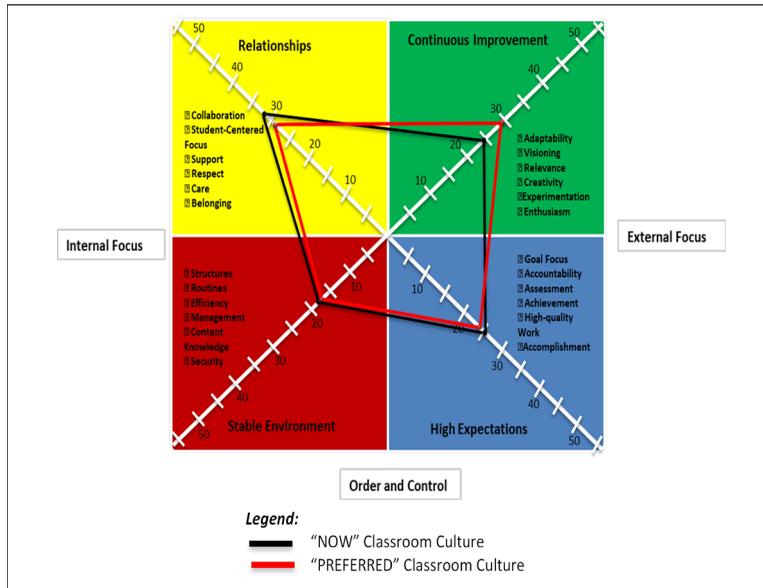
Figure 7. The diagram on the teacher's overall rating in their "now" and "preferred" classroom culture in their English classes

Table 8

Percentage distribution of teachers' overall dominant rating on the "now" and "preferred" classroom culture in their English language classes

Classroom Culture Focus	Now		Preferred	
	Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
Building relationship	11	**78.57**	5	**35.71**
Continuous improvement	1	**7.14**	4	**28.57**
High expectation	1	**7.14**	2	**14.29**
Stable environment	0	**0.0**	0	**0.0**
Multiple classification	1	**7.17**	3	**21.43**
Total	14	**100**	14	**100**

improvement, high expectation and multiple classifications. The non-unanimity of teachers' preference would create difficulty in shifting the current culture. No teachers prefer a classroom in a stable environment.

CONCLUSION

In all indications, the current classroom culture of English classes in MSU-TCTO is more of building relationships - the most basic and fundamental of all learning cultures. The Outcome-Based Education espoused by the Commission which focuses on developing higher-order skills is not yet fully met. Promising though is the aspiration of the teachers to shift towards continuous improvement; a classroom culture that is

geared towards higher-order learning. Thus, institutionalizing ambitious teaching - a pedagogical approach which is aimed to develop a learning outcome beyond the classroom - is probable but will face a lot of challenges specifically in reshaping the mind-set of the students and the teachers to shift their preference to an externally focused learning goal - a condition for ambitious teaching. The students should be exposed to academic work that is not only geared towards building relationships (i.e. care, support, respect, collaboration and belongingness) but also sets higher goals other than emotional and personal development To gradually realize ambitious teaching, the school has to remodel its instructional paradigm, modify teachers' learning goals and restructure classroom emphasis into a collaborative and holistic learning environment that would propel students' learning toward higher-order thinking and continuous learning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Prosodic Focus in Malay without Post-focus Compression

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ABSTRACT

Many studies across languages have recognised that focus substantially alters the prosodic structure of a sentence not only by increasing F_0, intensity, and duration of the focused words but also by compressing the range of pitch and intensity of the post-focus words. Studies, however, are still not fully clear regarding the main effects of focus on focused and post-focused words in Malay. Analyses from the present study revealed that on-focused words had significantly increased F_0, intensity, and duration, while post-focused words showed no significant lowering following the effect of focus. The outcomes of the study generalised Malay as a language without post-focus compression (PFC). These findings have implications on prosodic typology, language contact and the historical origin of Malay.

Keywords: Focus, Malay, post-focus compression

INTRODUCTION

Focus

When a speaker utters a sentence, certain information in the sentence is emphasised more than the others, and this linguistic phenomenon is generally known as focus. Under a certain discourse condition, some parts of a sentence might as well get highlighted (Bolinger, 1958; Eady & Cooper, 1986; Ladd, 2008; Xu, 1999). Such a phenomenon can be manifested

morphosyntactically through clefting as in 'It is X who ...' by which the constituent X is put to focus. Additionally, prosodic alterations can also contribute to the effect of focus. Findings from various languages have shown that a focused word is characterised with a higher fundamental frequency (F_0), a longer duration and a greater amplitude in contrast with the non-focused words (Cooper et al., 1985; Eady & Cooper, 1986; Féry & Kugler, 2008; Xu & Xu, 2005).

Prosodic Realisation of Focus

Within the realm of autosegmental-metrical (A-M) theory of intonational phonology, the phonological constituents that accompany certain stressed syllables are known as pitch accents especially in languages where stressed syllables are prevalent like English and Dutch (Ladd, 2008). With a better understanding of stress in terms of pitch accent, changes in pitch are thought to provide major cues to the perception of stress such that pitch accent illustrates actual prominence in a sentence whereas stress describes abstract lexical properties of individual syllables.

However, dependence on this view can be problematic looking at its inability to address multiple factors and conditions that influence the variations of F_0 specifically under the condition of focus. Essentially, studies have reported the effect on F_0 linked to a multitude of conditions, but the A-M approach has yet to demonstrate the interaction that occurs between these discriminate factors (Xu & Xu, 2005). Hence, the A-M approach is incomprehensive at

illustrating the workings of prosody as a system in communicative terms. In lieu of the complication, it is necessary to search for a coherent approach that can compromise all these factors in understanding the effect of focus.

By employing the articulatory-functional view of speech as an alternative, various conditions affecting prosodic focus with their interacting effects can be examined through the Parallel Encoding and Target Approximation (PENTA) model. The model is a basis that assembles independent mechanisms but treats them all as an integral part of speech from which simultaneous encoding of communicative functions can be realised as a communicative system (Xu et al., 2015). The PENTA model focuses on the functions rather than the forms by viewing the role of phonology as an abstract manifestation of speech prosody. Unlike the A-M model that focuses on categorical distinctions of prosodic units, the PENTA model defines units on a functional basis.

Within this model, the prosodic focus is conceptualised as an encoding scheme that links a communicative function with articulatory parameters through several underlying prosodic components. That is prosodic focus functions to emphasise a speech unit against the others within the sentence through components like duration and intensity. Additionally, the prosodic focus is found not to be the only encoding scheme utilised to achieve focus, but the effect of post-focus compression of pitch and intensity (PFC) is also used in realising focus in several other languages (Xu et al.,

2012). At this point, viewing prosodic focus from the perspective of the PENTA model helps to explain the phenomenon in a more detailed, generalisable and predictable way. Also, the dispersed distribution of prosodic focus and PFC across languages elucidates the nature of the phenomenon as multi-faceted and language-specific.

A focused element within a sentence is largely represented by increased pitch, increased F_0, longer duration and higher amplitude in comparison to its unfocused correlates across languages. Dohen and Lœvernbruck (2004) from their findings showed that in French, narrow focus (or contrastive focus) had an increased pitch as compared to broad focus. In addition, the study also showed that the duration of the focused syllables was lengthened by 33.71%, which was perceptually pertinent. Xu and Xu (2005) reported that in declarative English sentences, the narrow focus was associated with higher F_0 peaks as compared to neutral-focus constituents. The increase in duration for the focused constituents has long been supported in an earlier study by Cooper et al. (1985) that showed the elongation of the emphasised words using a contrastive focus in question-answer stimuli in English. Additionally, a study done to test the reliability of overall intensity and spectral emphasis of focal accents in Swedish showed that the overall intensity of a focused constituent had a significant increase against other non-focused constituents by about 3dB (Heldner, 2003). Deductively, an on-focus element would generally be susceptible to a higher pitch, longer duration, and greater amplitude, which lead to its marked emphasis against other constituents within a sentence. While this glaring effect of focus is rather predicted, questions aroused as to whether focus manifests in isolation or in a dynamic fashion. This entails the assumption as to whether focus has any consequential effect with respect to its neighbouring constituents or the sentence in which it is located.

By examining Chinese Mandarin, Xu (1999) suggested an asymmetric structure in illustrating the significance of focus on F_0 such that there was (a) an expansion on non-final focused words; (b) a suppression or compression in the post-focus regions; and (c) a neutral shape in all other words with minimal deviation of F_0 range before the focused words. Note that the pitch range adjustments structure indicates the consequential effects of focus around the on-focus region. This structure is further reinforced by a perception study on Beijing Mandarin focused words that showed 90.9% and 92.7% rate of perception in initial and medial focus conditions respectively (Xu et al., 2012). This tallies the argument made by Cooper et al. (1985) who stated that relative prominence of duration and F_0 varied according to the focus location. Other studies have also shown that pre- and post-focus constituents could be influenced by the effect of focus especially in terms of their duration and F_0 contour (Dohen & Lœvernbruck, 2004; Jun & Lee, 1998; Xu & Xu, 2005).

From studies on prosodic elements, languages are divided into certain groups. In non-tonal languages, F_0 variations have been the major approach in realising prosodic focus (Botinis et al., 1999; Rump & Collier, 1996). In contrast, tonal languages like Mandarin utilised these variations for lexical distinction and they are thought as possibly unnecessary for prosodic focus realisation.

However, an alternative view aroused as a response to such an assumption. From the observations of pitch and intensity on the post-focus elements in Beijing Mandarin, such compression was inferred as an approach to elicit focus (Jin, 1996; Liu & Xu, 2005). Nonetheless, these findings from Beijing Mandarin did not provide a forthright generalisation. The compression effect was not found in a study done on a closely-related language, Taiwanese Mandarin; rather, the features found were more similar to that of Taiwanese and Hong Kong Cantonese (Chen et al., 2009; Wu & Xu, 2010). In Hong Kong Cantonese, findings have shown that F_0 of the lexical tones was not wholly manipulated for the purpose of highlighting focus because the speakers of the language are prone to keeping the feature unchanged in non-focused conditions. Interestingly, findings in light of F_0 variations and focus between tonal and non-tonal languages have generated insights about the notion of PFC. While studies have long put emphasis on the phenomenon of focus, PFC as an element that emerged specifically and variably from the effect of focus should be an informative constituent in distinguishing language typological differences.

The notion of PFC has formed a pattern across languages which may provide supportive accounts on the linguistic typology, diachronic linguistics and evolutionary theory of human. Xu (2011) provided a cross-linguistic overview of PFC distribution in which he argued that, while it could be integral in underscoring focus, PFC distribution was not necessarily universal. A measure of post-focus F_0 lowering, deaccenting, dephrasing and pitch range compression has suggestively drawn Dutch (Rump & Collier, 1996), French (Dohen & Lœvernbruck, 2004), Finnish (Mixdorff, 2004), German (Féry & Kugler, 2008), Greek (Botinis et al., 1999), Hindi (Patil et al., 2008), Japanese (Ishihara, 2002), Korean (Lee & Xu, 2010), Egyptian, Lebanese Arabic (Chahal, 2003; Hellmuth, 2006), Tibetan, Uygur, Nanchang (Wang et al., 2011), Persian (Taheri & Xu, 2012), Turkish (Ipek, 2011) and Swedish (Bruce, 1982) into languages with PFC. On the contrary, languages without indications of PFC are found from various language families and origins such as African languages (Afroasiatic & Niger-Congo) in Buli, Chichewa, Chitumbuka, Durban Zulu, Northern Sotho, Hausa and Wolof (Rialland & Robert, 2011; Zerbian et al., 2010); Chinese languages in Yi, Deang and Wa (Wang et al., 2011); and Mayan in Yucatec Maya (Kugler & Skopeteas, 2007).

Many explanations can be made from the dispersed PFC differences which will be useful in drawing stipulations on the historical movement of languages. Indeed, three famous hypotheses have been

discussed by Xu (2011) in this regard namely (a) independent genesis or emerging in situ within a language; (b) horizontal spreading or borrowing from other languages through contact, or (c) vertical inheritance or descended from an ancient proto-language. The argument for independent genesis is seemingly faint looking at the abundant data suggesting PFC's inability to arrive in situ and its 'hard-to-evolve' nature (Xu et al., 2012) while spreading would only hold true if there had been findings showing a gain of PFC from language contact rather than just a loss of PFC from contact (Xu, 2011). At this juncture, vertical inheritance seems to be the highly endorsed hypothesis in support of the current findings because the grouping of PFC languages has shown that the feature as a means of encoding focus could possibly arrive from a common ancestor called the Nostratic superfamily. The study, in particular, presupposes this hypothesis; yet, all of these stipulations require a wealth of support for them to hold true because in the case of the hypothetical Nostratic superfamily, for instance, data from some language families are still inadequate. While it seems much safer to hold on to this hypothesis, other hypotheses should not be disregarded entirely.

The Case of Malay

Many languages have been described in terms of their prosodic realisations and historical connection; however, this paper will explore Malay since not much has been described the language in the aspect of prosodic focus especially within the PENTA model. By doing so, this paper hopes to address the aforementioned hypotheses and simultaneously provide richness for the description of the language.

In addition, there has not been any exploration of Austronesian languages on the notion of PFC given the fact that the Nostratic superfamily hypothesis argues for only Indo-European, Uralic, Altaic, Afroasiatic, Dravidian, Kartvelian, and Eskimo-Aleut languages to be in the same assemblage. Yet again, looking at the hypotheses regarding the origins of Malay speakers, which might arrive from the Southern China or Taiwan (Kern as cited in Anceaux, 1965; Bellwood, 1997; van Heine Geldern, 1966), it will be enticing to see if those assumptions would still hold true with the evidence arriving from this study. That is, if the Malay language shows strong indications of PFC, then the possibility increases for the language to have not originated from those implicated regions and the hypothesis of a proto-language origin will be vulnerable. Otherwise, the Nostratic superfamily hypothesis and the hypotheses regarding the origins of Malay speakers will still remain strongly plausible.

This paper will examine the F_0 contours of contrastive focus uttered in short Malay declarative sentences which are prompted by questions. By doing so, this paper aims at answering the following queries:

1. Will there be differences in pitch, intensity, and duration between on-

focus words with their correlates in the non-focused conditions?

2. Will there be a significant lowering pattern after the effect of focus in the post- focus words?

Based on previous studies, several predictions are assumed. First, there would be higher values on the three parameters when the words are focused on a sentence. Second, there would be no significant lowering pattern in the post-focus words under focus. Analyses from the present study will reveal the directions of these predictions.

METHODS

Stimuli

Four unique target sentences served as stimuli for the study. Each sentence consisted of five words to make up a simple declarative sentence to control for the effect of sentence type. The target sentences were constructed in such a way that there would be three distinct focus locations within the sentences, namely the initial-focus (first word), the medial-focus (third word) and the final-focus (fifth word). All focus locations were nouns. In addition to these three focus locations, the non-focused or neutral condition was introduced such that none of the words in the sentences was focused. This condition will serve as a baseline for comparisons.

Several studies have shown that the initial consonant of a syllable can have an influence on its F_0 contour (Howie, 1974; Lehiste, 1975; Lehiste & Peterson, 1961).

To address the issue, sonorants were used in the onsets of stimuli to maintain the least obstruction and interruption on the continuous F_0 contours (Xu, 1999). As per this study, sonorants were used to control for the effects across the target sentences although not in all possible syllables. In addition, to ensure the ease of segmentation during an acoustic analysis of the data, the use of glides or vowels at the start of the syllables within the target sentences were put at a minimum.

While there are many types of focus described in the literature, a type of focus that was used in this study is the contrastive focus. It is a subtype of narrow focus that can be employed to generate both syntactic and prosodic cues (Féry, 2001). Literature has indicated that contrastive focus could trigger vital prosodic marks for analysis such as F_0, duration and/or intensity via highlighting certain words or phrases within a sentence (Dohen & Lœvenbruck, 2004; Féry, 2001). Since this paper examines the effect of focus on a phonological level without a particular examination of syntactic or pragmatic elements, this type of focus was selectively used for analysis.

Contrastive focus on a specific word at different focus locations was elicited using four precursor questions. Each precursor question would directly enquire a specific unit of information from the target sentence, hence a specific focus location. Targeting contrastive focus using question and answer would help in controlling for the effect of focus during the experiment. The precursor questions were randomised and repeated

across four different target sentences. An example of a target sentence with its respective precursor sentences is shown in Table 1 below.

Participants

Twelve native speakers of Malay were recruited to participate in the experiment. Only participants who were born and raised in Malaysia with high proficiency in Malay were selected to minimise the variability between the participants. All the participants were students from universities around London with equal numbers of male and female participants. Participants' ages ranged between 23-35 years old (mean = 29 years and 5 months) and all participants reported no speech or hearing impediment. The participants were given an information and consent form prior to the actual recording sessions. The ethics of the study was approved under blanket ethics by the Ethics Chair of University College London (project number: SHaPS-2014-YX-013).

Procedure

The recording sessions were conducted separately for each participant in an anechoic recording room in the Division of Psychology and Language Sciences building of University College London using RODE NT1-A large-diaphragm condenser microphone with a Focusrite Scarlett 2i2 external sound interface connected to a PC. The condenser microphone was positioned about 30 cm from the participants' mouths. Before the actual recording, the participants were given printed sheets of the stimuli and asked to practice reading aloud the target sentences by highlighting foci according to the precursor questions. Then, the recording was started as the experimenter read the precursor questions to the participants.

Table 1

The precursor questions preceding the target sentences addressing different focus locations

Precursor Questions	Target Sentences
1. Siapakah yang membeli nanas di kedai? 'Who bought a pineapple at the shop?	1. ***Najib*** *membeli nanas di kedai* 'Najib bought a pineapple at the shop'
2. Apakah yang Najib beli di kedai? 'What did Najib buy at the shop?'	2. *Najib membeli* ***nanas*** *di kedai* 'Najib bought a pineapple at the shop'
3. Di manakah Najib membeli nanas? 'Where did Najib buy a pineapple?'	3. *Najib membeli nanas di* ***kedai*** 'Najib bought a pineapple at the shop'
4. *Apakah yang sedang berlaku?* 'What is happening?'	4. *Najib membeli nanas di kedai* 'Najib bought a pineapple at the shop'

Notes: 1 = initial focus location, 2 = medial focus location, 3 = final focus location,

4 = no focus location or neutral.

The subject read aloud the target sentence as a response to the precursor questions. Whenever the experimenter noticed any sentence that was overdone, understated or inappropriately pronounced, the participants were asked to start again. Every participant read the sentences in four different blocks containing each unique sentence with four precursor questions. The participants were given one-minute break between blocks and each participant read in total 16 target sentences in one session. The experimental design can be seen in Figure 1 below. The speech signals were directly digitised onto the hard disk of a PC at a sampling rate of 22kHz and 16 bits bit width, using a software digitization program called Praat, version 5.4.12 (Boersma & Weenink, 2015).

F_0 Extraction and Measurements

The F_0 extraction was done using a custom-written Praat script called ProsodyPro (version 6.0.1) by Xu (2013). When the script was run, two windows were displayed with one showing the waveform and pulse markings while the other showing spectrogram and TextGrid. In the beginning, the target sentences were

segmented accordingly and labelled in the TextGrid window. The segmented data were then being manually rectified in the pulse window for any extraneous errors such as missed or irregular vocal markings. This procedure was followed by F_0 contour smoothing process so as to minimise random variations in the contours and subsequently maintain the accurate measurement of the location and value of F_0 peaks and valleys (Xu, 1999). Based on the manually labelled boundaries, several measurements were collected from the different focus locations: maximum F_0 (max F_0), mean F_0, mean intensity (henceforth, intensity) and duration as automatically generated by the ProsodyPro script. These measurements were later analysed using SPSS version 22.0 (IBM Corp., 2013).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

The results obtained from the F_0 extraction of the Malay participants' sentence productions were transformed into a number of time-normalised mean F_0 contours. These contours were plotted by focus locations and different unique sentences, while the word
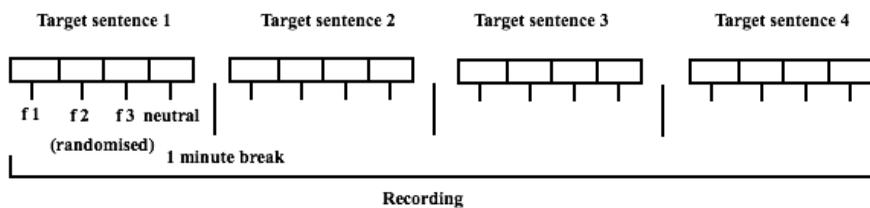
Figure 1. Experimental design of the study showing stimuli being presented in four blocks, each of which contains four focus conditions. *Note.* f1 = initial focus, f2 = medial focus, f3 = final focus, neutral = neutral or non-focused condition.

boundaries representing focus locations were marked with vertical dash lines. As can be seen in Figure 2, the contour shows a longer interval between initial and medial foci because the word is longer than the others in the sentence.

Figure 2 shows that there is a clear trend of increased mean F_0 contours for the on-focus words in three different locations as compared to other words. The highest observable mean F_0 peaks occur at the initial focus location at approximately 210 Hz. The trend in terms of mean F_0 peaks for the focused words also displays a decreasing pattern towards the end of the sentence, with around 190 Hz and 180 Hz for medial and final locations respectively. Secondly, however, a general observable indication of PFC is seemingly absent, looking at the close overlap between the curves following the focus marks. A much wider gap between the

focus conditions to that of the neutral curve would alternatively suggest the possibility of PFC in the language. Nonetheless, the result of close overlap might have arrived from the effect of averaging across unique sentences. Hence, time-normalised mean F_0 contours representing each unique sentence in isolation would be necessary.

Figure 3 shows that each word has a rising-falling F_0 contour with one or two peaks regardless of the focus condition. General observation suggests that only Sentence 1 in Figure 3 displays PFC in the language. This is due to the consistent further lowering of F_0 following the on-focus words at all focus locations as compared to their neutral correlates, such that the on-focus F_0 continues to drop until it reaches a level that is lower than the neutral-focus contour (in blue). Comparing with the other sentences, Sentence 2 does not show observable
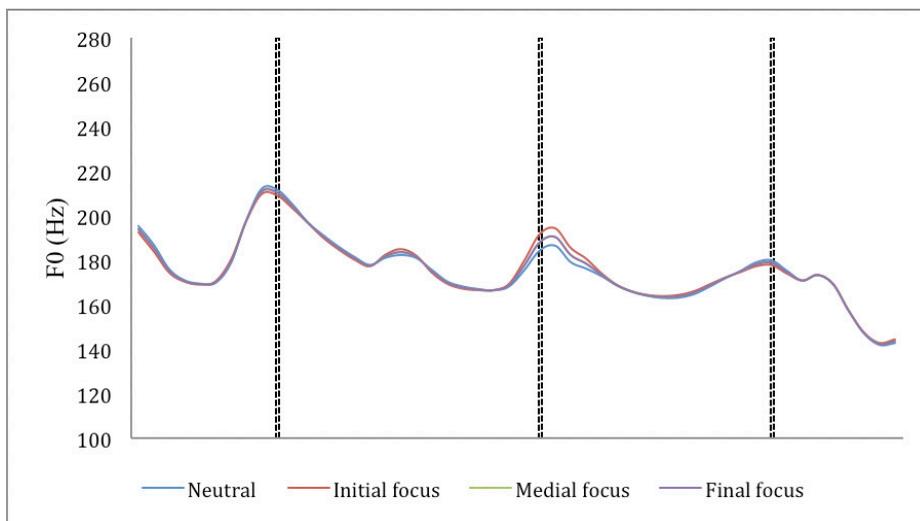
Figure 2. Time-normalised mean F_0 contours of the averaged values across four unique sentences. Each curve in the figure represents each focus condition with an average of 12 repetitions across four unique sentences that account for 48 tokens in total.

further lowering for medial and final focus, Sentence 3 does not show lowering for medial focus whereas Sentence 4 only shows indication following the initial on-focus words. Overall, the time-normalised mean F_0 contours at hand have provided the study with mixed and ambiguous results. Whereas the contour of mean F_0 averaged across unique sentences shows no trace of PFC, isolated sentences extracted from the averaged results have supplied the study with inconsistent hints of PFC the language. At this juncture, it is safe to say that PFC is seemingly absent in the language; however, support from the statistical analysis will reveal further insights.

The fundamental approach for the analysis is to compare the values between the on-focus and non-focused words. In order to make comparisons between on-focus and non-focused conditions in three different locations, four prosodic parameters namely max F_0, mean F_0, intensity and duration were regarded as dependent variables while focus (focus, non-focused/neutral) and focus locations (initial, medial, final) were taken as independent variables. The study also compared the post-focus words in both conditions by examining the areas following the initial and medial focus locations. The final focus location was not included in the analysis of post-focused words because there was no word following the fifth word. This study analysed the dependent variables in two ways by averaging the values across unique
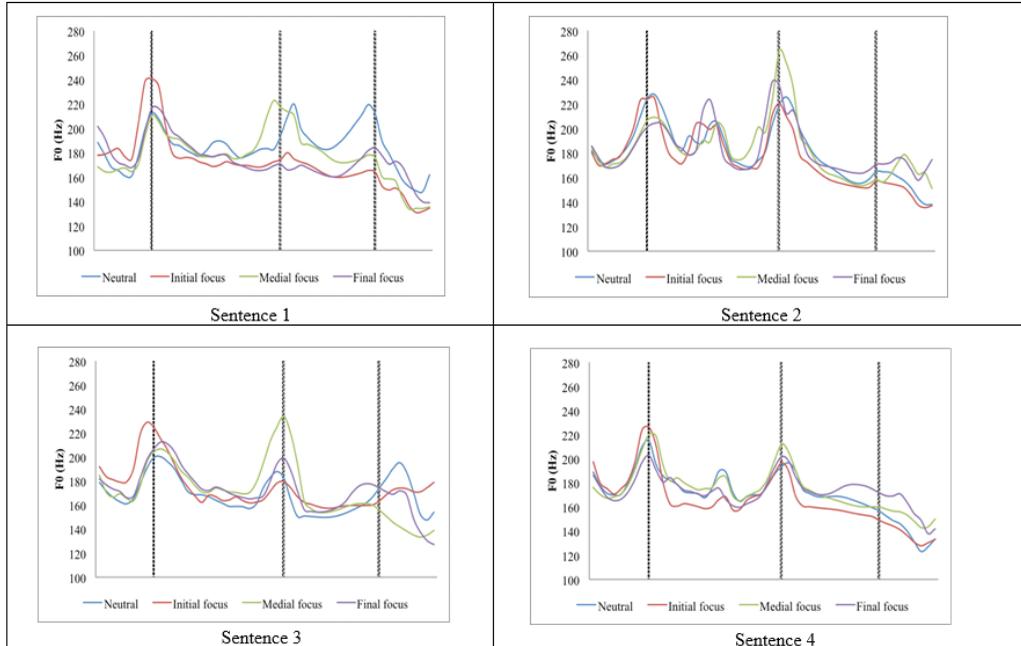
Figure 3. Time-normalised mean F_0 contours of the values across four unique sentences with each curve representing an average of 12 repetitions by 12 participants.

sentences and by treating the four unique sentences as a within-subject factor. For the averaged values across unique sentences, 2-way repeated-measures ANOVAs were employed while 3-way ANOVAs were applied to analyse the effects on four unique sentences in isolation.

The results from the analysis of 2-way ANOVAs showed that for the on-focused words, max F_0, intensity, and duration are significantly higher than their non-focused counterparts. However, there is no significant difference for mean F_0 between the on-focused and non-focused words. The effect of focus locations is significant for all parameters except duration. In the focused words, all parameters have higher values as compared to the later location: max F_0: 246.612 vs. 206.252, mean F_0: 194.693 vs.

165.263, intensity: 72.037 vs. 68.466, and duration: 402.303 vs 395.263. There is only one significant interaction between focus and focus location which is for max F_0: $F(2, 22) = 15.931$, $p < 0.001$.

The comparison between post-focused words in on-focused and non-focused conditions shows no evidence of significant difference in all four prosodic parameters (see Table 2). Meanwhile, the effect of focused location displays significant difference in mean F_0 (F [1, 11] = 8.033, p = 0.016), intensity (F [1, 11] = 24.795, p < 0.001) and duration (F [1, 11] = 696.319, p < 0.001). There is only one significant interaction of focus and focus location found which is indicated in duration (F [1, 11] = 8.175, p = 0.016).

Table 2

Results of 2-way repeated-measures ANOVAs for all prosodic parameters on their averaged values across four unique sentences

On-focus words			
	Focus (df = 1, 11)	Location (df = 2, 22)	Focus * Location (df = 2, 22)
Max F_0	F = 26.571 **p = 0.000***	F = 6.880 **p = 0.005***	F = 15.931 **p = 0.000***
Mean F_0	F = 4.107 p = 0.068	F = 15.655 **p = 0.000***	F = 1.861 p = 0.179
Intensity	F = 12.842 **p = 0.004***	F = 37.528 **p = 0.000***	F = 3.429 p = 0.051
Duration	F = 14.398 **p = 0.003***	F = 0.196 p = 0.750	F = 2.402 p = 0.114
Post-focus words			
	Focus (df = 1, 11)	Location (df = 1, 11)	Focus * Location (df = 1, 11)
Max F_0	F = 0.138 p = 0.717	F = 4.698 p = 0.053	F = 0.005 p = 0.944

Table 2 *(Continued)*

Post-focus words			
	Focus (df = 1, 11)	Location (df = 1, 11)	Focus * Location (df = 1, 11)
Mean F_0	F = 0.264 p = 0.618	F = 8.033 **p = 0.016***	F = 0.835 p = 0.381
Intensity	F = 0.059 p = 0.813	F = 24.795 **p = 0.000***	F = 3.429 p = 0.092
Duration	F = 0.25 p = 0.876	F = 696.319 **p = 0.000***	F = 8.175 p = 0.016*

On the other hand, comparisons using 3-way ANOVAs analysing four unique sentences as a within-subject factor revealed a similar fashion in the main effect of focus. As can be seen in Table 3, the main effect of focus shows a significant difference in max F_0, intensity and duration parameters while mean F_0 shows no significant difference. The main effect of location is significant in max F_0, mean F_0 and intensity whereas, for the effect of sentence, significant effects are found in max F_0, intensity and duration. Note that the interpretation of the main effect of the sentence is not directly explainable considering the differences in structural make-up underlying each unique sentence. In addition, the interaction of sentence and focus is only evident in intensity such that F (3, 33) = 4.227, p = 0.12.

The analysis of post-focused words on the basis of unique sentences revealed no significant difference in the main effect of focus in three prosodic parameters which max F_0, mean F_0, and intensity. Instead, duration of post-focused words shows significant change (F [1, 11] = 10.814, p = 0.007). Moreover, significant main effects of the sentence are observed in intensity and duration, while the main effect of location is found significant in mean F_0, intensity, and duration. Lastly, the interaction between sentence and focus indicates moderate significant effect for max F_0, whereas intensity and duration illustrates high significant differences at F (3, 33) = 14.480, p < 0.001 and F (3, 33) = 25.898, p < 0.001.

Table 3

Results of 3-way repeated-measures ANOVAs for all prosodic parameters on their values across four unique sentences

On-focus words				
	Focus (df =1, 11)	Location (df = 2, 22)	Sentence (df = 3, 33)	Sentence*Focus (df = 3, 33)
Max F_0	F = 5.264 **p = 0.042***	F = 11.419 **p = 0.000***	F = 4.140 **p = 0.014***	F = 1.312 p = 0.287

Table 3 *(Continued)*

On-focus words				
	Focus (df =1, 11)	Location (df = 2, 22)	Sentence (df = 3, 33)	Sentence*Focus (df = 3, 33)
Mean F_0	F = 4.107 p = 0.068	F = 15.655 **p = 0.000***	F = 2.855 p = 0.052	F = 0.587 p = 0.628
Intensity	F = 12.842 **p = 0.004***	F = 37.528 **p = 0.000***	F = 3.308 **p = 0.032***	F = 4.227 **p = 0.012***
Duration	F = 14.398 **p = 0.003***	F = 0.196 p = 0.824	F = 23.738 **p = 0.000***	F = 0.832 p = 0.486
Post-focus words				
	Focus (df = 1, 11)	Location (df = 1, 11)	Sentence (df = 3, 33)	Sentence* Focus (df = 3, 33)
Max F_0	F = 3.007 p = 0.111	F = 4.014 p = 0.07	F = 1.094 p = 0.365	F = 2.947 p = **0.047***
Mean F_0	F = 1.274 p = 0.283	F = 6.314 **p = 0.029***	F = 0.758 p = 0.394	F = 1.752 p = 0.176
Intensity	F = 4.282 p = 0.063	F = 9.882 **p = 0.000***	F = 14.348 **p = 0.003***	F = 14.480 **p = 0.000***
Duration	F = 10.814 **p = 0.007***	F = 25.898 **p = 0.000***	F = 3.641 **p = 0.023***	F = 25.898 p = 0.000*

Notes: Statistically significant differences (ANOVA) are indicated by $*p < 0.05$; N = 12; df = degrees of freedom

Discussions

The objective of the study was to describe the prosodic realisation of focus in Malay. To achieve the objective, two questions were raised as to whether there is a difference in the variations of F_0 contour, intensity, and duration between focused and non-focused conditions. The study also aims to search for a possibility of PFC in the language by comparing the focused and non-focused correlates at the region after the on-focus words.

Table 2 and 3 from the previous section exemplify clear differences of the implicated prosodic parameters due to the effect of focus in Malay. According to the current findings, the words under focus appear to have a higher pitch, higher intensity, and longer duration although pitch-wise, the parameter of mean F_0 indicates no substantial difference under this effect. In terms of focus locations, similar evidence of a heightened pitch for the focused words is found in Hong Kong Cantonese, with the initial location showing a more pronounced contour than the others in the sentence (Wang et al., 2011). Indeed, the fact that the initial focus shows the highest pitch

contour as compared to other focus locations tallies with the observations implicated on different effects of focus in different locations (Cooper et al., 1985). These results are well supported looking at the consistent display of significance across two levels of analysis employed in the study which are comparisons across values of unique sentences and across the averaged values of these unique sentences. These findings have directly addressed the first question raised in this study and they are found to be in accord with other studies on prosodic realisation of focus in this regard (Cooper et al., 1985; Eady & Cooper, 1986; Féry & Kugler, 2008; Heldner, 2003; Xu & Xu, 2005).

As for the post-focused words, the results from the analyses suggest a series of salient outcomes such that there is an absence of significant lowering or compression in all prosodic parameters: pitch, intensity, and duration. Again, these prosodic parameters manifest a consistent pattern on both levels of analysis, with the exception of duration that shows significant difference across unique sentences. Put together, these findings fit very well with the three-zone pitch range adjustments model as suggested in the earlier section (Liu & Xu, 2005; Xu, 1999). These findings confirmed the two zones of pitch adjustments from the model, namely the expansion under focus and the consequential compression following it as a result of focus. A follow-up study will further illustrate the fit of the intonational model in the pre-focus regions in Malay. In such a case, findings will illustrate if Malay shows a presence/absence of a neutral shape in the pre-focus words with minimal variation of F_0 range.

Referring to the second question presented in the earlier part of this study, Malay appears to exhibit no evidence of pitch and intensity lowering on the post-focus words, thus implying that the language belongs to the group without PFC. The literature review has indicated several languages that are characterised as having no PFC such as Yi, Deang, and Wa (Wang et al., 2011) and comparisons between these languages have shown a similar pattern of F_0 with that of Malay. Malay also seems to share an expanse of similarities with Taiwanese such that the raising of F_0, intensity and duration appear to be the major acoustic correlates for signalling focus (Chen et al., 2009). Moreover, a comparison of the results with another language that is devoid of PFC noted a similar fashion in terms of time-normalised mean pitch contour. Specifically in Hong Kong Cantonese, post-focus words display the only negligible observable differences in pitch contours between focused and non-focused contours, with a rather minimal focus-related variability (Wu & Xu, 2010). Closer scrutiny further confirms the mutual similarities that are shared between the two languages through the indication of non-significant mean F_0 under the effect of focus. At this juncture, this study has arrived at several deductions. First, Malay applies the same focus signalling strategy as the other languages without PFC by utilising duration, intensity and sometimes pitch parameters in an utterance. This is contrary to the PFC

languages which showed the utilisation of the lowering of prosodic parameters following the on-focus words. Secondly, this study has led to a strong affirmation in the typological categorisation of languages on the basis of PFC. A series of studies have substantiated a clear-cut distinction between languages positing PFC and the ones without by showing no traits of ambiguous overlaps in the prosodic measures. These findings have demonstrated the notion of PFC as a strong and robust element to designate languages into different groups that can probably be explained by a certain ancestral origin.

This combination of findings now leads the discussion to the subsequent issue of language typological differences. Notably, this study was carried out with the purpose of addressing the bigger hypothesis of linguistic typology as proposed by Xu (2011). The highly endorsed proposal suggests a proto-language called Nostratic superfamily to be the common origin for the grouping of all modern PFC languages, within which lies seven different language families which are Indo-European, Uralic, Altaic, Afroasiatic, Dravidian, Kartvelian, and Eskimo-Aleut. Malay, however, is not hypothesised to be in the same grouping since Austronesian origin does not constitute the grouping of Nostratic superfamily. Hence, findings would be informative in testing the viability of the hypothesis by confirming the exclusion of the Austronesian family from the hypothesis. Indeed, this is the case with the current findings; however, a note of caution is due since a negative

proof could leave to a logical fallacy. It could be a dangerous attempt to base the soundness of the hypothesis upon the lack of evidence from other language families that are not implicated. Xu (2011) noted that languages from the Dravidian, Kartvelian, and Eskimo-Aleut families had not yet been tested for PFC, thus future research for these languages should be carried out. In summary, the results have corroborated supplementary support for the hypothesis involving the ancestral origin of modern PFC languages.

CONCLUSION

The present study concurs that the prosodic realisations of focus in Malay were better described within the articulatory-functional framework. It has provided an alternative outlook to the prosodic inventory of Malay looking at the complications that emerged from the adaptation of the A-M framework of intonation. Under the effect of focus, Malay illustrates heightened pitch, increased intensity, and elongated duration; a series of characteristics that have been generally implied in the literature across languages. The language also works in agreement with the three-zone model of pitch range adjustments consisting of a neutral shape and intact structure for the pre-focus words, an expansion under focus, and lowering for the words following the on-focus words. Notably, the present study had unearthed a novel feature of Malay which was not previously discovered, namely the absence of post-focused compression (PFC). This adds another layer of description to the

language such that it exhibits similarities with several existing languages on the Southern coast of China and Taiwan. More importantly, this renders support that is central to the hypothesised origin of the language, which belongs to the Austronesian language family.

The authors recognize several improvements for a better representation of the study. Essentially, the study could have been better described with rectifications on the overall experimental design. Better considerations on the choice of words and the method of repetitions of sentences would be necessary for the ease of segmentation and to avoid the collection of anomalous and random data. The authors noted difficulties in segmenting the words from the raw data, which might have led to less accurate markings of word boundaries. Although word onsets were controlled by sonorants, it was not fulfilled on all occasions. Moreover, the study collected repetitions of different focus locations across unique target sentences rather than across identical sentences. The method of repetitions could have been better implemented if every target sentence consisting of different focus locations was randomised and repeated during the recording session. Further study will also reveal the feature of pre-focused words in Malay under the effect of focus since this study did not approach the query in that regard. Lastly, a perception experiment could be supplemented to the production experiment to seek for the effectiveness of focus signalling strategy underlying the language. Since the language is devoid of PFC, which is an effective element for focus recognition, further study will reveal other focus elicitation approach that could be employed in the language.

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SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

Strategies Employed by Jordanian Subtitlers in Translating the Dialect Used in the Movie "Theeb"

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to investigate the translation strategies employed by subtitlers in the translation of the Jordanian dialect used in the movie "Theeb" into English. The dialectical expressions investigated in this paper were taken from the dialogue between actors in the movie "Theeb". The movie focused on a young Bedouin boy his name was "Theeb" (ذيب, wolf) and displayed Bedouin life during World War I. The actors were non-professional actors who came from the Bedouin community in southern Jordan (Petra). To critically analyze the dialectical expressions and their translations, the actors' dialogues and their corresponding subtitles were investigated. To examine the translation strategies use, the dialect was first defined, and the translations used in the subtitles were examined. To illustrate the strategies employed by subtitlers in dealing with the translation of the dialectical expressions examples were listed in tables. The findings might offer perspicacity to the subtitlers in selecting strategies used in translation and it gives more attention to the cultural differences between the source language (SL) and target language (TL). The subtitles of the movie preferred to transfer the dialectical expressions into modern standard Arabic (MSA) by using the standardization strategy and then translated it into the TL.

Keywords: Culture, dialect, subtitling, transliteration, translation strategies

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INTRODUCTION

The internet and other new technologies have made the world a very small place by allowing people, culture, and languages to interact more effectively. The television

and movie industries have been expanding rapidly and the role of translators have been increased. The translation of dialectical and cultural expressions as part of any language is also an intimidating task. The actors' dialogues in the movie are based on the Jordanian Bedouin dialect which comes from the southern part of Jordan, near Petra. The data of this paper was collected from the movie (https://ok.ru/video/91070138943). This dialect requires very close attention in order for it to be accurately and concisely translated into English. The translation of the movie, therefore, requires special skills and excellent attention to detail.

Key Terms of the Article

Dialect. A regional variety of languages, distinguished by features of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation from other regional varieties that together constitute a single language (Webster, 2006). Dialect is also a very powerful way of characterization, which elaborates on the geographic and social background of any character. It should be noted the Arabic spoken dialects are acquired and taught as native languages, while modern standard Arabic (MSA) is learnt and taught in schools. Moreover, another dialectal difference exists between the Bedouin and those who live in cities and villages, with other differences being used by different ethnic or religious groups, and by different social classes (Badawi, 1973).

Culture. Newmark (1988) stated that culture was the way of life and its manifestations peculiar to a society. The culture is a cumulative experience affected by morals, art, knowledge, beliefs, and traditions. Hofstede (1980) stated that culture was learnt, rather than inherited, and was derived from the social environment. The culture includes three levels, the first of which is the universal level, which is associated with the common nature of all human beings. The second is the collective level, which is common within a group of people and it can be learnt from other individuals in the group. The final level is that of the individual, which specific to every person. The language reflects the thoughts, notions, ideas, habits, and any other cultural aspects of the community. The terminology of a language shows the culturally important sides of people such as social, religious or geographical themes.

Transliteration (TRL). Transliteration is the representation of a word or phrase written in a script different from the source language achieved by using the characters or letters of the target language (Muscat, 2011). Also, it is the process of transferring a word, a phrase from the alphabet of the source language (SL) to the target language (TL), which can be helpful for students, scholars, and readers in understanding and pronouncing words, phrases, and names in the TL and vice versa. Additionally, transliteration provides readers with an idea of how the word is pronounced only through transferring the words and phrases into a familiar alphabet. For example, الفاعل' '(faᶜel) (doer),'الفعل' (feᶜel) (verb), and ', حروف الجر '(huroof aljar, prepositions).

Subtitling. A printed translation of foreign-language dialogue shown at the bottom of the screen, in a film or a television broadcast (American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, 2011). Subtitles are the words or sentences that appear at the bottom of the screen. They are the translation of the movie's spoken dialogue into a different language for the target audience. Subtitling is also a very important method used in allowing the hearing impaired to follow the movie. In addition, the subtitlers should have the knowledge and the ability to localize the spoken dialogue in the movie to suit the dialect and culture of the target audience. As a subtitler, it is very important to have deep knowledge of SL dialects, slang, and culture.

Strategies for Translating Dialect

One of the most problematic issues in the translation of audio (spoken language) is how to deal with the dialects and slang (nonstandard language) that is used in movies and television. This help develops the characters and put them in specific groups of communities or cultures by use of specific linguistic patterns. This paper identifies the possible methods and strategies that help in translating dialects and slang with specific examples from the Arabic translation of the dialogue in the movie "Theeb."

Linguistically, dialects and slang are categorized as subdivisions of the standard language. The varieties of the language and its subdivision (dialect and slang) can be recognized either socially or geographically.

Therefore, in this paper, the dialect and slang used in the movie have been strongly connected and tied to the geography of the primary location shown in the movie, South Jordan, near Petra. However, Perteghella (2002) had developed a remarkable definition of five possible strategies for translating dialectical and slang expressions, that could be applied in any language. These strategies are discussed in the following paragraph.

Dialect Compilation. The Arabic speakers and scholars believe that the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) was originally a collection of slang and dialects ensuring that the Arabic speakers using different slang and dialects, from Morocco in the west to the Gulf States in the east, could more or less can all understand each other. The Arabic language is a language that stands by itself, there are slight differences between it and its related languages in the region, such as Hebrew, Turkish (Turkey), Persian (Iran), Urdu, Swahili, and Malay. All of which are somehow unintelligible to the Arabic speakers. However, the dialect is deep-rooted in a particular group of people, where the background of this social group remains the same. For example, they are welcome, which is the translation of Hayahom Allah حياهم الله.

Pseudo-Dialect Translation. The deep meaning of the phrase "pseudo" is the usage of adjective or nounthat refers to something different from the meaning it is claimed to be. So, if you are trying to describe a person as a pseudo-honest or a country

as pseudo-economic, your intention is to mean that the person is not really honest and the country is not really economically strong. In the same vein, the translation of Pseudo-dialect is usually used for indistinct dialects, nonstandard language, and idiomatic features of different target language dialects, where the proper names, topical, and cultural references are kept as in the original. For example, thank you, which is the translation of E'sht, عشت, long life.

Parallel Dialect Translation. Parallel or parallelism linguistically refers to use the same pattern of phrases or words to clarify that the two phrases, words, or ideas have the same importance in the spoken language. Therefore, the words, phrases, or ideas should have the same impact, tense, and structure. Subtitlers and producers usually use parallel phrases and ideas to increase the transparency of their stories and to make their language understandable by their audience. Grammatically, their intention is to illustrate that the language used in their sketches is grammatically and structurally correct, which can help them to add value to their movie. Additionally, parallel in the structures of the writing will provide flow in the sentences and phrases used. It also maintains the stream of writing in a sentence. It keeps your writing balanced and well-adjusted to make it easier for readers. On the other hand, making any errors in the writing will cause loss of the ideas and the story will sound strange to the readers and hearers. In the same context, to translate a dialect into another specific

target language (TL), usually the languages that have similar implications and occupies the same correspondence position in the TL linguistic system. Names, places, jokes, and other source-language cultural references are kept as in the original. This strategy can achieve the goal of the translation only if the translators work closely with the actors and producers.

Dialect Localization. Localizing the dialect is the matter of adjusting and acclimating the dialect/slang that has been previously rendered into different multiple languages. Also, it is the most important stage in adapting to the targeted cultures that belong to specific regions, areas, or groups of people. The localizing process differs from the translation process due to the need for studying the targeted cultures to render your story to comply with local requirements. Generally, the notion of localizing the dialect is linked to the adaptation of targeted cultures and interpreting movie sketches, websites, or audiovisual contents. It can be made for a group of people or regions where this region and groups of people use different languages or where the same language is spoken. For example, different dialects, with different expressions, are used in North Africa. Frequently, the names of characters the actors play in the movie are changed to the TL to TL cultural references. This is an acculturating strategy, domesticating that limits on adaptation and version (for example, an Arabic version of American movies such as the film Titanic. A dialect-localization strategy is every so often chosen by scriptwriters or a director

to express a different perspective on a movie or for a particular production. The dialect-localization strategy might restrain reception, especially in those countries in which regionalisms are stronger.

Standardization. Language standardization is attentive to the forms of linguistic and social functions of the language. The standard language is a rational sketch and normally accompanies the development of the discourse practices, which stress the accuracy of language usage. It may also come as a natural development of the language. MSA is a standardized form of the Arabic language, normally used by government authorities in political speeches or official correspondence, media, universities, and schools. Standardization can be considered as a way of applying and enhancing the technical standards based on the consensus statement of different government official parties, in order to help the language's speakers to take the full advantage of language compatibility and repeatability. Political and economic issues in the country play a remarkable role in this, where the officials usually choose to implement a standard language in order to enhance comprehensibility and to safely convey their message to multiple groups within a region, and thus to the widest audience possible. Arabic speaking nations often substitute their regional dialect with Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). This is because the spoken Arabic language is often mixed with colloquialisms, which may not be understood by non-local audiences. This approach is more suitable for drama, but

also for productions that universalize some issues, as in the movie "Theeb".

Subtitling

The first subcategory of screen translation is subtitling. It is a complex form of translation in which the source SL / spoken language of a drama series or movie is conveyed into the TL/ the written language. Subtitling is a new translation category falling under audiovisual translation. This type of translation has its own requirements, characteristics, and rules. As a translator, subtitler, or producer the first thing you should start with is an understanding that this type of translation belongs to "subordinate translation". Also, you must know that this type has special limitations, and that time greatly affects the end results. Consequently, the space for the translation that is given to the translator is usually limited to 2-3 three short lines. Also, the subtitles will be centred and placed at the bottom of the screen.

Ideally, the first line of a subtitle is limited and should not exceed 35 letters, while the second line can go up to 60-70 letters. As for the limitation of time, each subtitle normally has only one to six seconds in which it will be displayed on the screen. With much depending on the number of letters and the reading speed. Technically, the translator and subtitlers should know the time of the appearance and disappearance of the subtitle on the screen, in addition to the changing of the clip.

The process of subtitling includes spotting to determine the time of exit and entrance of the subtitles matching with the

audio; translation to adapt and translate from the SL to TL; adjusting it to the number of letters that will be displayed on the screen in the allotted time; imitation (simulation) to illustrate and represent the translated subtitles with the image and the audio to make sure that they meet the minimum standards, and that can be read properly. If done properly, the subtitles should follow the audiovisual presentation in such a way as to become natural, fluent and easily read.

Limitations of Subtitling. Gottlieb (1992) indicated that subtitler was faced with formal and textual limitations, where the textual limitations were those imposed on the subtitles by the visual context of the movie, whereas the formal limitations were the space factors (a maximum of two lines are allowed, with some 35 characters each) and time factor. However, the length of a subtitle depends on the quality and complexity of the spoken language and on the speed of the actors' speech in the movie. Along the same vein, Delabastita (1989) explained that subtitles were limited forms of translation since the spoken language must be translated as segments with no more than two lines usually. Typically, the audience reads more slowly than they speak, therefore, the subtitles try to summarize some of the spoken languages in order to make it more readable in accordance with the audiences reading speed. In the same context, Delabastita (1989) mentioned that "the constraints of space and time lead into the problem of selection as the translator has to analyze the source text material carefully to decide what should be transferred to the target text and what can or must be left out".

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Materials
The material and information used in this paper were taken from the movie "Theeb"," which was produced in 2014. The movie was in the Arabic language, using the Jordanian Bedouin dialect. The colloquial and dialectical terms used in the dialogue in the movie were carefully selected to give the readers and scholars a clear idea regarding the nature of the Bedouin dialect and the manner for transferring it into English. Moreover, the selection process for the terms used was meant to cover the entire movie, from the beginning to the end (https://ok.ru/video/91070138943).

Methods
Around six dialectical and slang expressions were collected from the movie. These represent the whole of the dialectical Bedouin expressions occurring in the movie. Bear in mind that all of the spoken languages in the movie was in the Jordanian Bedouin dialect/slang. These selected expressions were written in tables in Arabic (SL, MSA) that illustrated the dialectical term, transliteration, original English translation, alternative translation to see how it had been translated into English, and its time in the movie. After examining the translation of each term, the strategies that users would be identified and the final conclusion would be made.

Dialectical Expressions and Its Translation.
The following tables show the dialectical expressions that were selected from the movie along with their transliterations, original English translations, and the alternative translation suggested by the writer. Additionally, the following abbreviations (Table 1) are used in the tables; dialectical term (DT), modern standard Arabic (MSA), English translation (ET), transliteration, and alternative translation (ALT).

In this part of the film, the actors were trying to slaughter a goat in an acceptable Islamic way (Halal). The elder brother tried to teach Theeb what he had to say and what he had to do when he slaughtered a goat. The elder brother used the Bedouin Islamic cultural expression ' سمي ' (Sami), which meant 'say In the name of Allah'. The translators/subtitlers conveyed it into the English language as 'say a prayer'. The interpretation of the term does not reflect the deep dialectical Islamic cultural expression as it meant in the sentence. They transferred it into MSA and translated it into English ignoring the real meaning of this dialectical Islamic cultural expression.

However, their translation 'say a prayer' might be suitable for another culture, in which beliefs and customs differ from Bedouin Islamic culture. Usually, when it comes to Muslims, especially the Bedouin, they start by mentioning the name of ALLAH when they intend to do something (see Table 2). The term 'say a prayer' does not exist in Bedouin culture at all. Obviously, the subtitlers are not familiar with Bedouin culture and they just quoted the translation from other English movies.

The term refers to the death of Sheik Mahmoud, The translator converted the expression to MSA and conveyed it literally to English as an MSA term, which caused a loss of meaning, as well as ignoring the sense of the dialect and culture used. In Bedouin culture when someone dies, they would use the term 'اعطاك عمره' (a'tak o'mroh) instead of saying he died. Using such dialectical expression will reduce the shock of the death and the effect of this bad news. Instead, they are asking Allah to extend the life of the one who asked about him.

The term is not transferred precisely and accurately to the TL by the subtitlers and

Table 1

Dialectical expressions selected from the movie and its English translation

Dialectical expressions	Translation
Dialectical term (DT)	سمي
Modern standard Arabic (MSA)	بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
English translation (ET)	Say a prayer
Transliteration	Sami
Alternative translation (ALT)	In the name of Allah

Note: Time in the movie (TM) is 11.7.

Table 2

Dialectical expressions selected from the movie and their English translation

Dialectical expressions	Translation
Dialectical term (DT)	أعطاك عمره
Modern standard Arabic (MSA)	توفي
English translation (ET)	passed away
Transliteration	a'tak o'mroh
Alternative translation (ALT)	He gave you his life

Note: Time in the movie (TM) is 13.6.

the phrase "a'tak o'moroh" is not translated well, thus, a senseless translation has been made and the shock of this bad news has been increased. Therefore, using the polite sense in telling such kind of shocking news, the term 'gave you his life' is more appropriate to this dialectical Bedouin expression (see Table 3).

The term (ابشر, e'bsher) is an Arabic verb derived from the root verb ' أبشرَ' (a'bsher) and it refers to the 'obligation' in English, which means "something that you must do with pleasure because it is morally

right," as defined in the Merriam Webster Dictionary (2006). As we have noticed from the spoken Bedouin dialect in the movie, the Bedouin always connect their answers with Islamic culture, where they can praise Allah in each sentence.

In this example, they link their answer ' أبشر' (e'bsher) with the Islamic term (حياك الله, hayak Allah, Allah bless you). The subtitlers/translators of the film do not convey the same sense and image of the dialectical term into the TL when they translated it as 'of course'. This

Table 3

Dialectical expressions selected from the movie and its English translation

Dialectical expressions	Translation
Dialectical term (DT)	ابشر حياك الله
Modern standard Arabic (MSA)	ماذا تريد
English translation (ET)	Of course,
Transliteration	e'bsher hayak Allah
Alternative translation (ALT)	Allah bless you, will do it with pleasure

Note: Time in the movie (TM) is 16.3.

deviates from the true meaning of the term in the SL. Therefore, 'Allah bless you, will do it with pleasure' is more appropriate, in order to reflect the sense and the image of the dialect (see Table 4).

Again, the term 'وصلتوا' (weselto) is an Arabic verb derived from the root verb 'وصل' (wasal). This verb is similar to the previous verb 'ابشر, e'bsher' and it refers to the 'obligation' in English, which means "something that you must do with pleasure because it is morally right" as defined by the Merriam Webster Dictionary (2006). The subtitlers/translators did not impart the sense of the dialect into the TL, having translated it too literally as 'you have arrived'. The true translation has a far deeper meaning, conveying much more than someone was on a trip and he just arrived.

The real meaning of this term is that the Sheik sent them to ask something (a favor) from the eldest brother. Bear in mind,

that this term is widely used in Jordan, in both Bedouin and urban communities. Thus, since the subtitlers/translators were Jordanian they should have been aware of such a common phrase, but it seemed as if they used MSA to avoid making mistakes in their translation. Instead of the translation they used, 'you are welcome, will do it with pleasure' is more appropriate to reflect the real sense of the dialect (see Table 5).

The term (حرمته, horomtoh) is an Arabic verb derived from the root verb "حرَّم" (harama) and it refers to the 'women' in Arabic. In the English language, this term is equivalent to 'inviolable', which means 'secure from violation or profanation' as defined in the Meriam Webster Dictionary (2006). In Arab Bedouin culture, a wife or a woman is something very valuable, and it is totally prohibited to mention or to talk about. That is why when Theeb saw the picture of the English man's wife he asked who was

Table 4

Dialectical expressions selected from the movie and its English translation

Dialectical expressions	Translation
Dialectical term (DT)	وصلتوا
Modern standard Arabic (MSA)	أهلا وسهلا
English translation (ET)	You have arrived
Transliteration	Weselto
Alternative translation (ALT)	You are welcome

Note: Time in the movie (TM) is 16.31.

Table 5

Dialectical expressions selected from the movie and its English translation

Dialectical expressions	Translation
Dialectical term (DT)	حرمته
Modern standard Arabic (MSA)	زوجته
English translation (ET)	his wife
Transliteration	Huromtoh
Alternative translation (ALT)	his wife

she? The eldest brother answered she was hishoromtoh (wife), meaning 'don't be rude and stop asking'.

As we have noticed from the spoken dialect in the movie, Arabs always limit their answers to Islamic values, culture, tradition, and habits. The subtitlers literally translated this term into TL as 'his wife', dealing with it as if it was in MSA. However, this kind of translation may be acceptable when the translators cannot find any equivalent for the term. On the other hand, I do believe that translators have to explain the real meaning of this Bedouin expression in order to clarify the deep meaning of the expression for the reader. (see Table 6).

The elder brother was trying to protect Theeb from the English man when he said ' ايدك عليه ' (la tmed edak a'laih), where Theeb was very curious to know what was in the English man's box. He used this dialectical term to warn the English man not to touch his brother. In their work, the subtitlers conveyed the term into English as 'don't you dare touch him'. They transferred the term to MSA and translated it into the TL. Actually, the phrase ' لا تمد ايدك عليه ' (la tmed edak a'laih) represents protection in

Table 6

Dialectical expressions selected from the movie and its English translation

Dialectical expressions	Translation
Dialectical term (DT)	لا تمد أيدك عليه
Modern standard Arabic (MSA)	لا تضربه
English translation (ET)	Don't you dare touch him
Transliteration	la tmed edak a'laih
Alternative translation (ALT)	keep your hands off him

the English language, and it means 'to stop holding or touching something' as defined in the Macmillan dictionary (Dictionary, 2007). Therefore, 'keep your hands off him' is a more appropriate equivalent, reflecting the same meaning as the original dialect.

RESULTS

The most frequent strategy for translation of dialectical expressions used by subtitlers in the movie "Theeb" was the strategy of standardization. By using this strategy, the producers and the translators transferred the spoken language in the film into the MSA and then they translated it into the TL in order to avoid translation errors. Generally, the original translation of the movie did not reflect the sense and the image of Bedouin dialect and Islamic culture, which was the core theme of the movie. The following Table 7 shows the statistical analysis of applied strategies.

It is noticed that out of the five strategies for the translation of dialect mentioned above. The only one used in the translation of this movie is strategy number five, which is standardization, with the other strategies being totally ignored. This is because (1) the

producers and subtitlers were not aware of the Jordanian dialect, (2) they were overly cautious against making translation errors, and (3) they do not find more appropriate equivalents for the dialectical terms used.

CONCLUSIONS

As the results show, the Jordanian producers and subtitlers generally prefer to transfer the dialectical expressions into MSA, and then translate into the TL. There is no doubt that this type of translation caused a loss of the sense of the dialect and real meanings of the Bedouin expressions used in the movie. Which was one of the main themes of the movie? The findings of this paper may be useful for translation classes, as well as any discussions concerning the translation of dialect. Additionally, it could also illustrate ways to enrich the translation of dialects with a view towards reproducing more precise equivalents of the original terms and phrases. Additionally, the findings of this paper may offer perspicacity to the translators in selecting translation strategies from those discussed above. It will also bring attention to the cultural differences between source languages and

Table 7

Statistical analysis of applied strategies of dialect translation in the movie "Theeb"

Strategies	Percentage
Number of dialectical expressions	6
Dialect compilation	0%
Pseudo-dialect translation	0%
Parallel dialect translation	0%
Dialect localization	0%
Standardization	100%

target languages. Finally, the researcher found that there is not enough research on audiovisual translation, especially in translating dialect, and therefore, hopes that this paper might be lead to further research.

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Effectiveness of Learning Portfolio for Writing Practice in Korean Language Learning

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ABSTRACT

Electronic communication forms a greater part of everyday language use and this form has influenced foreign language teaching and learning. If foreign language learners in the 21st century are able to practice their target language in its written form through both a hand-written and typed format, this will allow for more engagement; and flexible learning. Infotech in language and communication today allows for various channels to use the target language. This study aims to examine the perception of Korean language learners, and how they view the effectiveness of *Naver Blog* (blog.naver.com) as an electronic learning portfolio (e-portfolio) to practice the language in written its form over the course of five weeks, during which the weekly online task of publishing posts in the target language is required. Learners were undergraduate students enrolled in a beginner-level Korean language university elective module. The students believed that the effectiveness of improving writing skills included the need to look into sentence structure, spelling and vocabulary. These opinions were collected through a questionnaire. Results indicate that students agreed that publishing was an effective way to practice the Korean language, as well as to improve writing skills in the areas discussed in this study. This study expects to provide language instructors with insights into the adoption

of existing online platforms in their teaching and learning activities.

INTRODUCTION

Students in the 21st century are called digital natives, who are native speakers of the digital language of computers, video games and the internet (Prensky, 2001). They are surrounded by interactive media-sharing technologies (McBride, 2009). Digital natives is a global phenomenon, as such, they exist in Malaysia as well.

According to statistics from *the Internet Users Survey 2018* by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC, 2019), younger Malaysian respondents in their 20's allocated on average eight hours daily online. The survey showed that Malaysians in their 20's had the highest (30.0%) percentage of internet usage. On reflection, it is fair to state that foreign language instructors in universities countenance and employ Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) into teaching and learning design.

The maturation of digital technology and the internet has changed the nature of foreign language instruction, and its significance is greater in those foreign languages which are taught less commonly (Robin, 2013). It provides more diverse, flexible and authentic learning environments where students can practice their target language (TL) even outside the classroom. Today, typing is the preferred way of writing (Pinet et al., 2016). According to the MCMC survey mentioned above, the most frequent online activities in Malaysia is communication by text (96.3%), followed by visits to social network platforms (89.3%). The survey has also identified that the most popular way of connecting to the internet is via smartphones (93.1%), laptops (44.2%), and desktop computers (28.1%).

This scenario does not differ from South Korea. The *Survey on the Internet Usage 2017* by the Korea Internet & Security Agency (KISA, 2017) under the Ministry of Science & ICT proved that Instant Messengers account for the highest (95.1%) frequency of internet use in South Korea. The most popular means to access the internet demonstrate slightly different ranks which are smartphones (94.1%), desktops (61.2%), and laptops (31.6%). This shows that writing electronically or typing is very common in communications. As such, it is essential for students studying Korean to be able to type on both a physical and a touch screen keyboard. A student's ability to type in Korean offers more channels to use the language not only as a medium of learning but also as a means of communication.

Nevertheless, researchers claim that handwritten practice is still more effective in foreign language learning in terms of character orientation and vocabulary learning. (Longcamp et al., 2006; Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014). Consequently, exploring more alternatives using electronic communication methods in foreign language

learning should propose the appropriate applications for foreign language instructors of the future.

Research Questions and Aims

The objective of the study was to investigate the students' perception of an e-portfolio and its effectiveness when addressing writing practice in terms of sentence structure, spelling, and vocabulary. This study also intended to find out how students perceived typing using the Korean alphabet, *Hangeul*. The research questions based on the objective of this study are 1) what do students perceive of the e-portfolio?; 2) what do students perceive of writing practice to improve their understanding of Korean sentence structure, to familiarize them with spelling Korean words, and to aid recall of vocabulary; and 3) what do students perceive of typing in *Hangeul*?

Literature Review

E-Portfolio in Language Learning. A learning portfolio is a file consisting of contents reflecting and proving the work of the student (Paulson & Paulson, 1991), and a collection of gathering evidence to show an individual's learning journey and talent over time (Anagün et al., 2018).

The advance in technology has seen widespread usage of smart mobile devices particularly with data supporting the internet on mobile devices. This has changed the appearance of learning portfolios. An electronic portfolio (e-portfolio) allows students to collect and present their productions in diverse formats on online platforms. Seldin et al. (2010) suggested that reflection, documentation and collaboration are the main purposes of using an e-portfolio in education. Zubizarreta (2009) highlighted the advantage of e-portfolios in comparison to traditional hard-copy portfolios. According to him, e-portfolio platforms are fluid, constructivist, instant, accessible and collaborative. Fournier and Lane (2006) also claimed that the advantage of using an e-portfolio helped students make explicit connections between the course learning outcomes and their work. By planning and developing their own content for the learning portfolio, students can view and organize the learning contents with the intention of expressing themselves.

E-portfolios also assist educators and students to interact. According to Zubizarreta (2009), frequent, focused, and friendly feedback from an instructor on their e-portfolios result in students responding positively to the portfolio model. He also highlighted the e-portfolio was a flexible, evidence-based tool that engages students in a process of continuous reflection and collaborative analysis of learning.

Cooper and Love (2001) described two types of portfolios namely formative and summative. The formative portfolio places emphasise on the learning process of the learner, while the summative portfolio emphasizes on the learning outcomes of the learner. Interactivity, collaboration and feedback are highlighted in a formative portfolio.

There have been studies related to the effectiveness of a student's attitude, and

their satisfaction with the e-portfolio in language learning. Interestingly, the record of reflective writing is discussed frequently by researchers. In a foreign language class, a learning task using the blended learning method should be a meaning-focused work that involves instructors and students in comprehending, producing and interacting in the target language (Towndrow & Vallance, 2004), and an e-portfolio is adequate. It fulfils these criteria.

Weblogs and *Naver Blog*. According to Bausch et al. (2002), the term 'weblog' (also commonly known as "blog") entered common vocabulary in 1997. The Cambridge Engish dictionary (2019) defines 'weblog' as 1) a regular record of thoughts, opinions, or experiences that are put on the internet for other people to read; or 2) a website on which one person or group puts new information regularly, often every day. In another definition by Richardson (2009), it is an easily created, easily updatable website that allows an author to publish instantly.

Using a weblog as an e-portfolio creates a digital filing cabinet of the students' work (Richardson, 2009). Du and Wagner (2007) showed that the effective use of a blog as an online learning log enriched cognitive and social knowledge construction. Researchers also agree that using a blog in language learning and practise has several advantages (Prebakarran & Khir, 2017; Pinkman, 2005; Qi-yuan, 2013; Rivens, 2010). Pinkman's (2005) study demonstrated that blogs enhanced reading comprehension, improves students' writing skills and abilities as well

as, providing an exciting and motivating learning environment. Qi-yuan (2013) opined that blogs could be effectively integrated into traditional college writing instruction classes.

Bearing in mind all the above, *Naver Blog* was chosen as the platform for the e-portfolio in this study. *Naver* (www. naver.com) is the most well-known search engine in South Korea. Amongst all social network service (SNS) sites used in Korea, and taking into consideration only those which are native to Korea, the survey by KISA in 2017 found that *Naver Blog* was chosen as the third most frequently used SNS by 28.2% of the internet population in South Korea. It is preceded by Kakao Story (47.6%) and Naver BAND (29.7%).

Some researchers have discussed the use of Naver BAND in education which introduced the use of closed-type SNS, project-based learning, group debate and discussion (Kim & Yoon, 2016; Lim, 2017). In contrast, the use of *Naver Blog* in education is not discussed actively. *Naver Blog*'s distinct feature differentiates it from the other existing SNS platforms. Unlike some closed-type SNS, such as Kakao Story and Naver BAND, *Naver Blog* has more inflow routes as it is accessible via a web browser and a mobile application; it also allows searches by content, title, author, and date of online publication. Posts on *Naver Blog* are displayed in reverse chronological order on the blog site, with the newest post at the top of the page.

Typing as Writing Practice. Swain (2007) mentioned that the act of producing language

in spoken or written form formed part of the process of second language learning, under certain conditions. Taking this thought a step further into the current digital era, the act of typing in the TL can be considered as language production, thus providing language learners with an additional avenue of language output. In addition, Dale's Cone of Reference (1969) which is a model for experiential or action learning, demonstrates that people generally remember 70% of what they say and write. Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) for Korean language learning require students to be equipped to "type" Korean characters in order to "write" in Korean. According to Li and Hamel (2003), research has shown that technology assists with lower-level writing processes such as proofreading, grammar, spelling, and outlining (as cited in Van der Steen, 2017). As such, for beginner-level, digital-native learners, typing as writing practice would be beneficial for them. However, Mogey et al. (2012) found that their students preferred writing by hand to using word processing software.

The Korean language is written in phonograms called *Hangeul* (/hɑ:ngu:l/)

which use *jamo* (자모 ,字母), a type of phonemic letter. Unlike general phonemic writing systems such as the Roman Alphabet, it was uniquely designed to combine consonant letters and vowel letters into syllabic units. Each syllable is written in a syllable unit which includes an initial consonant, a medial vowel, and an optional element, a final consonant (Figure 1).

As shown in Figure 1, the syllable unit is systematically constructed so that the component consonant(s) and vowel form a block-shaped syllable. In modern Korean, the *Hangeul* consists of 24 basic *jamo* where 14 of it are consonants and 10 are basic vowels. In addition, there are 5 compound consonants and 11 compound vowels (refer to Table 1). The compound *jamo* is made by combining two or three basic consonants or basic vowels together. For instance, the compound vowel '과' [wa] is a composition of two basic vowels, 'ㅗ' [o] and 'ㅏ' [a]. The compound vowels include diphthongs (double vowels) and triphthongs (triple vowels).

Hangeul syllables can be typed by pressing keys using the left- and right-hand fingers in turn (MacKenzie & Tanaka-Ishii, 2007) because the keyboard separates

Initial consonant + Vowel   Initial consonant + Medial vowel + Final consonant
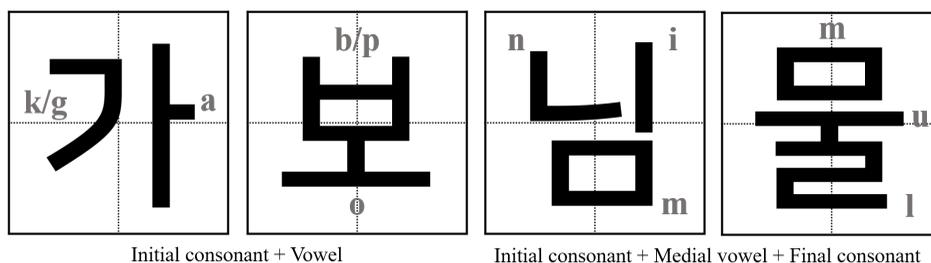
Figure 1. Syllable units in Korean

consonants and vowels to their own respective sides: the consonants are located on the left-hand side and the vowels are located on the right. Figure 2 shows a South Korean keyboard layout for *Hangeul* entry, called *dubeolsik* (two-set-system), with 24 keys for the basic *jamo* and the two keys for the most frequently used combined vowels, 'ㅐ' and 'ㅔ'.

Apart from the composition of syllables, word spacing also requires students' attention when writing. Word spacing in Korean functions to group words and their associated grammatical elements together

without any space between them (Song, 2009). Therefore, a true understanding of the use of certain grammar can be reflected in writing.

METHODS

The instrument used for data collection was a cross-sectional descriptive questionnaire that is composed of two parts. Part A comprised four questions on the respondents' backgrounds, and Part B comprised 25 items designed to elicit information regarding the students' perceptions of the task and its effectiveness. A five-point Likert scale that

Table 1

Korean alphabet

Basic *jamo*	Basic consonants	ㄱ ㄴ ㄷ ㄹ ㅁ ㅂ ㅅ ㅇ ㅈ ㅊ ㅋ ㅌ ㅍ ㅎ
	Basic vowels	ㅏ ㅑ ㅓ ㅕ ㅗ ㅛ ㅜ ㅠ ㅡ ㅣ
Compound *jamo*	Compound consonants	ㄲ ㄸ ㅃ ㅆ ㅉ
	Compound vowels	ㅐ ㅒ ㅔ ㅖ ㅘ ㅙ ㅚ ㅝ ㅞ ㅟ ㅢ

Figure 2. Hangeul dubeolsik keyboard layout (http://virtualkeyboard.biz/2-beolsik)

went from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1) was used to explore the students' perception and attitude towards the online task. The responses were collected using an online questionnaire via Google Forms and it was administered at the last week of the semester. The respondents to the questionnaire were selected using a purposive sampling method, where students enrolled in the beginner Korean language elective who participated in the online task was chosen. A total of 28 out of 32 students enrolled in the class answered the questionnaire. 2 out of 32 students were excluded from the study as they did not attempt to perform the online assignment within a given time. Lastly, two students who completed the task did not want to participate in the survey.

A pilot study was carried out in the previous semester with a group of students enrolled in the beginner Korean language elective module, prior to the main study. 34 students responded and they spent an average of 10-15 minutes to answer all the questions provided. The questionnaire consists of 12 Likert scale items and 1 open-ended question for feedback. The students did not face any problems when answering items in the questionnaire. However, the items were not adequately specific to answer the research questions, and therefore the items were modified and new items were added to the questionnaire. The modified questionnaire was then used for the current study. This questionnaire was analysed using SPSS and obtained a Cronbach's alpha coefficient value of 0.896 which

points to the strong internal consistency of the instrument.

This present study was carried out at Taylor's University, Malaysia and the participants of this study were undergraduate students enrolled in the Korean language elective for beginners during the short 7-week semester. All the respondents were Malaysians. Students were also asked to sign consent forms acknowledging that their responses would only be used for research purposes and that their identity would remain anonymous.

As part of their class, students were required to keep an online learning portfolio, in which they needed to publish two posts each week, according to a given schedule of topics. These topics were presented in accordance with the order of the classroom lessons. The online task was carried out over a five-week period. The posts were required to be written in Korean, with a minimum length of five sentences including at least one image or video that is relevant to the content of the post. The posts must follow the theme and grammar item in the schedule (refer to Table 2).

The platform that was chosen for the e-portfolio was *Naver Blog* (blog.naver.com), as it is a free blogging platform which is native to South Korea (developed by Koreans, for Koreans). It is the most popular blogging website in South Korea, with 28.2% of internet users using this website. *Naver Blog,* which is accessible through web browsers as well as a mobile app, provides the features to publish and share posts, write captions, search for users, keywords, places

Table 2

Sample of topics for posts

Week	Task	Theme	Grammar item
Week 2	Writing (1)	Introduction	-이/가, -은/는, -도
	Writing (2)	Family	-이에요/예요, 있어요/없어요
Week 3	Writing (3)	Number	unit noun, native Korean numbers
	Writing (4)	Number	date, Sino Korean numbers
Week 4	Writing (5)	Number	time expressions of the day, -에 가요
	Writing (6)	Place	-에 있어요, -에서

and hashtags, get notification of new post of the followed bloggers, view other users' posts, like posts, and add comments. Figure 3 below is an example of a post published by a student.

In the first week of classes, prior to beginning the task, the students created an account on *Naver* and added the instructor as a *Neighbor,* which is a similar concept to 'following' other users on *Facebook, Twitter*
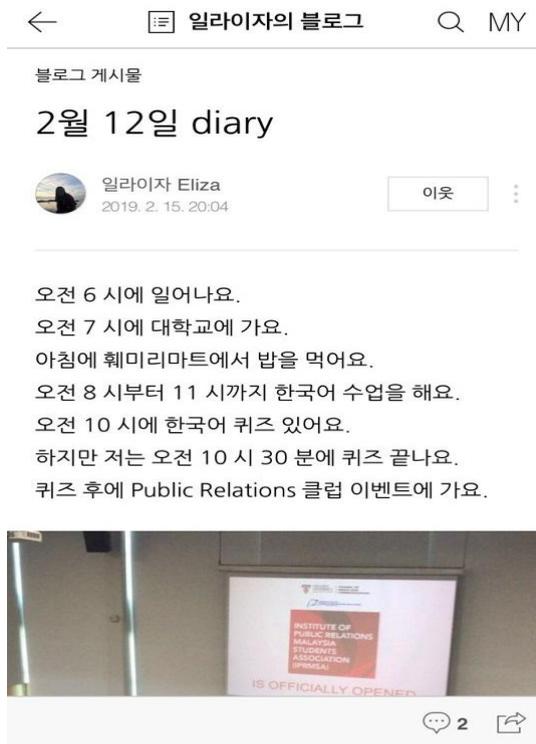
Figure 3. Sample of student's post (Mobile app view)

and *Instagram*. In the same week, the layout of the website and mobile application is also introduced. Subsequently, the students were taught to change the keyboard and language settings on their computers and smartphones. Finally, they were introduced to the layout of the Korean keyboard.

In Week 1, prior to beginning the task, students opened an account on *Naver* and added the instructor as a *Neighbor,* which is a similar concept to 'following' other users on other SNS platforms, such as *Facebook, Twitter,* and *Instagram*. In the same week, the layout of the website and mobile application are introduced as well. Then, they were taught to change the keyboard and language settings on their computers and smartphones. Finally, they were introduced to the layout of the Korean keyboard.

RESULTS

Overall Perception of the Publishing Task on the E-Portfolio

The task of publishing posts on the e-portfolio met with a positive response from the students. A total of 53.85% strongly agreed and 46.15% agreed that the e-portfolio created familiarity towards the learning contents of the class. Apart from that, students responded that they were engaged with learning through the e-portfolio, with 61.54% strongly agreed and 38.46% agreed. Students generally agreed that the e-portfolio helped them learn at their own pace with 46.15% strongly agreed, 50% agreed and only 3.85% remaining neutral. The majority of students responded in agreement that the e-portfolio helps them to connect the class learning contents to real-life situations, with 42.31% strongly agreed, 50% agreed, 3.85% neutral, and 3.85% disagreed. In addition, students responded that their learning motivation increased as they built their e-portfolio. A total of 65.38% strongly agreed, 26.92% agreed, while 7.69% remained neutral.

With regards to achievement, half of the students strongly agreed and the other half agreed that the e-portfolio helped them achieve their learning objectives. A total of 65.38% strongly agreed that completing the e-portfolio gave them a sense of satisfaction, with 30.77% agreed, and 3.85% remained neutral. When asked if the e-portfolio helped students develop self-directed learning habits, 50% strongly agreed, 42.32% agreed, while 7.69% were neutral. Most of the students responded positively that the weekly topic helps them recall the learning contents with 46.15% strongly agreed, 50% agreed, and 3.85% neutral.

Students also viewed the task as an effective method, with a generally positive response. The results show that 65.38% of the students strongly agreed and 34.62% of them agreed that writing and publishing in Korean is a good way to apply what they learnt in class. They also felt the task to be a good way to put their Korean to good use, with 61.54% strongly agreed, and 38.46% agreed. The results also show that students felt that the e-portfolio was good as they were free to choose the content, with 53.85% strongly agreed, 38.46% agreed, and 7.69% remained neutral.

When asked whether writing and publishing posts in Korean was a difficult task, there was a mixed response. 7.69% strongly agreed that the task was difficult, 15.38% agreed, 26.92% remained neutral, while 30.77% disagreed that it was difficult, and 19.23% strongly disagreed. In other words, a majority felt that the task was not difficult, while many had neither a positive nor a negative response. There was also a mixed response towards whether the task was time-consuming, with 11.54% of the students strongly agreed and 11.54% agreed; 15.38% and 19.23% strongly disagreed and agreed, and a majority (42.31%) neither agreed nor disagreed.

Spelling

Overall, the student responses showed that the task helped students in their Korean spelling, as shown in Table 3. A total of 53.85% strongly agreed and 46.15% agreed that writing and publishing posts in Korean helped them gain familiarity in spelling Korean words. For the next item, students showed a strong positive response that the task improves their spelling, with 61.54% strongly agreed, and 34.62% agreed. Following this, students strongly agree (53.85%) and agree (46.15%) that the tasks helped them to understand the combination of Korean vowels and consonants better.

Responses to whether the keyboard layout helped students to recall the spelling

Table 3

Student responses to questions related to spelling

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
Writing and publishing posts in Korean helped me gain familiarity with spelling Korean words.	53.85%	46.15%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Writing and publishing posts in Korean improves my spelling.	61.54%	34.62%	3.85%	0.00%	0.00%
Writing and publishing posts in Korean helps me to understand the combination of vowels and consonants better.	53.85%	46.15%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
The keyboard layout helps me to recall the spelling.	11.54%	34.62%	15.38%	34.62%	3.85%

of words met with mixed responses, with 11.54% strongly agreed, 34.62% agreed, 15.38% remained neutral, 34.62% disagreed, and 3.85% strongly disagreed. Although the Korean keyboard layout is systematic in its division of consonants and vowels, results show that only some found it to be helpful when recalling spelling.

Vocabulary

The results indicate that the online posting task aided students in the recall and memory of lexical items. Referring to Table 4, in the first item, 42.31% strongly agreed that the pictures and videos which accompanied their publication helped them to remember the vocabulary and grammar used in their posts. Apart from that, 61.54% strongly agreed that writing and publishing posts in Korean aided in the recall of vocabulary that had been learnt in class. Lastly, the responses show that students strongly agreed (46.15%) and agreed (50%) that writing about themselves and their daily lives was helpful to recall vocabulary and expressions.

Table 4

Student responses to questions related to vocabulary

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
The pictures and videos help me to remember vocabulary and grammar I have used in the posts.	42.31%	46.15%	11.54%	0.00%	0.00%
Writing and publishing posts in Korean enabled me to recall the vocabulary I have learnt in class.	61.54%	34.62%	0.00%	3.85%	0.00%
Writing about myself and my daily life helps me to recall vocabulary and expressions.	46.15%	50.00%	3.85%	0.00%	0.00%

Sentence Structure

Table 5 shows that a total of 61.54% of students strongly agreed and 38.46% agreed that writing and publishing posts in Korean enabled them to understand word order. Half of the students (50%) strongly agreed that publishing these posts enabled them to understand the use of word spacing in Korean, while 34.63% agreed and 15.38% of students were neutral. With regards to the use of particles or markers more accurately, a total of 57.69% strongly agreed and 38.46% agreed that the task was helpful, while 3.85% remained neutral.

Table 5

Student responses to questions related to sentence structure

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
Writing and publishing posts in Korean enabled me to understand the word order.	61.54%	38.46%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Writing and publishing posts in Korean enabled me to understand the use of word spacing.	50.00%	34.62%	15.38%	0.00%	0.00%
Writing and publishing posts in Korean helps me to use particles or markers more accurately.	57.69%	38.46%	3.85%	0.00%	0.00%

Perception Towards Typing in *Hangeul*

Referring to Table 6, most students strongly agreed (38.46%) and agreed (30.77%) than typing was difficult in the beginning, while 15.38% disagreed and 15.38% remained neutral. As for preferences, 73.08% strongly agreed and that they preferred typing Korean on a smartphone rather than the computer keyboard, while 3.85% disagreed with this. There are mixed reactions to the statement that typing helps improve their handwriting, with most students positively responding (30.77% strongly agree and 34.62% agree). However, a large number of students, 19.23% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. In the next item, 38.46% disagreed that typing Korean is more convenient than writing by hand to practice the language, although 26.92% strongly agree with this statement. Lastly, 30.77% agreed that it is easier to make corrections by typing in Korean than writing by hand, while 23.08% of students disagreed.

Table 6

Student perception towards typing in Hangeul

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
Typing was difficult in the beginning.	38.46%	30.77%	15.38%	15.38%	0.00%
I prefer typing on the smartphone compared to the computer keyboard when I type Korean characters.	73.08%	23.08%	0.00%	3.85%	0.00%

Table 6 *(Continued)*

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
Typing helps to improve my handwriting.	30.77%	34.62%	19.23%	7.69%	7.69%
Typing Korean is more convenient than writing by hand to practice the Korean language.	26.92%	19.23%	7.69%	38.46%	7.69%
It is easier to make corrections by typing in Korean than writing by hand.	23.08%	30.77%	15.38%	23.08%	7.69%

DISCUSSIONS

The results of the questionnaire yielded several interesting findings regarding the effective use of an e-portfolio in learning Korean as a foreign language. When classroom learning is applied to real-life situations, and students were free to choose the contents which they wished to publish, albeit, within the topic given by the teacher, it resulted in students who were more engaged as learning was made meaningful to them. These results are consistent with Fournier and Lane's (2006) findings that an e-portfolio can be used to connect course learning outcomes with student work.

Based on the findings, students viewed the task of publishing posts as an effective method which enables them to put their Korean to good use. As such, the e-portfolio fulfilled the criteria of a learning task set by Towndrow and Vallance (2004), in that it involves both the students and instructors in the comprehension, production, and interaction in the target language, in this case, Korean. The results demonstrated that students not only felt their learning motivation increase as they built their learning portfolio, it also helped them develop self-directed learning habits. The study revealed that students felt a sense of achievement when they achieved their learning objectives. As the e-portfolio acted as a "digital filing cabinet" (Richardson, 2009) of their work, students could clearly see the progress they had made since they began.

Consistent production or output in the target language is shown to have a strong positive response from the students, as it increased familiarity towards the learning content, which in turn aided the recall of spelling, vocabulary, and expressions that were taught in the classroom lessons, as well as Korean word order word spacing, and lastly the use of particles. As the students' writing was produced by typing in Korean, these results corroborate the findings of Li and Hamel (2003) that showed technology, in this case, the e-portfolio, was able to aid low-level writing processes, including

spelling, and had become part of the language learning process (Swain, 2007). Language teachers take this into consideration as they prepare activities and tasks for their students, that consistency is effective. Although using an e-portfolio may be challenging and time-consuming for both teacher and student, it is certainly a rewarding and beneficial tool. However, the task or activity need not be a complicated one, as the key to the success of the e-portfolio is consistency. A simple and straightforward task in the target language which requires consistent effort will produce equally positive results.

Finally, the current results show a small positive shift towards typing, differing from the preferences found by Mogey et al. (2012). This could be attributed to the quick growth and advancement of digital technology, as well as the wide availability of devices such as smartphones in the current years that has influenced student preferences. Writing by hand still has a place even in this era of digital technology, where most written communication is done by typing. This is an important point for teachers to bear in mind in the midst of the current advent of educational technology, that traditional methods like writing by hand with a pen and paper are still effective methods to learn a language and to practice it.

CONCLUSION

This paper the findings of this show that the use of *Naver Blog* as an e-learning portfolio for is an effective way of writing practice for beginner level students of Korean.

For the study, data was collected through a questionnaire which was administered after the close of the task. The first aim of the study is to explore the student's overall view of the given writing task using e-learning portfolio. The results indicated that the students appreciated *Naver Blog* as a useful platform to practice a language which engages and motivates them in the learning process, and brings a sense of achievement and familiarization with the learning contents. The study also aimed to explore the effectiveness of the learning task in terms of spelling, vocabulary and awareness of sentence structure. According to the responses, it is generally agreed that the given writing task helped them to develop the skills and knowledge in the second research question, however, there is a neutral response about the aid of keyboard layout in memorizing the spelling. They admitted that the task brought positive reinforcement in vocabulary learning and understanding sentence structure.

However, the small sample size used in this study signifies that these results cannot be generalized for all beginner Korean language learners. Nevertheless, it has provided some insights into the use of an e-portfolio in the teaching and learning of Korean as a foreign language.

As discussed by researchers and this study, blogging to record and assessing the student's learning could be an efficient and effective alternative for the foreign language learning, especially in which there is a need for more practice of the TL outside of the classroom. This sample learning task used

an existing online platform where the native speakers are exchanging information and knowledge and communicating with other users. It has an implication for foreign language instructors to explore numerous existing and potential online spaces and flexibly deploy them into the teaching and learning environment where they are at. Further and deeper research still needs to be done to better integrate learning portfolio and blogging into the foreign language instructional tasks, inter alia, the sources and factors of the students' perception discussed in the study.

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SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

Aesthetic Response of Language Learners to Stylistic Devices

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ABSTRACT

Graded readers, termed Language Learner Literature (LLL), are used mainly for extensive reading. To engage language learners, they rely upon strong plots and readable language. Rosenblatt's transactional reader response and Miall and Kuiken's foregrounding theories support the notion that stylistic devices have the capacity to create evocation, which could heighten the reading experience. The use of literary language in graded readers has been a contentious issue, due to its potential of affecting readability. Nevertheless, studies have shown that readers are capable of responding to stylistic devices regardless of their language characteristics. This study, therefore, investigated language learners' aesthetic response to stylistic devices. Employing an adapted 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire, a survey was carried out on 54 language learners at a tertiary institution to obtain their response towards two versions of a story: one with figures of speech, the other, without. Eight expressions with figures, and their corresponding expressions without them, were also tested on the respondents. The percentages and mean scores generated from the data indicated that stylistic devices do heighten learners' aesthetic reading experience. About three-quarters of the respondents favoured the version with stylistic devices. The results suggest educators should consider the use of literary language in graded readers.

Keywords: Extensive reading, foregrounding theory, graded readers, Language Learner Literature (LLL), transactional reader-response theory

INTRODUCTION

Language Learner Literature (LLL) is the body of reading materials specially written in a reduced language code for language learners with the aim of providing them with suitable texts for extensive reading (ER). As such, it is pertinent that LLL should appeal to language learners. Coined by Day and Bamford (1998), the term signifies the emergence of the genre of learner literature. LLL encompasses fiction and non-fiction, and the texts could be in original or simplified versions. LLL is commonly referred to as graded readers (GRs) (Bassett, 2015) as GRs form the mainstream of materials under LLL. GRs are called graded to reflect the laddered language difficulty of books within a series. Readers thus progress through the levels until they attain the desired level. In other words, GRs aim to prepare language learners for language mastery of native materials. It is, therefore, necessary for GRs to hold the attention of language learners to encourage them to continue reading, failing which, the purpose of increasing their proficiency would not materialise.

To support ER, language practitioners Richard Day and Julian Bamford set up the Extensive Reading Foundation (ERF) in 2004. The foundation gives out awards to the best GRs every year and helps to set up Extensive Reading Programmes (ERPs) in educational institutions.

In Malaysia, residential schools were the first to participate in ER in the 1970s and over the years, ERPs such as the Class Reader Programme (CRP) and Nadi Amalan Membaca (NILAM) were introduced to cater for the needs of language learners in non-residential schools (Kanmani, 2013). However, ER is not popular at the tertiary level (Ruhil et al., 2014; Tan, 2016).

To ensure the success of ER, GRs have to be enjoyable to the language learner (Bassett, 2015). This raises the question of what makes a good GR. There is no discord among the key players in the LLL publishing industry that the story is the core factor of good reading material (Bassett, 2015; Claridge, 2011; Waring, n.d.). Good GRs must also provide an easy reading experience, that is an experience that is not linguistically challenging to the language learner. To cater for this, each level of GR is bound by linguistic constraints. This elicits a compromise on the use of language, resulting in concerns over the use of literary language.

Day and Bamford (1998) believed that the success of GRs was determined by their ability to communicate with the audience, that is, the audience must be able to experience affect and impact. Rosenblatt (1978) in her transactional reader-response theory stated that it was the transaction between the text and the reader that transpired in evocation, enabling successful communication between text and reader. The evocation allows for an aesthetic reading experience that fuels and propels the reading journey.

Day and Bamford (1998) implied that the use of literary language contributed to communication with effect and impact when they described editors who allowed the use

of poetic and figurative expressions in GRs as sensible. Rosenblatt (1978) recognised the role of stylistic devices in helping to position the reader on the aesthetic stance. Similarly, the foregrounding theory states that stylistic artefacts will be able to generate reading pleasure when the readers engage with them (Miall & Kuiken, 2002).

In the same vein, GR writers and series editors Bowler and Parminter (2015) supported GRs that use language in a more liberal manner, that is, where the style of writing was revitalising and not pedagogic. They viewed them as possibly the new type of GR.

Waring (n.d.), however, cautioned against the use of figures of speech, expressing concern for readability. Simensen (1987) in listing 11 aspects of language to be avoided in GRs with the aim of controlling the language, identified figurative uses that were not explained as being one of them. While agreeing somewhat with the use of figurative language, she insisted that such use must be explained within the text. She supported the premise of publishers that language should be explicit and require little interpretation. As put forth by Maley (2008), common sense dictates that a linguistically challenging text will discourage reading, and this is a view many cannot disagree with.

Nevertheless, a language that is impoverished may not achieve its aim of effective communication. McRae (1991) opined that unfamiliarity and unexpectedness were necessary for evoking effect and creating impact. However, this does not mean that what is unfamiliar to the learner will be problematic for her. The linguistic world of the learner is modest; hence, the language does not need to be difficult to be unfamiliar to the learner as what are considered common expressions to native speakers may be surprising or delightful to the learner (Day & Bamford, 1998).

Furthermore, readability is a problem that may not be resolved even without the use of stylistic devices if the reading level is not correct. As proposed by Day and Bamford (1998), the reading level should be *i-1*, whereby *i* is the language learner's reading level, and *1* signifies a level below the reader's level. The level can also be *i-2,* that is two levels below the reader's level, as the aim is to enable effortless reading to promote ER.

It is without a doubt that a good story written in linguistically appropriate language makes for a good GR. However, the issue of whether the use of literary language will contribute to more enjoyable reading experience for language learners needs to be explored due to the paucity of research done on the aesthetic response of language learners from the angle of artefact response (Chiang et al., 2018).

Purpose of the Study

This paper investigates if the use of literary language elevates the reading experience of language learners and explores language learners' aesthetic response towards stylistic devices or foregrounding, which are the artefacts of literary language. Based on the purpose of the study, the following research questions were posed:

1 (a): How do language learners respond aesthetically to a story void of selected stylistic devices?

1 (b): How do language learners respond aesthetically to the same story with selected stylistic devices?

2 (a): How do language learners respond to expressions void of selected stylistic devices?

2 (b): How do language learners respond to expressions with selected stylistic devices?

Literature Review

Aesthetic Reading Theories. A key player in the transactional reader-response theory, Rosenblatt (1978) introduced the concept of aesthetic and efferent reading stances. A reader who adopts the aesthetic stance reads primarily for pleasure as opposed to reading for information, which is the purpose of the reader in taking the efferent stance. In aesthetic reading, both the story elements and the words play a role in the text-reader transaction. Although content or a good story is important in creating an aesthetic reading experience, by itself it cannot guarantee a transaction, which is a two-way interaction between reader and text, whereby the reader plays the active role. The transactional theory states that when a transaction occurs, evocation is generated, helping to place the reader on the aesthetic stance. This means that the felt experience of reading pleasure occurs when the text and the reader transact.

A story is read efferently if the purpose is only to attain the plot. This means the text is not enjoyed. The reader has no interest in savouring the words and is personally detached from the text. However, in aesthetic reading, it is the reading journey that the reader is concerned with. It is what the reader "is living through during his relationship with the particular text" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p.25). When the reading activity involves savouring the sounds of words, an evocation of feelings and enjoyment of the reading journey, transaction transpires. This signifies an aesthetic appreciation of the words and evocation of emotions. The use of stylistic or formal devices, therefore, is one way to rouse the reader to assume the aesthetic stance. Words incite the reader to connect his sensations and feelings and imagination to his ideas (Rosenblatt, 1988, 1982, 1978). Rosenblatt (1982) substantiated her notion by highlighting how children were drawn to the sound and rhythm of words despite their limited cognitive strategies.

It has to be noted that Rosenblatt's (1978) aesthetic stance refers to both the reader's experience with the words of the text as well as the reader's private response which results from the reader's personal experiences. Soter et al. (2010) delineated both types of response by describing the aesthetic response as a response to the artefacts of the text and expressive response as response evoked by the reader's personal connection with the text. To be able to respond aesthetically, the reader must have engagement with the text. The text must be relied upon, and this is what Rosenblatt (1978) expounded, opined Soter et al. (2010). In the present study, it is the aesthetic response or the evocation created by the hardware of the text that is the focus.

Rosenblatt (1978) developed her transactional theory based on the first language (L1) readers. She explained that

she developed her theory from observing how her graduate students responded to literary texts. Her reader-response theory has been employed by Iskhak (2015) and Khairul (2016) in their studies on language learners. Claridge (2011) advocated that evocation of texts took place in readers, whether language learners or not, in the same manner in the context of reading for pleasure. Hence, she viewed the transactional reader-response theory as being applicable to language learners as well. No doubt, linguistic proficiency may affect learners' reading experience, as is the concern of Waring (n.d.) and many GR publishers, but it is irrelevant if the difficulty level (*i-1*) of the text matches the readers', as in the context of ER.

Another theory that supports the doctrine that aesthetic experience can be achieved via the use of stylistic devices is the foregrounding theory. The theory proposes that unusual forms of language, or foregrounding, afford the reader unexpected visions or perceptions and sensations (Van Peer & Hakemulder, 2006). This theory is also known as the theory of deviation, which relies on the concept of linguistic elements that are not common such as rhyme, word order and parallelism, which usually fall under the umbrella of figures of speech. In view of this, literary artefacts fall under the scope of foregrounding (Khairul et al., 2012a).

Figures of speech, which are foregrounding devices, have been recognised to be capable of elevating emotions (Chapman, 1982; Dancygier & Sweetser, 2014). The present investigation employs Miall and Kuiken's (2002, 1994) foregrounding theory, which echoes the general concept of the foregrounding theory that states foregrounding interrupts the reading experience to bring about evocation and sensations. In their foregrounding theory, Miall and Kuiken (2002) explained that devices used in foregrounding capacitate the evocation of feelings as a result of defamiliarisation. These feelings, which embody bodily emotions, moods and attitudes, direct the cognitive work during reading (Kuiken et al., 2004; Miall & Kuiken, 1994). This means interpretations of meanings are a result of feelings. Miall and Kuiken (2002) further advocated that readers were able to enjoy the aesthetic feelings derived from engagement with the formal features of a literary text. In other words, formal features of texts evoke aesthetic feelings, inducing the reader to have a transaction with the text. As such, Miall and Kuiken's (2002, 1994) foregrounding theory resonates with Rosenblatt's (1978) transactional reader-response theory.

Studies have been carried out based on the foregrounding theory to assess responses to literary style, particularly to see how foregrounding evokes feelings. Russian formalist Shklovsky (1998, p.18) asserted that stylistic devices help "to make one feel things, to make the stone stony"; hence, expressions that are aided by devices will be able to achieve the greater emotional effect (Miall & Kuiken, 1994).

Empirical tests have shown that the processes of foregrounding are independent of the reader's background or training (Van Peer & Hakemulder, 2006). As such, the foregrounding theory is relevant to language learners and GRs.

It is quite evident from a review of the two theories that the transactional reader-response theory and the foregrounding theory are intertwined, with the foregrounding theory acting as a support to the transactional theory (Khairul, 2016). Khairul et al. (2012a) captured the essence of the two theories when they deduced that "the primary focus grounded in the studies of foregrounding and reader response is that reader response can be evoked by … the elements of the story world … and … the text itself ", with one of the responses being the aesthetic emotion.

Studies on Language Learners' Aesthetic Response

No known direct studies have been conducted on language learners' aesthetic response to foregrounding or stylistic devices. However, some related studies have indicated that language learners are capable of engaging with stylistic devices. In Khairul's (2016) investigation in which she constructed a pedagogy to help learners appreciate foregrounding, she observed from her survey that her 17-year-old second-language (L2) learner Malaysian respondents were able to respond aesthetically to the foregrounding elements in literary texts.

In another study, Chesnokova and Van Peer (2016) conducted a study that investigated English as Foreign Language (EFL) readers' responses towards stylistic devices to gather the manner in which the respondents interpreted the devices. Their study suggested that the respondents appreciated deviations. However,

interestingly, they did not favour excessive deviations. More interestingly, the findings revealed that deviations that were overly extensive were also not favoured by trained readers.

Wan-a-rom's (2011) study of 80 teenage Thai participants showed that the learners had the capacity to be engaged with texts utilising stylistic devices. A participant who read the GR version of *Jane Eyre* expressed her enjoyment of the detailed emotions and scenes depicted (imagery) and expressed her motivation to read the original version for a more realistic experience. Another participant who read *Gulliver's Travel* at Level 2 of Penguin Readers conveyed his enjoyment of his reading experience due to the vividness of the imagery presented.

The implications of these studies are not surprising as studies by Miall and Kuiken (1994), Miall (2006), and Van Peer et al. (2007) had demonstrated that there was no correlation between readers' response to foregrounding and the readers' literary background. This proposes that readers, regardless of their experience with literary language (Miall, 2006; Miall & Kuiken, 1994; Van Peer et al. 2007; Van Peer & Hakemulder 2006), are capable of experiencing elevated emotions when they encounter stylistic devices. Soter et al. (2010) construed that readers were capable of experiencing the text without being aware of what contributed to the experience. Based on this, it cannot be assumed that language learners lack the capacity to react emotionally to stylistic devices. In addition, there is also evidence that language skills

from the first language can be transferred in performing language tasks involving other languages (Barnett, 1989).

On the other hand, there are studies that suggest that the use of stylistic devices in texts does not evoke an aesthetic reading experience. In fact, one of the studies found that it may even bring negative effects to language learners. Gillis-Furutaka (2015) discovered that the use of figurative expressions caused confusion among learners even though the lexical items used in the figurative expressions were within the designated headword list for each level of GR. Her findings suggest that stylistic devices do not contribute to an aesthetic reading experience; however, her methods of measuring the respondents' reading level in ensuring the correct reading level of her respondents were questionable. She measured their language levels by determining their reading fluency by asking her respondents, who were university students, to read aloud to her and by administering a reading comprehension exercise consisting of five questions based on the first few pages of GR texts (about 700 words). She used the publishers' guidelines of levels and number of headwords stated in determining the level of texts for her respondents. Lastly, she used a retrospective think-aloud protocol to understand her respondents' reading strategies and difficulties in understanding. Gillis-Furutaka (2015) did not indicate that arriving at the suitable reading level of her respondents was of primary concern, which is crucial for ER. In fact, she admitted that her methods

of arriving at suitable levels of GRs for the purpose of her research, which was to explore factors that impede comprehension, were unsuitable for investigating ER experience that focusses on fast and easy reading.

In another study, Khairul et al. (2012b) opined that language learners might not be receptive to stylistic devices, especially low proficient readers. In their study, they observed that when presented with a short story, both low and high proficient readers, as language learners, were primarily evoked by the narrative dimension rather than by the aesthetic aspects or literary devices of the story.

Drawing from the literature review, it is not wrong to deduce that language learners are not foregrounding impaired. However, for an aesthetic response to take place, it is paramount that the reading level is at Day and Bamford's (1998) recommended *i-1*, whereby *i* is the learner's language level. This means *i-1* is the learner's comfort zone in which the material can be read easily and with confidence. When the reading level is not within the learner's comfort zone, the aesthetic experience may not take place, as evidenced in Gillis-Furutaka's (2015) study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

To investigate language learners' aesthetic response to stylistic devices, the quantitative approach was employed. A survey that used purposive sampling was carried out by administering an adapted 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire to generate the data in

the form of percentages and mean scores for descriptive analysis. The data were then compared for statistical significance. The questionnaire was accompanied by two versions of the same story, which were tested out on the respondents, with Version A (VA) void of figures of speech and Version B (VB) containing them. Figures of speech are known to be foregrounding or stylistic devices that have aesthetic value (Chapman, 1982; Dancygier & Sweetser, 2014), and are considered to be devices that are capable of contributing to communication with impact and effect (Day & Bamford, 1998). They were, therefore, selected as the stylistic devices to be tested.

Respondents

The respondents were 54 first-year university college diploma undergraduates taking a compulsory English course. Twenty-three of them were male and 31 were female. They had studied English as a second language for 11 years and had obtained low distinction to credit in Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) English language examination. The SPM examination is an O-level-equivalent national examination. The ages of the respondents ranged from 18 to 20. The respondents whose English examination results did not fall within the stated range were not included in the investigation as the level of texts to be used in the study would not have matched the recommended *i-1* or even *i-2* range for them.

Instruments

The Questionnaire. There were two parts to the questionnaire. The first part consisted of one question, which aimed to compare the aesthetic reading experience between the two versions of the story tested on the respondents. The item reflected Rosenblatt's (1978) aesthetic notion and Miall and Kuiken's (2002) concept of evaluative response, which takes into account the overall pleasure.

The second part of the questionnaire aimed to measure the respondents' aesthetic response to expressions without and with figures of speech. It consisted of four items that were generated from three sources: questions posed by Miall and Kuiken (1994) in a study that investigated strikingness and affect towards foregrounding; the LRQ (Literary Response Questionnaire) (Miall & Kuiken, 1995); and Van Peer et al.'s (2007) questionnaire, which assesses foregrounding effects. The statements were selected and adapted based on the aesthetic theory of Rosenblatt (1978) and the foregrounding theory of Miall and Kuiken (2002), which reflected two dimensions of the aesthetic reading experience: aesthetic appreciation and evocation. The four items in the questionnaire, which were subdivided into the two categories of aesthetic response are:

Aesthetic appreciation

(i) Statement 1: This expression is striking (it captures my attention/ it is different/ it stands out).
(ii) Statement 2: This expression is beautiful.

Evocation

(iii) Statement 3: This expression lets me feel the description (e.g. see/ feel/ smell/ hear).

(iv) Statement 4: This expression arouses feelings in me (e.g. feel sad, touched, moved).

The questionnaire was tested for reliability utilising the internal-consistency procedure. The Cronbach's alpha generated using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for the four items that measure aesthetic response was .971, while for the constructs 'Appreciation' and 'Evocation', the values were .938 and .943, respectively. These reliability indices are considered high (Hinton, et al., 2014).

The Texts. The story tested out on the respondents, "Dora's Turn" (Bassett, 2008), was selected based on its suitability of language level, its story or content and expressions (figures of speech) used. It was retold by Jennifer Basset, whom Tabata-Sandom (2013) described as one of the very best GR writers available. A level A2 story, which consists of 700 headwords, it was at the respondents' reading level at *i-1*, a reading level recommended for ER that fulfils the criteria of materials that can be read quickly, easily and with few unknown words (Day & Bamford, 1998).

To determine the accuracy of the recommended level of GRs for the respondents, two methods were employed: relying on the researcher's empirical assessment and conducting a survey to validate the empirical assessment. Using the researcher's empirical assessment, when the researcher is the respondents' language instructor, is a common practice as language teachers are usually responsible for selecting GRs for their students' ERPs (Claridge, 2011). The questionnaire survey utilised the judgement of readability by the learners themselves; this measure has been shown to be accurate in prior research (Klare, 2002). Having gauged the respondents' levels at the Elementary and Intermediate levels of GR texts, the researcher sought the help of her colleagues to carry out the questionnaire survey to avoid researcher bias. The first few pages of two texts (about 700 words) at the two levels (Elementary and Intermediate) and a questionnaire that sought to assess comprehensibility and reading speeds were distributed to the respondents.

For the purpose of the present study, the story selected for the survey of aesthetic response was shortened to almost half its original length to deter fatigue and disinterest. This move was taken as the respondents had shown disinterest and fatigue during the readability survey. More than 300 words long, the story was then manipulated to produce two versions of texts, with one void of figures of speech (Version A) and the other containing figures of speech (Version B). Both reflected the original text of the selected GR story. The figures of speech in the original text were retained and some figures were further added. The two texts were then proofread by a native speaker who was an editor to ensure the correctness of manipulation.

Procedure

The 54 respondents were asked to read the two versions of the story before answering the Likert-scale questionnaire. To neutralise order effects, half of the respondents were asked to read Version A (VA) of the story first and the other half were asked to read Version B (VB) first. The respondents were asked to respond to eight expressions without figures of speech taken from VA and eight corresponding expressions with figures of speech taken from VB. The following is an example of the two versions of expressions:

(i). VA: We are soldiers. No one must escape.

(ii). VB: We are soldiers - no escaping, no running away.

For each expression, they were asked to respond to the four items by circling the appropriate response ranging from "Strongly agree" (1) to "Strongly disagree" (5). The data collected were then computed for percentages and mean scores.

RESULTS

The present study was conducted to explore the effects of stylistic or foregrounding devices on language learners' aesthetic reading experience. The data obtained from the questionnaire were segregated into three groups, by combining "Strongly agree" and "Agree" into one group and "Disagree" and "Strongly disagree" into another to form two polarised groups for distinctive and perceivable results. The response "Not sure" remained a category of its own. The research findings provided answers to (i) language learners' aesthetic response to a text without figures of speech and another version of the text with figures and (ii) the learners' aesthetic response to language expressions without and with figures of speech.

Respondents' Enjoyment Level in Response to Texts Without and with Figures of Speech

Table 1 shows the respondents' preference for the same story without and with figures of speech. A total of 66.7% of the respondents agreed that VA was enjoyable to read compared to 72.2% who found VB to be enjoyable to read, signifying a slightly higher percentage of respondents favouring a text that employed stylistic devices. The mean score of 2.28 for VA versus 2.20 for VB reflects that the respondents were more drawn towards a story that carried less stilted expressions.

Table 1

Language learners' enjoyment response to texts without and with figures of speech: Percentages and mean scores

| | Story without figures of speech (VA) | | Story with figures of speech (VB) | |
| | Enjoyment | | Enjoyment | |
	%	Mean	%	Mean
Agree	66.7		72.2	
Not sure	18.5	2.28	13.0	2.20
Disagree	14.8		14.8	

Respondents' Aesthetic Response to Expressions Without and with Figures of Speech

Table 2 shows the respondents' aesthetic response towards expressions without and expressions with figures of speech and Table 3 gives a breakdown of the respondents' aesthetic response, which consists of the two aesthetic dimensions, aesthetic appreciation and evocation of senses and feelings.

The results displayed in Table 2 show that the respondents responded more positively to expressions that used figures of speech, with average mean scores of 2.60 and 2.37 for expressions without figures of speech and expressions with figures of speech, respectively. Out of the eight expressions tested on the respondents, only one expression, Expression 7 ("Then they must kill us both" versus "Then kill us both they must"), which involved the use of inverted word order or the figure 'anastrophe', was less well-received by the respondents. The results show that the respondents reacted more positively to the expression without the device. Expression 2, which employed 'personification' and 'onomatopoeia', and Expression 6, which employed 'metaphor', attained the highest differences in mean scores (0.54 and 0.55, respectively).

Table 3, which shows the breakdown of the two aesthetic constructs, appreciation and evocation, projected consistent and similar results, with the average mean score of 2.30. The average mean scores for a response to expressions without figures of speech demonstrated that the respondents experienced less 'evocation' (2.59) and 'appreciation' (2.68).

Table 2

Language learners' aesthetic response to expressions without and with figures of speech: Percentages and mean scores

	Expressions without figures of speech (VA)		Expressions with figures of speech (VB)	
	Overall aesthetic response		Overall aesthetic response	
	%	Mean	%	Mean
Expression 1				
Agree	47.2		62.1	
Not sure	26.4	2.73	19.9	2.31
Disagree	26.4		18.0	
Expression 2				
Agree	44.0		67.2	
Not sure	30.5	2.77	20.3	2.23
Disagree	25.5		12.5	

Table 2 *(Continued)*

	Expressions without figures of speech (VA)		Expressions with figures of speech (VB)	
	Overall aesthetic response		Overall aesthetic response	
	%	Mean	%	Mean
Expression 3				
Agree	46.8		70.8	
Not sure	23.6	2.80	17.1	2.64
Disagree	29.6		12.1	
Expression 4				
Agree	51.4		57.4	
Not sure	27.3	2.56	23.6	2.49
Disagree	21.3		19.0	
Expression 5				
Agree	62.1		68.1	
Not sure	15.7	2.53	15.6	2.16
Disagree	22.2		16.3	
Expression 6				
Agree	47.2		72.2	
Not sure	31.0	2.68	12.0	2.13
Disagree	21.8		15.8	
Expression 7				
Agree	67.2		42.1	
Not sure	18.0	2.23	22.2	2.95
Disagree	14.8		35.7	
Expression 8				
Agree	56.1		68.0	
Not sure	26.8	2.51	17.6	2.11
Disagree	17.1		14.4	
Average mean score		2.60		2.37

DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The results show that a higher percentage of the respondents found a text containing stylistic devices to be more enjoyable to read than a text without stylistic devices. This indicates that a text that is adorned with devices has the capacity to draw language learners towards the aesthetic reading stance.

Table 3

Language learners' aesthetic appreciation and the evocation to expressions without and with figures of speech: Percentages and mean scores

	Expressions without figures of speech (VA)		Expressions with figures of speech (VB)		Expressions without figures of speech (VA)		Expressions with figures of speech (VB)	
	Appreciation		Appreciation		Evocation		Evocation	
	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean
Expression 1								
Agree	43.5		60.2		50.9		63.9	
Not sure	26.9	2.81	23.1	2.28	25.9	2.65	16.6	2.34
Disagree	29.6		16.7		23.2		19.5	
Expression 2								
Agree	38.0		74.1		50.0		60.2	
Not sure	35.1	2.86	13.9	2.17	25.9	2.68	26.8	2.30
Disagree	26.9		12.0		24.1		13.0	
Expression 3								
Agree	41.7		72.2		51.9		69.4	
Not sure	26.8	2.89	13.9	2.12	20.3	2.70	20.4	2.10
Disagree	31.5		13.9		27.8		10.2	
Expression 4								
Agree	45.4		55.6		57.4		59.3	
Not sure	35.1	2.65	23.1	2.54	19.4	2.47	24.0	2.44
Disagree	19.5		21.3		23.2		16.7	
Expression 5								
Agree	63.9		69.4		60.2		66.6	
Not sure	16.7	2.57	14.8	2.13	14.8	2.59	16.7	2.19
Disagree	19.4		15.8		25.0		16.7	
Expression 6								
Agree	43.5		74.1		50.9		70.4	
Not sure	32.4	2.78	10.2	2.11	29.6	2.59	13.9	2.14
Disagree	24.1		15.7		19.5		15.7	
Expression 7								
Agree	64.9		41.7		69.5		42.6	
Not sure	20.4	2.25	22.2	2.99	15.7	2.22	22.2	2.90
Disagree	14.7		36.1		14.8		35.2	

Table 3 *(Continued)*

	Expressions without figures of speech (VA)		Expressions with figures of speech (VB)		Expressions without figures of speech (VA)		Expressions with figures of speech (VB)	
	Appreciation		Appreciation		Evocation		Evocation	
	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean
Expression 8								
Agree	54.7		65.8		57.4		70.4	
Not sure	24.0	2.60	19.4	2.13	29.6	2.41	15.7	2.10
Disagree	21.3		14.8		13.0		13.9	
Average mean score		2.68		2.30		2.59		2.30

The findings also suggest that the language learners were largely capable of adopting an aesthetic reading stance with a text void of stylistic devices, implying that good content alone has the capacity to beget a transaction. Rosenblatt (1988) opined that content alone did not guarantee a transaction; however, this investigation suggests that while there is no guarantee that a transaction will take place by relying on content alone, language learners are very capable of being able to savour undecked content. Nevertheless, as observed by Khairul et al. (2012b) in their investigation, even though both aesthetic and narrative responses play a role in reader engagement, what gives rise to a more enjoyable reading journey is the aesthetic response.

With regard to the language learners' overall aesthetic response to expressions that use stylistic devices and expressions sans devices, the survey results suggest that a majority of these language learners did possess the faculty for appreciating the beauty of language, and had the capacity to be evoked by stylistic artefacts. However,

interestingly, the respondents did not respond in the same manner to different types of stylistic device. The respondents did not react positively towards the anastrophe but showed their ability to be evoked by more common types of devices, mainly personification, onomatopoeia and metaphor, and to appreciate them. However, Gillis-Furutaka (2015) discovered in her study that all her respondents found onomatopoeia ("The stick made a THWACK sound when it hit the walls", taken from a Level-A2 text) to be confusing. She provided no explanation for her respondents' confusion despite having interviewed them to try to comprehend their difficulty in understanding the figure of speech. The researcher is of the opinion that onomatopoeia is a device that should be the easiest to understand, as it is a mimic of sound and requires no high levels of cognitive maturity to grasp its meaning and effect. In fact, it is a device very commonly used in children's books.

However, in the present study, it is quite understandable why many of the respondents were not able to respond

aesthetically to the anastrophe. It can be perceived that the anastrophe might seem awkward or unnatural to the respondents; hence it probably impeded their ability to appreciate the expression. The results resonate the findings by Chesnokova and Van Peer (2016) which showed that readers, be they trained or untrained, did not favour extensive and excessive deviations despite their ability to appreciate deviations.

The breakdown of the aesthetic dimensions 'appreciation' and 'evocation' shows both elements were similar in their mean scores. The average mean scores suggest that the respondents were equally capable of showing appreciation for and being evoked by figures of speech. Similarly, the average mean scores for a response to expressions without figures of speech demonstrate that the respondents experienced less appreciation and evocation compared to their response to expressions utilising figures.

The results of the survey support the proposition by Day and Bamford (1998) that the use of literary language contributed to communication with effect and impact. They echoed the findings by Khairul (2016) that language learners were in fact equipped to respond positively to foregrounding devices. The results also reflect the findings of Miall and Kuiken's (1994), which evidenced that the use of foregrounding devices had the ability to strike readers and produce emotional effects. They postulated that the evocation of feelings as a result of foregrounding bears no link with the readers' literary competence. In other words,

the premise that readers' aesthetic reading experience can be elevated by stylistic devices is applicable not only to L1 readers but language learners as well. However, the results reveal that the language learners did not respond in the same manner to different stylistic devices. There was an indication that the respondents did not react positively to language phenomena that seemed strange to them.

While acknowledging the concern raised by Waring (n.d.) that using stylistic devices might affect readability, it has to be borne in mind that if the concept of selecting materials at the *i-1* level is abided by, the matter would no longer be of concern. The study by Gillis-Furutaka (2015) found that the use of figurative expressions caused confusion among her learners was probably a result of her failure to ensure the right level of reading texts.

It is quite evident from the present study that it cannot be assumed that language learners are incapable of experiencing an aesthetic reading experience when the text is embellished with stylistic artefacts. As such, this study implies that the use of literary language in GRs will contribute to a more enjoyable reading experience. For ERPs to succeed, it is pertinent that the instrument is correctly crafted.

CONCLUSION

This paper explored the role of stylistic devices in heightening language learners' aesthetic reading experience with the aim of providing language learners with more appealing reading materials. This will help

to make the ER experience enjoyable, and in turn, contribute to the success of ERPs. While it has been acknowledged that content plays a vital role in creating an enjoyable reading experience, there has been discord in opinion on the role of stylistic devices in creating an aesthetic reading experience in language learners, with readability being a concern. As such, an investigation examining how learners respond to the artistic tools of writing was deemed necessary.

By selecting figures of speech as the stylistic devices and eliciting language learners' response to them, the results of the investigation suggest that, in the context of reading for pleasure, learners of language do have the capacity to experience an elevated aesthetic response when they engage with stylistic devices if the reading material is at a suitable level. In fact, a higher number of learners experienced a more enjoyable reading journey with a text that used stylistic devices compared to a lower number of learners who enjoyed reading a text void of devices.

Nevertheless, language learners do not necessarily react aesthetically to all types of stylistic device. This is an area that can be further probed, by ascertaining the suitability of types of stylistic device for language learners. However, the present study also revealed that not all language learners may respond positively to the use of stylistic devices in their reading experience. The results of this research suggest to producers of GRs to consider exploring the use of suitable figurative expressions in GRs, and to English as Second Language (ESL) educators, to consider taking into account the use of literary language in GRs when selecting materials for ERPs.

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Phonological Errors in English among Dyslexic Learners in Selected Primary Schools in Penang: Phoneme, Syllable and Word Levels

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ABSTRACT

Dyslexia is a learning difficulty primarily characterised by the deficit of phonological awareness which includes representing, storing and retrieving speech sounds. Past research has identified the influence of dyslexia in learning English as a second language (ESL). Presently in Malaysia, data that link dyslexia and phonology in English as L2 is scarce. Thus, this study aimed to identify the phonological errors, specifically at the phoneme, syllable and word levels in English among dyslexic learners in selected primary schools in Penang. It also differentiated phonological errors made by dyslexic and non-dyslexic learners in the same context. This study adopted the phonological awareness assessment that consisted of tasks at different phonological levels. The sample included seven dyslexic learners aged ten, and seven non-dyslexic learners with matched age. Overall, the findings suggest that dyslexic learners made significantly more errors than non-dyslexic learners based on the average scores of each task, with the lowest average score of only 28% in the non-word reading task. The results also reveal that dyslexia posed substantial problems in English as L2 learning, as well as the need for structured language programmes for dyslexic learners.

Keywords: Dyslexia, English as a second language (ESL), phoneme, phonological deficit, syllable

INTRODUCTION

Dyslexia has been termed as a specific language-based learning difficulty that affects reading, writing, spelling

and numeracy skills (British Dyslexia Association, 2010). Based on extensive evidence of past researches, the main underlying factor that leads to difficulties in literacy skills among dyslexics is the problem with phonological awareness or phonological processing skills (Ecalle et al., 2009).

Phonological awareness difficulties in dyslexics mostly occur in the principle of letter-to-sound (grapheme-phoneme) relationship. The interference in the process of establishing links between written letters and spoken sounds affects the word recognition system, thus resulting in difficulties of reading and spelling out words, as well as poor access to phonemes (Ramus, 2004; Snowling, 2000).

Morton and Frith as cited in Kelly and Phillips (2011) suggested a causal modelling framework in representing theories of causation in relation to dyslexia. The causal modelling framework in Figure 1 discusses three main components which are biological, cognitive and behavioural.

Based on the model, it is summarised that there are three levels of theories of causation for dyslexia involving interaction at all levels with the environment. The biological factor is reflected in the form of the abnormality of the cerebellar. The abnormality affects cognitive functions such as the phonological deficit, motor deficit and sequencing deficit. The deficits are then reflected by poor reading, writing and spelling, and poor motor balance.

Dyslexia in Malaysia

According to Gomez (2004), the concept of dyslexia as a learning difficulty is still very much in the infancy stage in Malaysia. However, for the past several years, dyslexia has gained serious attention and support from the government by taking into account dyslexia in the mainstream school education system. As of March 2004, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MoE) in collaboration with the Special Education Division has introduced a dyslexia programme in selected schools across the country.
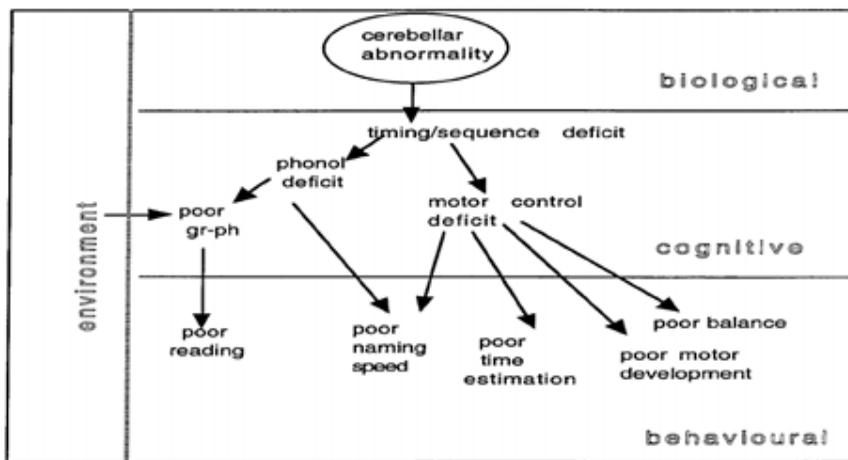
Figure 1. Morton and Frith's causal modelling framework (Philips et al., 2013)

The availability of statistical data on dyslexic children in Malaysia is still very much in its early stage. Ministry of Education Malaysia in July 2012 has published data on the comparison between the numbers of children enrolled in special education system against the total number of children enrolled in government-run schools. Meanwhile, 2013 has shown an increase in the number of children enrolled in special needs education with approximately 54 000, which remains at one per cent of the total number of students enrolled (UNICEF Malaysia, 2014).

The growing number of dyslexic children in Malaysia has prompted the MoE to introduce a dyslexia screening test for primary school pupils, known as *'Instrumen Senarai Semak Disleksia'* (ISD) (Bahagian Pendidikan Khas Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2011). The screening instrument allows for teachers to identify dyslexia children using a checklist of 50 items from three elements; namely the level of proficiency in spelling, reading and writing, pupil's strengths, and pupil's weaknesses. The ISD is tested on pupils who show specific symptoms of being dyslexic.

In terms of academic support by the MOE through the Special Education Division, there are currently three options available in the national school system for dyslexic pupils. They are Special Education Schools, Special Education Integrated Programmes (SEIP) and Inclusive Education Programmes (UNICEF Malaysia, 2014). Despite the initiatives and support provided by the MOE through the Special

Education Division in the national schooling system, the level of awareness of dyslexia in Malaysia is still relatively low. Furthermore, special education schools and programmes are yet to be made available in all schools throughout the country. Research done on difficulties and language errors by dyslexic learners are also sparse in Malaysia.

Role of Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness refers to the ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) as the smallest unit of sounds in words and utterances independent from their meanings (Stackhouse et al., 2002). Phonological awareness is a skill developed at an early age in children through explicit instruction for reading. Beginner readers are required to learn the concept of phoneme-grapheme (Kovelman et al., 2012). The process of grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) in normal-performing individuals occurs as an automated process. However, individuals with a phonological deficit namely dyslexics struggle with decoding letters and blending them into sounds, especially for unfamiliar words, and vice versa.

Phonological awareness in children develops along a continuum from tacit to explicit awareness. Figure 2 shows that phonological awareness is the collective result of auditory, articulatory and orthographic processes. The most basic form of analysis is the syllable segmentation, followed by rhyming and blending. As the developmental progression of phonological awareness moves towards the right in Figure

2, the level of analysis becomes more complex and demanding of phonological skill (Stackhouse et al., 2002).

It is suggested that a deficit in phonological awareness is the core characteristic of dyslexia (Bradley & Bryant, 1978; Wagner & Torgensen, 1987). This view was supported by Stackhouse et al. (2002) in which he stated that problems with phonological awareness tasks and literacy development were prevalent in children with persisting speech and language difficulties. In the case of dyslexia learners, they usually have poor phonological awareness in which they struggle with phonemically-demanding tasks.

To sum up, phonological awareness is essential to understand the underlying alphabetic principle of the written language system. Sensitivity towards phoneme sounds of language and words is necessary for learning to read for young children. For the past years, research has concluded that phonological awareness is in close relation to literacy development, specifically in terms of reading proficiency. Early reading requires the ability to understand and manipulate phonemes for successful reading. In short, success in early reading is dependent on having a certain level of phonological awareness. For this reason, children with reading difficulties often demonstrate poor phonological awareness. Thus, it is clear that phonological awareness plays a crucial role in determining reading and spelling success.

Dyslexia in Learners of English as a Second Language

Lerner and Johns (2009) added that the cultural background and environment also contributed to the difficulty in learning the English language. In the local context, for example, many children in Malaysia speak only their native language at home and have considerable difficulty in English despite receiving continuous instructions in the schooling system (Maros et al., 2007). Lerner and Johns (2009) stated that English language skills in learners of English were built upon a child's native language. In addition, Miller et al. (2006) and Lundberg (2002) also argued that students who experienced learning difficulty in their native
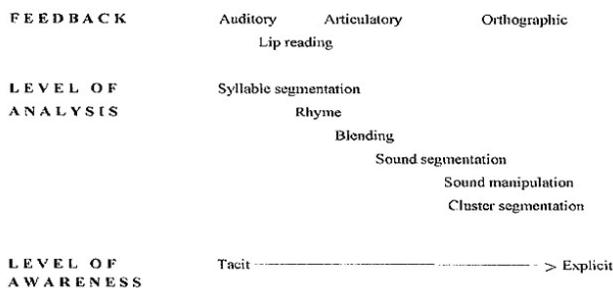
*Figure 2.*The development of phonological awareness skill (Stackhouse et al., 2002)

language also showed problems in English as a second language. In other words, language problem in the first language (L1) will most likely be reflected in the second language (Gerber & Durgunoglu, 2004; González, 2002; Miller et al., 2006).

Furthermore, L2 proficiency also differs considerably in learners. Individual factors such as motivation and anxiety play a role in the varied achievement of L2 learning. Nonetheless, phonological skills in L1 remain as the most promising predictor of L2 learning success (Sparks & Ganschow, 1991). Impairment in L1's phonological processing skill can negatively affect the proficiency level in L2 (Helland & Kaasa, 2005). To account for such assumption, Sparks and Ganschow (1993, 1991) proposed the Linguistic Coding Differences Hypothesis (LCDH). The hypothesis suggests that the learning of L1 and L2 is dependent on basic language components that are present across all languages. Additionally, the hypothesis also argues that difficulties in L1 skills may lead to low performance of L2.

Another issue related to dyslexia in English as L2 is that dyslexia translates in accordance with the orthography or typography of a language (Smythe & Evarett, 2000). Spencer (2001) had noted that transparent orthographies were more accessible to dyslexic children, as they required less demand on memory. In contrast, deeper orthographies such as English are more memory-dependent and may decrease the reading and writing fluency of dyslexic children (Andreou & Baseki,

2012) in English as L2. Spencer (2001, 2000) had also discussed the inclusion of redundant letters and consistency of sound representation in English to be the two main factors in reading and spelling deficits among English as L2 dyslexic children.

Problem Statement

Since the establishment of the Dyslexia Programme in selected schools in Malaysia in 2004, the number of students identified as dyslexic has increased and the latest data provided by the MoE have recorded a total of 50, 738 student enrolment in Special Needs Education in the year 2012 alone (UNICEF Malaysia, 2014). It has widely been agreed by researchers (Liberman & Shankweiler, 1991; Sela, 2014; Stackhouse et al., 2002; Sparks, 1995; Stanovich, 1988) that the core underlying reason for the reading, writing and spelling difficulties in dyslexia is a deficit in phonological processing.

Although there have been many accounts of studies done of the phonological deficit in dyslexia, studies which explored how dyslexics cope with learning English as L2 have been few so far (Łockiewicz & Jaskulskaa, 2016). To date, studies on dyslexia in English as L2 have been carried out in Arabic-English (Abu-Rabia & Sammour, 2013), Greek-English (Andreou & Baseki, 2012), Norwegian-English (Helland & Morken, 2015; Helland & Kasaa, 2005), Persian-English (Akhlaghi et al., 2013), Chinese-English (Ho & Fong, 2005), Dutch-English (Morfidi et al., 2007), and Danish-English (Elbro et al., 2012).

Within the area of dyslexia research in Malaysia, there has been no attempt to specifically look into the errors made by dyslexic students in English as L2. Although there had been several studies conducted in relation to dyslexia in Malaysia, these studies mainly focused on dyslexia in the Malay language (Awang Bolhasan, 2009; Mohammad, 2012; Ruzanna & Letchumy, 2013). Meanwhile, studies involving dyslexia in the context of English language learning in Malaysia have only investigated the use of technology and multimedia as learning assistance for dyslexic learners (Balakrishnan et al., 2015; Ismail & Jaafar, 2014). The phonological difficulties and errors faced by dyslexic students in English language learning have yet to be the focus of studies done on dyslexia in the context of Malaysia.

In addition, the study is also motivated by the scarcity of data on dyslexia in English as L2 in the context of Malaysia. Findings from past studies have unanimously shown that the inconsistencies and irregularities of the phonological and spelling system of the English language resulted in higher errors made by the dyslexic children (Abu-Rabia & Sammour, 2013; Andreou & Baseki, 2012; Helland & Kaasa, 2005), thus contributing to the urgent need for research on dyslexia in English as L2 in the local context.

Furthermore, the bulk of research done on dyslexia concerns with English as the native language. Based on the evidence of scarce research done in the field of the phonology of dyslexic students in Malaysia as English language learners, the researcher

hopes to fill the gap especially in the area of phonology in English among dyslexic learners. Previous research in Malaysia has only focused on the spelling of dyslexics in the Malay language. Hence, this study aims to acknowledge the phonological difficulty of dyslexic learners in English by exploring the types of phonological errors made by dyslexics in their L2.

Research Questions

This study seeks to investigate the aspect of phonological difficulties of dyslexia English language learners specifically in selected primary schools in Penang. The main research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What are the phonological errors in English among dyslexic learners in selected primary schools in Penang at the phoneme level?

2. What are the phonological errors in English among dyslexic learners in selected primary schools in Penang at the syllable level?

3. What are the phonological errors in English among dyslexic learners in selected primary schools in Penang at the word level?

4. What are the differences of phonological errors in English between dyslexic and non-dyslexic learners in selected primary schools in Penang at the phoneme, syllable and word levels?

Literature Review

There are currently three major theories that

are the most prominent in the discussion of dyslexia. The three theories are phonological deficit theory, magnocellular deficit theory and cerebellar deficit theory. All three theories offer an explanation of why literacy is affected, particularly on reading. Kelly and Phillips (2011) also included the role of genetic and hemispheric influence to support the biological level in Morton and Frith's (1995) causal modelling framework. They believed that the three main theories might be inter-related rather than distinct approaches.

Developmental dyslexia may be most prevalent in children, but it persists throughout life into adulthood. Nevertheless, developmental dyslexia varies in its symptoms in accordance with age, severity and also the presence of intervention strategies (Bruck, 1990). Developmental dyslexia has been extensively discussed based on its causal theories. The theories include the magnocellular deficit theory, cerebellar deficit theory and phonological deficit theory. Among these theories, the phonological deficit theory has been the most widely accepted.

Phonological Deficit Theory. Currently, the most dominant theory of dyslexia is the phonological deficit theory (Ramus et al., 2003; Snowling, 2000). Many studies have shown that poor phonological processing skillsets apart dyslexic from non-dyslexic individuals. Poor phonological processing skill is also able to predict later reading difficulties due to difficulties in learning the alphabetic principle that letters represent sounds (Bryant & Bradley, 1990; Lundberg,

2002; Snowling, 2000). Phonological deficit improves with age but is still prevalent in adult dyslexics. For example, a study by Ramus et al. (2003) found that all 16 subjects of adult dyslexics used in the study had a phonological deficit. In addition, evidence from research shows that the majority of dyslexics experience difficulties in phonological processing, especially those in English-speaking countries. This may be related to the deep orthography of the language that consists of irregular and complex grapheme-phoneme relationship.

A further argument on the phonological deficit theory lies in the cause of a phonological processing deficit (Nicolson & Fawcett, 2008). Snowling (2008) maintained that the functioning of the cerebellum also offered a direct link to the cause of deficit in phonological processing skill. Her earlier studies (Hulme & Snowling, 1992) proposed that the cause of reading difficulties was the problem in retrieving phonological codes stored in long-term memory. Previously, the phonological deficit theory was only widely discussed in dyslexia in the first language. However, this theory also applies to L2 learning difficulty of dyslexics as evident in many studies of dyslexia in L2. Most recently, Soroli et al. (2010) explored the theory of phonological deficit in dyslexia from the angle of second/foreign language learning.

Previous Similar Studies. The past studies mentioned had all showed a conclusive finding that dyslexic individuals performed poorer than non-dyslexic individuals, both

in adults (Dickie et al., 2013; Suarez-Coalla & Cuetos, 2015) and children (Tiadi et al., 2016; Tilanus et al., 2013). The central element that was found problematic for dyslexic individuals in all studies is the phonological task. The results are in line with the phonological deficit theory which claims deficit in the phonological processing is the central causal of dyslexia (Ramus, 2003). To date, there are few studies that have investigated dyslexics learning English as L2 (Abu-Rabia & Sammour, 2013; Akhlaghi et al., 2013; Andreou & Baseki, 2012; Helland & Morken, 2015; Helland & Kaasa, 2005; Łockiewicz & Jaskulska, 2016). The central findings of the studies show that the performance of dyslexics varies in accordance with the complexity of a language.

A number of studies have been carried out to compare errors in L2 of dyslexic children and normal performing children. Andreou and Baseki (2012) explored on spelling mistakes among dyslexic and non-dyslexic children learning Greek and English. The key findings of the study stated that generally dyslexic children made more mistakes as compared to non-dyslexic children. From the findings of the study, the variations of errors made are possibly due to the nature of English phonology that consists of inconsistent phoneme-grapheme relationship.

Perhaps the most exhaustive work on dyslexia in English as L2 was done by Helland and Morken (2015) in a longitudinal study in the span of seven years on dyslexic children. The study was done to find valid neurocognitive precursors of literacy development in L1 (Norwegian) and L2 (English). A wide range of standardised assessments covering language and literacy development was carried out. The tasks employed in this study were all standardised dyslexia assessment adapted by the researchers in accordance with the local and cultural context of the study.

Moving on, the most recent study on dyslexia in English as L2 was done by Łockiewicz and Jaskulska (2016) in which they investigated the difficulties of reading and spelling in L2 English of Polish dyslexic students. The study included a comparison of the reading and spelling performance of dyslexic students with a group of non-dyslexic students. The tasks included vocabulary task, real word reading task and non-word reading task. It was highlighted in their findings that the dyslexic students were less accurate and less fluent in the reading of real and non-word tasks both in L1 and L2 in comparison with the non-dyslexic students.

Overall, based on the studies done on dyslexia in English as L2 (Abu-Rabia & Sammour, 2013; Andreou & Baseki, 2012; Helland & Kaasa, 2005) in which English is compared to less opaque L1 language systems, in terms of the performance of dyslexic children in both languages, the findings unanimously show that the inconsistencies and irregularities of the phonological and spelling system of the English language resulted in higher errors made by the dyslexic children. Other studies have also concluded that the phonological deficit plays a central role in the learning

difficulty of dyslexia learners (Akhlaghi et al., 2013; Helland & Morken, 2015; Łockiewicz & Jaskulska, 2016).

The bulk of research done on dyslexia in Malaysia focused on the difficulty faced by dyslexic learners in terms of Malay spelling. Mohammad (2012) carried out a study investigating dyslexics who had a problem with spelling from the aspects of learning the Malay language. The focus of this study was on the language learning and the analysis of spelling errors which emphasised on visual and auditory problems in dyslexics. In addition to that, a subsequent study by Ruzanna and Letchumy (2013) concerning spelling difficulties in dyslexia was done carried out. Similar results were found as in the previous study by Mohammad (2012), hence supporting a general conclusion that dyslexic students struggle in spelling in the Malay language.

A relatively recent study done by Oga and Haron (2012) took on a slightly different approach. This study used a phenomenological approach to investigate the life experiences of dyslexics in Malaysia. They explored the dyslexics' perceptions and views about being dyslexic in the Malaysian context by employing an individual semi-structured interview. An interesting result from the study that appeared to be unique to the Malaysian context was that the subjects agreed that they felt subjected to watchful eyes and negative reactions from society.

In addition to that, studies done on dyslexia in Malaysia has also looked into the area of the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and multimedia as learning tools for dyslexic learners. Umar et al. (2011) investigated the use of interactive multimedia in helping dyslexic students cope with their numeracy skill. In another study, Ismail and Jaafar (2014) also undertook the element of multimedia as a learning tool for primary school dyslexic students.

Lastly, only one study of dyslexia in Malaysia has targeted English language learning among dyslexic students. The most recent study carried out by Balakrishnan et al. (2015) took on the approach of investigating the performance of dyslexic learners through the application of multimedia tools as the learning intervention.

All three studies (Balakrishnan et al., 2015; Ismail & Jaafar, 2014; Umar et al., 2011) concluded that ICT and multimedia tools are capable of improving literacy skills in dyslexic learners. Overall, based on the review of related literature, there are very few studies done specifically on the phonological deficit in the English language in the context of Malaysian dyslexic learners.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed the mixed-method research approach, specifically the explanatory sequential design method as proposed by Cresswell (2014). The researcher had collected data quantitatively based on the test scores from the phonological awareness tasks of the dyslexic and non-dyslexic subjects. The researcher also included the phonetic transcriptions from

the voice recordings to supplement the test scores of the subjects. The phonetic transcriptions highlight the pattern in mispronunciation of words and further provide explanations on the errors made by subjects. Overall, the quantitative data of the test scores was further supported by evidence in qualitative data of errors/ mispronunciations made by subjects.

Sampling

The subjects of this study were selected based on purposive sampling. They were selected from only two specific primary schools in Penang from the dyslexic class. The schools were identified by requesting the information from the Special Education Division, State Education Department, Penang. Only 10 year-olds were selected to participate as the subjects for this study. The availability of the 10-year-old dyslexics is best suited for the study as they are the highest in terms of a number of students, with seven students from both schools. In addition, 10-year old students have received sufficient English exposure as they have undergone three years of English instruction in the Malaysian national schooling system.

Furthermore, subjects were only selected from the national mainstream schools to ensure the validity of the diagnosis. This is because dyslexic students in the mainstream schools have been identified and diagnosed with developmental dyslexia through the ISD with further certification and formally diagnosed by a government medical practitioner. While there are dyslexic learners who could be recruited

from dyslexia or language therapy centres, some learners might have an overlapping learning difficulty such as ADHD, slow learner or autism.

The dyslexic students selected are all Malay students with the Malay language as their native language to form a homogenous sample. The control group (non-dyslexic) also consists of seven students selected from the same schools from the mainstream classes. The control group was matched by age, gender and race with the dyslexia group. The inclusion criteria for both groups are that they possessed normal-performing IQ level, free from any psychological disability/ brain damage/medical condition, and literate in English. The control group also had no history of literacy problem, developmental dyslexia and any other learning difficulty as according to their class teachers. Besides that, the control group was selected based on their similar English level based on their English grade in an examination provided by the English teachers. This is to ensure that the control group is homogenous in their English skills.

Research Instrument

This study had employed phonological assessments as the research instrument. The assessments were adapted from Phillips et al. (2013) in *'Assessment of Learners with Dyslexic-Type Difficulties'*. They were adopted in accordance with the cultural and learning context of dyslexic learners in the Malaysian context. The selection of words in the tasks was done based on words from the dyslexic students' official

textbook by the MoE. This is to ensure the familiarity of words for the subjects as well as to avoid errors that would possibly be produced due to unfamiliar words. The word selection for the tasks was tested in a pilot study prior to the actual study. In addition, the phonological awareness tasks were employed in much previous research investigating phonological deficit in dyslexic individuals (Andreou & Baseki, 2012; Dickie et al., 2013; Helland & Morken, 2016; Suárez-Coalla & Cuetos, 2015; Tilanus et al., 2013).

The phonological awareness assessment used in this study consists of four sub-tasks in total from three main categories, which are phoneme, syllable and whole word. The section on 'phoneme blending' in Phillips et al. (2013) was not used in this study due to the poor response from students in the pilot study.

RESULTS

The results of the test scores are calculated in terms of the average score and percentage score of the dyslexic group. As a group, the dyslexic students scored overall much lower than the normal-performing students, with a total average score of 24 out of 25 items (43.6% correct scores). Based on the results, the dyslexic students made several types of phonological errors in the current study based on the assessments conducted. The types of errors include phoneme deletion, syllable segmentation, syllable blending, and non-word reading. The errors occur at the phoneme, syllable and word levels, which show that the dyslexic students have

difficulty in all three levels of phonological skill.

Phoneme Deletion Errors

As a group, the dyslexic students only scored an average of 1.85 out of 5 items (37% correct scores) in the task. Their average score for this task is the lowest as compared to other tasks in the study. The result of this task indicates that dyslexic students are particularly poor in phoneme deletion task. This finding echoes the finding by Tilanus et al. (2013) in which they too found that dyslexic individuals performed poorer than controls in phoneme deletion task. However, this result in a sense contradicts the findings by Ho and Fong (2005). In their study, they found that the control group showed an equally poor performance in phoneme deletion.

Furthermore, in this study, it was found that the dyslexic group made the most error in consonant blending stimulus words 'stop' and 'frog'. Three of the subjects committed the error of replacing the vowel in the stimulus word when asked to delete the first phoneme in the stimulus word, producing the word /fɪg/ rather than the targeted answer /rɒg/. Meanwhile, two subjects replaced the vowel 'o' in stimulus word 'stop' with 'i', producing the answer /tɪp/ rather than targeted sound /tɒp/. Besides that, dyslexics also made errors in stimulus words that do not contain consonant blending. Two subjects made an error in the initial phoneme deletion of stimulus word 'cat', in which they exchanged the places of the letters 'a' and 't'. In addition, two students were not

able to perform the task at all due to the severity of their condition. They were not able to manipulate the sounds as stimuli were presented verbally, rather than visually.

Syllable Segmentation Errors

The next type of error produced by the dyslexic group is an error of syllable segmentation, which involves the skill of phoneme counting. The scores show that the dyslexic group performed poorly with the average score record of 2.7 out of a total of five marks (54% of correct scores). Although the dyslexic group's performance in this task is low, two subjects scored full marks on the task. Another trend observed in the dyslexic students' performance in this task is that they did better in longer syllable words as in the stimulus for the words 'computer' and 'television'. This indicates an interesting finding because the overall performance of the dyslexic group shows that their performance decreases with the increase in complexity of stimulus words. However, this particular finding does not agree with such generalisation. This may be due to the familiarity of the stimulus words which exist in their L1.

Syllable Blending Errors

As opposed to the poor performance of dyslexics in the syllable segmentation task, the dyslexic students scored the highest in syllable blending task among other tasks with an average score of 3.57 (71.4% of correct scores). The syllable-blending task proved to be the easiest task for the dyslexic students reflected by the highest record of the average score in comparison with other tasks. Four out of seven subjects recorded full marks for this task. One subject was not able to respond to the longest stimulus word 'beautiful', while two subjects could not perform in the task due to the severity of their dyslexia condition.

Non-Word Reading Errors

In the non-word reading task, the dyslexic group showed particularly poor performance with the record of an average score of 2.85 out of 10 items (28.5% correct scores). The non-word reading error is recorded as one of the lowest performance among dyslexic learners. The non-word reading task especially showed the poor phonological processing skill among dyslexic students, particularly in increasing complexity of CV relationship. Words consisting of CCV, CVCC, CCVC and CCVCC highlighted the difficulty experienced by the dyslexic students in which errors were prevalent in stimulus words containing the mentioned CV strings. For example, the target sound /stɑː/ were pronounced as /tɑː/ and /sæt/, in which subjects were observed to drop the initial phoneme, and as well as rearranged the letters to form CVC word. The same pattern was observed in stimulus words 'kush', 'snat' and 'frang' which involved either phoneme dropping or letter rearrangement reflected in /kʊh/, /kʊs/, /net/, /sʌnʌt/, /sæt/, /frɑː/ and /rʌŋ/ respectively.

Dyslexics vs. Non-Dyslexics Performance

As a group, the dyslexia students scored overall much lower than the normal-

performing students, with an average score of 10.9 out of 25 marks (43.6% correct scores) as compared to the average score of 24.8 out of 25 marks (99.2% correct scores) among the non-dyslexic students. The average score of the non-dyslexic students indicates more than twice higher than that of the score of the dyslexic students. This finding echoes many of the past studies done in dyslexia research (Abu-Rabia & Sammour, 2013; Andreou & Baseki, 2012; Germano et al., 2014; Helland & Kasaa, 2005; Tiadi et al., 2016; Tilanus et al., 2013).

Overall, the performance of the dyslexic and non-dyslexic learners differ in all types of phonological errors produced in English. The differences in the types of phonological errors produced are especially striking in the phoneme deletion errors. Another type of phonological error that shows a striking contrast between the two groups is the non-word reading. This result corresponds with the result of a study by Łockiewicz and Jaskulska (2016). Table 1 illustrates the differences between the two groups based on the types of phonological errors recorded in this study.

Overall, Figure 3 showed the dyslexic group have poor performance as compared to the control group. They recorded particularly low average scores in the phoneme deletion, rhyming, voicing contrasts, minimal pairs and non-word reading tasks with percentage scores of below 50%. The types of errors produced by both groups differ greatly in term of their average and percentage score. The differences occur in the types of phonological errors, which include perception of rhyme, phoneme deletion, syllable segmentation, syllable blending, voicing contrast, minimal pairs and non-word reading.

DISCUSSIONS

The results of the present study reveal that dyslexic students made errors in the phoneme, syllable and word levels of phonological processing. The phonological errors produced by the dyslexic learners are phoneme deletion, syllable segmentation, syllable blending, and non-word reading. The errors made in all levels of phonological awareness were higher than those of the errors made by the control group, indicating that dyslexic students have difficulty in the

Table 1

Average scores of dyslexic and non-dyslexic students in the phonological awareness tasks

Types of phonological errors	Dyslexia group	Control group
Phoneme deletion (n = 5 items)	1.85 (37%)	5 (100%)
Syllable segmentation (n = 5 items)	2.7 (54%)	4.85 (96%)
Syllable blending (n = 5 items)	3.57 (71.4%)	5 (100%)
Non-word Reading (n = 10 items)	2.85 (28.5%)	10 (100%)
Overall scores (n = 25 items)	**10.9 (43.6%)**	**24.8 (99.2%)**

	Phoneme Deletion	Syllable Segmentation	Syllable Blending	Non-word Reading	Overall Score
Dyslexic	37	54	71.4	28	43.6
Non-dyslexic	100	96	100	100	99.2
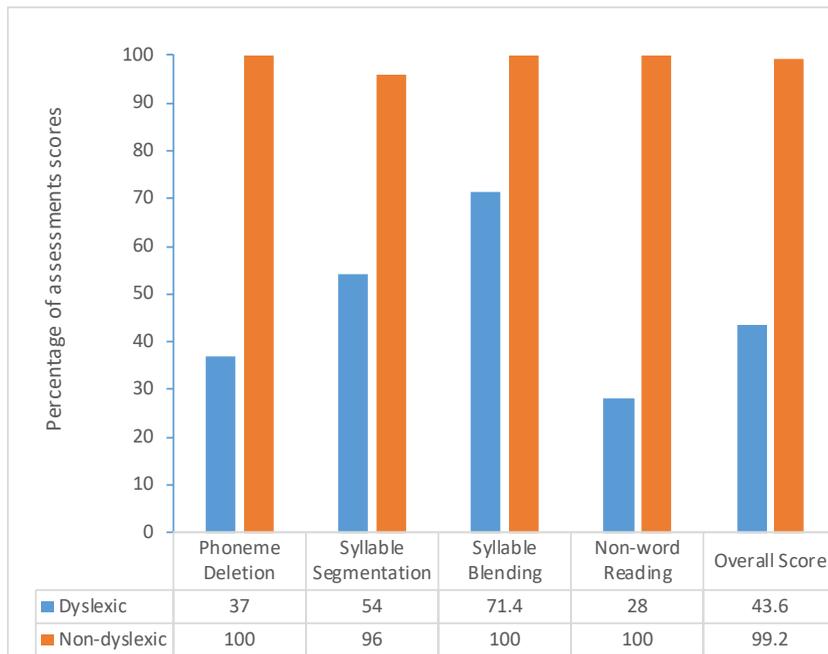
Figure 3. Percentage scores of dyslexic and control group

process of reflecting on, manipulating and storing sounds for efficient phonological processing.

Moving on, the underlying cause of phonological errors most typically recorded by the dyslexic group is the phonological processing difficulty are in regard to the consonant blending, irregularly spelt words and words with complex consonant-vowel string. For words that contain consonant blending such as 'stop', 'frog', 'kush', 'sta', 'glue' and 'frang' from the tasks, the dyslexic students made errors in terms of phoneme omission and vowel/consonant alterations (Abu Rabia & Sammour, 2013; Snowling et al., 1996). For examples, the subjects produced responses such as /tɑː/ (sta), /kʊh/ (kush), /kʊs/ (kush), /net/ (nid), /rʌk/ (bark) and /rʌŋ/ (frang) which shows phoneme

deletion from the target words that contain consonant blending. This agrees with the findings by Andreou and Baseki (2012) and Abu Rabia and Amour (2013) in which they observed that dyslexic learners often committed the errors of phoneme omission. Such errors may be attributed to the complex grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) in L2 English.

Overall, the performance of dyslexic subjects does not reflect the development of non-dyslexic children in that they demonstrate apparent difficulty in their phonological processing skill. The difficulty is most commonly reflected in consonant blending words, irregularly spelt words and complex GPC words. They produced several types of phonological errors including rhyming error, phoneme deletion, syllable

segmentation, syllable blending, voicing contrast, minimal pairs and non-word reading.

Recommendations

Considering the results of this study, several instructional implications are suggested for conquering English phonology to L2 English learners in Malaysia. Smythe (2010) suggested that teachers should address specific difficulty faced by learners, such as poor phonological processing. Training in specific areas of difficulty would help learners to develop their skills and thus improve their academic performance.

Kelly and Phillips (2011) proposed structured language programmes that should be specifically developed for dyslexic learners. These programmes utilized phonics-based, bottom-up approaches. Individual phonemes should first be targeted, and then gradually move up to sound blending for word-building, continuing further with the sentence and eventually passages when sufficient phonemes have been introduced to and conquered by learners. Such programmes should also highlight specifically on elements that are absent in the native language but present in the target language to help dyslexic learners grasp the complex phonological elements more efficiently. They also noted the importance of instructions for grammatical features, vocabulary and sentence structure for L2 English learners.

Furthermore, Abu Rabia and Sammour (2013) also implied that additional instructional emphasis on elements that

did not exist in L1 was also important in overcoming difficulties for dyslexic learners. This recommendation is in line with Treiman's (1993) conclusion which highlights the need for more time and effort in instruction for elements that were found to be more difficult than others.

CONCLUSION

This study presents significant insights into the understanding of phonological awareness skill in relation to dyslexia in the context of learning English as L2 in Malaysia. The results have highlighted the urgency for intervention measures in teaching methods to cater for dyslexic learners learning in English as L2. It is concluded that dyslexic learners face phonological difficulty at all phonemic levels. Based on this deduction, dyslexic learners should be exposed to these specific elements for learning remedial or interventions in schools.

It should be noted that the study was limited to the participants from dyslexia class in mainstream schools of one state only, and are not necessarily representative of the overall dyslexic population. Future considerations of this study should include bigger samples by including participants in mainstream schools from other states in Malaysia to increase the generalisability of the study. However, the data maintains that specific learning methods should be implemented and integrated into mainstream schools to ensure the inclusion of dyslexic learners in learning English as L2.

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Picture Superiority Effect: Using Images for Vocabulary Enhancement Among Year One Malaysian ESL Learners

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ABSTRACT

As depicted in the current Malaysian scenario, competency in English is not assured although students are formally taught the language from their first year of schooling in National schools. Malaysian pupils have been achieving English proficiency level lower than the set expectation. This is further highlighted in the 2016 Economic Planning Unit report that after finishing Year 6 of Malaysian primary education, less than half of the students achieved a reasonable level of English literacy. Given the significance of vocabulary knowledge to language proficiency, the present study sought to examine the use of images in Malaysian ESL classrooms in terms of its effects on the development of vocabulary knowledge among Year One pupils'. The study is different from previous studies and exploratory in nature, in the sense that it examined not only receptive vocabulary knowledge but also the productive aspect of vocabulary learning. Two groups of Malaysian Year One pupils from a national primary school in Malaysia were selected by purposive sampling for a pretest-posttest-delayed posttest design in a quasi-experimental approach. The Experimental group experienced the interventional approach (use of images) while the Control group did not. Results revealed superior productive vocabulary scores, at both the posttest and delayed posttest levels, in favour of the Experimental group. No significant difference was recorded for the receptive dimension. One other finding is that the testing instruments used were statistically

found to be reliable for use with Malaysian Year One pupils. This study and its findings are of relevance to policymakers, educators, curriculum designers, and scholars engaged in ESL/EFL research pertaining to young learners.

INTRODUCTION

An average Malaysian student who experiences preschool, primary, secondary and tertiary formal education would have gained approximately an average of 14 to 15 years of English language learning. Ironically, these young Malaysians, in general, have been found to be below the English language competency level expected of them (Economic Planning Unit [EPU], 2016). Despite massive efforts by stakeholders and the government, the issue has become increasingly critical to the extent that this is posing a threat to the realisation of the nation's socio-economic goals. The situation is further compounded by globalisation and internationalisation, which have placed a tremendous amount of expectations on the Malaysian education system to measure up to international standards as well as the global demands of the 21st century. Where English is concerned, the onus is on the English Language Standards and Quality Council (ELSQC), not only to uphold and improve the English language competency of our young but also to align local English standards with that of an internationally recognised one, the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

Consistent with the goals of the Malaysian Education Blueprint, the proposed intervention of this research seeks to significantly enhance the vocabulary knowledge of Malaysian Year 1 pupil of various ethnicities, so that their English language acquisition can be effectively fulfilled. In order to achieve this, the research will examine if pupils' receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge is significantly enhanced after intervention implementation.

Vocabulary knowledge has been established to be significant in improving language proficiency and is positively correlated to language development (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; Laufer, 2005; Lewis, 2000; Nation, 1990; Wilkins, 1972), and the lack of focus on vocabulary teaching in our Malaysian classrooms, the proposed study is deemed a worthwhile endeavour.

Research Problem

Evidently, as depicted in the current Malaysian scenario, competency in English is not guaranteed despite being included in the Malaysian curriculum from the very start of primary education which is a Year 1 in both national and national-type schools. Hazita (2016) observed that Malaysian pupils' competence in English left much to be desired, and emphasised the mandated importance of the possession of competent English skills, despite its contested position

dating back to our independence. It is not an inadequate investment in the promotion of this language that has resulted in pupils still dropping below the established literacy standards and requiring further remediation and increased enhancement. As evident in the substantial amounts allocated by the Malaysian government to numerous reformations in the teaching of English language in the last three decades, an ELE standards elevation is clearly visible in every new reform. Take, for instance, the curriculum reform targets a minimum of 90% literacy acquisition after about 3 years of lower primary education (end of Year 3) on the LINUS LBI 2.0 programme based on 12 constructs (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2014) of which the twelfth is able to construct sentences with guidance. Yet, pupils still fall below these established language standards.

Furthermore, in Hayes' (2014) assessment of English provision in primary schools, studies by various researchers (Bauldauf et al., 2011; Kaplan et al., 2011; Nunan, 2003) on international comparisons in the Asia Pacific region have revealed that as far as learners at primary levels are concerned, it is futile to lower the age at entry level for English language learning as it fails as an attempt to increase the dire levels of proficiency.

In research of language acquisition specifically of a second and foreign language, findings that prove the importance of vocabulary in language proficiency is becoming more common. There could be differing views on the most effective way of language teaching and learning, however, it does not diminish the significance of vocabulary knowledge in developing language competence. Schmitt (2008) observed that the importance of vocabulary growth in improving language proficiency was acknowledged by researchers of second and foreign language studies.

Unfortunately, the teaching of English vocabulary is not specified in the MOE's *Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran* and while there is a word list that teachers can refer to, there is no specific model or guideline that they can rely on to teach English vocabulary. Due to the frequency of tests and the intense focus on students excelling in examinations in Malaysia, Ali (2003) pointed out the phenomenon of 'teaching to the tests' (Nuttall, 1995; Norris, 1993). This involves teachers frequently resorting to the drilling or rote-learning method (memorisation) which has been suggested to be less useful to students as mere memorisation may not encourage deep information processing that can result in knowledge being better retained (McQuirter-Scott, 2010).

Meanwhile, the Standards-Based English Language Curriculum emphasises the modular approach and covers the four language components of reading, writing, listening and speaking. The aspects of grammar, phonics and language arts are also accorded focus - but again, none for vocabulary. As advanced earlier, Malaysian students' English language proficiency levels are in dire straits and given the essential dependence of language

proficiency on vocabulary, it is only sensible that an effective approach to vocabulary development is identified in the best interest of our students from the commencement of their formal schooling years. As such, the researchers are proposing to study the effectiveness of using images for vocabulary knowledge development among Malaysian Year 1 pupils, as an effort to discover the most effective method to enhance vocabulary knowledge among Malaysian students and subsequently improve their competence in the English language as aspired by the Malaysian education system. Additionally, a comprehensive search of extant literature has revealed that there is no published research to date, within the Malaysian context, implementing this vocabulary knowledge development method. Not only does this research seek to assess receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge, but it also measures vocabulary knowledge recall (short-term memory storage of vocabulary knowledge gained) and vocabulary knowledge retention (long-term memory storage of vocabulary knowledge gained). Previous research in the domain of vocabulary learning mainly stops at the recall stage and assessing only receptive vocabulary knowledge.

Research Objectives and Questions

Broadly, this study examines the use of images in Malaysian primary school level ESL classrooms in terms of its effects on pupils' receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge development. The pupils' pretest, posttest and delayed posttest mean scores, standard deviation values, and significance (p) values were compared to determine performance levels between the Experimental and Control groups. Performances were measured at the recall level and the retention level. Table 1 below details the study's objectives and questions.

Table 1

Objectives and questions

Item	Research Objectives	Research Questions
1	To examine if Malaysian Year 1 pupils' receptive vocabulary knowledge recall (short-term) is enhanced with the intervention.	Are Malaysian Year 1 pupils' receptive vocabulary knowledge recall significantly enhanced after undergoing the intervention?
2	To examine if Malaysian Year 1 pupils' receptive vocabulary knowledge retention (long-term) is enhanced with the intervention.	Are Malaysian Year 1 pupils' receptive vocabulary knowledge retention significantly enhanced after undergoing the intervention?
3	To examine if Malaysian Year 1 pupils' productive vocabulary knowledge recall (short-term) is enhanced with the intervention.	Are Malaysian Year 1 pupils' productive vocabulary knowledge recall significantly enhanced after undergoing the intervention?

Table 1 *(Continued)*

Item	Research Objectives	Research Questions
4	To examine if Malaysian Year 1 pupils' productive vocabulary knowledge retention (long-term) is enhanced with the intervention.	Are Malaysian Year 1 pupils' productive vocabulary knowledge retention significantly enhanced after undergoing the intervention?

Literature Review

Vocabulary. The term vocabulary refers to the knowledge of words and word meanings. Vocabulary includes receptive and productive vocabulary; vocabulary knowledge begins from being able to recognise a word and then progress to being able to meaningfully apply the word in the right context (Faerch et al., 1984). According to Beck and McKeown (1991), vocabulary knowledge development is gradual from one degree to another from having no knowledge of a word to recognition, understanding its meaning, being able to relate its concept to other words and ultimately being able to use it correctly. Clearly, this renders vocabulary knowledge as multidimensional as proposed by Nation (1990), words have form, meaning, and association with other words. Based on this, it is evident that researchers regard vocabulary knowledge as having breadth and depth as opposed to simplistic zero-sum knowledge attainment.

With respect to vocabulary breadth or in other words receptive vocabulary knowledge, Nation (1990) explained that the more central and familiar feature of this aspect was the reflection of word form recognition through the knowledge of its meaning. Meanwhile, Meara (2009) similar to Nation (1990), more recently defined productive vocabulary knowledge, also known as vocabulary depth, as one's word-association ability. Meara and Wolter (2004) and Meara and Fitzpatrick (2000) explained that vocabulary depth was reflected when a learner was able to link one word with other individual words. For this study's purposes, both vocabulary forms are covered and are operationalised as follows:

1. Receptive vocabulary (breadth): Knowledge of word meanings
2. Productive vocabulary (depth): Word-association ability

The Central Importance of Vocabulary Control. The emphasis on the importance of vocabulary in the development of English language literacy and competence is commonly concluded within the findings of second and foreign language acquisition research. Hunt and Beglar (2005) identified lexicon as key to language comprehension and use. Also lending support to the importance of lexicon in language learning, Singleton (1999) noted that it was the most challenging aspect for L1 and L2 learners, not the area of broad syntactic principles. Even in the opinion of language learners, it is vocabulary acquisition that is considered to be important as a lack thereof, results in poor receptive and productive language use (Nation, 1990).

Eyckmans (2004) observed that second or foreign language learners appreciated the fact that vocabulary knowledge was crucial in the attainment of language proficiency. The growth in vocabulary is clearly beneficial in the development of overall language competence (Nation, 2001; Yuksel & Kavanoz, 2010) but findings from past studies are not limited to only such relationships as various correlation studies have shown that specific language skills are also enhanced and related reciprocally to vocabulary size.

Picture Superiority Effect. Pictures are understood universally without the need for translation across languages and because of this nature of pictures, memory stored based on pictorial stimuli is more lasting than the memory of words (Paivio, 1986). When a picture is introduced with either printed or spoken words, recognition memory for pictures is improved (Bower et al., 1975; Madigan, 1983), especially among young learners (Nelson & Kosslyn, 1976). The distinctive power of picture recognition and memory enhancement due to the use of images compared to storage based on mere words as found by Anderson (2009), Brady et al. (2008), Ally and Budson (2007), and Paivio (1991) has provided recognition to the superiority of pictures over words and is termed as 'picture superiority effect' (PSE). Theorists explained that PSE takes place due to the deeper information processing for pictorial stimuli in comparison to mental processing for words.

To further understand the picture superiority effect, it is useful to look at its elaboration in encoding theories and Transfer-Appropriate Processing (TAP) (McBride & Dosher, 2002). The effectiveness of pictures against words and pictures with words have been studied extensively and one of the most prominent hypotheses produced is Paivio's Dual-Coding Hypothesis. The Dual-Coding Theory proposed by Paivio (1971) suggests that pictures are decoded differently which contributes to its superiority over mere words decoding. Paivio (1971) also stated that pictures were coded verbally and in image form rather than just verbally in the case of words stimuli that were single-coded.

This study is designed quite similarly to Paivio's dual-code model consisting of verbal and nonverbal memory codes that are interdependent and involve deeper processing which leads to improved storage of information. The stage of deep processing of information is supported by many researchers for the benefit of recall and retention. Craik and Lockhart (1972) made an important discovery through their seminal work on cognition, learning, and memory. They proposed a Depth of Processing hypothesis which stated that it was the shallowness of an information processing that determined whether the information was stored in the long term memory and not how long it was stored in short term memory. In addition, they also observed that in general, information such

as pictures presented to the learner that was compatible with cognitive structures already previously developed in the learner's brain has a chance of being processed more deeply and stored in short term as well as long term memories.

Concept Attainment and Inductive Thinking. The essence of the vocabulary intervention programme lies in the utilisation of inductive thinking combined with presenting pictorial stimuli which display objects and actions familiar to the learner in order to bring about existing words in their vocabulary whether from listening or speaking experiences. This teaching model encourages learners to inquire about the new words, increase the size of their existing sight-reading and writing vocabularies, discover structural

principles and implementing the tools of observation and analysis when studying the four components of language skills - reading, writing, comprehending and composing (Calhoun, 1999). The steps of intervention in the instructional sequence of the model is cyclical all throughout with autonomy given to the teacher in deciding issues such as the duration for each picture as well as the selection of pictures or images used. In making these decisions, the teacher is guided by factors such as the age and language development of the pupils, and the language learning objectives of the teacher. In essence, this intervention incorporates into its model the concept of using pictures as stimuli for language development as well as implements the inductive thinking and concept attainment models of teaching.
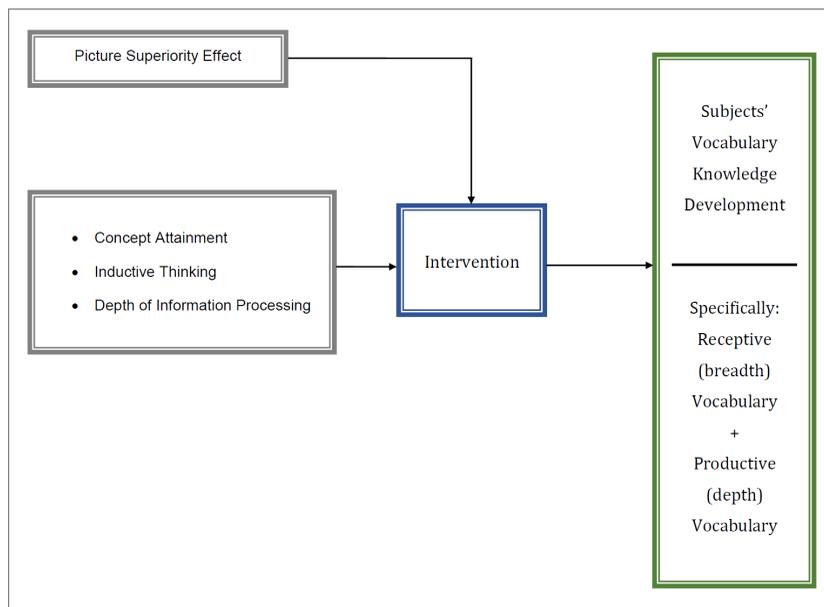

Figure 1. The framework of the study

METHODOLOGY

Design

This study focused on Malaysian Year 1 pupil enrolled in Malaysia's national primary schools. The study was specifically designed to examine young learners' receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge development by using images in learning new words. A primarily quantitative approach was adopted for the stated purposes. A quasi-experimental design with purposive sampling formed the core of the study. Quasi-experimental designs are considered worthwhile because they permit researchers to reach reasonable conclusions (Ary et al., 2009) and it is also a design that allows for the collecting evidence of a particular treatment effect especially in the study of impacts in an educational intervention (Diem, 2002). Nested within this design is the pretest-posttest-delayed posttest control-group approach (Revesz et al., 2011). Denzin (1978) observed the importance of 'within-method' triangulation steps such as conducting post-testing and assigning control groups in order to increase research findings credibility.

Size and Sampling

The participants were male and female Malaysian Year 1 pupil enrolled in a national primary school in Malaysia. The sample size for the study ($n = 53$) is comparable with the range employed by similar past studies on vocabulary knowledge development among children. For example:

    Amin Afshar & Mojavezi (2017): $n = 50$
    Seyed & Azam (2011): $n = 34$

    Sobel et al. (2010): $n = 39$
    Subramaniam et al. (2009): $n = 20$

According to Gay and Diehl (1992), the recommended number of participants or the ideal sample size for correlational studies or causal-comparative studies which are usually conducted in educational research is 30. They emphasized that the sample size has to be determined based on the types of research being carried out. Causal-comparative studies include studies that examine the effects of interventions (Brewer & Kuhn, 2010). It is important for studies that employ testing designs where multiple groups are involved to have an at least 25 participants so that it is of a good size to observe whether the intervention implemented really has taken effect (Hogg & Tanis, 2005).

The intact classes assigned to the researchers were largely determined by the participating school's administrative authorities, as is common in educational research processes (Ary et al., 2009). However, to adhere as closely as possible to research protocols, the researchers applied randomisation *where possible* and the coin-toss method (Neuman, 2000) was employed to determine the status of each intact class (the Experimental status of Control status).

According to Salkind (2010), intact groups are usually chosen in educational research involving classroom settings. Intact group selection refers to choosing participants based on existing cohorts (such as individuals already organised into classes) (Martella et al., 2013). Intact groups

include language classes, medical or clinical groupings, communities, and organisations.

Instruments and Intervention

According to vocabulary testing expert, Read (2007), the Yes-No format is the simplest test format and is practical for use. He elaborated that Meara has taken the lead in developing the Yes-No format and making it available for use. The test has been validated by various studies with returned values indicating a positive correlation with other similar tests (Mochida & Harrington, 2006). Meanwhile, the Lex30 Test by Meara and Fitzpatrick (2000) has been repeatedly validated as an adequate instrument to measure ESL learners' productive vocabulary across all ages, including young learners (Gonzalez & Piriz, 2016). Similarly, Fitzpatrick and Clenton (2010) highlighted that the test produces reliable scores, reflects an improvement in language knowledge and produces scores which are comparable to those of similar

tests. The details of the instruments are as presented in Table 2.

Each cycle of the intervention is highly comprehensive as listed out below, based on Calhoun (1999):

1. The teacher puts up the selected picture on the board and gets pupils to sit in groups.
2. The teacher goes through the steps of the intervention with the pupils:
    - Points at an item in the picture and asks pupils to identify what they see;
    - Label by drawing a line from the identified object or area;
    - Pupils say the word and one will write the word on the board;
    - Pupils spell and read the word aloud;
    - When the teacher has gone through the items in the picture, pupils review the picture aloud (read and spell);

Table 2

Instruments

Instrument	Type/Source
Image	Selected from Year 1 textbook
Word List	Year 1 Word List provided in MOE's *Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran* (2018)
Tests	Receptive vocabulary: Yes-No Test by Meara (1992) Productive vocabulary: Lex30 Test by Meara and Fitzpatrick (2000)

- The teacher leads pupils into creating a title for the picture;
- The teacher guides pupils to generate simple sentences using the picture;
- Reading and reviewing the sentences.
- The teacher will only induce a few words (enough to generate simple sentences) as an example for the pupils. The pupils will then continue in groups.

3. Pupils experience intervention in their groups.

4. Teacher gives a copy of the picture to each group with a time limit.

5. The teacher walks around to guide, supervise, and extend help when necessary (teacher monitors if students get restless and may give breaks if necessary). The teacher also ensures that every pupil gets a chance to participate and that no one is isolated.

Data Analysis

The administered pre-, post- and delayed post-tests were scored by a qualified teacher. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to lend greater depth to the findings. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software (Version 22) was utilised to analyse data gathered from the administration of the tests. Specifically, this software was used to derive the central tendency values or mean scores as well as for standard deviation values (variance of distribution in relation to the mean). SPSS was also employed to run t-tests to check for statistical significance.

The t-test is a comparison between the values of two means to determine whether variables are dependent or not dependent on each other which leads to either accepting or rejecting null hypothesis based on a pre-determined significance level (Agresti & Finlay, 2008). A p-value that is smaller than a pre-determined threshold value (commonly 0.05) indicates that the observed effect is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance (Privitera, 2012). It is also a measure of the probability that is generalizable to the entire population from which the sample has been derived Dane (2003). The p-value for the present study is specified at $p < 0.05$, a level of significance often employed in psychological and educational studies (Best, 1977).

Integrity

The researchers, in cooperation with the school's authorities, closely monitored the research to ensure the smooth-running of study protocols. Consent was also obtained from the school's authorities as well as the participants' guardians, and anonymity is preserved to fully protect the participants' privacy.

Primary Phases

The primary phases of this study are listed in Table 3.

RESULTS

Receptive Vocabulary Knowledge (Breadth): Recall and Retention

Both descriptive and inferential statistics

Table 3

Primary phases

Phase	Activity	Timeline/Duration
1	Pretesting	Week 1
2	Intervention	Over the course of 2 weeks: 1 session per week, 30 minutes per session *(as permitted by the school's authorities)*
3	Post testing	Immediately after the intervention ends
4	Delayed Posttesting	2 weeks after post-testing

were applied to lend greater depth to the findings. The *p*-value is set at $p < 0.05$.

RQ 1: Are Malaysian Year 1 pupils' receptive vocabulary knowledge recall significantly enhanced after undergoing the intervention?

H_1: There is no significant difference in the receptive vocabulary knowledge recall between the Experimental group and the Control group.

RQ 2: Are Malaysian Year 1 pupils' receptive vocabulary knowledge retention significantly enhanced after undergoing the intervention?

H_2: There is no significant difference in the receptive vocabulary knowledge retention between the Experimental group and the Control group.

As shown in Table 4, the mean scores of the pretest for both the Control and Experimental groups did not differ significantly, thus denoting baseline similarity at 6.81 ($SD = 0.392$) and 6.74 ($SD = 0.360$) respectively. Posttest data indicate that the Experimental group experienced higher vocabulary breadth recall than the Control group; the Experimental group's mean score at 8.93 ($SD = 0.388$) is superior to the Control group's achievement of 8.77 ($SD = 0.409$). As for the delayed posttest, which measures vocabulary breadth retention, the mean scores achieved were 8.33 ($SD = 0.453$) (Experimental group) and 8.12 ($SD = 0.478$) (Control group), indicating minimal knowledge decay.

At the pretest level, Table 5 shows that the Sig. (*p*) value obtained was more than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$) at $p = 0.900$, indicating no

Table 4

Pretest, posttest and delayed posttest

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Pretest	Control	26	6.81	0.392
	Experiment	27	6.74	0.360
Posttest	Control	26	8.77	0.409
	Experiment	27	8.93	0.388
Delayed Posttest	Control	26	8.12	0.478
	Experiment	27	8.33	0.453

Table 5
Independent samples test: Equality of variances and statistical significance

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff.	Std. Error Diff.		Lower	Upper
Pretest (Breadth)	Equal variances assumed	0.006	0.940	0.126	51	0.900	0.067	0.532		-1.001	1.135
	Equal variances not assumed			0.126	50.452	0.900	0.067	0.533		-1.003	1.137
Posttest (Breadth)	Equal variances assumed	0.031	0.862	-0.278	51	0.782	-0.157	0.563		-1.288	0.975
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.278	50.745	0.782	-0.157	0.564		-1.289	0.975
Delayed Posttest (Breadth)	Equal variances assumed	0.014	0.908	-0.331	51	0.742	-0.218	0.658		-1.539	1.103
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.331	50.723	0.742	-0.218	0.659		-1.540	1.105

statistically significant difference between group means. Table 5 also indicates that the Sig. (*p*) the value obtained was more than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$) at $p = 0.782$ at the posttest level, indicating no statistically significant difference between group means at the recall level for vocabulary breadth. Similarly, no statistically significant difference between group means was found at the delayed posttest level (retention) with a value of $p = 0.742$. Both H_1 and H_2 are therefore accepted.

The Sig. (*p*) value obtained at the pretest level, which specifies no statistically significant difference between group means, indicates that the testing instrument is reliable in terms of 'reliability as stability over similar samples' (Cohen et al., 2007), thus presenting it as a feasible option for use among similar cohorts in future studies.

Productive Vocabulary Knowledge (Depth): Recall and Retention

Both descriptive and inferential statistics are applied to lend greater depth to the findings. The *p*-value is set at $p < 0.05$.

RQ 3: Are Malaysian Year 1 pupils' productive vocabulary knowledge recall significantly enhanced after undergoing the intervention?

H₃: There is no significant difference in the productive vocabulary knowledge recall between the Experimental group and the Control group.

RQ 4: Are Malaysian Year 1 pupils' productive vocabulary knowledge retention significantly enhanced after undergoing the intervention?

H₄: There is no significant difference in the productive vocabulary knowledge retention between the Experimental group and the Control group.

As demonstrated in Table 6, the mean scores of the pretest for both the Control and Experimental groups did not differ significantly, thus denoting baseline similarity at 2.19 ($SD = 0.184$) and 2.15 ($SD = 0.183$) respectively. Posttest data indicate that the Experimental group experienced higher vocabulary depth recall than the Control group; the Experimental group's mean score at 4.63 ($SD = 0.234$) is superior to the Control group's achievement of 3.38 ($SD = 0.249$). As for the delayed posttest, which measures vocabulary depth retention, the mean scores achieved were 3.67 ($SD = 0.200$) (Experimental group) and 2.38 ($SD = 0.167$) (Control group), indicating the presence of knowledge decay but not at a substantial rate.

At the pretest level, Table 7 shows that the Sig. (*p*) value obtained was more than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$) at $p = 0.865$, indicating no statistically significant difference between group means. Table 7 also indicates that the Sig. (*p*) the value obtained was less than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$) at $p = 0.001$ at the posttest level, indicating a statistically significant difference between group means at the recall level for vocabulary depth. Similarly, Sig. (*p*) value obtained was less than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$) at $p = 0.000$ at the delayed posttest level, indicating a statistically significant

Table 6

Pretest, posttest and delayed posttest

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Pretest	Control	26	2.19	0.184
	Experiment	27	2.15	0.183
Posttest	Control	26	3.38	0.249
	Experiment	27	4.63	0.234
Delayed Posttest	Control	26	2.38	0.167
	Experiment	27	3.67	0.200

Table 7

Independent samples test: Equality of variances and statistical significance

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
		F	Sig.
Pretest (Depth)	Equal variances assumed	0.000	0.985
	Equal variances not assumed		
Posttest (Depth)	Equal variances assumed	0.061	0.805
	Equal variances not assumed		
Delayed Posttest (Depth)	Equal variances assumed	2.389	0.128
	Equal variances not assumed		

		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest (Depth)	Equal variances assumed	0.000	0.985	0.170	51	0.865
	Equal variances not assumed			0.170	50.960	0.865
Posttest (Depth)	Equal variances assumed	0.061	0.805	3.653	51	0.001
	Equal variances not assumed			3.650	50.662	0.001
Delayed Posttest (Depth)	Equal variances assumed	2.389	0.128	4.905	51	0.000
	Equal variances not assumed			4.923	49.777	0.000

Table 7 *(Continued)*

| | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | |
| | | Mean Diff. | Std. Error Diff. | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
				Lower	Upper
Pretest (Depth)	Equal variances assumed	0.044	0.259	-0.477	0.565
	Equal variances not assumed	0.044	0.259	-0.476	0.565
Posttest (Depth)	Equal variances assumed	-1.245	0.341	-1.929	-0.561
	Equal variances not assumed	-1.245	0.341	-1.930	-0.560
Delayed Posttest (Depth)	Equal variances assumed	-1.282	0.261	-1.807	-0.757
	Equal variances not assumed	-1.282	0.260	-1.805	-0.759

difference between group means at the retention level for vocabulary depth. Both H_3 and H_4 are therefore rejected.

The Sig. (*p*) value obtained at the pretest level, which specifies no statistically significant difference between group means, indicates that the testing instrument is reliable in terms of 'reliability as stability over similar samples' (Cohen et al., 2007), thus presenting it as a feasible option for use among similar cohorts in future studies.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It was predicted that the participants who experienced vocabulary learning through images would outperform their peers, in terms of both recall and retention, who learnt via the conventional approach practised in Malaysian ESL classrooms at the primary school level. The results of the Lex30 Test (productive vocabulary test) strongly support this prediction, with the participants of the Experimental group obtaining higher vocabulary recall and retention scores as compared to the Control group. The results were also found to be statistically significant, indicating that the observed effect is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance.

The results of the Yes-No Vocabulary Test (receptive vocabulary test), meanwhile, showed gains but further analysis returned values indicating the absence of statistical significance. This is possibly due to a testing

issue, in that the target words included in the Yes-No Vocabulary Test were likely too easy for the students which may have caused a ceiling effect to occur and consequently, affected the scores. This is a finding worthy of note, and it is recommended that future studies employing the Yes-No Vocabulary Test takes into account the possibility that a ceiling effect may indeed occur and therefore also consider the inclusion of more complex or difficult target words for testing as well as the use of a larger cohort of participants.

Essentially, productive vocabulary knowledge (depth) development was found to be positive when pupils experienced the intervention, in which they were exposed to images and prompted to establish direct links between the images and corresponding English words, thereby gaining access to two instead of merely one retrieval path (Plass et al., 1998). Apart from augmenting the positive influence of the visual-verbal cognitive style of learning (Koć-Januchta et al., 2017), the findings of the present study are also largely in line with those of similar research. For instance, Wahyuni (2016) whose study was conducted within the context of Indonesia, McDonald (2010) whose study was conducted within the context of Canada, and Calhoun et al. (2001) who framed their research within the American context.

Additionally, the study's findings are fundamentally supportive of Paivio's (1991) dual-code theory; Paivio theorised that pictures, when used with words to elicit a verbal code as well as an image code, have an advantage over single-coded models in terms of information processing and storage. The study's intervention emphasised on two interdependent types of memory codes, one verbal and the other, non-verbal.

The participants' enhanced vocabulary knowledge recall and retention for the product dimension are also likely due to the picture superiority effect (PSE) which is one's memory for pictures is superior to one's memory for words. The findings of the present study are consistent with previous studies' findings (Anderson, 2009; Ally & Budson, 2007; Brady et al., 2008), in that exposure to visuals can lead to better memory or "welding" of information received. Scholars generally suggest that the deeper level of information processing experienced when presented with pictorial stimuli contribute to PSE.

The study's intervention also capitalises on inductive thinking and concept attainment (Calhoun, 1999). The steps of the intervention are designed to not only undertake the development of sight vocabulary but also to classify new lexical items through concept building and to develop productive abilities. Continuously putting forth questions that stimulate classroom discussion as well as encouraging learners to suggest words from their existing vocabulary are key activities of the intervention. Furthermore, each comprehensive cycle of the intervention is structured around an image and the corresponding target words and activities are intended to maximise student engagement as well as create multiple encounters with the target words. The recorded higher mean

scores of the Experimental group attest to the effectiveness of the intervention's design for lexical development; although this is, with respect to the present study, concentrated on the productive dimension, it is likely that the receptive dimension will also be shown to have benefited once the testing issue is resolved.

Fundamentally, the findings of this study offer vital insights into the effectiveness of the intervention for vocabulary knowledge recall and retention among young Malaysian ESL learners. The essentialist nature of the intervention demonstrates that images, when used to elicit words from a learner's existing vocabulary, can be effective classroom tools for vocabulary instruction.

It is important to note that these findings should not be generalised to the entire (or general) population of young Malaysian ESL learners as the samples in the study were restricted to Year 1 Malaysian ESL learners enrolled in a national primary school in Malaysia. Therefore, the same effect or level of effectiveness may not necessarily be reflected when employed with, for instance, preschool learners. It is recommended that future research look into the effects of this intervention on different and larger cohorts of learners, and also examine its effectiveness with regards to improving ESL students' reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, especially within the Malaysian context in which exists a paucity of such research.

It is to be noted that this study also gleaned one important contribution; the testing instruments were empirically found to be reliable in terms of 'reliability as stability over similar samples' (Cohen et al., 2007), thus presenting them as feasible options for use among similar cohorts in future studies.

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First, Second, and Third Tongues: Malaysia's Languages for Unity and Education

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ABSTRACT

This study borders on the dilemma between the language for national unity, and the language for education in Malaysia. It is guided by the Malaysian Education Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2025 that recommends the learning of Bahasa Melayu (BM) to unite the plural society; English as the language for modernisation; and vernacular languages (VL), which are Mandarin and Tamil, to preserve culture and identity. This study aims to investigate the preferred medium of instructions at higher learning institutions, the value of different languages for national unity, and students' perceived reasons for using these languages. Using a set of questionnaires, the study was piloted to a group of 69 university students. The results indicate that many preferred English for the teaching and learning process, followed by BM, and VL. They perceived English as the most suitable, frequently used, and highly important for university education. Many students adhered to MEB's recommendation where they valued these languages for integration, internalisation, and preserving cultural identity; and perceived BM and English as equally important in promoting national unity. The main finding suggests that students rely heavily on English for both educational purposes and national unity; thus, calls upon strategies to strengthen the language, while not forgetting to uphold BM and VL as part of the nation's identity, uniqueness, and pride.

Keywords: Bahasa Melayu, English language, globalisation/internationalisation, national unity

INTRODUCTION

The Multicultural Society of Malaysia

As a result of the British divide-and-rule policy, the plural society of Malaysia is divided by nationalism, race-based politics, and globalisation (Phan et al., 2013). In a multicultural society, the terms 'ethnicity' and 'race' bear social and political importance (Md. Yusof & Esmaeil, 2017); and are constantly related to the issues of languages, privileges, and education. Despite various attempts and campaigns for an integrative culture, Malaysia continuously witnesses ethnic conflicts since the early days of its conception; but remains hopeful in creating and preserving a united and harmony society (Jamil & Raman, 2012; Md. Yusof & Esmaeil, 2017).

The rhetoric of "New Malaysia" after the 2018 General Election 14 has yet to materialise, as incidents of race-based comments, online and offline confrontations among different ethnicities and religions, and newspapers reports of race-based news escalate (Byrnes, 2018; Sipalan, 2018). Kamunri (2019) defined "New Malaysia" as an effort to repair what needed to be improved or to repeat successes that had made the country respected in the past. Therefore, the "New Malaysia" that is hoped to ignite the spirit of nationalism and integration, seems relatively distant.

In relation, Aun's (2017) study of public opinion surveys in Malaysia highlight its ethnic relation issues from both perspectives; racial tension and divide as well as integration and cohesion. While Malaysians generally relate well to other culture, show goodwill towards other, shift away from race-based politics, and increase interactions to foster better understanding and friendship across ethnic lines; they also tend to form circles of ethnically homogenous friends, feel constrained to forge inter-relationships with people of different race and religion, and gravitate towards opposing positions on issues of ethnic affirmative actions (Aun, 2017). Thus, the concepts of national unity, integration, nation-building and national identity are defined as a state in which all citizens from various groups (ethnics, religion, regions) live in peace as one united nation, giving full commitment to national identity based upon the Federal Constitution and the National Ideology (Lee et al., 2013) in Malaysia still have to be nurtured among individuals. Disunity, however, does not just transpire from self-integrity, but also the integrity of the leaders in civil society involving all sectors including economic, politic, social, religion and science and technology (Lee et al., 2013).

Education is therefore key in uniting Malaysians together and acts as an avenue to channel national consciousness and societal cohesion (Jamil & Raman, 2012; Ong et al., 2013; Puteh, 2010); hence, calls for a more interactive and proactive way of teaching and learning to introduce, practice and reflect the ideology of national policy (Lee et al., 2013). The long-enacted British policy and issues pertaining to language and education have, however, unfolded in the context of nation-building, societal multilingualism, and globalisation; that

threaten a united culture (Hashim, 2009; Ya'acob et al., 2011).

Malaysians speak many languages (bilingual, trilingual, and/or multilingual), but Malay or Bahasa Melayu (BM) and English, are the two official ones. BM, the national language of Malaysia, aims to unite Malaysians, while English, the nation's second language is the medium of globalisation, business, and international communication (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015; Ya'acob et al., 2011). All official businesses must be conducted in BM, but necessary usage of English is allowed, based on discretions (Pesuruhjaya Penyemak Undang-Undang Malaysia, 2006). Optionally, Malaysians are also encouraged to be fluent in vernacular languages (VL), like Mandarin and Tamil (Nair, 2018). Essentially, Nair (2018) believed that in creating a united nation, the society must be able to first communicate in the national language, BM, then the second language, English, and optionally, other VL like Mandarin and Tamil.

All in all, in the discourse of nation-building, Malaysia's education system is a constant agenda (Ong et al., 2013) which includes matters such as language policy, the medium of instructions (MOI), and vernacular school system vs national school system. On the one hand, the mastery of BM is key to national integration, which makes it equally as valuable for education. On the other hand, the English language is paramount for employability in local and international sectors (Selvaratnam, 2019) hence, necessary for individuals'

professional development. Accordingly, this study is interested to examine perceptions in the matter of languages for education and national unity.

Statement of the Problem: The Status of Bahasa Melayu BM and English in Malaysia

Schools are powerful institutions, capable of fostering a sense of coherence and a common identity among multicultural students, and are supportive of national ideology, in the most effective way (Kaur et al., 2017; Nordin et al., 2013; Puteh, 2010). To realise this, BM is made the instituted national language of Malaysia, and the main medium of instruction (MOI) to promote national unity agenda, and to balance linguistic imperialism of the English language (Selvaratnam, 2019). Despite this ruling, the use of English and other VL is permitted. This was as Ya'acob et al. (2011) observed BM as the MOI at schools and most tertiary institutions for content delivery, and inculcation of national unity, as well as the integration of Malaysia's diverse ethnic groups.

Studies on Malaysian languages and national unity are popular, with regards to education system and language policy (Yamat et al., 2014); MOI, English proficiency and employability (Selvaratnam, 2019); language planning and national unity (Coluzzi, 2017); the importance of languages on cultural identities and values (How et al., 2015); the impact of vernacular schools on national unity (Selvadurai et al., 2015); and the result of language policies on ethnicization, globalisation and

internationalisation (Ang et al., 2015; Lim, 2015; O'Neill & Chapman, 2015).

The findings from these studies generally concluded some extent of national unity among the plural society of Malaysia, but called out on the national language policy that is not economically strategic, but benefitted particular ethnics, ideologies, or communities (Ang et al., 2015; Coluzzi, 2017). These studies thus proposed suggestions to re-evaluate Malaysia's language planning and policy to ensure globalisation and internalisation, as well as practising fairness in its linguistic diversity and acceptance of other cultures (Albury & Aye, 2016; Coluzzi, 2017; Kenayathulla, 2015).

At times, however, the conclusions drawn from previous studies seemed bias against the Bumiputera due to the privileges they received. For example, several times, it was reported that the Chinese and Indian communities felt marginalised as the government give preferential treatment to the Bumiputera in terms of education, employment, and ownership, which resulted in the suspension of Chinese secondary schools' development due to the rising dominance of national schools, and lack of diversity and inclusiveness of the Non-Bumiputera (Kenayathulla, 2015; Khairul Anuar et al., 2015; Wong, 2017). Ang et al. (2015) further claimed that, though allowed sufficient breathing space for the development of their ethnic culture, the younger generation of Malaysian were subjected to the state's nation-building ideology, based on Malay cultural

nationalism. These arguments are indeed alarming as "a society divided along cultural and ethnic boundaries will create constraints for its social, economic, cultural, and political development and well-being"; resulting in unattainable social cohesion (Kaur et al., 2017, p. 45).

Essentially, Ong et al. (2013) offered that the different routes and complexity of educational choices, experience, expertise, and engagement in Malaysia, demonstrated inclusiveness that catered to the need of its diverse population. However, to what extent have this complexity of educational routes influence social cohesion? The answer to this has been addressed by many research, but comprehensively, it is agreed that BM promotes Malaysian unity, English is needed for internalisation and employability, and students from vernacular schools are loyal to VL and cultures and possess low sense of national identity (Ang et al., 2015; Gill et al., 2013; Ya'acob et al., 2011).

Therefore, due to the abundance of research that focuses on language, national unity and vernacular schools, this study fills in the gap in the literature by identifying the suitable language(s) for education and national unity in Malaysia. At present, a more pressing question lies not in the debate between vernacular schools and national schools; rather, in the intricacy of managing the language for internationalisation which is English, and the language for national unity which is BM. This argument mainly follows Coluzzi's (2017) recommendation that Malaysia replaces ethnic-based preferential treatment with a system based

on economic needs; which is deemed more effective for socioeconomic well-being and will simultaneously raise the prestige of BM. Campbell (2018) aptly summarised this issue as a previously stable but increasingly unstable tension between nationalist language concerns and the pressure of globalisation with its impact on economic development and social justice.

In moving forward towards modernisation, English becomes the language of choice at many local and international levels for various purposes of education, businesses, mobility, employment, and commerce. In effect, improved English competency entails increasing opportunity in a globalised knowledge economy (Campbell, 2018). When English dominates in academic institutions, BM may lose its importance as the MOI and the vehicle to push forward national unity (though some might argue that it has never had the standing of one). This study would, therefore, like to find out university students' view of the dilemma between the language for education and the language for national unity, as they are the generations who will be impacted, facing the challenges of employability, internalisation, national identity, and sociocultural values once they graduate.

Guided by the 2013-2025 Malaysia Education Blueprint (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015), this study asks how do university students view English and BM as the languages for education at the university, and the languages to promote national unity. Ya'acob et al. (2011) affirmed that BM promoted unity, and the usage of different languages did not hinder harmony and integration. Lee et al. (2013), however, argued that more efforts towards national unity in the forms of policies, concepts, or ideology should be reflected via practices at tertiary settings, as courses like TITAS and Ethnic Relations were insufficient. On the other hand, English is viewed more practically and more synonymously as the primary language of Malaysia's open, thriving, and highly internationalised economy; hence, demands effective proficiency amongst its citizens (Albury & Aye, 2016). Though English and BM are the focus of this study, the influence of VL on these issues is unavoidable, hence are also presented and discussed. To reiterate, this study contributes towards understanding the positions of these languages in Malaysian education system; as the fundamental that ignites the spirit of integration and cohesion. It calls for the involvement of students receiving tertiary education, whom are most likely to drive future economy and create policies. This study, therefore, observes the following research questions:

1. What are students preferred medium of instructions at the university?
2. To what extent do students perceive the importance of BM and English and VL for education?
3. To what extent do students perceive the importance of BM, English, and VL for national unity?

Literature Review

Malaysia's Languages and Nationalism. Language represents a sense of belonging and dignity to many people and reflects the identity of a community; encouraging the citizens of a nation to bond with each other (Campbell, 2018). In a multi-ethnic society like Malaysia, the need to create a sense of national unity among its people is not only vital but also urgent (David & Tien, 2008). After achieving its independence in 1957, several policies were introduced to raise BM's status as the national language, immediately recognising it as a symbol of national identity (patriotism) and unity among Malaysian. National Education Policy (NEP) and National Language Policy (NLP) were the two prominent policies enacted in attempts to foster the spirit of unity and nationalism via a standard curriculum across the different types of schools in Malaysia. NLP has positively developed a sense of national identity among the youngsters due to the exposure to BM from the age of seven in schools (David & Tien, 2008).

As the national language, BM has been mandated the MOI in national institutions, but VL is still prevalent in vernacular schools. BM has expanded in its vocabulary (lexified) as a language (Tajuddin et al., 2019); and serves as the MOI for mainstream education (López, 2014) and intra-ethnic communication (John, 2015). Meanwhile, the VL, Mandarin and Tamil, are the two top languages used as the medium of communication in vernacular schools (Azman, 2016); a practice that leads to ongoing debates as to whether vernacular institutions encourage disunity among Malaysian citizens (Editor, 2018; Mior, 2011; Wan Husin, 2011). In addition to being contested by the usage of their native languages in place of BM at schools, the Chinese and Indians may favour the *de facto* international language, English, compared to BM, in their communication; which may further hinder integration among Malaysians (Ying et al., 2015).

Ying et al.'s (2015) called upon concerted orientation to alleviate disunity among Malaysians. Fundamentally, racial integration and national unity could be promoted through BM that has been made the common medium of communication in all contexts and milieus (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015). Liu et al. (2002) compared between the Singaporeans and Malaysians perception of their identities and found that Malaysians tended to identify themselves with their ethnics, whereas Singaporeans tended to associate their self-identities with their nationality. As a multi-ethnic country, Malaysians are blessed with a rich exposure to languages and enjoy the perks of multilingualism. While it is valuable for the races in Malaysia to learn the VL, it is even more crucial that Malaysians master the national language, BM, due to its role in fostering socialisation and creating national unity (David & Tien, 2008; Nair, 2018).

Malaysia's Languages in Education. BM and English were the two languages that formed Malaysia's bilingual education system, introduced by the Razak Report in

1956 (Thirusanku & Melor, 2012). After Malaysia achieved its independence in 1957, BM was mandated as the national, official language. It is to be employed in education and administration, as a tool for integration (Gill, 2009). Under the 1957 Malaysian Education Ordinance, English is recognised as the nation's second language (Azman, 2016).

NEP and NLP policies have seen to BM being the MOI in national schools. BM is made a compulsory subject to encourage its mastery and a pre-requisite for acceptance into tertiary institutions. Even with the implementation of the NLP in 1970, the importance of English language has not been diminished; it is a compulsory subject in most academic institutions in Malaysia, alongside BM (Darmi & Albion, 2013). However, the MOI in vernacular schools is either Mandarin or Tamil. Vernacular school students learn BM as a second language, thus are less proficient in the language compared to their peers in national schools (Ting, 2013).

In national schools, the curriculum was standardised, with hopes that BM becomes the instrument of unity for the different races in Malaysia (Foo & Richards, 2004). However, in 1979 the then Minister of Education, Dr Mahathir Mohamad, outlined a new policy to make English the MOI in primary and secondary schools primarily for Science and Mathematics subjects, to meet international economical and professional needs. This change caused a great disparity in academic performance between students in rural and urban areas. Therefore, not

long after, another reformation to the education policy would witness the MOI being reverted to BM at the expense of English competency among the students (Darmi & Albion, 2013). In 2003, the teaching of Mathematics and Science in English (PPSMI) was reintroduced but ended in 2012; and replaced by the Dual Language Programme (DLP). The latest educational reform that is the English Language Education Reform Roadmap 2015-2025 focuses on primary to tertiary institutions with hopes that it will bring significant transformations in the ways English is taught and learned as L2 in the 21st century (Azman, 2016).

While the government has remained faithful in their effort to empower and retain the national language status and its prestige in education through subsequent radical changes in the country education policy, its preference among the students especially in vernacular schools remains contentious. In a study conducted in vernacular schools, Ying et al. (2015) summarized that BM was not a dominant and preferred language among the students due to its inability to fulfil their daily communicative purposes and therefore was deemed as a language of little significance.

Despite the consecutive changes, the tertiary level of education remains largely unaffected. BM and English are both taught in universities and the choice of MOI is often the representation of the university mission and policy (Yamat et al., 2014). Even though the prestige and role of BM as the national language has been elevated

in both education and administration areas, the MOI for private universities and some courses at public universities is English. The importance of English language in Malaysia education is, therefore, indisputable due to its huge applicability and extensive use in various distinguished areas such as politics and media (Kok, 2018; Thirusanku & Melor 2012), tourism (Kostic & Grzinic, 2011; Selke, 2013), economics (Darmi & Albion, 2013), and business sectors (Soo et al., 2018).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Instrument

The data to this study were gathered using a set of questionnaire adapted from Ya'cob et al. (2011). The questionnaire consists of five sections to measure language for education and language for national unity, which is section A: demography; section B: medium of instructions at university; section C: a language for national unity; section D: factors that influence language choice, and section E: the importance of language.

The items in sections B and C were measured using a 5-point Likert scales (Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5)); while the items in section D were measured using multiple-choice questions. Section E were written as open-ended items to gauge students' perceptions of the importance of the languages. The responses to the open-ended items (section E) are discussed as a means to corroborate the findings from the close-ended questions (section B to D). The

Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaire is 0.893, thus indicates a high level of internal consistency of the items.

Participants

The participants were 69 university students; 91% Malaysian and 9% non-Malaysian. Many were in between 21-23 of age (84%); with 52% in the second year, 26% in the first year, 16% in the third year, and 6% in the fourth year. Malay students formed the majority with 62%, followed by the Chinese with 26%, Bumiputera (7%), Indian (3%), and Non-Bumiputera (1%).

RESULTS

The results of this study are presented as two sub-topics; language for education and language for national unity. In the former, the preferred MOI at university is discussed, while in the latter, the values and importance of Malaysian languages for national integration are examined. The items in Sections B, C, and D were run through One-Sample T-Test. All items score p-value 0.000 ($p<0.0005$), hence indicate significant findings.

Language for Education: Medium of Instructions at University

This section presents and discusses the findings for preferred MOI at the university based on four main items: (a) language use in the classrooms, (b) language preference for teaching and learning, (c) suitability of language in teaching and learning, and (d) the importance of specific language for education.

Table 1 shows the statistics of the languages used in university classrooms. The participants reported English as the most frequently used language with 59% (mean score 3.62). Though the percentage is not tremendously high, it demonstrates the importance and value of English as the language for content delivery and medium of instructions at tertiary settings. This follows Dass' (2018) assertion that almost all universities in the country used English to a greater extent, where most of the books at the universities, libraries, and elsewhere were in English.

BM comes in second with 30% of participants who agreed that the language was frequently used in the classrooms. In the open-ended section, they cited reasons for using BM as both academic and social. Academically, many subjects at the university were taught in English, and they saw BM as promoting better communication with lecturers and friends. Socially, they regarded BM as the nation's official language, whose usage should be encouraged. This finding emphasises Ya'acob et al.'s (2011) observation that BM was used for national unity and integration among diverse ethnic groups and languages in schools and most institutions of higher education. Arguably, Coluzzi (2017) asserted that the present situation of the language policy caused dissatisfaction to many people, which led to BM being viewed as being secondary in terms of importance.

Table 2 shows the students' preferred language in the classrooms. 58% of the participants (mean score 3.77) agreed that English was their preferred language for the teaching and learning process, followed by BM (33%; mean score 2.84). These two percentages are comparable to those in Table 1, but with higher mean scores. This again proves the value of English language in Malaysia as not only the language of modernisation but also as the preferred language for education; trumping the national language, BM.

It is interesting to note that the students mainly used English to improve their mastery (17%) due to its importance for employability (16%), great educational

Table 1

Language used in the classrooms

In the classrooms, I learn many of my courses in …	Agree + Strongly Agree (%)	Disagree + Strongly Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	*Mean Score*
Bahasa Melayu	30	46	23	*2.83*
English	59	13	28	*3.62*
Vernacular Languages	3	86	12	*1.54*

Table 2

Language preference for teaching and learning in the classrooms

In the classrooms, I prefer to learn in ……	Agree + Strongly Agree (%)	Disagree + Strongly Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	*Mean Score*
Bahasa Melayu	33	42	25	*2.84*
English	58	13	29	*3.77*
Vernacular Languages	6	78	16	*1.80*

values (15%) and that its usage is encouraged at the university (15%). Mainly, the students showed initiatives to master the English language due to its instrumental values. These findings resonate with Abdul Kadir et al.'s (2015) earlier study that concluded the importance of English language proficiency for new graduates seeking employment opportunities. Despite the participants' belief that the university strongly encouraged the use of English language, findings from a comparative analysis indicate that each university interpreted bilingual policy differently, thus implemented it differently which in return resulted in distinguished language abilities among their graduates (Yamat et al., 2014).

The reasons for the students' usage of BM were different from that of English. The students stated that they were more comfortable using BM (12%), more fluent in BM (11%), saw BM's educational values (11%), identified with their cultural identities and values (10%), and believed that it is a vehicle to promote national unity (10%). To a large extent, their preference for BM

is due to its convenience for communication with fellow Malaysians familiar with the language.

Table 3 inquires the students' perceptions of the suitability of Malaysian languages for teaching and learning. A huge percentage of 70% (mean score 3.90) saw English is suitable for teaching and learning, followed by BM (37%; mean score 3.07), and VL (23%; mean score 2.07). While it is expected that the students saw English and BM as the languages for educational purposes, it is interesting to note that more students were positive about VL for academic purposes, compared to the percentages in Tables 1 and 2.

The participants saw English as a highly suitable language for teaching and learning at the university as many reference books and courses were written and taught in English; making it more convenient to transmit knowledge. Besides, they prioritised English to improve their communication skills, enhance the ability to understand and be fluent in English, as well as converse with many foreign students

Table 3

Suitability of language in teaching and learning

This language is suitable for content teaching and learning at universities:	Agree + Strongly Agree (%)	Disagree + Strongly Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Mean Score
Bahasa Melayu	37	29	35	3.07
English	70	9	22	3.90
Vernacular Languages	23	48	29	2.07

at the university in the international lingua franca. For example, one participant wrote that "… English is used to communicate with students of different ethnicities and cultures, and many foreign students at the university". Again, these findings reflect the students' awareness of English's educational values and the importance of its mastery; hence, grounds its inevitability as the language for education. Abdul Kadir et al. (2015) concurred that students possessed a medium level of awareness of the importance of English, particularly for job employment.

Table 4 shows the importance of specific languages for education. Not surprisingly, the English language comes in first with 74% (mean score 4.00), followed by BM (59%; mean score 3.62), and VL (23%; mean score 2.52). The findings in Table 4 are interesting for two languages, English and BM.

First, English was regarded as the most important language for educational purposes. This is not unexpected as English is the current lingua franca of the academic community (Liu, 2019). English is, therefore, prioritised, owing to its global

Table 4

The importance of specific language for education

This language is suitable for content teaching and learning at universities:	Agree + Strongly Agree (%)	Disagree + Strongly Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	*Mean Score*
Bahasa Melayu	59	19	22	*3.62*
English	74	10	16	*4.00*
Vernacular Languages	23	48	29	*2.52*

status and widespread use. Second, the percentage of support for BM shows a huge increase of approximately 20% of the percentages in Tables 1, 2, and 3. This shows that the participants were aware of the importance of BM, besides English, as the language for education. The participants further expressed their appreciation of BM to preserve their identity, to uphold BM as the national language, to remind all Malaysians of the importance of BM, and to maintain its purity as a language.

Language for National Unity

This section addresses the theme language for national unity based on items classified into two main tables; the values of Malaysia's first, second, and third languages; and Malaysia's languages and national unity.

Table 5 illustrates the participants' perceptions of the values of BM, English, and VL of Mandarin and Tamil. It is interesting to note the patterns of the participants' responses for comparable items of the same language. The participants generally reported higher percentages for the items that show respect towards the languages, (a), (c), and (e); compared to items that indicate acknowledgement of the languages, (b), (d), and (f). Das (2015) differentiated these two terms by stating that 'respect' always conveyed or implied a positive feeling, while 'acknowledge' was to accept or recognise the existence of the truth of something in a neutral, positive or negative feeling. The students, therefore, perceived a higher positive feeling for the use of BM and English in Malaysia.

Table 5

The values of Malaysia's first, second, and third languages

Statement	Agree + Strongly Agree (%)	Disagree + Strongly Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	*Mean Score*
I respect Bahasa Melayu as the national language of Malaysia.	80	4	16	*4.36*
I acknowledged Bahasa Melayu as the national language.	68	12	20	*4.00*
I respect English as the language of modernisation.	77	6	17	*4.16*
I acknowledged English as the nation's second language.	72	7	20	*4.03*
I respect vernacular languages for cultural identity and values.	70	7	23	*3.87*
I acknowledged vernacular languages as the nation's third languages.	49	12	39	*3.62*

The participants largely respected BM as the national language of Malaysia (80%, mean score 4.36); but only 68% (mean score 4.00) acknowledged it as such. The English language comes in second with 77% respecting it as the language of modernisation (mean score 4.16%); but, not as high a percentage (72%) acknowledged it as the nation's second language.

The percentages are substantiated by the open-ended responses where the students reported the strongest feelings towards BM as the national language and English as the language for modernisation and the nation's second language. They defended BM as the nation's language that promotes national unity, and as their mother tongue. These findings, therefore, illustrate Malaysian university students' strong perceptions of the values of BM and English as languages for national integration, and education. It contradicts Puteh's (2010) earlier conclusion that the language medium policy was not successful in developing unity among the students, as the integration process at the school level is slow and tottering.

Table 6 addresses Malaysian languages and their importance for national unity. The percentages for the items in this table show quite a significant drop from the items in Table 5. Many students (74%) saw the English language as important for national unity, but only 64% felt that English promoted national unity. A similar pattern is observed for BM, whereby 71% saw its importance for national unity, but only 64% believed that BM promoted national unity. Relatedly, Ya'acob et al.'s (2011) found that BM promoted unity, and the usage of different languages did not hinder unity and integration.

Notably, item (b) that measures the importance of BM for national unity scored the highest mean score of 4.04; followed by item (d) for English (mean score 3.99); hence, indicates the students' awareness of the importance of both BM and English as agendas for national integration. What the students were less certain about were the ways that these languages encouraged national unity among the plural society of Malaysia.

Table 6

Malaysian languages and their importance for national unity

Statement	Agree + Strongly Agree (%)	Disagree + Strongly Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	*Mean Score*
Bahasa Melayu promotes national unity.	64	9	28	*3.97*
Bahasa Melayu is important for national unity.	71	13	16	*4.04*
English promotes national unity.	64	7	29	*3.90*

Table 6 *(Continued)*

Statement	Agree + Strongly Agree (%)	Disagree + Strongly Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	*Mean Score*
English is important for national unity.	74	7	19	*3.99*
Vernacular languages promote national unity.	35	17	48	*3.26*
Vernacular languages are important for national unity.	39	29	32	*3.14*

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The study sets forth to identify the language for education and the language for national unity among university students. The findings indicate that the students viewed the English language as important for both national agendas, i.e. unity and education; while BM is mainly valuable for national unity. Meanwhile, VL scored rather poorly on the education and national unity scales.

The findings demonstrate university students' strong preference for the English language in practice and usage for instrumental purposes of education and employability. This is in line with Liu (2019, p. 15) who explained that "… fluency in English boosts employability considerably has become a strong incentive for higher education institutions, since they are responsible for educating the workforce for a knowledge-based labour market and improves mobility in terms of rising global trade relations and collaborations". Dass (2018) substantiated this by stating that the private sector functions almost entirely in English and candidates must be proficient

in the language to be employed. Relatedly, Ting et al. (2017) discovered that Malaysian employers differentiated language proficiency and communication skills as separate qualities; whereby candidates with average English proficiency would be considered if they had good communication skills. Good communication skills increase employability and opportunities for career advancement, thus must be emphasised for graduates to perform well in the future (Ting et al., 2017).

Therefore, based on the advent of English as the language for modernisation and communication; as well as university students' reliance on English and BM for national unity and education, this study refutes How et al.'s (2015) earlier conclusion that rated BM and English as having a low vitality compared to VL. The usage of English in Malaysia does not show any signs of slowing down, especially in a highly globalised, connected world. A downside, however, on the emphasis of English is the widening socio-economic gap for those who can afford to send their children to English

medium schools, and those who attend national government schools with BM as the MOI (David, et al., 2017).

The findings that the English language is prioritised by Malaysian university students for both education and national unity resonate with many existing studies that underline the importance of revising the NLP to reflect the current need and socioeconomic wellbeing of its citizens (Coluzzi, 2017). Furthermore, Wong (2017) claimed the language medium policy as dysfunctional due to its failure in creating a united nation, plus the strong resistance from the Chinese community who ran the vernacular schools. Based on the data, perhaps, the NLP should consider prioritising the English language as MOI, and for official purposes. However, arguing against Coluzzi (2017), the suggestion to confer official status to minority languages as subjects in schools is not quite relevant in the current education and national agenda milieu, as the participants of this study disregard VL for education and national unity.

Ang et al. (2015) however, suggested that the key to integration was by creating an ethnically neutral national identity, compatible with diversity, instead of harmonising the various ethnic as practising a common culture. Likewise, Md. Yusof and Esmaeil (2017) in their reconstruction of Malaysian plural society through visual culture, raised the issue of whether Malaysians needed a collective identity? The findings of this study showed that

university students identified with the national language, BM, for national unity, as well as education; hence emphasises that to a large extent, Malaysians desire a national identity and a sense of belonging to a country. Substantiating this, Liu (2019) argued that local languages were important symbol of national/regional solidarity, were necessary to access public service positions, and facilitated the learning of a second language.

Based on the findings, this study proposes that the English language is emphasised for educational and instrumental purposes, plus national integration. Furthermore, as BM is still highly respected and acknowledged as the national language, Malaysians should preserve their sociocultural identities and values but inculcate and practise a high sense of nationalism and integration. BM should be treated as a tool to unite Malaysians, rather than viewed as a vehicle propagating a certain ethnic or community, exclusively belonging to one race. Therefore, overt strategies and frameworks are needed to promote the usage of BM nationwide. As a national language, BM should be learned, mastered, and used equally by all Malaysians to foster national unity (Education Malaysia Hub, 2019). Likewise, Lee et al. (2013) identified the role played by university in promoting national unity through dialogue, and a more interactive and proactive way of teaching and learning that pushed policies and ideologies of national unity via practices. This is because, the multilingual character of an institution

such as university could be perceived as the national identity in itself (Ting, 2013).

Though it is acknowledged that the English language is taking the prominent lead as the language for communication and internalisation, BM is still very much respected as the national language. This shows that while some youths may grapple with a sense of a collective identity (Ang et al., 2015), they still highly value their national language, and held an instrumental view of the English language for education and careers.

The earlier findings are indeed valuable in shaping Malaysia's educational landscape and pointing the nation in the right direction for national unity. Despite the saturation of similar suggestions, issues that involve ethics, languages, education, and cultures are always provocative, delicate, and sensitive to many; hence, require much deliberation, before any enactment. Nevertheless, to reiterate Coluzzi's (2017) propositions for better policies to improve socioeconomic standings of the citizens, and BM's status as a language; as well as to emphasise the importance of English, and national unity, a quote by Tun Mahathir in 1979 is relevant:

"… True nationalism means doing everything possible for the country, even if it means learning the English language." (Mahathir, 1999).

This study is limited by the number of participants, and the context of where the questionnaire was distributed. Future studies might want to explore the relationship between the plural society of Malaysia and the language they perceive suitable for education and national unity with a much bigger sample to obtain more valid, significant results.

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SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

Investigating CFL Learners' Dependency on Pinyin in the Acquisition of Vocabulary Meaning

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ABSTRACT

The main task in the teaching and learning of Chinese vocabulary is to cultivate the ability of foreign students in recognizing, discriminating, choosing and using accurate words. However, the nature of Chinese characters in logographic form makes the reading and learning of the Chinese language more challenging. Every Chinese character carries not only the pronunciation ("*yin*") and meaning ("*yi*"), but also the writing ("*xing*"). Hence, Chinese vocabulary acquisition includes the recognition of Chinese characters, the articulation of characters and the knowledge of the characters' meanings. Classroom practices indicated that beginner-level learners of Chinese-as-a foreign language (CFL) rely heavily on word articulation via Pinyin or phonetic alphabet orthography to comprehend the meaning of words. Therefore, this paper investigated the CFL learners' dependency on Pinyin to acquire the meaning of words. A total of 60 CFL learners participated in this study. They were given a written task to write the meaning of 30 Chinese words in the target language in two situations; firstly without provision of Pinyin and then with the provision of Pinyin. The results showed that the mean score of words comprehended accurately without Pinyin is 5.817 out of 30 words. The words comprehended with the provision of Pinyin showed a higher score of 25.483/30. The high dependency of Pinyin to acquire the word meaning implied that more teaching and learning of written word recognition should be imposed in the CFL beginner-level classroom.

Keywords: Chinese-as-a-foreign language, meaning, Malaysia, Pinyin, vocabulary meaning

INTRODUCTION

The drastic development of China's economy after its Open Door Policy implementation in the 1980s has drawn the world's interest to the country and its official language, Mandarin. Mandarin, or Standard Chinese,

is better known as "*Putong Hua*" (common speech) in mainland China, as "*Guoyu*" (national language) in Taiwan, as "*Huayu*" (Chinese language) in South East Asia countries, and as "*Hanyu*" (Han language) when referring to Chinese-as-a second language or foreign language.

In Malaysia, Chinese-as-a foreign language (CFL) has been in great demand among students in public universities (Tan & Hoe, 2017). The main aim of Malaysian public university learners is to converse with Chinese speakers and to secure a better career opportunity (Lee & Chow, 2015). The CFL course learners in Malaysian universities are becoming more popular among non-Chinese speakers, who are generally Malays, Indians, other minorities and foreigners. The content of the CFL course as carried out in this study basically covers listening and speaking skills, as well as reading and writing of Chinese characters and Pinyin (Division of Academic and International Affairs, 2018).

Unlike most writing systems which are phonographic, Chinese script is presented in the logographic form. In other words, the Chinese words are not spelt out, but they are characters written in the two-dimensional form set within squares, for example, "人" ([*ren*] people), "看" ([*kan*] to see), "湖" ([*hu*] lake). As seen in the example, every single character is single syllable ("*ren*", "*kan*", "*hu*"). Chinese writings or characters carry not only the pronunciation ("*yin*") and meaning ("*yi*"), but also the writing, or orthography ("*xing*"). As for the word with the meaning "people", the

pronunciation is "*ren*", while the writing is "人". Logographic characters, such as Chinese characters represent words or morphemes (Taylor & Taylor, 1983). In other words, the writing does not provide the message or hint on how the words are to be pronounced. Hence, the pronunciation scheme or official romanization system for standard Chinese was introduced in China in 1958, in order to help learners, especially foreign learners to read and to remember the pronunciation of Chinese characters (Zhao, 2010). The pronunciation of characters are transcribed into alphabets (romanized), called "*Pinyin*". Before the implementation of romanized phonetic transcription, there was a set of phonetic symbols (Zhuyin) introduced in 1918. Prior to the use of the romanized system and phonetic symbols, the pronunciation of characters was reflected by the most commonly used or well-known characters. In short, the Chinese script is the character, while Pinyin is the phonetic transcription.

Semantically, most of the Chinese characters can stand alone as morphemes, but some are dependent. The characters that can stand alone as morphemes are the lexical units of Chinese. In other words, a Chinese word can be one single character or more than one. As pointed by Zhao (1968), the definition of a word in Chinese is, however, rather ambiguous.

For instance, "人" [*ren*] is a character, and it is a word depicting the meaning "people". "电视" ([*dianshi*] or "electrical vision" is a word with two characters, meaning "television". Another example, "

加拿大" [*Jianada*] or "Canada" is a three-Chinese-character word meaning Canada. The characters "加" [*jia*], "拿" [*na*], and "大" [*da*] are three characters which are considered as non-morpheme words. In this case, more than one Chinese character is needed to produce the word that carries the meaning of "Canada". Other examples of a lexical unit with more than one character are "看见" ([*kanjian*], which means "to see"; and "学习" [*xuexi*] which means "to study". The presence of two morphemes with similar meanings that are joint together in word-formation is commonly found in the Modern Chinese (as compared to classical Chinese). This illustrates the features of Chinese words that can consist of one morpheme (monosyllabic morpheme) or more (disyllabic or multisyllabic morpheme).

Due to the nature of the logographic writing system, the teaching and learning of Chinese words include the recognition of Chinese characters, articulation of characters and the knowledge of characters' meaning. Therefore, the basics to learn Chinese words, also rely on recognizing and identifying the Chinese character system. General classroom practices, likewise, indicated that beginner-level learners of CFL rely heavily on word articulation via Pinyin or phonetic transcriptions to comprehend the meaning of words. Second language studies on Chinese characters also indicated that phonology plays a major part in word identification (Everson, 1998). However, this view remains controversial, because the role of phonetic radicals has not

been closely examined (Akiko, 2016). As pointed out by Akiko (2016), the mechanism of processing logography has been a long-debated issue, mainly due to the lack of transparency between phonology (Pinyin) and orthography (character).

Studies on second language acquisition proved that the proper use of vocabulary is more important than that of grammar (Jiang, 1998). For the teaching of vocabulary to CFL learners, Jiang (1998) proposed a contextual teaching strategy while Fang (2013) stressed on the learners' needs and background knowledge. Several other studies such as Ke (1996), Chin (1973), Nation (2001) and McEwen (2006) investigated the ability of CFL learners in task recognition and task production while Chin (1973), Sergent and Everson (1992), Xiao (2002), and McEwen (2006) examined the impact of the density of Chinese characters on word recognition. Peggy et al. (2018) investigated the effects of Pinyin and pronunciation on monosyllabic and disyllabic word recognition.

Besides having background knowledge and language knowledge, more in-depth studies pertaining to the relationship have evolved. For example, Everson (1998) investigated the relationship between the ability to know the pronunciation and meaning, as well as the word learning strategy among CFL learners. Hayes-Harb and Cheng (2016), likewise reviewed the influence of Zhuyin and Pinyin on Chinese word acquisition. Recent studies have also focused on the impact of the provision of word pronunciation on the assessment of vocabulary knowledge

(Zhang et al., 2017) and the role of Pinyin on word recognition (Wang & Harris, 2016). While some studies have explored vocabulary and pronunciation as separate entities, there is a great link between vocabulary and Pinyin that is less explored.

Borrowing Wilkins's (1972) quote "without grammar little can be conveyed, without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed". This study therefore, seeks to shed some light on vocabulary learning in CFL settings by probing further into the aspect of Pinyin. Furthermore, from the review of previous studies, it is evident that the dependency of word recognition on Pinyin among Malaysian university CFL learners has not received adequate attention from researchers. Thus, this study seeks to explore further into the dependency of CFL learners on Pinyin to comprehend word meanings. Specifically, the study aims at answering three main research questions on the learning of vocabulary among CFL learners in a Malaysian public university. Firstly, the study attempts to investigate the dependency of respondents on Pinyin to comprehend the meaning of Chinese words. Secondly, it seeks to understand the word learning strategy used and thirdly, to understand the challenges faced by CFL learners in comprehending the meaning of Chinese words.

Literature Review

Teaching and Learning Chinese as a Foreign Language. The three strategies of approach, method and technique have to be accurately integrated for producing quality and effective language teaching (Husin, 1998). However, effective integration of all strategies is not easily attainable in certain language teaching, particularly for standard Sino-Tibetian languages such as the Chinese language due to its logographic features (Huang, 2009; Lee & Jaganathan, 2014).

The main objective of teaching Chinese-as-a foreign (CFL) language is to cultivate learners in the aspects of phonology, vocabulary, grammar and Chinese characters (Zhao, 2010). The expected learning outcome is to enable learners to communicate in the Chinese language. The teaching of CFL targets two categories of learners: the minorities within mainland China and the foreigners outside China (Xing, 1996). The teaching and learning of CFL that commenced from the late 1950s had gradually developed into a discipline in the late 1970s (Zhao, 2011). The reading component, however, involves a two-step process; one involving the learning for rapid acquisition of spoken language, and the other involving the learning of Chinese characters (Everson, 1998). Due to its nature of non-phonetic symbols and its non-alphabetic form, the learning of reading in Chinese has to be split into two processes. Given the intricate features of its graphology that are based on stroke orders and the pronunciation of words that are based on tone and stress, CFL students also face some challenges in identifying the characters. Studies on Chinese language learning also show that one of the greatest challenges for CFL is learning the Chinese characters (Huang, 2009; Shi & Wang,

1998; Zhang, 2009). This factor contributes to the failure of teaching CFL learners to produce pronunciation accurateness, as well as the lack of interest among teachers in teaching the stroke orders to the learners (Zhao, 2011).

Teaching and Learning of Chinese Vocabulary. The Chinese vocabulary pool is large. The total number of Chinese vocabulary accounts for about hundreds of thousands. Nevertheless, an average Chinese adult knows only about tens of thousands of Chinese vocabulary (Zhao, 2011). The statistics on the number of vocabulary used and needed by Chinese speakers and CFL learners vary according to language groups. China's National Linguistics Work Committee (*Guojia Yuyan Wenzi Gongzuo Weiyuanhui*) published a list of 3000 most commonly used Standard Chinese vocabularies in 1964. There are 4000 words included in the list of most commonly used words by CFL learners published in 1986 (Zhang et al., 2012). The number of vocabulary evaluated in the China Official International Chinese Proficiency Test, Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi or HSK, ranged from 150 vocabularies for the lowest level (Level 1) to over 5000 vocabularies for the highest level (Level 6).

In the CFL setting, the main task in the teaching and learning of Chinese vocabulary is to cultivate the ability of foreign students in recognising, discriminating, choosing and using accurate words (Zhao, 2011). However, the logographic nature of Chinese characters makes the reading and learning of the Chinese language more challenging, as discussed earlier. Studies on foreign languages showed that vocabulary acquisition is one of the biggest challenge faced by learners and generally vocabulary mistakes commonly involve the misuse of words, homonyms, non-standard vocabulary or even the wrong form of vocabulary are committed by learners and such mistakes are more frequent compared to grammar mistakes. Educators generally agreed that the proper use of vocabulary is more important than the use of grammar, in order to convey a message clearly and fluently (Jiang, 1998).

In the context of teaching meaning, Jiang (1998) noted that the teaching of vocabulary should include the definitional meaning, as well as the contextual meaning. Also, he proposed that the teaching of vocabulary should not be limited to the lexicographical meaning, but it should be related to the lexicon grammar and the contextual knowledge as well. Thus, it was suggested to use contextual teaching methodology in the teaching of vocabulary to CFL learners (Jiang, 1998). Likewise, Fang (2013) perceived vocabulary acquisition in CFL, as a process of matching a sound in the target language with the corresponding physical item in the world. Vocabulary acquisition in CFL is also associated with an idea. For example, Li (1924) suggested that a word was an idea or a concept in our mind to express something in the communication. Thus, in the teaching of CFL, the educators have to consider not only the "communication unit", but also

the needs of foreign learners in terms of the complete system of sound, strokes and stress that are depicted in the character. In addition to that, educators also have to take the learners' background knowledge into account when teaching vocabulary to CFL learners (Fang, 2013).

In another study regarding the ability to recognise or reading Chinese words as represented by Chinese characters, it is found that CFL learners performed better on character recognition tasks (reading Chinese script) compared to production tasks (writing Chinese script). It is found that the character density or the complexity of Chinese characters have an effect on production accuracy (Chin, 1973; Ke, 1996; McEwen, 2006). As put forward by Chin (1973) and Sergent and Everson (1992), character density affected recognition. Studies showed that CFL learners perform better with low-density characters compared to mid or high-density characters in recognition, production, and dictation tasks. In addition, CFL learners perform better with mid-density characters compared to high-density characters in dictation and production but not in recognition (McEwen, 2006; Xiao, 2002). In learning Chinese vocabulary as reflected by Chinese characters, partial information can lead to recognition, but total mastery of the character is required for accurate production (McEwen, 2006). Also, providing learners access to the pronunciation of characters or words through Pinyin may make for a better test design for assessing Chinese learners' vocabulary knowledge, irrespective of the learners' backgrounds. Thus, it is proposed that written Chinese vocabulary knowledge tests should present target words in Pinyin together with characters (Zhang et al., 2017). In the same vein, Wang and Harris (2016) suggest that the use of Pinyin to type characters facilitate vocabulary recognition, while over-dependency on Pinyin to pronounce characters hinders the recognition process.

In a research investigating the relationship between deriving the phonetic codes and lexical meaning of Chinese words, Everson (1998) stated that "there is a very strong relationship between knowing a word's meaning and its pronunciation." In this aspect too, Everson's (1998) study indicated that when the respondents knew the meaning of a word, there was a mean probability of 91.4% that they also know how to pronounce it. Likewise, there are situations where respondents are able to identify the meaning of a word without knowing its pronunciation at an average of only 8.6% of the time. "In order for CFL learners to remember the characters, the learners are employing strategies that are in some way very reliant upon their ability to pronounce them" (Everson, 1998), suggesting that "ideographic" processing is not a primary strategy used among the learners.

In a recent research, Peggy et al. (2018) compared the orthographic effects of Chinese characters and Pinyin on lexical pronunciation with experienced learners. The study found that Pinyin was more beneficial for pronunciation perception in monosyllabic words (one-character words),

while pronunciation was better perceived in characters for disyllabic words (two-character words). A production experiment revealed a similar pattern. Additionally, low-performance learners were affected by orthographic differences of more than high-performance learners. In sum, the learning of CFL is a combination of tonal, pictographic and understanding of the standard system of romanized spelling or Pinyin that enables the CFL learners to master the language more effectively.

METHODS

Respondents and CFL Course

This exploratory study attempted to investigate the dependency of respondents on Pinyin to comprehend Chinese words and secondly, it probed to understand the word-learning strategy and challenges that CFL students faced in identifying the Chinese words' meanings. The study was carried out on 60 Level One Chinese course (LAC100) respondents in a public university in Malaysia. The CFL course is an optional course offered by the university.

This course covers 30 hours per semester, with two slots of two-hour lessons in a week. It caters for the students who have no prior Chinese knowledge. In this course, the learners are taught four skills, comprising of listening and speaking of the standard Chinese language, as well as reading and writing Chinese characters and Pinyin scripts. The LAC100 syllabus includes 10 topics in 20 lessons, and a total of 203 words are included in the *New Concept Chinese 1*, a CFL textbook published by Beijing Language and Culture University Press in 2017. The written scripts in this textbook are simplified Chinese characters and all the characters in the textbook are provided with the corresponding Pinyin.

The demographic profile of respondents is presented in Table 1. The respondents of this study ranged between the age of 20-23, consisting of 50 female students and 10 male students. The respondents consisted of 57 Malaysians and 3 non-Malaysians; 2 Japanese and 1 Indonesian. Most of the respondents spoke Malay (81.67%) as their first language, the percentage of respondents who spoke English, Japanese and Tamil as

Table 1
Demographic profile of respondents

	Item	Sub-item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	10	16.67
		Female	50	83.33
2	Nationality	Malaysian	57	95.00
		Non-Malaysian	3	5.00
3	First language	Malay	49	81.67
		English	2	3.33
		Japanese	2	3.33
		Tamil	2	3.33
		Others	5	8.33

their mother tongue was 3.33 % for each language. A total of 5 respondents spoke Dusun, Iban and Chinese dialect as their first language. The focus group interview consisted of 10 respondents, R2, R5, R11, R23, R24, R26, R30, R36, R37 and R51 who were selected for purposive sampling. The justification of interviewee selection will be explained in the Study Procedure section.

Study Instruments

The corpus for the test consists of 30 Chinese words (see Appendix A) taught to the respondents in the LAC100 class. Prior to the experiment, the respondents have been formally taught an approximate of 80 words. The words were selected randomly from *New Concept Chinese I*, with varied density (including simple characters and complex characters) and difficulty, in terms of the frequency of use in the texts and classroom. 30 words were listed in the Vocabulary Test (Test I & II) sheet in simplified Chinese character. Pinyin was not provided in Test I but it was provided in Test II.

The open-ended interview questions were provided to explore further the learning strategy and learning difficulties in learning the Chinese words. Based on the results of Test I and II, further interview questions were posed to the selected respondents, as follows:

i. What method helps you to remember the Chinese words that you have studied?

ii. Do you find it difficult to remember the Chinese characters? What are the challenges you face in remembering the Chinese characters?

iii. Does the Pinyin script assist you in knowing the meaning of the Chinese words?

iv. What role does Pinyin play in helping you to learn Chinese vocabulary?

v. Do you rely on Pinyin to comprehend the meaning of Chinese words?

vi. How do you remember the meaning of Chinese words that you have learnt?

vii. Given the choice between listening to the words and reading out the words, which one do you perform better? Why?

viii. Do you think that learning Chinese vocabulary is difficult? If you consider learning Chinese as difficult, can you explain further why it is difficult for you?

Study Procedure

Phase 1. The 60 respondents (R1-R60) for the study were given a worksheet twice. The Vocabulary Test I sheet with 30 Chinese word corpus was distributed to the respondents in the classroom. The respondents were requested to write down the meaning of the 30 Chinese words in either English or Malay. The students were given 10 minutes to complete the test and the test sheets were collected.

Phase 2. In the second phase, the respondents (R1-R60) were provided with the same

vocabulary list with the 30 Chinese words as in Test I. In this second phase, Pinyin were provided for each word. The Test I and Test II sheets were marked and the score for the number of words answered accurately was documented. The answers were considered accurate if the meaning given by the respondents corresponds with the actual meaning of the Chinese words. The rating scale for a number of words answered accurately is shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Rating scale for a number of words answered accurately

Range Sub-item	Meaning Percentage (%)
26-30	Excellent
21-25	Very good
16-20	Good
11-15	Fair
6-10	Poor
≤ 5	Very poor

Upon the completion of both Test I and II, a total of 10 respondents were selected for interview. The selection was purposive sampling. It was made based on the results of Test I and Test II score. The respondents who were selected for the focus group interview consisted of respondents who had a high score difference, moderate difference and least difference in their Test I and Test II. Each interview session took 10 to 15 minutes and each interviewee was asked 6 to 8 questions as provided in the interview guide.

RESULTS

Respondents' Dependency on Pinyin to Comprehend Meaning of Chinese Word

The numbers of words answered accurately in the vocabulary test refer to the number of appropriate meanings or the accurate corresponding equivalents provided in the Malay or English language for the Chinese words. The number of accurate lexical meaning provided by sample 1-60 corpus is shown in Appendix B.

Table 3 shows the number of words answered accurately by respondents in Test I (without the provision of Pinyin) and Test II (with the provision of Pinyin). The data showed that in general, the respondents performed better in Test II. Based on the number of words answered accurately in

Table 3
Comparison of the number of words answered accurately without and with Pinyin

No. of words answered accurately	Test I (Without Pinyin)		Test II (With Pinyin)	
	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
26-30	2	3.33	36	60.00
21-25	0	0	17	28.33
16-20	4	6.67	5	8.33
11-15	3	5.00	2	3.33
6-10	14	23.33	0	0
≤ 5	37	61.67	0	0
Total	60	100	60	100

Test I and II, most of the respondents were able to provide the accurate meaning of Chinese words with the provision of Pinyin. In Test I, a total of 61.67% of the respondents managed to give only 5 or less than 5 meanings of the Chinese words accurately. Another 23.33% of the respondents were able to provide the equivalents of 6-10 Chinese words accurately. The data also revealed that 2 respondents attained a score of 26-30 out of 30. The number of respondents with 26-30 accurate lexical meaning increased to 36 out of 60 in Test II. Another 28.33% of respondents attained a score of 21-25 accurate meanings to the Chinese vocabulary in Test II. The lowest score of the accurate answer in Test II fell within the 11-15 number of words range.

Table 4
Number of words answered accurately without and with Pinyin by 60 respondents

No.	Test	Number of words
1.	Test I (Without Pinyin)	349/1800
2.	Test II (With Pinyin)	1529/1800

Table 4 demonstrates the total number of words with the correct meaning given by 60 respondents in Test I (without the provision of Pinyin) and Test II (with the provision of Pinyin). There were only 349 (out of 1800) equivalents provided correctly by the respondents in Test I and it quadrupled to 1529 correct equivalents in Test II. In other words, the incorrect lexical meaning provided by the respondents decreased from 1451 in Test I to 271 in Test II. The data in Table 4 reflected the difference between the respondents' ability to giving the lexical

meaning of the Chinese words, with and without the provision of Pinyin. The finding showed that the respondents rely on Pinyin to comprehend the meaning of Chinese words.

Table 5
Comparison of mean, median, mode, max and min of words answered accurately

	No. of words answered accurately	
	Test I (Without Pinyin)	Test II (With Pinyin)
Mean	5.817	25.483
Median	4	27
Mode	2	27
Max	30	30
Min	0	14

The mean, median, mode, maximum and minimum of equivalents given accurately by the respondents will further explain the result of this study. As indicated in Table 5, the mean for the number of words answered accurately increased from 5.817 (without the provision of Pinyin) to 25.483 (with the provision of Pinyin). The average score of accurate equivalents written by the respondents in Test 1 is 5-6 out of 30 words. The average accurateness of equivalents almost quadrupled in Test II, where 25-26 of the equivalents out of the 30 given by the respondents were accurate. The mean for accurate equivalents given by the respondents in Test I and II showed a difference of 19.57, meaning that on average, the accurate equivalents escalated as high as 19-20 with the provision of Pinyin. Table 5 also indicates that the median of accurateness is lower than the mean (4) in Test I but higher than the mean

(26) in Test II. The frequency of occurrence (mode) of the number of words with accurate lexical meaning for Test I is 2, and it is increased to 28 in Test II. The maximum and a minimum number of equivalents written accurately showed that there were respondents providing 30 equivalents accurately in Test I and Test II, and there were also respondents who provided all 30 (out of 30) equivalents wrongly in Test I, but the number was reduced to 16 out 30 in Test II. The lowest score without and with the provision of Pinyin is 0 and 14 respectively.

Table 6 demonstrates the number of accurate lexical meaning given by respondents R2, R11, R23, R30, R37 and R51. The data revealed that there were three types of trends, based on the accurateness of the lexical meaning in Test I and II. R11 and R30 made the least difference, in terms of the number of accurate lexical meaning provided by them in Test I and II. The accurate equivalents provided by respondents R2 and R30 increased to 11 and 12 respectively. However, the number of accurate lexical meaning provided by respondents R37 and R51 showed a remarkable difference,

in which the accurateness increased to 25 and 30 words respectively in Test II. The data also revealed that the respondents who made the least difference in terms of their performance in Test I and II were the high scorers in both tests. Contrarily, low scorers made a prominent difference in providing the accurate lexical meaning of the Chinese words in Test II, when they were provided with Pinyin.

The Word Learning Strategy and Challenges Faced by Respondents in Comprehending Meaning of Chinese Words

In the interview session, the respondents R2, R5, R11, R23, R24, R26, R30, R36, R37, and R51 were called for interview individually. The samples were selected based on purposive sampling and from the 3 groups of achievers. Regarding the question on what enabled the respondents to remember the Chinese words and what are the challenges faced in remembering the Chinese words, most of the respondents mentioned that "Pinyin and the pronunciations" affected them. However, 2 of the respondents; R11 and R23 said that the Chinese words are not strange to them, as they have learnt Kanji

Table 6
Number of words answered accurately by some samples

No. of respondent	No. of words answered accurately		Difference
	Test I	Test II	
R2	19	30	+11
R11	27	29	+2
R23	30	30	+0
R30	2	14	+12
R37	3	28	+25
R51	0	30	+30

(Japanese logographic script) for years. The lexical meanings come into their mind automatically when they read the Chinese words. Additionally, they employed the "ideographic" strategy in the learning of Chinese words, meaning that both Kanji and Chinese words reflect meaning rather than sound.

For the question of Pinyin knowledge in assisting the identification of the meaning of Chinese words, the respondents generally gave a positive response. R11 and R23, however, noted that they needed Pinyin in order to know the pronunciation of the Chinese words, compared to apprehending the meaning. Other respondents, however, found that the written form of Pinyin facilitated in associating the Chinese words to its meaning.

The response to the question on the role of Pinyin indicated that the respondents agreed that the role of Pinyin was very much significant. According to the respondents, in the process of learning and knowing Chinese words, they firstly related Pinyin to the sound or pronunciation. The pronunciation was then related to the meaning of Chinese words. Only two respondents, R11 and R23 gave a relatively different answer. They found that the written form of Pinyin guided them on Chinese word articulation, whereas the sound form of pronunciation did not help them in knowing the meaning of words. They had to memorize the sound of words in order to get the meaning.

The comments by 5 respondents R5, R26, R36, R37 and R51 indicated the significance of Pinyin in assisting them

as they highlighted that it helped them to comprehend the meaning of the Chinese words and made the comprehension of meaning more "sensible" and "functional" to them. R2 and R24 reflected that they relied on Pinyin sometimes in order to get the lexical meaning. This, however, depends on the "familiarity of Chinese words to them", although the "familiarity" varies, depending on the effort they have put in writing and reading of the Chinese words. The Japanese respondents (R11 and R23) stated that they relied on Pinyin to get accurate pronunciation but not to comprehend the lexical meaning of the Chinese words.

For the question on preference between listening and reading of words, all the respondents, except for R11 and R23 noted that they had better listening skill. The respondents expressed that "reading Chinese words is a challenging task"; "it is difficult to remember Pinyin or pronunciation of Chinese words" and "there are too many Chinese words to memorize". For the respondents who were considered good, as in R11 and R23, they remarked that their listening and reading skill was equally good, but sometimes, the listening part is more challenging especially when the words are uttered softly and fast.

Generally, the respondents found that the learning of Chinese words was relatively good and several respondents (R2, R5, R24, R26, R37, and R51) expressed their interest in learning the Chinese language despite its demand for time in writing and reading practice (R2). R30 and R36 noted

that "Chinese is very difficult" as there are "too many Chinese words to memorize". In particular, the main comment was that "it is very difficult to recognize and to remember Chinese words and their meanings". Generally, the respondents, agreed that the learning of Chinese words is difficult as the Chinese script does not reflect the pronunciation. Hence, the process of learning involves a lot of memorizing and studying effort, which is challenging for them. Only two respondents R11 and R23 commented otherwise.

DISCUSSIONS

The mean and median of accurate meanings for the Chinese words given by respondents revealed that the respondents' ability to provide accurate equivalence for the Chinese words seems to be higher with the provision of Pinyin. The general data showed that most of the respondents were unable to recognise or know the meaning of Chinese words without the provision of Pinyin. This depicted that the respondents generally rely on Pinyin for the comprehension of lexical meaning. This finding concurs with Everson's (1998) study which highlighted that CFL learners were employing strategies that were very reliant on their ability to pronounce them. However, when respondents rely highly on pronunciation, this will have an impact on the recognition of Chinese characters. Wang and Harris (2016) also suggested that over-dependency on Pinyin to pronounce characters hinders the recognition of the characters.

Based on the interview findings, it is also evident that learners who have a similar logographic and tonal language, as in the case of the Japanese respondents who do not rely on Pinyin or pronunciation in comprehending lexical meaning. However, those who do not have similar writing form nor tonal affiliation to the language found Pinyin and pronunciation important in facilitating them to get the meaning of Chinese words. As in the case of Japanese writing (Kanji), there are similarities in the logographic form. On the other hand, the Malaysian and Indonesian respondents, whose first language is either Malay, English or Tamil do not have the logographic system. Therefore, they found it challenging to relate the logogram to the sound system of the language. This finding shed some light on the Chinese word learning strategies employed by logographic writing users and non-logographic writing users. It proved Everson's (1998) finding that ideographic processing is not a primary strategy among the non-logographic-based language learners, but it may be applicable to logographic-based language learners.

The interview findings, likewise also justified that the process of knowing Chinese words involves two processes, firstly, transferring Chinese words to Pinyin or pronunciation, and secondly, converting the pronunciation to meaning. As for the listening process, it involves only one process, which is translating Pinyin or pronunciation to meaning. This finding thus explained the reason why the respondents perceive reading task as relatively more challenging than the listening task.

CONCLUSION

In general, this study has shown that the high dependency of Pinyin to acquire the word meaning implies that more teaching and learning of word recognition should be imposed in the learning processes of CFL beginner-level classroom. It is also suggested that more practice of reading without Pinyin should be carried out during classes. In addition, this study indicated that the Chinese word learning strategy employed by logographic-based language learners and non-logographic-based language learners is different. The Malaysian university CFL learners, who are largely non-logographic-based language learners rely heavily on Pinyin to acquire the word meaning. This has pedagogical implications on the teaching of CFL, particularly in the Malaysian context. The CFL educators, particularly the CFL teachers in Malaysian university need to be cognizant of this language structure diversity used by the Malaysian university CFL learners. The distinctive nature of their first language writing system also affects the way they comprehend vocabulary meaning. Thus, it is proposed that more of such tasks and motivations be offered to the CFL learners, particularly the beginner-level learners so that they could overcome the "logographic" barrier in the process of learning Chinese vocabulary.

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The Effectiveness of Using a Tracker Chart to Enhance Willingness to Communicate among ESL Learners in a Philosophical Inquiry Classroom Discussion

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ABSTRACT

There has been burgeoning interest among researchers in investigating Willingness to Communicate (WTC) as part of the instructional method in a Philosophical Inquiry (PI) Discussion. The present study investigated the effectiveness of using a tracker chart in a PI classroom discussion to promote WTC. The participants were 30 undergraduate students in a public university in Malaysia. A WTC questionnaire was administered before and after the intervention. A tracker chart was used to gauge the number of learner responses that occurred throughout the 8-week intervention. Interview sessions with seven randomly selected participants were then carried out to gauge the learners' perceptions of using the tracker chart in PI Discussions and its effects on their WTC. The data analysis showed that the tracker chart resulted in increments in the number of responses throughout the 8 weeks, and participants reported that the tracker chart had positive effects on their WTC as they were more conscious of their responses and contributions in the PI Discussions. The t-test result also showed a significant difference in the participants' levels of WTC which indicates that the use of the tracker chart in PI Discussions helped increase the participants' WTC. The results indicate that the use of a tracker chart could have positive effects in enhancing learners' WTC in PI Discussions.

Keywords: L2 learners, philosophical inquiry discussion, tracker chart, willingness to communicate

INTRODUCTION

In the past few decades, there has been an increasing amount of research on promoting Willingness to Communicate (WTC) among ESL and EFL learners (Cao, 2014; MacIntyre, 2007; Peng, 2014; Shen & Byfield, 2018). This is largely

due to the research findings that show a positive correlation between WTC and second language (L2) learning outcomes (Mahmoodi & Moazam, 2014). Moreover, the importance of WTC is compounded by the growing population and the importance of English use in various domains globally (Shen & Byfield, 2018). The goal of getting students to express themselves freely in the foreign language has come into prominence in recent years as a result of the growing emphasis on communicative abilities.

Research in WTC has employed various methods including the use of classroom observations (Buckingham & Alpaslan, 2017; Peng, 2012), stimulated recall interviews (Kang, 2005), reflective journals (Cao, 2011), videotaped conversations (Kang, 2005), and focused essays (Zarrinabadi, 2014). The current study attempted to contribute to the body of research by looking into the use of a tracker chart as a meta-cognitive monitoring strategy in Philosophical Inquiry (PI) classroom discussions to enhance WTC.

Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant difference between the participants' level of WTC before and after using a tracker chart in Philosophical Inquiry Classroom Discussions?
2. What are the participants' perceptions of using a tracker chart in Philosophical Inquiry Classroom Discussions?

Willingness to Communicate (WTC)

WTC is defined as the readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using an L2 (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Moreover, it is viewed as a readiness to speak in the L2 at a particular time with a specific person, and as such, is the final psychological step to the initiation of L2 communication (MacIntyre & Doucette, 2010). WTC also refers to a person's motivation to use the target language to communicate (Dornyei, 2003).

Speaking is important for language development. Swain (1985) posited that quality language output and interaction between interlocutors have a direct impact on language learning achievement. Meanwhile, MacIntyre et al. (2003) asserted that one of the fundamental goals of language instruction was to trigger WTC which was psychologically driven. Skehan (1989) suggested that once initiated, the learner would "talk the language" and in the process, he would learn or acquire the language.

McCroskey and Baer (1985) advanced WTC as a somewhat novel construct, defining it as the intention to initiate communication at the earliest opportunity. Primary lines of research designated WTC to the native language and recognised it as a personality-based trait-like predisposition (McCroskey & McCroskey, 1988) that is relatively stable across contexts and receivers (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990). As such, the WTC construct plays an important role in L2 teaching and learning. Almost any L2 learner is likely to respond

to a direct question, but many will not continue or initiate communication (Reid & Trofimovich, 2018).

Following this perspective, the current research regarded WTC as the tendency of an individual to begin communication when free to do so. McCroskey and Richmond (1990) placed the emphasis on WTC for an individual's well-being, implying that individuals who were communicating more, were, by and large, better evaluated in different contexts (for instance school, organization, and social) and that disclosing low WTC signalled a communicational dysfunction that could reduce one's social and emotional happiness.

WTC is relevant in both L1 and L2 contexts. In the L1 context, WTC is perceived as containing two major antecedents which are communication apprehension and perceived communication competence (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). The development of WTC models in L1 usually begins with personality-related items and traits and then expanding towards variables concerning communications (MacIntyre et al., 1999). This shows that WTC is a developmental construct which originates from an individual's innate traits and personality and slowly progresses towards communication-based factors and variables such as communicative competence and communication skills.

In an L2 context, WTC models are largely derived from L1 models and concepts. McCroskey and Baer (1985) first saw WTC as a trait variable. Thus, they devised a model which was heavily influenced by the Socio-Educational Model as proposed by Gardner (1985). The model proposed by Gardner (1985) describes WTC as an individual's desire and attitudes towards learning and acquiring the L2. It displays an individual's tendency to have favourable or resentful attitudes and behaviours towards the L2, and the desire to engage with the L2 speaking community.

MacIntyre et al. (1998) proposed a pyramid model to explain WTC in the L2. The pyramid is divided into six separate layers with each layer representing various factors and contributors to WTC in the L2 (see Figure 1). The pyramid base begins with layers which represent individual characteristics such as individual personality and inter-group attitudes. As the pyramid goes up, the factors shifted from a fixed nature such as personality to more situational ones, such as self-confidence and the desire to speak to a particular person.

Measuring WTC could mean measuring a person's tendency to enter into the discourse in a particular language. In the systematic review by Zhang et al. (2018), to assess the antecedents of the WTC in L2, they provided a framework for researchers to describe people and WTC. Supported by past research, the model identified various antecedents connected with WTC. They include language difficulties, social background, behaviours, self-confidence, motivation, discussion skills and anxiety. As such, successful target language acquisition may be influenced by various variables. Many studies over the past few decades found that anxiety, attitudes and motivation
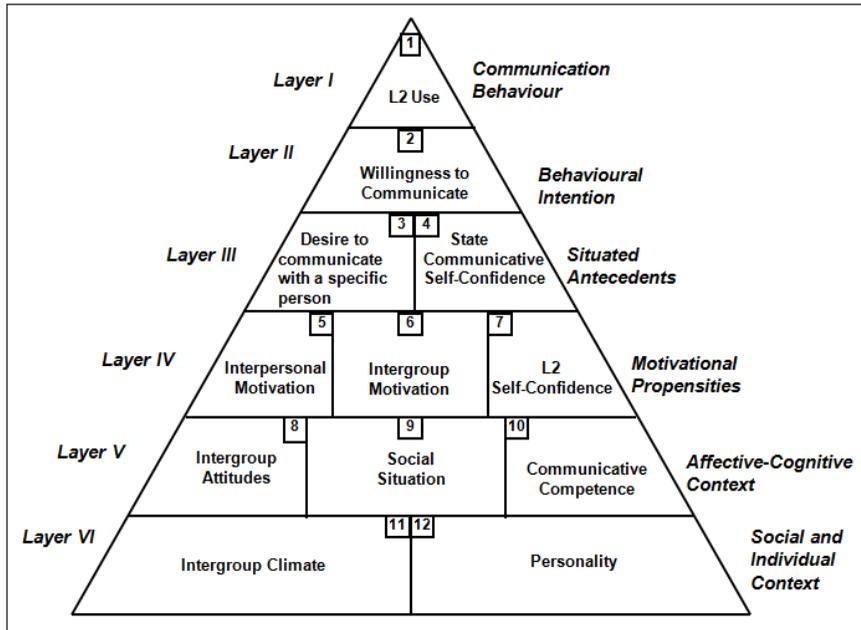
Figure 1. Willingness to Communicate Pyramid Model (MacIntyre et al., 1998)

have a large impact on L2 learning (Horwitz et al., 1991; Horwitz, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989), and the factor most often identified is anxiety. Foreign language learning anxiety is found to be distinct from other anxieties as it includes communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz, 1986).

Many studies have found a negative correlation between the level of anxiety and WTC in the L2 context. Results suggested that learners who experience a lower level of communication anxiety were more willing to use the L2 in communicative situations (Clément et al., 2003). Anxiety has also been found to be negatively correlated with several variables, such as student achievement and performance on a vocabulary learning task (Horwitz, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardener, 1989), language

production measures including a cloze test, a composition task, and an objective proficiency measure (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). As such, anxiety causes a person to be tense and anxious which is known as communication apprehension. This could result in students underestimating their ability when communicating with others (MacIntyre et al., 1997).

Several studies concluded that some causes of unwillingness to communicate are poor English proficiency, fear of speaking in front of others, shyness, lack of confidence and fear of making mistakes (Hamouda, 2013). Moreover, researchers found that affective, social-psychological, linguistic and communicative variables that are related to learner emotions could predict language learners' communicative behaviour (Goleman, 2001; Mehrpoor & Soleimani, 2018; Öz et al., 2015).

In summary, WTC has been found to be an important variable in language development. WTC is closely related to language learning anxiety and motivation. Lowering anxiety and enhancing motivation could help enhance WTC. WTC could also impact speaking goals, the confidence level in L2 skills, language proficiency, and fluency. Thus, it is important to ensure high levels of WTC by providing opportunities for communication in whole-class or small group discussions, and constantly being mindful of affective variables that could hinder WTC.

Philosophical Inquiry Classroom Discussion

The most natural and effective way for learners to practice talking freely in English is by discussing some problems or situations together through the verbal transaction of ideas. Discussion is known to promote the transfer of learning and deep learning among learners as it fosters critical thinking and content understanding (Zwiers & Crawford, 2011). The discussion could include anything from the simplest question to the most complex political and philosophical inquiry discussion. The current study subscribes to the principle that a discussion that works is one in which as many students as possible say as much as possible.

Thus, the technique used in the Philosophical Inquiry (PI) Discussion is using texts or stories and getting the students to question the ideas and decisions in the story, and deliberate on matters raised in the texts, initially through teacher-led discussion. The texts can help create a dialogue to allow students to forward their thoughts. In this method, the teacher will initially lead the discussion, and students are probed to think critically of the issues raised and the opinions expressed by their friends. Therefore, through PI Discussions, the process of deliberation is internalised and students gradually become reflective and critical thinkers. In the process, a community of inquiry is created and gradually a student-led discussion will take place.

As such, a tracker chart acts as a tool that enables teachers and students to gain a clear picture of the students' achievement in a PI Discussion. A series of bespoke trackers map out an assessment process that is simple and precise - it clearly highlights gaps in attainment so the teacher can see an individual student's progress at a glance. Therefore, teachers can monitor the students' progress throughout the semester, and individual students can take charge of their own learning, as the students' individual performances are at the centre of their own learning.

Shamsudin et al. (2017) studied the effects of debate and PI Discussion in enhancing WTC among ESL learners in a public university. The learners were randomly assigned into 2 groups with 16 participants in each group. The unpaired samples t-test showed that though debates were more effective in promoting WTC compared to PI Discussion, the former resulted in greater communication apprehension compared to the latter. The researchers argued that the nature of debates

that required each participant to take turns delivering their arguments probably resulted in a greater amount of speaking compared to PI Discussion. However, the high level of communication apprehension when engaging in debates could have adverse effects on L2 development. Meanwhile, in the PI Discussion, it was not compulsory for everyone to speak, thus some students chose not to participate in the discussions. However, the results showed that PI Discussions could still encourage speaking among learners. Therefore, the potential of using PI Discussion to promote WTC could be further explored and investigated. In the current study, the use of a tracker chart was incorporated so that the instructor and participants can keep track of the number of responses, opinions and arguments each participant articulated in the PI Discussion. Thus, this would allow for self-monitoring, and could potentially encourage the participants to speak more.

METHODS

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design with data collected using a tracker chart and pre-post WTC assessment. It is also supported by the use of interviews as a qualitative measure to triangulate the quantitative data obtained.

Participants and Procedures

The participants were 30 undergraduate students in an intact class at a university in Malaysia. Five of the participants were male and twenty-five were female. They were between 19 to 25 years old. The study used purposive sampling. The participants were selected as they were ESL learners taking a university course on aural- oral skills. At the beginning of the semester, a pre-measure on WTC was administered to the participants. Then, at the end of the weekly treatment lasting 8 weeks, a post-measure on WTC was administered. Additionally, a semi-structured interview protocol was designed to conduct one-on-one interviews with 7 participants who were chosen randomly. The interview sessions were conducted to support the results of the quantitative analysis and provide rich descriptions based on the participants' own words. Each interview session lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes and was audio recorded. The interview transcripts were transcribed verbatim and coded. A thematic analysis of the interview data was then carried out based on emerging themes.

Instruments

The instruments used in the study were a WTC questionnaire, tracker chart, and a semi-structured interview. The content validity of the instruments was verified by two experts with PhDs in Education.

Pre and Post-Measure for WTC

The pre and post-measure for WTC used in this study was a questionnaire developed by McCroskey (1992) with a scale from 0 to 100, from *'never to always'*. The questionnaire consists of 12 items to assess students' Willingness to Communicate in

English to strangers, acquaintances and friends in different communicative contexts. Among the contexts are public speaking, talking in meetings, group discussions, and interpersonal conversations. Following McCroskey (1992), the overall level of WTC was measured based on the categories in Table 1.

Table 1
Mean range and interpretation of WTC

Mean range	Interpretation
$M < 52\%$	Low level of WTC
$M = 53\text{-}81\%$	Average level of WTC
$M > 82\%$	High level of WTC

A mean score below 52% would indicate a low level of WTC, while a score ranging from 52 to 81% would indicate an average level of WTC and a score higher than 81% would indicate a high level of WTC.

PI Discussion and Tracker Chart

The study required the identification of participants' WTC in the philosophical inquiry classroom. In order to identify the participants' involvement, a tracker was introduced at the beginning of the semester. The tracker was a chart with the names of every participant on it. The tracker was displayed on the screen in front of the classroom every week.

The tracker was rated on a frequency-based system from the 1st tick to the 10th tick. Every time a participant gave an opinion or was engaged in the discussion, a tick was made in the appropriate box. Every week, there was a moderator who was chosen among the students. The moderator was not counted as one of the participants because he or she was responsible for the tracker. The participants took turns to act as moderator throughout the 8-week treatment period.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with seven participants who were randomly selected. The purpose of the interview was to gauge the participants' perceptions of using the tracker chart in a PI classroom discussion to encourage learner participation and WTC. The interview data were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. A thematic analysis of the data was then carried out. Words, phrases, clauses and sentences expressing opinions, perceptions and experiences in using the tracker chart were coded accordingly. Emerging themes across the codes were identified, and the codes were grouped under these themes. The themes identified were positive (for instance encouraged participation, motivating,), negative (for instance causing high anxiety, demotivating), and neutral comments (for instance no difference). 30% of the data was rated by a second-rater. The percentage of the number of agreement between the first and second-rater over the total number of agreement and disagreement (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was used to determine inter-rater reliability. There was an 87% agreement between the two raters which, according to Miles and Huberman (1994), indicates sufficient agreement for inter-rater reliability.

RESULTS

PI Classroom Discussion and Use of Tracker Chart

Table 2 below shows the frequency and the percentage of the participants' participation in the classroom discussion according to week.

Based on Table 2, the first week of the semester recorded the lowest frequency with 25 ticks over 300. This is equivalent to 8.33% which is a very small percentage of participation. This is probably due to the fact that the tracker was still new to the participants and the participants needed time to get used to the PI classroom discussion. Some of the participants needed more time than the rest of their classmates to be reflective especially during the PI Discussion.

Pre and Post-Measure of WTC

Table 3 shows the mean scores for the pre and post-measure of WTC. The mean pre-measure score was 61.14% and the mean post-measure score was 69.50%. This

is a mean difference of 8.36. Both mean scores were considered average based on McCroskey's (1992) categorisation and interpretation of WTC scores.

The mean scores that showed the highest mean difference were "talk to a stranger while standing in line" (18.00) and "talk in a large meeting (20 people) of strangers" (15.67). The lowest mean difference was for "talk in a small group (4-7 people) of friends (0.67). The results could indicate the effectiveness of the use of tracker chart in PI Discussions in lowering anxiety, and enhancing motivation and confidence levels when speaking to strangers.

The pre and post-measure of WTC also showed a statistically significant mean difference before and after the use of a tracker chart in a PI classroom discussion, as shown by the results of the paired t-test on the pre and post-measure for WTC in Table 4.

The results indicate that the use of the tracker chart in PI classroom discussions was effective in increasing WTC among the participants.

Table 2
Distribution of participation according to week

Week	Number of participants	Frequency	Percentage
1st week	30/30	25/300	8.33%
2nd week	29/30	55/290	18.97%
3rd week	24/30	69/240	28.75%
4th week	29/30	83/290	28.62%
5th week	25/30	63/250	25.20%
6th week	16/30	57/160	35.63%
7th week	26/30	79/260	30.38%
8th week	22/30	80/220	36.36%

Table 3
The mean results of pre and post-measure for the level of WTC

No.	Items	Mean (Pre-measure)	Mean (Post-measure)	Mean difference
1	Present a talk to a group (40 people) of strangers	58.67	61.00	2.33
2	Talk with an acquaintance while standing in line	59.67	67.00	7.33
3	Talk in a large meeting (20 people) of friends	64.00	74.67	10.67
4	Talk in a small group (4-7 people) of strangers	62.33	73.00	10.67
5	Talk with a friend while standing in line	77.33	80.33	3.00
6	Talk in a large meeting (20 people) of acquaintances	64.33	69.33	5.00
7	Talk with a stranger while standing in line	46.00	64.00	18.00
8	Present a talk to a group (40 people) of friends	62.33	72.67	10.34
9	Talk in a small group (4-7 people) of acquaintances	62.00	69.33	7.33
10	Talk in a large meeting (20 people) of strangers	42.00	57.67	15.67
11	Talk in a small group (4-7 people) of friends	80.00	80.67	0.67
12	Present a talk to a group (40 people) of acquaintances	55.00	64.33	9.33
	Total	61.14	69.50	8.36

Table 4
Paired t-test on WTC

	N	M	SD	*p*
Pre-measure	30	61.14	10.79	0.00
Post-measure	30	69.50	7.18	0.00

Note: *p < 0.05

Interview

The themes that emerged from the coding of the interview data were positive, negative and neutral comments about the use of the tracker chart in the PI Discussions. One key positive feedback received was that the tracker chart and PI classroom discussion resulted in higher motivation. For example, one participant reported that "the *tracker has definitely pushed me to participate and contribute my thoughts in the discussion*". The participant also reported that the environment in the classroom also allowed "*students to reach a stage where they communicated in the class out of intrinsic motivation*". Another participant felt that "*Anxiety and lack of confidence really affected my willingness to communicate (before this). Previously, in my school, we will get mocked by the other students if we initiated a conversation in English. It is not the same here where everyone supports each other to the point you are not afraid to make mistakes. The classroom discussion has somehow lowered the students' affective filter in practising the second language, English*". Another participant disclosed that "*Before I learnt PI discussion (with tracker chart), I rarely participated in discussions. I do not have an English background and*

I seldom speak in English with family or friends, outside of the classroom.... when I started to participate in discussions, my speaking skills are getting better... Probably because I have to use the language and discuss among our classmates, I am comfortable to use English now". Thus, it could be deduced that the use of PI Discussions and the tracker chart helped enhance motivation and encouraged participants to speak more freely.

Participants also found that the tracker chart created a healthy environment for speaking one's mind. One participant felt that the "*usage of the tracker did affect her performance because it created a healthy competition between herself and her classmates*". The tracker chart encouraged the participants to speak and respond more frequently. Moreover, the participants indicated that the tracker acted as a push factor to them to contribute more thoughts and views in the class as the learning process takes place. For example, one participant said that "*the tracker has somehow pushed me to participate more and it gave the idea that I was in competition with classmates when I was actually not*". Thus, the intended purpose of using the tracker chart was somewhat achieved. The participants were monitoring their individual contribution to the discussions, and they were taking charge of their own L2 development, through engaging in a speaking activity and contributing to the discussions.

The participants also identified some negative effects of the tracker chart. One participant indicated that the text used in the classroom should be of interest to the students. If not, they might not feel motivated to discuss the text or give their views about it. In the first PI Discussion, the focus was on a short story titled "Pixie". This story is about a growing child who was in search of her very own definition of freedom. The participant noted that she was not able to relate to the text, and did not know how to engage in the discussion that ensued. She said, "*when it comes to a topic that I am not familiar with, I do not know how to join the discussion. In this situation, the tracker can be really demotivating and discouraging. Besides, the tracker also made me feel bad with myself. It was because my classmates could see how I was not doing well. As time passed by, I started to lose interest to participate in the discussion for the week*". Perhaps, the use of more appropriate texts: ones that are more in line with learner interests will enhance motivation and WTC.

Another participant also noted that the tracker chart could have an adverse effect on some learners as the number of responses and feedback they gave were obvious and on display for everyone to see. The participant stated that "*the use of the tracker chart can be) de-motivating because it either helped to give the sense of accomplishment or de-motivated the students because the contribution chart was made obvious and noticeable to everyone in the classroom*". In other words, instead of motivating learners to speak, it could have negative psychological effects on learners, such as causing them to feel de-motivated, pressured or embarrassed.

Another participant felt that the tracker chart could induce high anxiety for certain students as some students might have "*very high anxiety level and the tracker sometimes made their condition to be even worse*". Another negative viewpoint is the "*tracker made some participants felt as if they were forced to speak up in the discussion*".

The interview data yielded some support for the quantitative results. It does show that the use of the tracker chart in PI classroom discussion can have positive effects on motivation, and thus enhancing WTC. However, there are possibly some negative effects that need to be taken into consideration if teachers decide to use the tracker chart in PI classroom discussions.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study suggest that the use of a tracker chart in PI classroom discussions can have positive effects on WTC. The t-test results indicated that learners were motivated to speak more by giving opinions and responding to other people's opinions. The pre and post-measure of WTC also showed that the participants would be more willing to engage in conversations and discussions at the end of the 8-week intervention. The tracker chart also showed an increase in the frequency of learner responses throughout the 8-week intervention. The interview results also showed that participants felt motivated to speak as a result of the use of the tracker chart. However, they noted that the texts used should be interesting enough for the students to elicit responses, and the teacher

should be mindful of students who had high anxiety levels as the use of the tracker chart could make them feel more anxious, and this could have adverse effects on motivation and WTC. This is in line with the findings of studies (for instance Goleman, 2001; Hamouda, 2013; Mehrpoor & Soleimani, 2018) that showed that affective variables could affect WTC.

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Inconsistencies and Biases in English Language Testing in Bangladesh Civil Service Preliminary Examination

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ABSTRACT

Bias and unfairness of test items in language proficiency tests have been an issue of scholarly investigation. Unfair test items and cultural biases in international English language proficiency tests such as TOEFL and IELTS have received considerable attention. However, such unfairness and biases in proficiency tests conducted at the national level such as Bangladesh Civil Service examination (henceforth referred to as BCS) have not been investigated. This paper attempts to examine item biases and inconsistencies in English language testing of BCS preliminary examination. Qualitative data has been collected from stakeholders using a semi-structured interview technique. A detailed content analysis of the English section of the BCS examination is conducted. Most test items have been found to be biased towards testing knowledge of English literature which is inconsistent with validity constructs of the language proficiency test. Stakeholders have been found to perceive the test as ineffective in measuring their English language proficiency.

Keywords: Bangladesh civil service, bias, English proficiency test, validity

INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh Civil Service examination is one of the largest public examinations conducted by Bangladesh Public Service Commission for recruiting government civil servants. The fact that jobs in Bangladesh Civil Services are regarded as highly prestigious makes this examination fiercely competitive. Only 10 in every 10, 0000 make it to the final selection (Debnath, 2017). Within this context, this paper

attempts to examine the test validity of the existing civil service examination in Bangladesh in the light of English language proficiency testing. Firstly, this paper introduces civil services in Bangladesh and its recruitment and selection processes. Secondly, it interrogates the validity of the English language testing section in the BCS preliminary examination. Thirdly, it provides a description of data instruments. This is followed by an analysis and findings of the collected data. Finally, it moves to the conclusion of the study.

Language testing has been regarded as one of the core areas of applied linguistics partly because data analysis from language tests help in defining and reflecting on the appropriateness of Second Language Acquisition models. Also, because it is important to address the ethical issues coming from the social and political roles played by language tests (D'Este, 2012).

Fulcher (1999) argued that language testing thus had a twofold impact in a variety of contexts. In the first instance, it constitutes a scientific impulse for which research is needed to provide an accurate measure of precise abilities. Secondly, language testing has also become a subject of debate because the use and interpretation of test results introduces ethical issues concerning the concept of 'fairness' in the construction, administration, evaluation, and interpretation of language tests: the powerful effect of the '(mis)use' of the test that might have harmful-unintended or intended-consequences for test-takers or society.

Language tests have been categorized in terms of purposes for test uses such as diagnostic, placement, achievement, and proficiency tests (Hughes, 2003). According to the definitions by Hughes, the English section of the BCS preliminary test can be termed as a language proficiency test since the test does not follow any specific content from academic teaching/learning contexts. Proficiency tests are constructed and administered throughout the world for several purposes (Mustafa & Anwar, 2018) including granting immigration to foreign nationals (for instance IELTS general module), awarding citizenships to immigrants (for instance USCIS), issuing licenses for professional practices (for instance TOEIC, PLAB) and for granting students access to higher education (for instance IELTS academic module, TOEFL). However, the BCS preliminary test does not assign any fixed pass mark. The main purpose of the BCS English preliminary test seems to be eliminating candidates through test scores so that the elimination process appears to be justified.

BCS Recruitment and Selection Process

The Bangladesh Civil Services examination is a nationwide competitive examination for recruiting civil service cadres including admin, taxation, foreign affairs, and police among others. According to Ahmed and Khan (as cited in Jahan, 2012), BCS is structured into four classes, namely class-1 class-2, class- 3, and class-4. All class-1 and part of class-2 officers are treated as 'gazetted' officers, the rest are considered

as 'non-gazetted' officers. The gazette officers are provided with power, prestige, responsibilities and consequently enjoy greater opportunities.

Elaborated recruitment rules are set up for selecting the cadres of BCS. To be eligible for appearing at the BCS examination, an applicant must be a Bangladeshi citizen and a graduate from a university. The age limit is 21 to 30 years for the general cadre service and 21 to 32 years for the health care service (Khan & Ara, 2005).

Eligible candidates sit for an MCQ preliminary test of 200 marks. Upon qualifying the preliminary test, candidates need to sit for a written test. The written test consists of 900 marks. To go to the next step, the *viva voce*, a candidate has to secure an aggregate of at least 45% marks in the written examination and 40% in the viva voce.

The BCS preliminary test carries 200 marks comprising 200 MCQ questions each carrying 1 mark for the correct response and negative marking of 0.5 for the wrong response. Each question provides a 'correct answer' or in testing terminology a 'key' and three 'distracters' commonly known as 'options'. Marks distribution of the test is given in Table 1.

Literature Review

The literature concerning 'validity' in language testing, test biases and Bloom's taxonomy will be discussed in the following section to situate the study in a broader conceptual framework.

Validity in Language Testing. In 1961, Lado provided the first significant contribution by applying the term 'validity' to language testing. He conducted his research on the basis of a question-statement which summarized his concept of validity: Does a test measure what it is supposed to measure? If it does, the test is considered valid. Validity is thus regarded as one of the most important qualities of a language test. Validity is a matter of relevance, a test is considered valid when test content and

Table 1
Marks distribution of the BCS preliminary test

Subjects	Marks
Bangla Language and Literature	35
English Language and Literature	35
Bangladesh Affairs	30
International Affairs	30
Geography, Environment and Disaster Management	10
General Science	15
Computer and Information Technology	15
Mathematical Reasoning	15
Mental Ability	15
Ethics, Values and Good Governance	10

test conditions are relevant and there are no irrelevant problems which are more difficult than the problem being tested (Lado, 1961).

Validation is agreeably an important procedure to certify a test. The validity of a test refers to whether or not it measures what it claims to measure (Hughes, 2003). For the certification and recruitment tests, the test components must be highly correlated to the particular requirements. A test with poor validity does not measure the profession-related content and necessary competencies. In such situations, there is no approval for using the test for the purpose. Since theoretical constructs such as reading ability, fluency in speaking, control of grammar, and writing ability are essential components of valid language proficiency tests, the term 'construct validity' is used to mean 'validity' in general. Hughes (2003) and Bachman (1990) discussed several categories of the validity construct in the following paragraphs.

Content Validity. When a test includes a representative sample of the language skills, structures, functions related to a particular purpose for which the test is conducted, the test is said to have content validity. It includes a principled selection of test items. Judgments regarding the content validity of a test are ideally made by people with knowledge of language teaching and testing who are not directly concerned with test production. A test with higher content validity is more accurate than the one with lower content validity.

Criterion-related Validity. Criterion-related validity refers to the degree to which scores received by a candidate agree with scores from other independent assessment of the candidate's ability. Such an independent assessment is used as the criteria measure to validate the test. Criterion-related validity is understood through two kinds which are predictive validity and face validity.

Concurrent Validity. Concurrent validity is established by administering the test and the criteria are at the same time. Concurrent validity is a method that uses correlation. For the purpose of practicality, when an alternative and independent shorter version of testis administered to check if scores in the shorter test can result in 'a high level of agreement', the test is said to have concurrent validity. Once a test has been scored, the relationship is assessed between the examinees status as either pass or fail based on the test scores. This validity provides evidence that the test is classifying examinees correctly.

Predictive Validity. This method is similar to concurrent validity. it measures the relationship between examinee's future performance and the test scores obtained. An example could be how accurately a proficiency test can predict a candidate's future performance in terms of language use in the target domain for which the test is administered. This type of validity is especially useful for recruitment and admission tests.

Face Validity. Face validity of a test is achieved when a test looks as if it measures what it claims to measure. A pronunciation test that does not involve test takers to speak is an example of a test without face validity. However, a test with higher face validity does not necessarily ensure better measurement of the target skills. Unlike content validity, this validity is not measured through formal settings and also not determined by subject experts. Instead, anyone who supervises the test, including candidates, teachers, education authorities or employers, may develop an informed opinion as to whether or not the test is measuring what it is supposed to measure.

Bloom's Taxonomy. The taxonomy of cognitive domain which is widely considered to be an effective framework for categorizing conceptualization of thinking was suggested in the 1950s by an American educational psychologist Benjamin Bloom. The taxonomy has been used by several researchers from diverse disciplines to evaluate test items (see Ebadi (2015) for a comprehensive review) Bloom classified the cognitive domains into six hierarchical levels namely *knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation*.

Level one, *knowledge*, deals with test-takers' ability to recall and remember information such as specific facts, dates, events, names of persons, principles, theories, etc. Level two, *comprehension*, involves demonstration of understanding including interpretation, inferences,

explanation, estimation, prediction, and translation of one symbolic form to another. Level three, *application*, assess the ability to use abstract ideas, rules, or methods in actual situations. Level four, *analysis,* focuses on one's capacity to break down an entity into its components and to understand the relationship among different constituents. Level five, *synthesis*, deals with competence in organizing and assembling constituent components into new patterns or structures. Level six, *evaluation*, assess the ability to judge the quality, merit, or value of something according to given criteria.

Evaluation of English Language Proficiency Tests in Bangladesh. In order to understand the existing depth of knowledge base in the area of English language proficiency testing in Bangladesh, several online databases of specific journals dedicated to language testing and assessment were searched. More general and frequently consulted databases such as JSTOR, Google Scholar, ERIC and Scopus were also searched with search terms such as "language testing in Bangladesh", "testing language proficiency in Bangladesh", "biases in language testing in Bangladesh". A number of search attempts returned several studies most of which deal with achievement tests conducted in the context of secondary, higher secondary and tertiary level English education in Bangladesh. Despite the fact that English language proficiency is tested in almost all executive-level recruitments, in our online search, we have not found any empirical study addressing assessment issues

in any of these English language proficiency tests administered by the government and non-government recruitment agencies in Bangladesh. Evidently, English language proficiency tests conducted in recruiting professionals in Bangladesh have mostly remained unexplored. Although high-stake tests are common in Bangladesh (for instance Secondary School Certificate Examination, Higher Secondary School Certificate Examination, Teacher Recruitment Examination, University Entrance Examination and others), there is a dearth of sufficient information about the guiding principles of these tests, their design and construction (Ali et al., 2018).

We have found only one study by Khan (2006) which investigated the issue of test bias in administering IELTS speaking test in Bangladesh. The need to involve stakeholders, particularly in language assessment, has been emphasized in discussions on cultural biases in testing. Khan (2006) urged to consider ways of minimizing cultural biases of language tests and suggested that it was essential to seek more awareness of such issues among the test designers. Findings show that there are a number of culturally inappropriate topics, vocabulary items and phrases that are alien to candidates. In addition to creating a stressful test environment, these items add to undesirable test anxiety among test takers. Thus, examiners in this study are reported to have avoided certain topics and refrained from asking problematic questions.

Language Assessment Practices in Bangladesh. In the existing relevant literature, public examinations conducted by Secondary and Higher Secondary education boards across the country have been reported to be unsuccessful in matching curriculum goals and test formats (Ali & Sultana, 2016; Das et al., 2014; Haque, 2016; Sultana, 2018). Studies investigating nature of assessment have reported a tendency among test setters for assessing students' lower-order skills ignoring higher-order skills (Sultana, 2018), teachers' preferences for close-ended questions (Rahman et al., 2011) and content-driven assessment practices (Banu, 2009).

Highly 'ritualistic' practices have been found among the test setters for test design, construction, and development (Ali et al., 2018). It has been argued that such practices compromise the necessary qualities of test validity and reliability. Studies have also reported a high degree of the negative washback effect exerted by secondary school examination in Bangladesh. Teachers have been reported to have been pressured by the headmaster and other stakeholders to teach for the test (Al Amin & Greenwood, 2018).

Information regarding necessary qualifications and expertise required to become language test setters for the BCS and other public examinations is unavailable. Although teachers often design, construct and administer language tests, they receive no in-service training in language testing and have no academic and professional knowledge about language assessment (Sultana, 2019).

Fairness in English Language Proficiency Tests. A large and growing number of studies in the field of language testing have pointed out to considerable controversies around the fairness of tests used for selection decisions in job recruitment (Auer, 2018; Diamond et al., 2012; Knoch et al., 2015; Kim & Elder, 2015). Traditionally, concerns have been raised primarily around the cultural, ethical and validity biases at the test format and item levels (Cronbach, 1971). The concern of a more significant nature is what to do with bias once it has been detected. Should 'biased' items be eliminated, neutralized, completely replaced by fair items, or ignored as representative of the same necessary target behaviour? Certainly, to give an answer to these questions, a number of studies have been carried out (Chen & Henning, 1885; Djiwandonos, 2006; Vijver & Tanzer, 2004).

If such crucial issues in a test are not treated carefully, the tendency of bias found can be high (Vijver & Tanzer, 2004). To address the problems of these biases, Djiwandonos (2006) proposes methods such as Item Response Theory (IRT) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) which generally employ a statistical approach to detect biased items in a test. After biased items are detected the items are revised or removed from a test. If biases in a test have been taken care of, the aim of a test at measuring the proficiency of test takers regardless of their cultural and educational background can be achieved.

We assume that much like what happens with achievement tests investigated in the above studies, inconsistencies may exist between principles of language testing and the test items used in the English section of BCS preliminary examination. We also assume that test makers for these examinations have not been able to incorporate the fundamental constructs of language proficiency testing.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following research questions:

i. What is the nature of bias in the test items used in English language proficiency testing in BCS preliminary test?

ii. To what extent does the English section of the BCS preliminary test conform to the validity constructs of language proficiency tests?

iii. What are the perceptions of the test takers regarding the effectiveness of the English test in BCS preliminary examination?

METHODS

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used for data collection and analysis. The semi-structured interview method was used to obtain stakeholders' perceptions regarding the test. A content analysis of the test items from previous test papers was performed. Hughes' (2003) and Bachman's (1990) category of the validity constructs was used to examine the validity of the test. Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) was consulted to identify the cognitive domains that the test was capable of assessing.

Data Collection Procedures

Four examination papers of the previously conducted preliminary examination were collected from candidates who had appeared in the examination. A semi-structured interview was conducted to collect former test-takers' and aspiring candidates' opinions regarding the effectiveness of the test. The interview method was used in this paper to provide supporting and supplementary information on BCS recruited class-1 officers' (the former test-takers', O1-O5) as well as the aspiring candidates' (C1-C5) opinions and perceptions concerning the English section of BCS preliminary test. In-depth, supplementary information is obtained through the interview. Semi-structured interviews are used to enable the interviewees to freely express their opinions about the existing preliminary English language proficiency test. According to Nunan (1992), a semi-structured interview gives the interviewees full control and power to handle questions in free and flexible environments.

The interview was individually conducted with each respondent in English. The interviewers (the second author of the article) used English to conduct individual interviews with the respondents. However, the interviewees could choose either Bangla or English to respond to. The interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed and analyzed. Strict confidentiality regarding the identity of the interviewees was maintained to ensure authentic and genuine responses.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the Examination Papers. For evaluating the test items, a content analysis (Krippendorff, 2018) was performed. The test papers for the 35th, 26th, 37th and 38th BCS preliminary examinations were closely read several times to identify emergent themes and patterns in them. Several categories emerged which are defined and exemplified below:

English Literature (EL). Items asking for factual information regarding English literature such as identifying the author's name, genre, quotations, and literary periods. For instance, "To be, or not to be, that is the question- is a famous dialogue from-
 (A) Othello
 (B) Romeo and Juliet
 (C) Hamlet
 (D) Macbeth"

Meta-linguistic Knowledge (MK). Items requiring declarative knowledge of grammar such as recognizing parts of speech, determiner, passive voice etc. For instance, "Depression is often <u>hereditary</u>. The underlined word is a/an-
 (A) Adverb
 (B) Adjective
 (C) Noun
 (D) Verb"

Vocabulary in Isolation (VI). Items dealing with candidates' knowledge of the conceptual meaning of English words such as antonyms, synonyms, the analogy between pairs of words and others without

providing any meaningful context. For instance, "What would be the right synonym for "initiative"?

    (A) Apathy
    (B) Indolence
    (C) Enterprise
    (D) Activity"

Vocabulary in Context (VC). Items attempting to assess candidates' knowledge of the contextual meaning of English words used within a meaningful context provided in a sentence. For instance, "It is time to review the protocol on testing nuclear weapons." Here the underlined word means-

    (A) Record of rules
    (B) Summary of rules
    (C) Procedures
    (D) Problems"

Language Usage (LU). Items requiring candidates to identify instances of accurate language use according to rules of grammar and vocabulary usage. For instance, "------ amazing song haunted me for a long time.

    (A) These
    (B) Those
    (C) Thus
    (D) That"

Idiomatic Expressions (IE). Items asking for candidate's knowledge of English idioms, proverbs, and phrasal verbs. For instance, "The idiom "A stitch in time saves nine"- refers the importance of --

    (A) Saving lives
    (B) Timely action
    (C) Saving time
    (D) Time tailoring "

Analysis of the Interviews

With regards to the third research question, BCS class -1 officers'(former test-takers) and the aspiring candidates' interviews were conducted to know whether the English section of BCS preliminary test can truly measure the candidates' English language proficiency level.

Interviewees were required to respond to the following questions:

1. How well does the English section of the BCS preliminary test determine candidates' status as eligible or non-eligible?

2. Do you think the BCS preliminary English test measures the candidate's language proficiency?
   (a) If YES, to what extent can it measure the candidate's language proficiency?
   (b) If NO, what alternative(s) would you propose?

Responses were recorded and transcribed later for interpretation and analysis.

RESULTS

Applying Hughes' (2003) and Bachman's (1990) definition the validity constructs presented in the literature review above, it can be seen that the BCS preliminary English test does not conform to any of the validity constructs required for a valid language proficiency test.

The test does not qualify as valid in terms of its content as they do not constitute a representative sample of language structures and communicative functions the successful

candidates may require in their future profession for which the test is conducted.

No items in the four examination papers analyzed in this study assess English language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Absence of data regarding test specifications, proficiency construct and the tests' ability for satisfactory prediction of successful test-takers' future language use makes it impossible to accept the test as valid language proficiency tests. By all means, it may seem to qualify only as a general test for vocabulary, grammar and general knowledge of English literature. The total marks allocated for English section is 35 which is not based on any justifying correlation.

In light of Bloom's taxonomy, apparently, the test is entirely based on the lower order concerns of cognitive abilities. Most of the MCQ items of the English section in the BCS preliminary examinations from 35th to 38th are based on recalling factual knowledge which does not require higher-order thinking abilities of the candidates. Instead of testing language proficiency, the test assesses memorization of factual information. Table 2 shows the content distribution of the English section from 35th to 38th preliminary tests.

The average of the content distribution is presented in Figure 1.

Table 2

Percentage of content distribution of the English section from 35th to 38th preliminary tests

BCS preliminary examinations	Targeted domains of knowledge					
	EL	ML	VI	VC	LU	IE
35th	34%	17%	12%	23%	11%	3%
36th	50%	17%	5%	0%	20%	8%
37th	43%	32%	9%	5%	3%	8%
38th	32%	46%	12%	0%	5%	5%
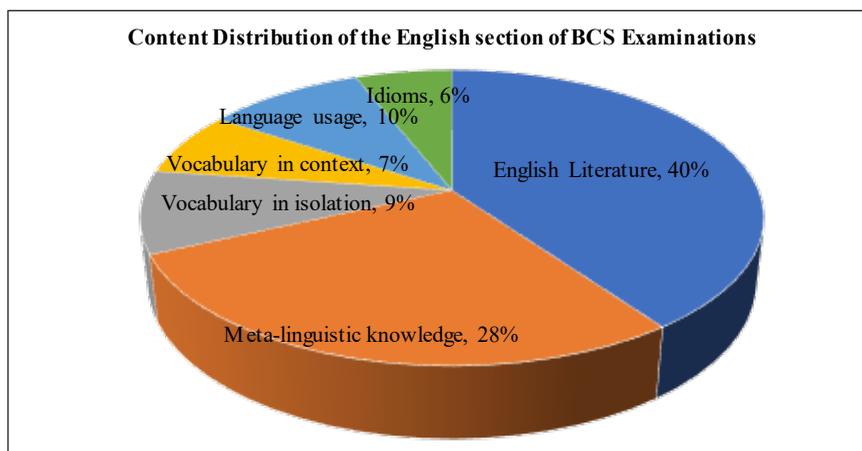
Figure 1. Content distribution of the English section of BCS examinations

The test is apparently biased towards candidates with a background in English literature. Almost 40 % of the test items require candidates' factual knowledge of English literature such as the name of authors, source of quotations, identification of literary genre and periods etc. Items requiring candidates' metalinguistic knowledge constitute the second-largest category with an average of 28%. Formal aspects of English grammar are tested through items that represent more than one-fourth of the test items.

Approximately one third (32%) of the total items involve assessment of vocabulary knowledge, language usage and idiomatic expressions. Items of this category again mostly target candidates' factual knowledge through testing vocabulary and idiomatic expression in isolation.

All the BCS officers (O1-O5) and the aspiring candidates (C1-C5) explicitly expressed that the existing English language proficiency test is not an effective test for measuring a candidate's proficiency level in English. They also expressed their preference to modify the test and suggested to add new items such as reading comprehension, uses of day-to-day English, and practical uses of grammar which are all related to higher-order abilities. As O1 expressed,

> *In this condition, [sic] English proficiency test is not enough to measure a candidate's proficiency level. Most of the questions are from the literature. For the grammar*

> *section, it also gives emphasis on direct grammar than the practical uses of grammar.*

Thus, it is evident that the test gives more importance to testing meta-linguistic knowledge than the uses of language. C1's opinion supports the BCS officer's opinion that this English proficiency test cannot appeal to be a fair test to measure a candidate's merit and potentials. She says,

> *A person's English language proficiency cannot be measured through the current format of BCS preliminary examination, as it is mainly a memory-based examination which gives significance to a person's knowledge of English literature rather than his/ her ability to use the language properly.*

It is found from the interview that candidates in preparation for the test memorize the MCQ items from the question banks commercially produced and marketed in the country. This indicates that the present examination type is based on memorization and reproduction. It does not assessment-takes true ability of language use. As O4 said,

> *I think the existing English language proficiency test is not enough to measure a candidate's proficiency level because most of the questions of the English section are based on memorization.*

Besides, both BCS officers and the aspiring candidates pointed out serious faults in the test. As C3 said,

I don't think the BCS preliminary test can determine the best candidates. The reason behind is that major parts of the preliminary test are[sic] depend on memorizing capabilities of the candidates. So, it may not identify an ideal candidate.

The level of English competence that BCS test attempts to measure is not sufficient. The BCS class-1 officers and the aspiring candidates expressed their views on the required level of English for speaking and listening. As O3 suggested,

To measure the candidate's proficiency level effectively, there should be some questions that include some basic grammar and pronunciation.

It is also echoed by (C3) too, who believed that the current BCS preliminary test items cannot truly measure a candidate's proficiency level and he proposed to revise the test items. He expressed his views:

Instead of testing memorizing ability, the test should give emphasis on analytical ability, critical thinking and creative questions.

In the same vein, C1 also believes that these test items mainly encourage memorization of factual information instead of testing language proficiency. She observes:

I feel the examination should change its current format and base it on international English examinations such as IELTS, TOFEL.

It seems that the existing English language proficiency test is perceived as ineffective in measuring candidates' proficiency level in English. Therefore, based on these non-expert opinions, the test does not qualify for its face validity too.

The interviewees also expressed their preference for modifying the test and suggested to add items to include reading comprehension, uses of day-to-day English, practical uses of grammar, linking ideas, application of language use and so on. They also advised reducing the number of questions from literature, proverbs, and idioms. Only one BCS class-1 officer claimed that the present test format is acceptable as it is a test of screening out candidates from a large number of applicants. However, he also clarified later that the existing English proficiency test needs to be revised and items for testing reading comprehension and control of grammar could be included.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The key findings of the study reveal that the English section of the BCS preliminary examination does not conform to the validity constructs and therefore does not qualify as a valid test of language proficiency. The test mostly involves assessment of memorization and is considerably biased with respect to its inclination for testing

knowledge of English literature and formal aspects of English grammar and vocabulary. The test takers and the aspiring candidates are evidently aware of the ineffectiveness of the test in measuring their language proficiency. Apparently, the test takers are in favour of modifying the test to make it more like other widely used proficiency tests.

As the findings reveal, test makers have selected test items for testing lower-order skill of remembering. This tendency clearly reflects Hughes (2003) observation that test writers tend to test what is easy to test rather than what is really important to test. Bachman (1990) argued the evidence was required to claim that scores in MCQ tests typically used for selecting clerk and secretaries were indeed relevant. As test design becomes a matter of convenience rather than accurate measurement, we need concrete evidence to claim that the test as valid.

Surprisingly, one participant still found the test acceptable. This is perhaps due to the fact that tests are often accepted uncritically. Tests are regarded as justified and unquestionable their own rights (Shohamy, 1998). Although most test-takers found the test ineffective, it still found its acceptance on the ground that the sole purpose of the test is to screen out excessive candidates and thus any test format that can successfully eliminate candidates may even appear fair to some stakeholders.

In Bangladesh, the system of assessment has always been guided by enthusiasm for assessing memorization and comprehension skills. Our findings are similar to findings from other studies conducted in Bangladeshi school settings which maintain that higher-order skills such as application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation are hardly included in the assessment (Begum & Farooqui, 2008).

The nature of test and assessment used in the BCS preliminary English test not only fails to successfully assess candidates' creativity, imagination, and critical thinking skills but also risks selecting candidates who are incompetent in English for positions that are crucial to the nation's socio-political and economic development. It may be possible that many candidates who are not good at memorizing facts and figures or who find the whole process somewhat meaningless seek illicit ways of passing the exam. Therefore, a change in the nature of test items of English and assessment procedures may prevent any unwanted and illicit means such as leakage of question papers.

This change should also ensure that candidates' critical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities are emphasized in the tests. We need to keep in mind that knowing factual information is no longer considered important in the age of social media, Google and Wikipedia. It becomes important to consider test takers' abilities to apply knowledge and information in practical life. Therefore, it is important that the English part of the BCS examination shifts its focus from lower-order to higher-order thinking skills and places greater emphasis on test-takers' ability of critical thinking, and in-depth understanding of how the English language is used in real life.

The dominance of MCQ items from English literature and the metalinguistic aspects of the English language have serious repercussions in terms of learning practices, strategies and outcomes. Aspiring candidates are very likely to memorize factual information from English literature which will consequently lead to candidates' cultivation of memorizing strategies and avoidance of language learning strategies. Excessive use of items that test metalinguistic knowledge can eventually prompt test takers to pay more attention to the formal aspects of language and to ignore the functional aspects of language necessary to develop proficiency in the target language. Indeed, the impact of high stakes assessment has a severe washback effect on English language teaching in Bangladesh (Sultana, 2018) and consequently increases a form of shadow education (Hamid et al., 2009) as both 'micro (classroom)' and 'macro (education system and societies)' level aspects affect washback (Khan et al., 2019). It is important to note that some of the essential qualities such as oral presentation, leadership, tolerance, and social values are not included in the assessment system in Bangladesh (Begum & Farooqui, 2008).

As Khan (2006) suggested, there was a pressing need to show sensitivity to educational and cultural contexts in which language proficiency tests were administered. Language should not only be taught but also be tested in a manner consistent with the local context. Test designers, therefore, need to consider the social, cultural and educational environment of the users and adopt tests accordingly.

It may be argued that since the main objective of the BCS preliminary examination is to sort out potential candidates, attempting to measure the lower order skills at this initial stage is acceptable. Thus keeping the higher-order skills to assess in the later stages seems somewhat reasonable. However, even for assessing the lower order skills of language proficiency, it is necessary to provide test setters with a guideline for the selection and construction of test items to ensure a valid language proficiency assessment.

Looking at the poor qualities of test items in the BCS preliminary English examination, it can be assumed that test designers and question setters have little understanding about the fundamental principles of language proficiency testing. It is also evident from the content analysis that the BCS English test setters seem to have a conspicuous inclination for candidates' knowledge of English literature. One explanation why civil servants' factual knowledge of English literature and idiomatic expression is given so much undue importance is perhaps the age-old colonial entanglement of the test setters which eventually may have prompted them to assume that the future civil servants of the country have to know the literature of the masters of the past.

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SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

Comparing the Effectiveness of Direct Vocabulary Instruction and Incidental Vocabulary Learning in Improving the Academic Vocabulary of Malaysian Tertiary Students

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ABSTRACT

This study compared the effectiveness of incidental vocabulary acquisition and using direct vocabulary instruction to improve tertiary students' academic vocabulary. Research has shown that Malaysian tertiary students lack exposure to academic vocabulary prior to their tertiary education and that they have an insufficient vocabulary size for tertiary education. Hence, this study explored the feasibility of providing direct vocabulary instruction with gamification through an intervention programme which the researcher named the Accelerated Vocabulary Acquisition (AVA) programme as a method to improve tertiary students' academic vocabulary. Marzano's three-phase framework for vocabulary instruction was adapted and gamification was incorporated through the use of the gaming platform Kahoot!. This study used a quantitative approach and adopted the non-randomized control group, pretest-posttest design. The participants were 180 tertiary students studying for their diploma in various fields. The academic section of the Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) by Schmitt et al. was used to measure the students' academic vocabulary. The results showed that the AVA programme is a feasible framework to improve tertiary students' academic vocabulary as tertiary students who underwent the AVA programme outperformed the students in the control group who learnt academic vocabulary incidentally.

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary knowledge is crucial in language learning. Without sufficient vocabulary, communication becomes less effective

because students would not be able to understand others and they would not be able to express their ideas (Lessard-Clouston, 2013). In the context of tertiary education, students not only require sufficient general vocabulary but also academic vocabulary in order to understand the academic materials. Vocabulary can be learnt incidentally, such as when students encounter new words through reading or peer interaction. Vocabulary items can also be taught explicitly.

Vocabulary knowledge is often studied in terms of size (or breadth) and/or depth. Vocabulary size refers to the understanding of word definitions or their dictionary meanings, however minimal or superficial that understanding may be. Vocabulary depth refers to the understanding of words beyond their dictionary meanings. In the context of this study, only vocabulary size is considered. Vocabulary size is measured in terms of word families which is seen as a reliable measurement (Milton & Treffers-Daller, 2013). A word family consists of the base form of a word and its inflexions which can be readily understood from the base form (Bauer & Nation, 1993). For example, *jump, jumped* and *jumping* would belong to one word family.

Malaysian tertiary students are perceived to have limited vocabulary size. Research shows that Malaysian tertiary students' vocabulary size ranged between 4500 and 6500 word families. This is below the vocabulary size expected of tertiary students (Tan & Goh, 2017; Yunus et al., 2016). In two separate studies, Milton

and Treffers-Daller (2013) estimated that native-English-speaking undergraduates had a vocabulary size of 10000 word families while Nation (2006) estimated that English-as-second-language users studying for their advanced degrees had a vocabulary size of about 8000-9000 word families. Furthermore, the vocabulary size of Malaysian tertiary students is insufficient for adequate comprehension of academic texts. Tan and Goh's (2017) research found that Malaysian tertiary students generally needed a vocabulary size of about 8000 word families to achieve adequate comprehension of academic texts.

In addition to the insufficient vocabulary size, Malaysian students also begin tertiary education without adequate exposure to academic vocabulary. The English syllabus for national secondary schools includes over a thousand vocabulary items to be taught, but less than ten are academic vocabulary (Manan et al., 2013). As such, there is a need to help tertiary students improve their vocabulary especially academic vocabulary.

Most tertiary institutions in Malaysia provide general English proficiency courses to improve the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing and to cope with the academic texts they have to read for their courses. However, the courses seldom provide direct vocabulary instruction to help students improve their vocabulary. Rather, it is assumed that students would acquire the necessary vocabulary incidentally. In the Malaysian context, research on explicit efforts to address the lack of vocabulary among

tertiary students has not been plentiful. Tan (2016) explored the use of guided extensive reading and vocabulary instruction to improve tertiary students' vocabulary. In her study, the instruction was carried out as an additional programme for remedial students and did not focus on academic vocabulary. Unfortunately, however, Malaysian students generally do not read widely and are dependent on their lecturers for among other things, lexical input (Kaur et al., 2008).

This study compared the effectiveness of incidental vocabulary learning and direct vocabulary instruction among tertiary students. It explored the feasibility of providing direct vocabulary instruction to help tertiary students improve their academic vocabulary as this is the type of vocabulary most relevant for tertiary students. Marzano's (2010) framework for direct vocabulary instruction was adapted for this study. Direct vocabulary instruction in this study refers to the explicit teaching of vocabulary items rather than vocabulary learning strategies. Instead of merely providing instruction and using the classroom games proposed by Marzano, gamification was incorporated using the gaming platform Kahoot!. Since the current generation of tertiary students is digital natives, it was hoped that technology use would make vocabulary learning more appealing and engaging. Wang's (2015) research had shown that Kahoot! is able to keep students' attention even after prolonged use.

Previous research using computer and games for vocabulary learning in the Malaysian context did not include direct vocabulary instruction. In addition, it involved secondary school students, not tertiary students (Letchumanan, 2012). The direct vocabulary instruction with gamification in this study was carried out within an existing English proficiency course, which did not include direct vocabulary instruction in its syllabus. The researcher named the programme the Accelerated Vocabulary Acquisition (AVA) programme.

Some may argue that students should be taught vocabulary learning strategies rather than vocabulary items so that they can be independent learners. Such strategies should be taught to students in schools rather than at tertiary institutions. Skills involved in vocabulary learning strategies need to be practised and mastered over time. It is not feasible for tertiary students to spend a great amount of time working on vocabulary acquisition skills. At the tertiary level where students are embarking on specialized fields, it would be more useful to teach them the relevant vocabulary so that they can use the knowledge to help them in their studies.

This study was carried out at a private tertiary institution in Malaysia. The participants were second-year students enrolled for various diploma programmes. They entered the tertiary institution immediately after completing their secondary education in Malaysia. The research question that guided this study was: Is there any significant difference in the academic vocabulary scores between students who received direct vocabulary instruction and students who learnt academic vocabulary through incidental learning?

Literature Review

Theoretical Background. This study is associated with two learning theories, namely behaviourism and cognitive constructivism. According to the behaviourist theory, learning is deemed to take place through stimulation and reinforcement (Wu et al., 2012). Cognitive constructivism, on the other hand, emphasizes the mental processes of learning and stresses that learning should involve thinking, meaning-making and motivation (Ertmer & Newby, 2013; Wu et al., 2012). The view is that knowledge is made up of mental representations that are actively constructed by learners based on their existing cognitive structures ("Learning: Theory and research," 2015). New information is assimilated with existing knowledge for it to become meaningful. In vocabulary learning, students must firstly receive some input on the vocabulary items. Only then can they progress to think about the words and make meaning of the vocabulary items.

Thus, in this study, students were given explanations of the vocabulary items as a form of stimulation in the learning process. They then received reinforcement through gamification when they engaged in Kahoot!. Gamification provided reinforcement in two ways: 1) repetition for effective reinforcement, and 2) immediate positive reinforcement for the correct answer(s) with the provision of rewards for the students. According to Ertmer and Newby (2013), the use of reinforcement to impact performance is a specific feature of instructional designs within the behaviourist principle. The use of

game rewards is relevant to digital natives since they 'thrive on instant gratification and frequent rewards' (Prensky, 2001).

The students were also encouraged to construct the meaning of what they learnt through the use of a vocabulary notebook, as prescribed in Marzano's framework. Students wrote in the vocabulary notebook and revised, where necessary, their own definitions of the vocabulary items based on their understanding rather than copy definitions from other sources. In addition, students were required to include a non-linguistic representation of the vocabulary item. The purpose is to enable students to assimilate the vocabulary items with their existing knowledge and make meaning to the words learnt. This is consistent with the cognitive constructivist principle for effective learning.

Academic Vocabulary. Academic vocabulary refers to words that occur in academic texts across various fields of study. However, 'academic words are not highly salient in academic texts, as they are supportive of but not central to the topics of the texts in which they occur' (Coxhead, 2000). Although academic words are not central to the content, it is important to understand these words as they can affect students' comprehension of academic texts. The secondary school syllabus does not provide adequate exposure to academic vocabulary. Out of the 1,316 words listed in the syllabus, only seven were academic vocabulary (Manan et al., 2013). Furthermore, academic vocabulary tends

to be neglected in vocabulary instruction because they may seem ordinary to the academician (Manan et al., 2013). Tertiary students should, therefore, be taught academic vocabulary to help them in their comprehension of the academic materials they have to read. The academic vocabulary taught in this study was taken from the Academic Word List (AWL) (Coxhead, 2000). The AWL is a comprehensive compilation of academic words taken from a corpus of 3.5 million running words of written academic text. It contains 570 word families.

Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition. Incidental vocabulary acquisition may happen from learning other language skills such as reading and listening. Although students can get exposure to vocabulary through incidental learning, Schmitt's (2008) review of various studies showed that the pick-up rate was relatively low. Similarly, Won (2008) found that 'the incidental learning process was slow, often misguided and seemingly haphazard' (p.4). Furthermore, there was concern among ESL researchers that incidental learning of vocabulary alone might not be efficient enough to meet the learning needs of students (Won, 2008).

Nevertheless, other studies on incidental vocabulary learning found that students were able to make significant gains in their vocabulary learning (Brown et al., 2008; Restrepo Ramos, 2015). However, they emphasized that the texts had to be carefully chosen to allow incidental vocabulary

learning to take place. If vocabulary acquisition is not the main focus of a course, it is unlikely that specific texts would be deliberately selected to enable students to acquire vocabulary incidentally.

In the present study, the materials were not deliberately chosen to allow optimum incidental vocabulary acquisition to take place. Rather, the materials were determined by the tertiary institution to improve students' overall reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. There was no provision for vocabulary instruction in the syllabus.

Direct Vocabulary Instruction. Direct vocabulary instruction refers to the teaching of specific vocabulary items rather than teaching vocabulary learning strategies. Research has shown direct vocabulary instruction to be effective in improving students' vocabulary (Suing, 2012; Stahl & Fairbanks, 1986; Won, 2008). In their meta-analysis of studies concerned with the effects of vocabulary instruction, Stahl and Fairbanks (1986) found that direct vocabulary instruction for words taken from high-frequency lists had an effect size of 0.32 while direct vocabulary instruction for words related to the students' reading materials had an effect size of 0.97. In another meta-analysis of studies on vocabulary instruction, Won (2008) tabulated the overall effect size to be d = 0.69. However, Won's (2008) meta-analysis showed that the mean effect size for vocabulary instruction without the use of technology in the form of multimedia was larger (d = 0.73, n = 28)

than the mean effect size for studies with multimedia use (d = 0.50, n = 13). The studies analysed by Won (2008) were from 1985 to 2006. It is possible that multimedia used at that time was not as advanced as is currently available. Thus, more current research involving the use of technology in vocabulary instruction is needed. Suing (2012) who used Marzano's (2009) Six-Step Vocabulary Process in a more recent study, also found direct vocabulary instruction to be effective with 32-33 percentile gains in student achievement. Her study, however, did not involve the use of technology.

This study adapted Marzano's (2010) framework for direct vocabulary instruction which involves teaching words in semantic clusters. This enables a larger number of vocabulary items to be taught within a shorter period of time. Marzano proposes three phases of direct vocabulary instruction, namely 1) introductory phase, 2) comparison phase and 3) review and refinement phase.

In the introductory phase, the teacher explains the important characteristics of the vocabulary items using everyday language rather than giving a formal definition. The students are shown how the word is used in context. The students then restate the explanation in their own words and create a non-linguistic representation of the vocabulary item in a vocabulary notebook.

In the comparison phase, teachers highlight similarities and differences between vocabulary items in the same semantic cluster as this can improve comprehension (Graves, 2006). For instance, *integration*, *assimilation* and *incorporation*

might be taught at the same time. In this study, similarities and differences were highlighted as part of the instruction given and also through the questions in Kahoot!.

In the review and refinement phase, students are given the opportunity to review and refine their understanding of the vocabulary items through multiple exposures to the same word in different contexts. Marzano proposed some conventional classroom activities and games for this purpose, but this study used the online gaming platform Kahoot! to make the lessons more contemporary for the students who are digital natives.

The three phases do not necessarily occur sequentially but may overlap. Figure 1 shows Marzano's framework for direct vocabulary instruction.

As students go through the comparison phase and the review and refinement phase, they may make additions and/or changes to the entries in their vocabulary notebook. This enables students to have a record of the vocabulary they have learnt and allows them to actively revisit their understanding of the new vocabulary items.

In the Malaysian tertiary context, there has been limited research on direct vocabulary instruction. Tan (2016) used graded readers and instruction to improve tertiary students' vocabulary. However, in her research, the instruction was teaching students dictionary skills to complete the vocabulary worksheets rather than providing direct instruction for specific vocabulary items.
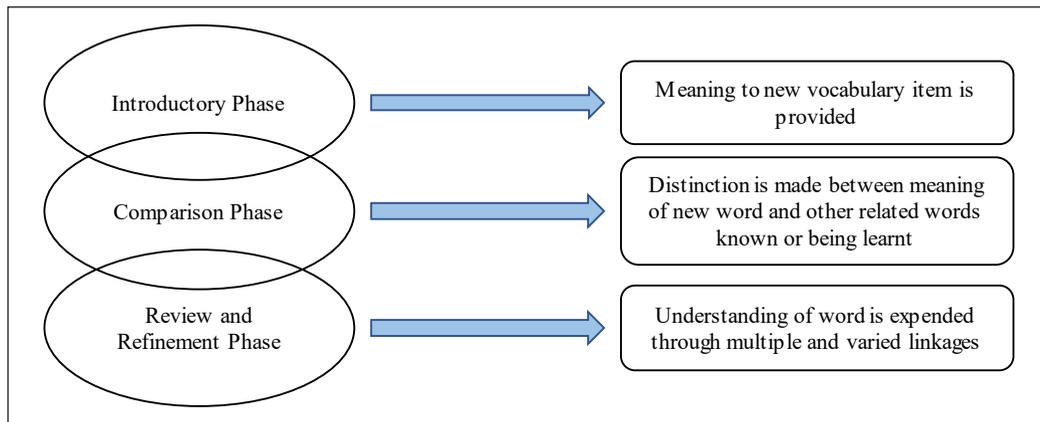
Figure 1. Marzano's framework for direct vocabulary instruction (adapted from Marzano, 2010)

Integration of Technology in Vocabulary Learning in the Malaysian Context. There have been efforts to use technology to help students improve their English vocabulary in Malaysian classrooms (Letchumanan & Tan, 2012; Letchumanan, 2012; Mustafa et al., 2012). The target group of students, however, are generally secondary school students rather than tertiary students. Mustafa et al. (2012) compared the performance of students who read texts and completed activities online to students who read the same texts and did the same activities as printed materials. They found that students who used the Internet showed greater improvement in their vocabulary test scores. The study, however, did not include direct vocabulary instruction. Letchumanan and Tan's (2012) study taught secondary school students the traditional vocabulary learning strategies of using a dictionary, semantic mapping and contextual clues as well as using computer games to improve students' vocabulary through incidental learning. They found that students scored better in the posttest vocabulary scores when using computer games to learn vocabulary and that the difference in scores was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). One of the reasons cited for the improvement in vocabulary was the immediate feedback which students received when they used computer games to learn vocabulary. It is also highly probable that the current digital native students respond better to game learning given their proclivity to technology. Although there have been studies showing that gamification is effective at tertiary level in various fields in other countries, studies on providing direct vocabulary instruction with gamification to tertiary students in Malaysia seem to be lacking (Lam, 2014; Mousavi & Mohdavi, 2016; Wang, 2015; Wu et al., 2011; Yip & Kwan, 2006).

Gamification. Gamification is 'an emergent approach to instruction which facilitates learning and encourages motivation through the use of game elements, mechanics and game-based thinking … such as earning points, overcoming a challenge or receiving badges for accomplishing tasks' (Kapp,

2013). Gamification can be incorporated into the classroom through the use of online gaming platforms.

According to research, the use of gamification is able to motivate and engage learners (Cheong et al., 2013; Hamari et al., 2014; Vandercruysse et al., 2012). Elements that should be included in using gamification in the classroom are relevance, social interaction, continuous motivation, minimum equipment, comparison of scores among players and audio-visual effects (Yip & Kwan, 2006).

Gamification provides an atmosphere with graphics, speed, interactivity and fun that digital natives are accustomed to (Prensky, 2001). In a survey, Lam (2014) found that students preferred online games to worksheets for reviewing vocabulary as it was more engaging and helped their memory retention. Similarly, Yip and Kwan (2006) reported that more than 70% of students enjoyed online games for learning vocabulary and found the games effective in helping them build their vocabulary. These studies did not involve student interaction as the students played online games individually. In immediate posttests, these studies showed that online games facilitated vocabulary retention. Lin et al. (2011), however, reported that student interaction in vocabulary learning made for better vocabulary retention in a delayed posttest compared to individual learning.

In this study, the gaming platform Kahoot! was used as it promotes interaction among students. Kahoot! creates a game show atmosphere whereby students compete with each other to answer quiz questions on their individual technological devices (mobile phones or laptops). Unlike other quiz-style gaming platforms where students are able to see both questions and answers on their devices, students playing Kahoot! only see the answer codes on their devices. The questions and answers are projected on a common screen at the front of the class. When students are able to see both questions and answer on their own devices, there is a tendency to work in isolation. On the other hand, when students are forced to see the questions and answers on a common screen, it creates a group dynamic that encourages social interaction and discussion among the students. Kahoot! also allows teachers to include videos and sound effects to the quiz to enhance the gaming atmosphere. All these features of Kahoot! promote learning in an engaging manner.

METHODS

Research Design

This study used a quantitative approach and adopted the non-randomized control group, pretest-posttest design (Ary et al., 2013). The research was conducted as a quasi-experiment. Participants were divided into a control group and an intervention group. The students were assigned to either group as intact classes since classes could not be reorganized just to accommodate a research study. All the intact classes had an equal chance of being assigned as a control group or intervention group. The classes were assigned to either a

control group or intervention group without prejudice or bias. It was carried out prior to any contact with the researcher. The groupings were done to achieve an equal number of participants for the control and intervention groups. The Academic Vocabulary section of the Vocabulary Levels Test by Schmitt et al. (2001) was used to determine the participants' academic vocabulary score. All the participants were given a pretest at the beginning of the experiment. The intervention group received direct vocabulary instruction which incorporated gamification while the control group learnt the vocabulary items incidentally as all participants had exposure to the same vocabulary items through the teaching materials used. At the end of the intervention period, all participants were given a posttest. The data were analysed for statistical significance, effect size and mastery score.

Participants

A total of 180 tertiary students at a private tertiary institution in Malaysia participated in the study. The intervention group consisted of 89 students while 91 students made up the control group. All the participants were second-year students studying for their diploma in various fields. The participants were enrolled in diploma programmes which required credit in English in the *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* as an entry requirement. During their first year of study, all the participants received 84 hours of formal English lessons through two English proficiency courses provided by the institution. All the participants were from Chinese ethnic background and their age ranged from 19 to 21.

Vocabulary Levels Test

The Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) consists of two parallel versions (Version 1 and Version 2). In each version, there are five sections which test students' vocabulary size for the most frequent 2000, 3000, 5000 and 10000-word levels as well as academic vocabulary. Each section of the test can be used separately to meet the diagnostic purpose of the researcher. For this study, only the academic section of the test was used to measure the students' academic vocabulary size since this research focuses on academic vocabulary.

Version 1 of the test was used for the pretest. In order to address the threat of pretesting and memory effect in the posttest, Version 2 of the VLT was administered at the end of the intervention period. For comparison purposes, Version 1 was also administered to the participants at the end of the intervention period.

Kahoot!

Gamification was incorporated into direct vocabulary instruction through the free online gaming platform, Kahoot!. Kahoot! is a quiz-style game that allows teachers to create their own questions. Students score points based on the accuracy and speed of their response. In this study, the questions were designed by the teacher in order to reinforce the vocabulary items taught.

In Kahoot!, the questions and answer choices are projected on a large screen at the front of the classroom and the students select the answer from the answer codes displayed on their individual devices. After each question, students receive individual feedback on their devices on the accuracy of their answers. On the large screen, the overall distribution of answers chosen by all the students is displayed. This provides feedback to the teacher on the students' understanding of the vocabulary item(s) and enables the teacher to provide additional guidance on the vocabulary item(s) where necessary. Subsequently, a leader board shows the top scorers before the next question is displayed. This creates an engaging and interactive environment in the class.

The Intervention Programme

The researcher named the intervention programme the Accelerated Vocabulary Acquisition (AVA) programme. The AVA programme was conducted for 7 weeks. It was incorporated within the students' existing English proficiency course. Direct vocabulary instruction integrating gamification using Kahoot! was conducted based on Marzano's framework. As part of the intervention programme, the students maintained an online vocabulary notebook where they recorded the vocabulary items and wrote down their own definitions. They were allowed to use their first language if they found it necessary. For each vocabulary item, they were also required to include a non-linguistic representation, which could

be pictures that are downloaded from the Internet or their own illustrations.

Instruction for the control group was carried out as a normal English language class and learning of vocabulary was incidental and part of the routine teaching. No overt action was taken to teach vocabulary directly to the control group.

The students in the intervention group received direct vocabulary instruction as part of their regular English course. They were taught academic vocabulary items relevant to the topic of the day. In each lesson as well, students played Kahoot! to review vocabulary items taught in previous lessons. By using Kahoot!, similarities and differences in vocabulary items could also be highlighted to the students. Students were also given immediate feedback on errors, if any, after each question in Kahoot!. The AVA programme required 10 to 20 minutes of class time. The duration of each English lesson was 90 minutes.

Data Analysis

Each participant was coded individually for the data analysis. The pretest and posttest were marked manually and the scores were entered as raw scores into SPSS. The scores were tested for normality and the data was found to be normally distributed. The Levene's test for homogeneity was used to examine if the students in the intervention group and the control group were homogeneous and the results ($p = 0.12$, $p > 0.05$) indicated that the groups were homogeneous. Paired samples t-tests were performed separately for the control group

and the intervention group to determine if there was any significant difference between their pretest and posttest scores. The scores from the two groups were also analysed for their effect size and the ability of the students to achieve mastery score on the vocabulary test.

In order to compare the performance of the control group and the intervention group, the independent samples t-test was carried out to determine if there was any significant difference in their posttest scores. In addition, the effect sizes and mastery score of the two groups were compared.

RESULTS

Statistical Significance

Statistical significance was considered within the control group and the intervention group as well as between the two groups. Paired samples t-tests were conducted for the control group and the intervention group to determine if there was any significant difference in the academic vocabulary scores of the students within each group. Since the posttest consisted of Version 1 and Version 2 of the VLT (henceforth referred to as VLT Version 1 and VLT Version 2 respectively), separate t-tests were conducted for the results of each version. Table 1 shows a summary of the statistical results for the control group and the intervention group.

Students in the control group scored a mean of 22.16 (SD = 4.37) in the pretest. In the posttest, the students' mean score was 23.18 (SD = 4.07) for VLT Version 1 and 23.39 (SD = 3.94) for VLT Version 2. There was a significant difference in the scores for both versions; mean difference = 1.02, SD = 3.22, p = 0.003 for VLT Version 1 and mean difference =1.23, SD = 3.47, p =.001 for VLT Version 2. For students in the intervention group, the pretest mean score was 21.68 (SD = 3.76). There was significant difference in their posttest scores for VLT Version 1 (M = 25.62, SD = 3.17); p < 0.000, mean difference = 3.93, SD = 2.73, and VLT Version 2 (M = 26.94, SD = 2.46); p < 0.000, mean difference = 5.25, SD = 3.24.

As seen in Table 1, the intervention group obtained a higher score in the posttest (for both VLT Version 1 and VLT Version 2) than the control group. In order to determine if the difference is statistically significant, the independent samples t-test was carried out for VLT Version 1 and VLT Version 2 posttest scores for both groups. The independent samples t-test showed that the VLT Version 1 posttest scores for the intervention group (M = 25.62, SD = 3.17) were significantly higher than the scores obtained by the control group (M = 23.18, SD = 4.07), p < 0.000. Similarly, the

Table 1
Statistical results

	Pretest Mean	Posttest (VLT Version 1) Mean	Posttest (VLT Version 2) Mean	Statistical Significance
Control group	22.16	23.18	23.39	Yes (p < 0.05)
Intervention group	21.68	25.62	26.94	Yes (p < 0.05)

independent samples *t*-test showed that the scores in the VLT Version 2 posttest were significantly higher for the intervention group (M = 26.94, SD = 2.46) compared to the control group (M = 23.39, SD = 3.94), $p < 0.000$.

Although students in both the control group and the intervention group showed significant improvement in their academic vocabulary scores, the independent samples *t*-test results showed that direct vocabulary instruction through the AVA programme enabled students in the intervention group to obtain significantly higher scores than students in the control group.

Effect Size

Since statistical significance is affected by the sample size, Coe (2002) advocated that effect size be taken into consideration 'for quantifying the effectiveness of a particular intervention'. Effect size quantifies the size of the difference between the two groups and is not dependent on sample size. The effect sizes are described in terms of whether they are small ($d = 0.2$), medium ($d = 0.5$) or large ($d = 0.8$) (Coe, 2002).

Table 2 shows the effect sizes for the increase in academic vocabulary scores for the control group and the intervention group. The effect size for the control group was small for both VLT Version 1 and VLT Version 2 ($d = 0.32$ and $d = 0.35$ respectively). On the other hand, there was a large effect size ($d > 0.8$) for the intervention group in the posttest, $d = 1.44$ for VLT Version 1 and $d = 1.62$ for VLT Version 2.

Table 2
Summary of effect sizes

	Posttest (VLT Version 1)	Posttest (VLT Version 2)
Control group	0.32	0.35
Intervention group	1.44	1.62

Mastery Score

Students are considered to have mastery of academic vocabulary if they achieve 83% and above on the vocabulary test, the threshold recommended by Nation (1990). For the VLT, that percentage is equivalent to a score of 25 and above (maximum score = 30). From the mean scores (see Table 1), students in both groups were not able to achieve mastery score in the pretest (control group mean = 22.16, intervention group mean = 21.68). After undergoing the AVA programme, the intervention group was able to achieve a mean of 25.62 for VLT Version 1 and 26.94 for VLT Version 2 in the posttest. The control group, however, only obtained mean scores of 23.18 (VLT Version 1) and 23.29 (VLT Version 2) in the posttest. In addition to the mean scores, the number of students who were able to obtain 83% and above was also considered.

Table 3 shows the number of students who scored 83% and above (25 marks and above) in the pretest and posttest. In the pretest, 26 students (28.6%) in the control group and 20 students (22.5%) in the intervention group were able to achieve mastery score. Although there were more students in the control group who had mastery of academic vocabulary

Table 3
Number of students achieving mastery score

	Pretest		Posttest (VLT Version 1)		Posttest (VLT Version 2)	
	Total	(%)	Total	(%)	Total	(%)
Control Group	26	(28.6%)	37	(40.7%)	34	(37.4%)
Intervention Group	20	(22.5%)	77	(86.5%)	58	(65.2%)

at the beginning of the study, students who underwent the AVA programme outperformed students in the control group after the intervention period. The posttest results showed a total of 77 students (86.5%) achieving 83% or more for VLT Version 1 and 58 students (65.2%) for VLT Version 2 in the intervention group. In the control group, on the other hand, only 37 students (40.7%) and 34 students (37.4%) were able to achieve mastery scores for VLT Version 1 and VLT Version 2 respectively.

DISCUSSIONS

The results of this study indicated that students were able to improve their academic vocabulary scores significantly through both incidental learning and with direct vocabulary instruction. However, it is important to observe that the improvement is amplified with direct vocabulary instruction through the AVA programme. This is evident in the difference in the effect size and the number of students who were able to achieve mastery score in the control and intervention groups. The results of this study raise the question of whether incidental vocabulary learning of academic vocabulary is sufficient to help the students in their tertiary education. This concern was also

raised by Won (2008) who concluded that students may not achieve the desired rate of learning through incidental vocabulary acquisition. The results of this study using the AVA programme affirms the use of direct vocabulary instruction to improve students' academic vocabulary. This finding is consistent with other research that shows low vocabulary acquisition through the incidental approach compared to the explicit learning approach (Schmitt, 2008).

Considering the limited and almost non-existent exposure to academic vocabulary during their secondary education (Manan et al., 2013), tertiary institutions should attempt to address such need through their English proficiency courses. The academic vocabulary of tertiary students should be addressed through direct vocabulary instruction rather than leaving students to their own devices to acquire vocabulary incidentally.

For this purpose, the researchers proposed the AVA programme, which was informed by two learning theories which are the behaviourist theory and the cognitive constructivist theory. Direct vocabulary instruction incorporating gamification provided stimulation and reinforcement to promote learning among the students in line

with the behaviourist theory. In addition, students were taught vocabulary items in relation to other related words and the students maintained a vocabulary notebook. These steps helped students to construct the meaning of the vocabulary items and assimilate this new knowledge with their existing knowledge (as propagated by cognitive constructivism). This leads to better understanding and retention of the vocabulary items taught. The results of this study attest to the feasibility and viability of the AVA programme for vocabulary instruction.

A key feature of the AVA programme is the incorporation of gamification through the use of Kahoot! to enhance direct vocabulary instruction. With Kahoot!, the teacher is able to obtain immediate feedback on the students' understanding of the vocabulary items taught. The advantage is that the teacher can immediately correct any misunderstanding or misconception of specific vocabulary items which pose a difficulty for the students. The incorporation of Kahoot! also promotes active learning among students as they need to think and make meaning of the vocabulary items in order to answer the questions correctly and quickly since both accuracy and speed of their response affect the scoring. The competitive atmosphere created through the use of Kahoot! also provided motivation for students, an important element for learning to take place from the cognitive constructivist point of view.

Advocates of heuristic learning may deem direct vocabulary instruction to be out of place in language teaching. As the now common saying goes, '*Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day; teach a man how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime*'. Although we should encourage heuristic learning among students, such an approach is not suitable for vocabulary learning at tertiary level. Vocabulary learning strategies should be taught during primary and/or secondary education. At the tertiary level, students are embarking on specialized fields of study. They need to 'learn to fish' in their respective fields, but at the same time, they need to be equipped with the necessary tools to enable them to fish. Students do not need to learn how to make fishing tools, as it were. In this modern era of information overload, students (and educators too) need to choose the kind of information and knowledge to learn and/or retain. With so much to learn in their respective fields of study, vocabulary learning strategies may not be a priority for tertiary students. Direct vocabulary instruction, on the other hand, can be a useful approach to equip tertiary students with some of the necessary 'tools' that aid learning in the students' specialized fields.

The positive statistical results of this study are consistent with Yip and Kwan's (2006) study which found that the use of online games was able to significantly increase the mean scores of students and also yield a large effect size ($d = 1.3976$). Yip and Kwan's (2006) study used a total of 600 minutes to conduct their vocabulary lessons (two 50-minute lessons per week over a period of six weeks) whereas the

AVA programme only required 200 minutes, which is one-third of the duration, to achieve similar results – even with a slightly higher effect size. This result supports the AVA programme as a useful framework for improving students' vocabulary.

Quite often, programmes to improve students' vocabulary are conducted separately from the students' regular class time (Lin et al., 2011; Tan, 2016; Yip & Kwan, 2006). This study shows that the AVA programme can be included within an existing syllabus and that it is not necessary to conduct additional classes or additional vocabulary activities outside of class hours to improve tertiary students' academic vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that the AVA programme which employs direct vocabulary instruction with Kahoot! is a feasible framework to improve tertiary students' academic vocabulary. The results also indicate that students may not acquire sufficient academic vocabulary through incidental learning alone. Malaysian tertiary students should be taught academic vocabulary because the secondary school syllabus does not provide sufficient exposure to this type of vocabulary (Manan et al., 2013). Academic vocabulary is important in helping tertiary students comprehend academic texts. As such, it is hoped that direct vocabulary instruction can be incorporated into the English proficiency courses at tertiary institutions to benefit the students.

There is a paucity of studies that examine the feasibility of using direct vocabulary instruction to improve academic vocabulary, especially among Malaysian tertiary students. This study contributes to such genre in the research literature. Although it focused on academic vocabulary, the AVA programme can be adapted to teach any type of vocabulary.

Kahoot! is one example of incorporating gamification into direct vocabulary instruction. Researchers may explore other gaming platforms that may offer other features to suit their own requirements. Researchers with relevant expertise could also design their own gamification platforms to improve vocabulary.

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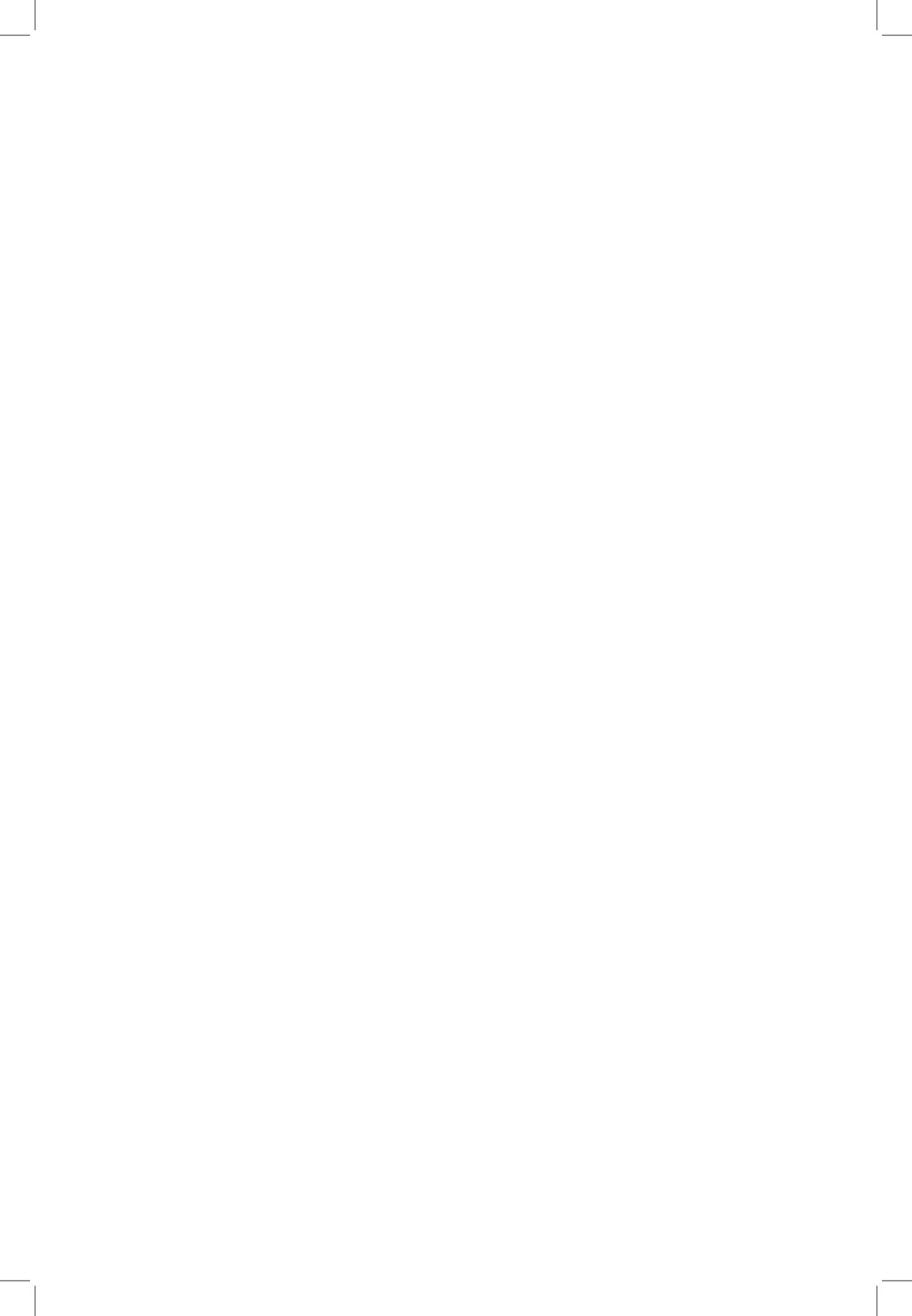
Ethnopragmatic Analysis of Selected Jordanian Proverbs

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ABSTRACT

Proverbs are replete with a rhetorical force and polymorphous nature which may result in misinterpretation of proverbs or the main essence of a proverb not being fully captured. Technically, such linguistic lacunae and drawbacks jeopardize the chances of conveying the intended message appropriately. This can give rise to a state of imbalance in the scale of communication and understanding. The audience, therefore, needs a sociopragmatic competence to be able to interpret proverbs properly. The purpose of this study is to examine the subtle implications and cryptic meaning of Jordanian proverbs from a sociopragmatic perspective. An attempt is made by the researchers to show the main ethnolinguistic factors that might give rise to difficulty in understanding Jordanian proverbs. Data was collected orally by employing the ethnographic approach. The data was studied and analysed in terms of pragmatic and sociolinguistic views. On the basis of the findings, recommendations were introduced towards more sociopragmatic studies to unravel the cryptic meaning embedded in proverbs. The research shows that ethnolinguistic factors and linguistic competencies seem to play a vital role in deciphering the cryptic meaning of proverbs.

Keywords: Cosmological, ethnolinguistics, pragmatics, proverbs, sociological

INTRODUCTION

Proverbs are considered as the mirror of a culture as they encompass many ethical values, traditions, and conventions. It is widely acknowledged that proverbs exist in any culture to deliver particular messages such as criticizing a situation, giving a piece of advice, or indicating a stinging satire on a given situation. Like other people in all societies, Jordanian people pay great attention to proverbs in their speech. In other words, Jordanians usually punctuate their speech with some proverbs in order to drive their messages home. Interestingly enough, they see proverbs in speech as 'salt in food'. Furthermore, there are proverbs

about proverbs, namely 'the proverb has left nothing unsaid or 'say your word and wait for its proverb' (Al-Awawdeh, 2013).

Research Problem and Objectives

The current study is motivated by the researchers' observation that some proverbs are usually misunderstood by language users. Consequently, the intended meaning of a proverb is not fully grasped. Basically, such linguistic drawbacks and lacunae can be conducive to impeding the language user form deciphering the hidden meaning of a proverb. Moreover, those interlocutors or language users who are unable to cope with such proverbs cannot grasp the ethical values encapsulated in these proverbs. Consequently, proverbs will lose their basic functions and values. It almost goes without saying that if this case persists in the long run, the essence of proverbs will gradually fade away in the repertoire of Jordanians especially the young ones. This scenario imposes a great burden on Jordanians' shoulders to handle this problem. That is to say, there is a need for research that highlights this problem and tackles the various aspects of Jordanian proverbs.

In light of such a problem, this study seeks to examine the cryptic meaning and subtle implications of Jordanian proverbs from a sociopragmatic perspective. Moreover, the study is an attempt to identify the main ethnolinguistic factors that contribute to impeding the process of misinterpreting proverbs. Putting it differently, the present study examines Jordanian proverbs in terms of a pragma-

linguistic analysis with an emphasis on the ethnography of proverbs in order to achieve a better understanding of proverbs.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it attempts to diagnose the problem of proverbs misinterpretation and determine the main ethnolinguistic factors that might be conducive to impeding the interpretation of Jordanian proverbs properly. To put it another way, the present study seeks to shed light upon this problem with some real examples in order to raise Jordanians' awareness towards proverbs. Moreover, the linguistic analysis adopted in this study will offer some significant insights to achieve the sustainability of the cultural and ethical values encapsulated in proverbs.

Theoretical Background

Review of Previous Literature. A considerable number of scholars (for instance anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, linguists, and folklorists) found in proverbs an interesting area of research. Accordingly, there was no consensus among these scholars about the definition of a proverb. However, many scholars have reached a compromise that a proverb can be defined as a brief sentence of folk which has wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a memorizable metaphorical and fixed formula that is transmitted orally from one generation to another (Meider, 1985; Norrick, 1985; Taylor, 2003). As for the characteristic

features of a proverb, acceptance and popularity are the two most essential features of any proverb. On his own, Trench (1853) argued that there were three main features that had to be included in any proverb, namely sense, shortness, and salt.

From the outset, we can see that much ink has been spilt about proverbs as a linguistic phenomenon. More strictly speaking, many studies have been carried out to investigate the syntactic features of proverbs (Jaradat, 2007; Migdadi, 2013), while other studies have been conducted on proverbs in terms of the hindrances and difficulties that translators encounter while rendering proverbs (Al-Azzam, 2018; Fahmi, 2016; Farghal & Hamly, 2015; Farghal, 1995). Some studies also deal with proverbs from other linguistic points of view such as the psycholinguistic aspect of proverbs (Alaba, 1996; Dabaghi et al., 2010). Additionally, there are some studies that have focused on the figurative and symbolic form of proverbs (Badarneh, 2016; Omoera & Inegbeboh, 2013; Wu, 2004). It is worthwhile to mention that the previous research (Cristina, 2015; Nwankwo, 2015; Yassin, 1988) has also paid some attention to the functions of proverbs. According to these studies, proverbs can serve different purposes such as discouragement, reprimand, praise and instruction.

Most importantly, a considerable number of researchers hint at the fact that the cryptic meaning and the implications of proverbs can be recognised in terms of sociopragmatic perspectives. Strictly speaking, based upon Halliday's language

functions, Yassin (1988) believed that proverbs served three different functions which were ideational, interpersonal, and textual. Similarly, Ashipu and Amende (2013) indicated that grasping the hidden meaning of proverbs could be best achieved in terms of three basic factors: first, the situation in which a proverb took place; second, the shared previous knowledge among interlocutors (which is common cultural background among interlocutors), and finally, the linguistic environment where a particular proverbial speech was used.

Having a thorough look upon the previous literature conducted on proverbs, one can realize that there is a scarcity of literature, and that little attention has been paid to Jordanian proverbs from a sociopragmatic perspective. Therefore, the current study attempts to examine Jordanian proverbs from a sociopragmatic perspective. As the present study comes under the umbrella of pragmatics and sociolinguistics, it will be of some help and benefit to shed light upon the two linguistic theories.

Sociolinguistics and Ethnography of Communication. The fact that Hymes is considered as one of the most eminent scholars in the field of sociolinguistics is quite noticeable. He is the founder of 'Ethnography of Communication'. Indeed, through a wealth of research (Hymes, 1977, 1974, 1972a, 1972b, 1967), Hymes revolutionized the realm of sociolinguistics and methodology as he came up with some new ideas and concepts about ethnography of communication. One of his main aims

was to come up with a theory that helped researchers to study language use in specific contexts.

In his insightful theory, Hymes (1974) made use of the letters S.P.E.A.K.I.N.G as an acronym to refer to a speaking model. The components of this model can be recapped as follows: setting, participants, ends, acts sequence, key, instrumentalities, norms, and genre. As a matter of fact, this linguistic model has three core issues (for instance, setting, norms and end) which will be highly workable for scrutinizing proverbs from a sociolinguistic point of view. That is, this model can be fruitful in providing a suitable descriptive examination of proverbs with an emphasis on the environment in which such a proverb has been instantiated. By and large, Hymes (1974) proposed this linguistic model that took into consideration many various aspects that were involved in speaking. Most importantly, using this valuable model in analyzing any folklore item (proverbs, folktales, anecdotes, riddles… and others) can be fruitful as it enables researchers to identify and label the linguistic components of any genre (Coulthard, 1977)

Pragmatics. As far as pragmatics is concerned, it should be kept in mind that one of the basic concerns of pragmatics is to understand the mechanisms that aid language users to work out the hidden or implied meanings of any utterance. For his part, Verschueren (2009) defined pragmatics as the social, cognitive and cultural science of language and communication. He also believed that pragmatics displayed a close relationship with context speech acts and implicitness. In this regard, Yule (1996) claimed that one of the main tenets of pragmatics was to enable language users to talk about intended meanings, utterance functions, and assumptions made by the speakers as well as the kinds of actions they aimed to perform while speaking.

As for speech act theory, it is a pragmatic premise advanced by Austin (1962), and it can be recognized in the light of three main related dimensions which are locutionary speech acts, illocutionary speech acts and perlocutionary speech acts. Searle (1976), for his part, offered a more thorough account and description of direct and indirect speech acts. It is apparent that his classification is not accurate enough as there is a kind of overlap between some of his categories. He contended that direct and indirect speech acts could be divided into six types which are representatives, directives, commissives, expressive, declarative and verdictives.

Having said that, the two pragmatic notions presupposition and implicature are brought to the scene at this level. Presupposition differs from implicature as the former tackles what the speaker assumes his/her addressee already knows. Pragmatic presupposition, therefore, touches upon those assumptions and beliefs which the speaker takes for granted about the hearer. This is because both of them share many common beliefs. The latter, implicature, is a pragmatic term which is mainly concerned with what is essentially suggested by an utterance.

It can be inferred then that implicature deals with the deep layer of meaning that is not overtly expressed or stated. In fact, implicature can be seen as a basic component of a speaker's intended meaning. In a similar vein, Grice (1975) proposed the 'Cooperative Principle' and its four conversational maxims namely the maxim of Quality, the maxim of Quantity, the maxim of Relevance and maxim of Manner. These maxims play a crucial role in our daily discourse (Hatim & Mason, 1990).

Partly related to the notions of implicature and presupposition is the notion of 'Mutual Contextual Beliefs' (MCBs). Bach and Harnish (1979) advanced this notion as it was somewhat related to the speaker's intention and the addressee's inference. Indeed, any sort of speech act can be performed with an intention that addressees will be able to understand and identify the intended meaning of the speakers. Putting it differently, addressees make use of some facts that will help them identify the speaker's intended meaning.

More clearly, Levinson (1980) asserted that the pragmatic theory had to explicate four core issues which were speech act, presupposition, implicature, as well as background competence. More subtly, relying on Levinson's views, Lawal et al. (1997) attempted to build a very comprehensive linguistic framework that could be useful for conducting pragmatic research. In a nutshell, Lawal et al. (1997) touched upon the fact that the cryptic or implied meaning of an utterance could be understood if the language user employed

and made use of some competencies such as context, linguistic, situational, cosmological, psychological and sociological.

Before moving on any further, it is a good idea to explain this model is slightly more detail because it is useful for our subsequent analysis. To start with, the 'linguistic context' is mainly concerned with lexical, phonological, and syntactic components of the sentence. Furthermore, it takes into considerations the semantic and pragmatic aspects employed in an utterance. Pertaining to 'the situational context', it deals with the central topic of conversation as well as the factors of the physical occasion. As for the 'psychological context', it revolves around the background of the mood and personal beliefs. With regard to the 'social context', it has to do with interpersonal relationships between the language users. As far as 'sociological context' is concerned, it aims to describe historical settings and socio-cultural conventions. Last but not least, 'cosmological context' is concerned with some implied references to certain universally established facts and truths (Lawal et al., 1997)

By and large, the two main linguistic notions namely, communicative competence and pragmatic competence play a significant role in diagnosing the research problem and answering the research questions. Strictly speaking, the communicative competence was proposed by Hymes (1972b) who argued that any native speaker of a language must had a knowledge of certain rules in order to be able to understand and produce both the referential and social meaning

of language. If such competence is not acquired in the appropriate way, a gap in communication will exist.

It is pretty valid that communicative competence was suggested by Hymes as a counter-concept to Chomsky's linguistic competence which focuses on an ideal hearer-speakers' knowledge of grammaticality of sentences in their native language. Gumperz (1970) indicated that whereas linguistic competence covered the speaker's ability to produce grammatically correct sentences, communicative competence described his ability to select, from the totality of grammatically correct expressions available to him, forms which appropriately reflected the social norms governing behaviour in specific encounters. As for pragmatic competence, it refers to cultural aspects of the language. In other words, it is a linguistic notion that encompasses and captures all aspects of knowledge that competent language users make use of in order to encode and decode meaning and sense relation in linguistic communication.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodology used in the current study was interviews and self-report observations. Interviews were conducted with Jordanians to get more information about the cryptic meaning of proverbs. Indeed, the interpretations made by participants were helpful and informative in that they gave room to much deeper analysis in this study. As for the respondents, the present research was based on data collected from 100 respondents, all of them were Jordanians who spoke the Arabic language as their native language, were born locally, and lived in Jordan for a long period of time.

It is widely acknowledged that the corpus of ethnographic research can be either written or oral. So, the proverbs in this study were collected from various sources. It is worth mentioning that the oral subset of data was collected by following the ethnographic communication approach proposed by Hymes (1972) and followed by others (Blom & Gumperz, 1972). Specifically, the data were collected by means of interviews. In order to collect sufficient and adequate corpus of data, the researchers had to participate in many conversations. The procedure employed was to ask the participants about the latest proverb that they heard of, then stimulating their appetite to tell us more proverbs. After that, the interviewees were asked to mention some proverbs that are difficult to be understood by them. All proverbs were written down after the meeting was completed.

It is worth noting here that some proverbs that seem to be difficult to be understood were also collected from articles, magazines, books, and television programs and so on. By employing these two methods in data collection, the researchers were able to collect 290 proverbs. These proverbs are in line with the research problem due to the fact that the respondents experience some difficulties in understanding these proverbs. Ten proverbs were randomly selected to be investigated from a sociopragmatic perspective. The selected proverbs are

presented in their original and English-translated forms. In other words, while translating, the researchers did their best to preserve the original point of view of each proverb as much as possible.

The selected proverbs were thoroughly examined and analysed qualitatively in terms of the pragmatic and sociolinguistic views of Lawal et al. (1997) and Hymes (1974). Specifically, the sociopragmatic analysis is done according to three main stages. First, the proverbs are linguistically examined. That is, some core linguistic issues embedded in proverbs such as polysemy, heteronomy, wordplay, lexical repetition, exaggeration or hyperbole, metaphor, lexical relations, pun have to be examined and analysed. The second stage of analysis is 'sociological'. In this stage, the proverb is examined and analysed in terms of the sociocultural as well as historical backgrounds of Jordanian society. In so doing, the sociological analysis reflects the conventions and values of Jordanian society encapsulated in proverbs.

In the last stage of analysis, the cosmological analysis will play a pivotal role in reflecting the universal theme of a proverb. Strictly speaking, it is widely accepted that proverbs are universal in their themes. Accordingly, proverbs touch upon certain worldly beliefs and facts. It is assumed the cosmological analysis can demystify the intricacies of Jordanian proverbs due to the fact that this way of cosmological analysis is concerned with universally established facts that are related to common sense.

Data Analysis

1 – ما بحرث البلاد الا عجولها 'Ma behroth albelad ila ojulha' (None ploughs the field but its calves)

Linguistic: The problem arises because of the misinterpretation of the word عجولها (calves). It is considered inappropriate among some Jordanians to describe someone as a calf. Nevertheless, the connotative meaning of this word refers to good and positive traits in Arab culture. Precisely, Arabs use the word فحول 'Fohoul', which is close in meaning to عجل 'calf', to describe the greatest poets; they called them '*Fohoul Al-Shu'ara'* which means 'the greatest poets ever'. Moreover, this word فحول was used to describe the bravest knights in the Arab tribe. Pragmatically speaking, the Arabic word فحول '« Fohoul» entails the word عجول 'calves' in the sense that the word فحول denotes 'the strongest male animal'. To recapitulate, the connotative meaning of عجول in such a context is related to a good attribute used by Arabs to praise the greatest people in a way that distinguishes them from other people. Having said that, one can infer that in order for this proverb to be interpreted properly, it is fundamentally essential for the language used to decode the lexical and word-play embodied in the proverb. If a language user is unable to interpret the word عجولها '*ojolha'* and its lexical relations properly, there will be a pragmatic failure in deciphering the positive attribute that resides in the proverb as a whole.

Sociological: The language user has to be well aware of the fact that the value of work is something of great importance to Jordanians. Moreover, the land for farmers is highly valued as it is something which cannot be sold or neglected regardless of whatever challenges or difficulties they encounter. Suffice it to say, Jordanians look at 'land' as something equal to honour as they repeatedly say 'he who sells his land, sells his honour'.

Cosmological: This proverb refers to the general belief that it will be much better for someone to do something by himself than relying on others or asking them to do it for him.

2 - كلب صديق خير من صديق كلب 'Kalb sadeeq their men sadeeq kalb' (A friend dog is better than a dog friend)

Linguistic: This proverb can be problematic due to the linguistic phenomenon in Arabic 'precedence and delay'. This phenomenon plays an essential role not only in the process of creating the proverb but also in the process of interpreting it properly. The phrase صديق كلب 'friend dog' represents a positive attribute. This is because the word كلب 'dog' is used as a noun and صديق 'friend' is used as an adjective to describe the dog. However, in the second part of the proverb, it is clear that the phrase صديق كلب 'dog friend' refers to a bad attribute, since the noun صديق 'friend' is described as an animal.

Sociological: The dog in old Arab culture symbolize for esteemed virtues such as faithfulness, loyalty and self-sacrifice. Suffice to say, some Arab poets praise princes and leaders' faithfulness, saying that "you are as faithful as a dog". Yet, this word that is dog, in the modern Islamic Arab society, is used negatively because many Arabs believe that the dog is unclean and impure.

Cosmological: The language user has to employ his worldly knowledge and competence of the fact that dogs are usually characterised by faithfulness and loyalty to the one who looks after and takes care of them. It is also common that dogs will never betray or stab someone in his back as some friends do.

3 - كلهم دارسين عند شيخ واحد 'Kolhum darseen ind Sheikh wahed' (All of them were educated by the same sheikh)

Linguistic: The use of polysemous Arabic word شيخ 'sheikh' in this proverb gives rise to a kind of difficulty in understanding the proverb. This word can mean both 'teacher' and 'religious man'. The language user has to interpret the polysomic word 'sheikh' in a proper way. Needless to say that this word is mostly used by Arabs to refer to a 'religious man'. Though, in this context, it has another meaning. It means 'teacher'. In old Arab times, there were no real professional teachers; rather, children used to go to the mosque to get taught by sheikhs.

Sociological: The stereotypical image about Jordanian community is clearly reflected in this proverb. This proverb is also indicative of the traditional Arab way of teaching in the past. Every sheikh adopted a certain method and way of teaching his students. Interestingly enough, when people see a student discussing some issues and matters in a certain way, people can easily infer the name of his sheikh from the way he deals with certain issues. By and large, this proverb reflects the idea that the students who are taught by the same sheikh are supposed to have the same information or way of thinking.

Cosmological: Awareness of the fact that teachers in the past have little information gained from limited sources of knowledge. Subsequently, it will be a fruitless and redundant effort if you ask the same question to all students who were educated by the same sheikh and expect a different answer from each one of them. This is because they 'read from the same page' so automatically you will get the same answer.

4 - مثل قلب النهار 'mithel qalb Alnahar' (Like the heart of the day)

Linguistic: There is a basic semantic requirement for interpreting this proverb properly. Strictly speaking, the word النهار 'daylight' can serve as a metonym for beauty, purity and clarity. Consequently, this intended meaning of this proverb is somewhat not easy to be grasped due to the fact that it can be interpreted in two different ways: 'the heart of a sandgrouse' or 'like the

middle of the day'. To put in another way, the Arabic word قلب 'heart' can be of two different meanings: either 'the real heart' or 'middle'. Furthermore, the word نهار 'day' can mean either 'bird' or 'day'. As a matter of fact, the language user who opts for the first interpretation will misinterpret the proverb and will not capture its real essence.

Sociological: Jordanians usually tend to make use of the day as a symbol of clarity and beauty**.**

Cosmological: It is a universal fact that people tend to utilize sunlight as a symbol of beauty. The daylight or sunlight is something that evokes beautiful memories that reside inside people.

5 - بكانون حضر الجفت والفحمات والكانون 'In Kanoon hadir eljifet wal fahmaat wal Kanoon' (In December and January, prepare the peat, coal and brazier)

Linguistic: The polysemous Arabic word كانون 'Kanoon' can cause misunderstanding for this proverb. Therefore, any language user has to appreciate the significance of the polysemic pun on كانون , meaning the two months 'December & January' and also 'brazier' respectively. It should be noted here that at the non-pragmatic level, the two interpretations can be valid. Subsequently, lacking pragmatic competence in deciphering the word كانون will lead to misinterpretation of the proverb.

Sociological: Knowledge of the Jordanian conventions embodied in this proverb can facilitate the process of figuring out the

meaning of this proverb. In other words, this proverb encompasses words like 'peat and brazier' which are stereotyped as being the prime way of heating for the needy people in the coldest months of the year. It is assumed that many Jordanians are unfamiliar with this old way of heating by using 'peat and brazier' due to the fact that it is no longer used nowadays.

Cosmological: Being well-aware of the fact that people all over the word take certain preparations and actions as to cope with the coldest months of the year.

6 - عرس وهص ما بيصير 'ors w hs ma beseir' (A wedding party and keeping silent do not coincide)

Linguistic: The difficulty in understanding this proverb stems from a popular linguistic phenomenon called metathesis. Metathesis can be defined as an alternation in the sequence of two adjacent sounds according to certain conditions. In this proverb, the two neighbouring sounds (/h/ and /S/) replace each other. The word صه /s h/ which means 'to stop talking' is pronounced in terms of metathesis as هص / h s/. To wrap up this point, if the listener or the language user is unfamiliar with this phonological process, he will encounter some difficulties in grasping the implications of this proverb.

Sociological: The traditional wedding ceremonies in Jordan are subtly indicated in this proverb. These ceremonies are replete with dancing, drums, loud music, the Arabic flute, and also the use of firearms and fireworks to express great joy. So, it would

be unacceptable to ask the audience to keep silent and quiet in such ceremonies.

Cosmological: It is well known that wedding parties all over the world have some noisy ceremonies, and it is of strange nature to ask people to be quiet and silent during these ceremonies.

7- بعد ما شاب ودوه الكتاب 'baed ma shab wdouh alkutaab' (After he had been white-haired, they sent him to the school.)

Linguistic: The difficulty in understanding this proverb arises from the fact that the proverb makes use of heteronomy. This semantic notion plays a significant role in interpreting the word 'الكتاب' 'alkutaab'. In other words, the word 'الكتاب' is of two different pronunciations that result in two different meanings regardless of the fact that they have identical spelling. Precisely, if this word is pronounced as /*alkuttab*/, as the case in this proverb, it means 'place where students gather to be educated or taught by teachers' it is something similar to a school. In contrast, if this word 'الكتاب' is pronounced as /*alkitab*/, it means 'book'. Once again, the language users and interlocutors will not identify the real meaning of this proverb in case they are not aware of this semantic notion.

Sociological: Knowledge of the immense importance the Jordanian people pay to literacy can be helpful in understanding the real meaning of this proverb. That is, Jordanians believe that it will be already too late to send old people to the school because

they will experience great difficulties to get literate at this age. Suffice it to say, Jordanian people believe that learning at a young age is like 'carving in a stone' in the sense that what is learned at a young age will stay in the mind for a long time and cannot be forgotten. The proverb has also been used widely in a metaphorical form as it is used to mock people who take too late action for any problem. Putting it differently, teaching old people is like 'closing the door of the stable after the horse has bolted'.

Cosmological: This proverb emphasizes the universal fact that teaching at a younger age is more fruitful and effective than teaching at an old-age.

8 - لبس العود بجود 'labis aloud bejoud' (Wear the wood, it will look nice)

Linguistic: To grasp the intended meaning of this proverb, one has to identify the personification that resides in this proverb. The wood here is personified as an ugly man. If this ugly man wears beautiful clothes, he will look nice.

Sociological: Jordanians pay attention not only to the essence of things but also to the appearances because they give you an initial impression of something or someone. Also, they believe that if you take care of someone who is ugly and give him beautiful clothes, his look and appearance will become much better.

Cosmological: It is widely known that 'a good countenance is a letter of recommendation'.

9 - كثير الكارات قليل البارات 'ktheer alkaraat qaleel albaraat.' (The man who often changes jobs gains little money)

Linguistic: The difficulty in understanding this proverb is attributed to the fact that it is 'injected' with a Turkish word البارات 'albaraat' (in Turkish - Para) which means money /coins. So, the language user who is not familiar with this word will experience some difficulties in capturing proverb meaning.

Sociological: Jordanian people look at those people who frequently change their jobs and do not settle in one place as careless people because of the assumption that they will not be able to gain much money or master any job.

Cosmological: The common belief demonstrated in this proverb is that the quality or the state of being likely to change unexpectedly and repeatedly rarely prospers. The meaning of this proverb is close to this universal image represented in these two sayings: 'rolling stone gathers no mosses' or 'Jack of all trades master of none'

10 - الطبع غلب التطبع 'Altaba ghalba altataba' (Nature overcomes nurture)

Linguistic: The closeness in pronunciation of the two words الطبع /Altaba/ and التطبع / altataba/ makes some kind of confusion as it makes the listener think that these two words are identical. In fact, the two mentioned words are derived from the same root. However, the sense of each word is different from the other. The former الطبع

means 'human nature', while the latter التطبع means **'nurture'.** This difference in meaning is ascribed to the well-known Arabic rule which shows that any addition to a word root will lead to a change in the meaning of that word.

Sociological: Jordanians think that inherent traits, values and habits in a person will remain as they are even if he/she actively seeks to change or pretends otherwise. That is, people cannot change their inborn nature, regardless of how much hard they try.

Cosmological: This proverb highlights the fact that custom is considered second nature in the sense that what is bred in the bone cannot easily go out of the flesh. In other words, the nature that someone is born with can beat any adopted behavioural patterns.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As mentioned earlier, the chief concern of pragmatics is to tackle the subtle implications and cryptic meanings. In fact, Jordanian society is regarded as a 'high-context culture', (Hall, 1976) as indirectness is highly appreciated by Jordanians. This very idea was manifested by one of the respondents who reported that "I use proverbs in my speech because I prefer saying things in an indirect way". Technically, in high context interaction, the recipient has to decode the message and infer the hidden or contextual meanings of the message. Additionally, the interaction can be of different multilayered contexts (for instance social norms, historical context,

relational and situational contexts), and these multilayered contexts govern the encounter (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Accordingly, it is inferred that proverbs with a rhetorical force are instantiated by Jordanians to deliver a message indirectly. Strictly speaking, a thorough examination of the data reveals that the cryptic meaning of Jordanian proverbs serves different purposes: blaming, advising, criticizing, reprimanding, mocking, or indicating a stinging satire on a situation.

It has also been noticed that Jordanian proverbs tend to communicate a great deal of information about the cultural norms of Jordanian society. Accordingly, one can safely claim that these proverbs are a rich source of information about how the language interacts with culture and society. Specifically, the subject matter of Jordanian proverbs and their subtle implications can also touch upon various themes such as caring for others and cooperation, loyalty to the land and home, warning and conflict resolution, just to name a few. Moreover, many Jordanian proverbs are replete with conventions and culture-bound values which reflect the way of life in the traditional Jordanian community. The following words that are mentioned in the previous proverbs demonstrate this phenomenon (brazier, peat, Alkutaab, wedding party)

It is also worth noting here that many proverbs contain cultural references. These cultural references were so common among people in the past, but nowadays they no longer exist. Consequently, these cultural references can impede the process of interpreting proverbs properly. One of the

interviewees commented on this issue by saying that ''some proverbs have many cultural references that I am not familiar with''. These findings seem to be in line with those of Blom and Gumperz (1972) who stressed that in order to be able to interpret what we heard, we must have both solid background knowledge of the local culture and of the processes which governed and created the social meaning. In the same way, Hymes (1972b) emphasized that native speakers of any language must have a solid knowledge of certain rules in order to be able to produce and understand both the social and referential meaning of language.

Having said that, it would be a safe assumption to claim that the adherence of people to their cultural norms can give rise to the creation of a set of stereotypical conceptions. That is, each community has its own distinctive stereotypes. Generally, stereotypes can be identified in terms of different kinds such as religious, communal, individual, intrinsic, and others. Based upon the above explanations, one can argue that many stereotypical beliefs are usually employed by proverbs and could be misinterpreted if the language used is unfamiliar with these stereotypical beliefs of society.

It should be pointed out that the analysis shows that the difficulty experienced by language users in understanding proverbs is ascribed to many reasons. First, the heavy use of word-play and lexical relations, for instance, homophony, polysemy, heteronym of a proverb (as shown in Proverbs 1, 2, 5) Furthermore, it is noticed that some proverbs employ rhetorical devices that govern the process of selection and arrangement of phonological, syntactic, semantic, and lexical features. This was clarified to us by one of the respondents who says that "the nature of the language used in proverbs is not easy to be understood.''

It has also been noted that some proverbs have archaic and difficult vocabularies, some of which are not from Arabic origin (as in proverb 9). Apparently, facing such words by the language used might result in difficulty in understanding the message of a proverb. One of the respondents, for instance, affirmed that "I do not know the meaning of words in many proverbs". Moreover, connotative meaning of a proverb's words is something of paramount importance. That is to say, linguists assert that meaning can be either denotative or connotative. The former deals with the conceptual meaning of a word that is dictionary meaning, while the latter is mainly concerned with the shades of meaning that could be added to the denotation of a word (Farghal & Abdullah, 1999).

It must be kept in mind that the hidden meaning cannot be unravelled unless the language users thoroughly scrutinize the deep layer of meaning in a proverb. This is because the cryptic meaning of a proverb does not only tackle the surface layer of meaning but rather it relies on the deep layer of meaning. This very idea seems to be in agreement with Musa (2006) who claimed that the relationships between the surface structure or the words that made up the expression and deep meaning, or the message of the proverb, were interconnected.

To recapitulate, having a knowledge of the linguistic norms is not enough to grasp and identify the cryptic meaning of a proverb; rather an interpretation of a proverb should go hand in hand with a solid knowledge of the socio-cultural background of the society. It also assumed that the ethnolinguistic analysis adopted in this study (that is pragmatics and ethnography of speaking) can be conducive to figuring out the cryptic meaning of proverbs as it facilitates the process of decoding and interpreting proverbs properly.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the subtle implications of Jordanian proverbs. It also attempted to determine the ethnolinguistic factors that hinder the process of understanding proverbs. The selected proverbs were examined from a sociopragmatic perspective. The findings of this paper show that there are some ethnolinguistic factors of great effect in understanding proverbs. Furthermore, this study stresses the fact that there are certain linguistic and social competencies need to be deployed by the language used to be able to capture the intended meaning of a proverb. By and large, this study is expected to be of great value to other forms of folklore. That is to say, investigating proverbs in terms of sociolinguistics will give rise to bring back the cultural values not only for proverbs but also for other short forms of folklore such as folktales, jokes, parables, and riddles. Lastly, it is hoped that the ethnolinguistic analysis adopted in this study contributes significantly to the sustainability of cultural values encapsulated in proverbs and to the process of capturing the intended meaning of proverbs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Recall and Retention of Vocabulary Depth of Young Learners via PWIM

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ABSTRACT

This quasi-experimental study explored the impact pictures had on the vocabulary depth knowledge of 7-year-olds in rural Malaysia. The Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM) is designed to elicit words from students' existing listening and speaking vocabularies while capitalising on a learner's ability to think inductively. Modified and adopting a single-factor one-cycle design with PWIM as the independent variable, the intervention employed a pretest-posttest-delayed posttest control-group design. The subjects were comprised of 2 intact classes ($n = 60$), 1 class formed the Experimental group ($n = 30$) and another formed the Control group ($n =30$). The primary testing instrument, Read's Word Associates Test (WAT), was specifically adapted to measure subjects' vocabulary depth knowledge for recall and retention. Analysed results revealed superior recall and retention by the Experimental group, denoting the effectiveness of PWIM in enhancing vocabulary depth knowledge recall and retention among Malaysian young learners. Moreover, given vocabulary depth's claim as the stronger predictor of language proficiency, the functionalities of such data in providing insights on effective measures to boost English language development, particularly among young learners, cannot be disputed.

Keywords: PWIM, recall and retention, vocabulary depth, young learners

INTRODUCTION

Acknowledging the significance of mastering English language, both for academic as well as career purposes, the Ministry of Education in Malaysia highlighted the need for students to excel in the language via various English language education reforms such as the Primary School Standards-

Based Curriculum for English language education (SBELC), introduced in 2011, the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025) (MEB, n.d.) as well as the Malaysia English Language Roadmap (2013-2025) (MELR, n.d.) and the latest being the Subject Grade Point Average (Gred Purata Mata Pelajaran [GPMP]), a set target for English language to ascertain that schools in every state perform well in the subject. Yet, our students still fail to attain a reasonable level of competency and unemployment among our graduates remains high with the main reason given as poor communication skills due to lack of English proficiency ("Poor command of English", 2018).

The present study pinpoints vocabulary acquisition on account of the robust correlation between vocabulary knowledge and language mastery, and all-inclusive academic excellence as well. Whilst researchers such as Laufer (1997), Laufer and Sim (1985) and Nation (1994) stood unanimous in their opinions that language learning would occur once learners had acquired an adequate vocabulary size, learners and teachers alike view vocabulary as a vital requisite for first and second language learning (Duppenthaler, 2007). Specifically, the study looks at vocabulary depth recall and retention given its status as a stronger predictor of language competency compared to its other dimension, breadth (Hadley & Dickson, 2018; Hadley et al., 2016; Hoffman et al., 2014).

Employing pictures, the present study's intervention is via PWIM, a teaching model that leverages on inquiry-oriented arts strategy. Designed and continuously researched upon, and refined by Joyce et al. (2015, 2009), the PWIM is deemed sufficiently versatile to be engaged with learners of any age group, either individually or in groups. Calhoun's (1999) earliest effort in experimenting with PWIM to promote literacy was with preschoolers and middle school learners but she eventually reached out to include adult non-readers. Her study documented significant positive findings in terms of vocabulary acquisition, reading skills and comprehension among 22 first graders via action research (Joyce et al., 2001).

The numerous recent studies conducted by local researchers such as Adibah Halilah et al. (2014), Lee et al. (2017), Susanto (2017) and Tan (2016a) on vocabulary acquisition indicate rejuvenated interest in second language vocabulary acquisition, as well as attempts at addressing the lack of proficiency in English language given the significance of vocabulary knowledge to overall language learning and development, and academic

Purpose of Study

Past and present Malaysian education reform initiatives have irrevocably reverted to English language education in both primary and secondary schools, with attention on the issue of underachievement in terms of English language proficiency among Malaysian learners, be it young or old. As observed by Misbah et al. (2017) in their study on factors contributing to young Malaysian learners' difficulties in English

language learning, lacking vocabulary knowledge among learners is a major causal dynamic. Consistent research findings have also pointed to the possibility that a gap in vocabulary knowledge among learners, including those in preschool, will eventually lead to compromised language proficiency in their later years (Biemiller & Slonim, 2001; Hart & Risley, 2003; Stanovich et al., 1998; Wagner et al., 1997). Therefore, it is of critical importance to address the issue of insufficient vocabulary knowledge without further delay (Biemiller, 2003; Hadley & Dickinson, 2018) and that includes attending to the vocabulary needs of children as young as preschool (McKeown & Beck, 2014).

Witnessing fellow researchers in solidarity on the need to increase learners' vocabulary knowledge for language development is certainly motivating. However, a fundamental question needs to be addressed; should measurements of vocabulary knowledge be all-inclusive or should its different dimension be taken into account - breadth, the quantity or depth, the quality? While Nation (2006) elucidated vocabulary depth as to how well a word was comprehended or applied by language learners, vocabulary breadth was simply referred to as the number of words - in numerical - known to a language learner. Such a dilemma is justifiable since young learners' vocabulary assessment is largely breadth based as the main indicator of vocabulary knowledge (Hadley et al., 2016). A report by National Early Literacy Panel (NELP, 2008) that defined vocabulary as encompassing only

vocabulary breadth showed young learners' (kindergarten) vocabulary breadth size to be a weak predictor ($r = 0.25$) of reading comprehension. Vocabulary depth test recorded a significantly stronger predictor ($r = 0.45$) in later tests.

Hence, the decision to explore the Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM) as an intervention for effective vocabulary acquisition and to measure vocabulary depth in this study. To this end, attention is on how pictures, viewed as a key component in cognitive processing (Joyce et al., 2015) that serves to assist young learners in acquiring, recalling and retaining the meaning of a new word over time, impact the recall and retention of vocabulary depth knowledge of our young learners via Calhoun's (1999) PWIM. This study attempts to provide answers to the following questions (RQ) and null hypotheses (H_o):

RQ1: Is there a difference in the vocabulary depth knowledge recall between the Experimental group and the Control group?

$H_{o1:}$ There is no significant difference in the vocabulary depth knowledge recall between the Experimental group and the Control group.

RQ2: Is there a difference in the vocabulary depth knowledge retention between the Experimental group and the Control group?

$H_{o2:}$ There is no significant difference in the vocabulary depth

knowledge retention between the Experimental group and the Control group.

Literature Review

Vocabulary Depth. Anderson and Freebody's (1981) definition of vocabulary depth as to how well words are known is infamous for its straightforwardness and easy comprehension. Vocabulary has been long viewed as a prerequisite and a worthy determinant of language proficiency and that it embraces two dimensions, breadth and depth as two individual but closely interconnected constructs. Testimonies to this are studies carried out by Lee (2013), Qian (2002, 1998), Read (1989, 1988), Tan (2016b), Tannenbaum et al. (2006) and Wesche and Paribakht (1996) with findings specific to vocabulary breadth and depth.

More studies on vocabulary testing (Cain & Oakhill, 2014; Dickinson et al., 2010; Proctor et al., 2012; Roth et al., 2002) merely corroborated the NELP's report mentioned earlier where the majority of vocabulary research on young learners demonstrated over-reliance on standardized assessments intended for breadth. In short, though helpful, as well as necessary in supplying an indicative vocabulary threshold, vocabulary size certainly falls short as a primary indicator for a comprehensive study.

Nation's (1990) four constructs-form, meaning, function and position-are tapered from Richard's (as cited in Shen, 2008) version that contains seven facets of word knowledge, a framework largely responsible for the subsequent varied yet complementary frameworks. Nation subsequently expanded the list to include receptive and productive vocabulary. In tandem, Qian's (2002) framework comprises vocabulary size, depth of vocabulary knowledge, lexical organization, and automaticity of receptive–productive knowledge. As stressed by Beglar (2010) and Harmer (2007), words should be studied in context, no less. Given the multi-facets of depth, it seems only right to measure learners for vocabulary depth.

There appears to be a general consensus that word knowledge progresses along a continuum (Waring, 2002) that spans levels and dimensions. Depth knowledge is seen as being positioned at various lexicon levels along a continuum. Here, the underlying notion is that one travels along the continuum of knowledge as one progressively accumulates more knowledge of a particular word. Rather than being limited to a single word, this basic concept extends to cover a wider dimension of vocabulary that encompasses receptively versus productive, passive against active, recognition and understanding as opposed to recall and vocabulary employment respectively.

It is relatively safe to enunciate that vocabulary depth is a critical and yet a largely under-researched dimension in the area of language learning; a destitute state indeed. In the present study, Read's (1998) WAT has been modified specifically to measure subjects' vocabulary depth knowledge for recall and retention.

Picture Superiority Effect (PSE). The greater conceptual processing pictures possess over words is often justified via the Picture Superiority Effect (PSE) with the support of encoding theories and transfer-appropriate processing (TAP). PSE is often explicated through Paivio's (1971) widely quoted dual-coding theory, the sensory-semantic theory (Nelson et al., 1977) and TAP by Weldon and Roediger (1987). Seemingly, it is the way pictures are decoded differently from words that account for picture superiority hypothesis. Pictures have the definite advantage of eliciting both verbal and image code whereas single-coded words are encoded verbally. Thus, the edge pictures enjoy over words in the encoding theory. Particularly when it concerns young learners, this notion found support with researchers such as Ally and Budson (2007), Alvarez and Oliva (2008), Anderson (2009) and Lee (2013) who collectively asserted on the superiority of a dual coded representation over a single coded one.

Nelson and his fellow colleagues (Nelson et al., 1977, 1976) proposed the Sensory-Semantic Theory, also an encoding theory of picture superiority that suggested a difference could be found in the order of access to phonemic information for both sensory and semantic codes. For pictures, semantic processing occurs prior to the availability of name codes since phonemic access is not direct. Alternatively, phonemic access for words is direct and therefore does not necessitate prior semantic processing. However, elevated levels of either schematic or conceptual similarity in pictures that lead to the distorted sequential arrangement can reverse or even eliminate PSE.

As for TAP, PSE can be experienced via the interrelation between encoding and retrieval (Weldon et al., 1989; Weldon & Roediger, 1987). Particularly on tasks pertaining to recall and recognition, the superior performance of pictures will be more palpable on those that entail conceptual retrieval (Weldon & Roediger, 1987). Pictures are often seen as being more conceivable to access meaning during encoding.

PWIM's basic structure is nearest to Paivio's dual-code model as it relies on two inter-reliant modes of memory codes, verbal and nonverbal, to the first process and then stores information. Apparently, there exists two disparate but interrelated modes of representational units (*imagen* and *logogens)* that refer to image illustrations and verbal entities depicting linguistic materials such as vocabulary items and sentences respectively. Hence, one can construe that retrieval and retention of monocoded information are more challenging as compared to dual-coded ones. Paivio (1971) justified by explaining that images were processed much faster through synchronous processing as opposed to the sequential access of the information in the verbal system. Paivio and Begg (1981) exemplified Paivio's dual-coding theory as in Table 1.

The referential connections between a verbal and a nonverbal mental representation, as well as the concurrent storage in short-term memory, are made possible by the close presentation of predominantly two

Table 1
The two systems that serve the memory

Sensory modality	Symbolic systems	
	Verbal	Nonverbal
Visual	Printed words	Picture or objects
Auditory	Speech sounds	Environmental sounds
Tactual	Braille	Fellable objects
Kinaesthetic	Motor feedback from writing	Motor feedback from the physical exploration of objects

Notes: Adapted from *Psychology of Language* (p. 68) by Paivio and Begg (1981)

different types of information (Chun & Plass as cited in Wu, 2014). Such linkages give rise to increased retrieval avenues for accessing of vocabulary items. Any increase in dependency on recall is also largely determined/influenced by learner variables such as one's preferences and abilities. In sum, vocabulary learning is deemed profoundly enhanced when learning involves the simultaneous application of both verbal and nonverbal system.

The Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM). The Picture Word Inductive Model (PWIM) is "...an inquiry-oriented language arts strategy that uses pictures containing familiar objects and actions to elicit words from children's listening and speaking vocabularies" (Calhoun, 1999, p. 21). Leaning on the inherent attributes of learners in learning, the approach strives to expand knowledge using language in print and simultaneously, to develop and hone skills on extricating and compiling information.

PWIM primarily uses pictures composed of commonly known objects and actions to exploit one's facility for thinking inductively to draw words from prevailing

listening and speaking vocabulary. Learners are first steered into probing for words to acquire a gradually increasing number of words for sight-reading and writing. Learners' observation and analysis skills are further cultivated in detecting and learning of fundamental phonic elements and language structures before stretching to envelope skills such as reading, writing, comprehending and composition. Basically, the instructional sequence of the model cycles and recycles through the steps of the PWIM. The length of a complete sequence of a PWIM cycle is extremely versatile, largely determined by aspects such as richness of the image, the level of maturity and language proficiency of the learners as well as the intentions and language goals of the teacher (Calhoun, 1999).

PWIM further integrates concept attainment into its model of teaching, making it also a "safety net" programme that is exceedingly effective and popular as well with the more mature beginning readers and writers in secondary and high school, and adult learners too (Joyce et al., 2004). Generally, the instructional sequence of PWIM generates a learning environment that stresses on brain-compatible teaching

and learning, consequently serving as a base for subsequent learning. As an integral part of the language arts curriculum, PWIM has successfully aided learners in expanding their sight vocabularies whether individually or in groups (Calhoun, 1999; Joyce & Calhoun, 1998), irrespective of age, gender or ethnicity.

Inductive Thinking. Within PWIM, inductive thinking inculcates concept formation and application in learners (Joyce et al., 2009). The research efforts of Taba (as cited in Joyce et al., 2004; Wragg, 2012) on approaches to pursue and organise information, to construct hypothesis and assess it, and to illustrate correlations among sets of collected data have been incorporated into PWIM and subsequently refined by Joyce and Calhoun (1998, 1996).

Learners are perceived as natural conceptualises that observe both similarities and dissimilarities between items, incidents or experiences and sentiments or reactions (Joyce et al., 2009). Hence, typical of the PWIM approach in increasing and augmenting one's innate potentiality, learners are coaxed and motivated to build and expand the concept. Consistently employed, this strategy also made it possible to widen learners' scope of perspectives to better review information collected.

The lesson structure of PWIM is devised in accordance to four stages ascertained in the inductive model of teaching (Joyce et al., 2009), stage one is identifying and itemising of data while the second stage is classifying them according to general elements. In the third and final phase, data is first analysed and interpreted before being converted to either skills or hypotheses. It is crucial that learners are closely guided throughout the lesson to think inductively; they are not to be spoon-fed. Hence, PWIM aspires for learners to focus and attain conceptual control, and to convert conceptual understanding to skills; the classification, reclassification, and development of a hypothesis.

Concept Attainment. Concept attainment refers to "the search for and listing of attributes that can be used to distinguish exemplars from nonexemplars of various categories" (Bruner et al. as cited in Crawford & Nicklaus, 2013). The design of PWIM provides for instructions on distinct concepts that are precise in distinctiveness with plentiful opportunities for learners to further refine the various learning strategies. It is an effectual avenue that categorises information comprising vast scope of topics, ready to be dispensed to learners at the various juncture of learning. Within an environment that already enjoys formed groups or categories, learners just need to pinpoint the attributes of the groups. However, to successfully do so learners must first differentiate the dissimilarities from the similarities of *exemplars*, effectively segregating those with traits of the concept from those without. It is through comparing and contrasting of *exemplars* that learners gradually learn to grasp the fundamentals of forming hypotheses (Joyce et al., 2009). All in, the concept attainment model contains three phases that generally guide PWIM's

lesson structure. The initial two stages concern providing data to learners and assessing them on the attainment of the concept respectively while the later phase is to correctly label secondary examples not identified and then to go about creating their own examples (Joyce et al., 2009).

Developmental Priming Mechanisms. Ramey et al. (1995) first applied its developmental priming mechanisms to early intervention programmes comprising two generations. As a component of a theoretical framework derived from the General Systems Theory, its mechanisms chiefly concern the outcomes of children in terms of cognitive, social, and emotional facets though the progress of adults development is not overlooked either. The priming mechanism needs to be present on a consistent basis in children's daily lives for optimum positive outcomes (Ramey & Ramey, 1998). Otherwise, as Ramey and Ramey (2002) claimed, the children's development would be negatively affected cognitively, linguistically and socially.

PWIM's instructional environment is closely oriented to the conditions expressed by Ramey and Ramey (Calhoun, 1999), as summarised in Figure 1 below:

Developmental Priming Mechanisms
1. Encouragement of explanation
2. Mentoring in basic cognitive and social skills
3. Celebrating new skills
4. Guided rehearsal and extension of new skills
5. Protection from inappropriate punishment or ridicule for developmental advances
6. Stimulation in language and symbolic communication

Figure 1. Developmental priming mechanisms. Adapted from *Early Intervention and Early Experience* by Ramey and Ramey (1998)

As asserted by Calhoun (1999), the instructional environment within the PWIM framework addresses "five of the six priming mechanisms for continued development"; Ramey and Ramey's fifth priming mechanisms was omitted. Thus, students in the intervention group similarly experienced the five priming mechanisms that exist within PWIM's instructional environment.

Research Framework

Figure 2 shows the research framework of this study.

METHODS

Research Design

The present quasi-experimental research utilised the pre-test, post-test and delayed posttest control group design, with purposive
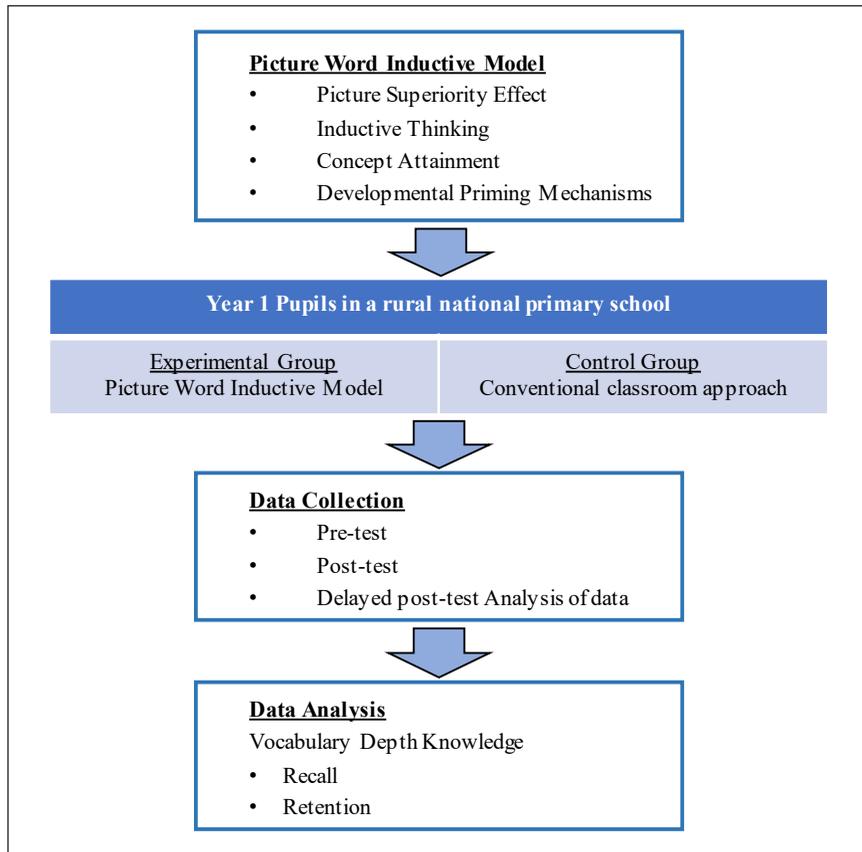
Figure 2. The framework of the present study

sampling. Such design is often employed for classroom experiments that come with naturally assembled experimental and control groups such as intact classes that are likely to be homogeneous (Best & Khan, 2006), particularly when the school refrains from the practice of streaming its pupils. The choice is further strengthened with Moore and McCabe's (2006) plausible recommendation for the experimental design as one of the most effective methods to ascertain causation within a design that extends control over possible variables. The presence or absence technique allows for manipulation of an independent variable in an effort to ascertain causal correlations, accomplished by conferring an intervention or condition on one group while denying the control or comparison group of it.

Participants

Subjects targeted in the study are young learners since past research findings deem it crucial to begin vocabulary knowledge building early (Hadley & Dickinson, 2018; Hoffman et al., 2014; McKeown & Beck, 2014) as those with smaller vocabularies have been found to lag behind their peers who possess larger vocabularies in literacy development (Biemiller & Slonim, 2001).

Hence, Year 1 pupils were purposively selected. As stated by Teddlie and Yu (2017), a purposive sample such as individuals, groups of individuals or institutions is selected with the precise intention related to seeking an answer to a research study's questions and hypothesis (Teddlie & Yu, 2007) and can be transferred absolutely to precise cohort (Barbie, 2008) because it is justifiable for researchers to form generalisations (Black, 1999). Utilising purposive sampling, a coin was tossed to resolve the random assignments of subjects to the experimental and control group. In the case of the present study participants comprised of two intact groups (n = 60) of Year 1 pupils enrolled in a rural national primary school.

Instruments

Enlarged pictures are taken from the Year 1 textbook and vocabulary depth tests made up the instruments in the study. The list of words utilised for the intervention was randomly selected from the words listed in the word list in the *Dokumen Standard*

Kurikulum Pentaksiran (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia [KPM]*, 2017). The teacher who participated in the study was given discretionary power to select the pictures used in the study, in line with Calhoun's (1999) suggestion that the pictures are selected by the teacher. Meanwhile, the vocabulary depth test employed in the study is based on Read's (1998) Word Associates Test, guided by (Schoonen & Verhallen, 2008). WAT has been validated with strong scores, for instance 0.93 (Read, 1998), 0.84 - 0.89 (Greidanus et al., 2004), 0.75 (Schoonen & Verhallen, 2008). It has also been subjected to a reliability test where at p = 0.891, the Sig. (p) value obtained is more than 0.05 (p > 0.05), denoting statistically no significant difference between group means. Thus, signifying the test's reliability in terms of stability over time. A sample of the WAT test employed in the present study to measure vocabulary depth is in Figure 3.

Scoring

The All-or-Nothing method was selected over the One-Point and Correct-Wrong

Instruction: Identify all related words and draw a line to join each word to the word in the center.

triangle

green

delicious

broccoli

circle

vegetable

potato
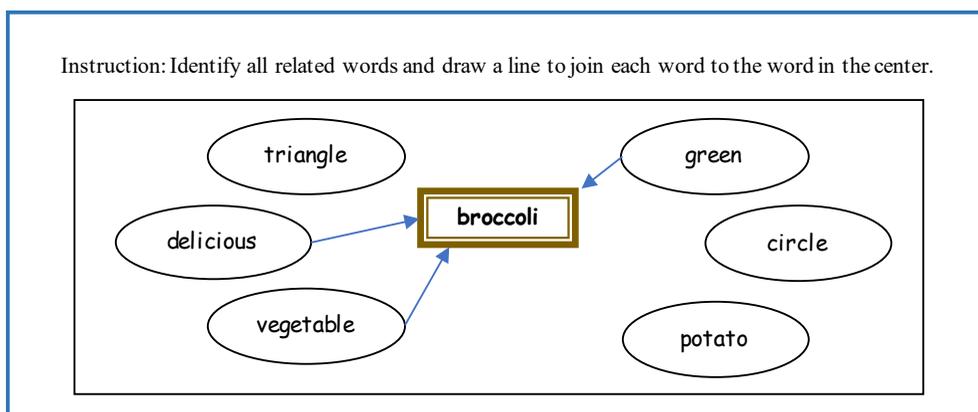
Figure 3. Vocabulary depth test adapted from Read's (1998) WAT

methods due to its simplicity in scoring and its strictness in awarding points. According to Schoonen and Verhallen (as cited in Zhang & Koda, 2017), the All-or-Nothing method awards points only for precise matching of correct answers which prevents testees from attempting to guess the correct answers. The One-Point and Correct-Wrong methods were rejected due to the weakness detected in them. For instance, the One-Point method only scores learners' answers according to their associate selection, completely disregarding the selection and non-selection of a distractor. On the other hand, the Correct-Wrong method was censured for its complexity and tediousness (Zhang & Koda, 2017). Both expose studies to threats of distorted data.

Scoring for the vocabulary depth test is mechanical and as such, tests to investigate inter-rater reliability are omitted. As stated by Cohen et al. (2018), inter-rater reliability only needs to be established to ensure the consistency of two or more raters, typical of studies pertaining to writing skills.

Procedure

Intervention. Guided by Calhoun's (1999) PWIM model of instruction, the structure of the PWIM was further adapted accordingly to accommodate the study based on its objectives. The steps of the intervention for the present study are in Figure 4.

Employing a single independent variable within a one-cycle design, the intervention occurred once a week at the participating school with the permission of its headmaster. Five words were taught during each session that lasted approximately 30 minutes; within one cycle ten words were taught to the experimental group while the control group received traditional classroom instructions. The present study stretched over a period of approximately six weeks.

Bearing in mind the Hawthorne effect, the researcher refrained from conducting the intervention. Instead, an English teacher in the participating school took charge of the experimental group upon receiving instructions in the steps of the intervention while the control group was held by the English teacher who was their class teacher at that point.

Steps of the intervention
1.   Choose a picture, enlarge and hand on the board.
2.   Point at an item and invite pupils to tell what they see
3.   Tag the items identified. (Draw a line from the identified object or area, say the word, write the word; ask students to spell the word aloud and then pronounce it).
4.   Read and review the picture word chart aloud
5.   Ask students to read the words (using the lines on the chart if necessary) and to classify the words into a variety of groups. Identify common concepts (e.g., beginning consonants, rhyming words) to emphasize with the whole class.
6.   Read and review the picture word chart (say the word, spell it, say it again)
7.   Add words, if desired, to the picture word chart and to the word banks.

Figure 4. Lesson structure of the intervention in the present study

Attempts were made to standardise the conditions in which the study took place in order to minimise both external and internal threats. For instance, random selection and assignment of intact groups were practised to negate some threats. Also, being a single intervention effectively rules out the multiple-treatment interference, an external threat to a research study. Additionally, the pupils involved were not informed of their role in the study. To the knowledge of the authors and the participating teachers, subjects remained unaware of their status as research participants as the intervention took place during normal lessons and the picture used was taken from their Year 1 English textbook, *Supermind*. Teachers concerned were also cautioned against mentioning of the intervention to anyone. Hence, minimising another threat that could jeopardise research findings. As for internal threats, namely historical and maturation of subjects, they have been nullified to a greater extent with the existence of a control group and the comparatively short duration of the intervention as well. Regarding the mortality threat, it was non-existent since all subjects remained throughout the intervention and all were pre-, post- and delayed post-tested.

It is to be noted that this study is a piloting effort and therefore, is a scale down version of the actual study that numbered 180 subjects from a total of three primary schools located in rural Perak, Malaysia.

Data Collection. The participants in both experimental and control groups were administered vocabulary pre-tests, post-tests and delayed post-tests. Participants were subjected to pre-test before the intervention began while post-test was administered immediately upon completion of the intervention. Delayed post-tests took place approximately two weeks after the intervention was completed. The schedule is as summarised in Figure 5.

| PRE-TEST |
| INTERVENTION |
| POST-TEST |
| DELAYED POST-TEST |
| DATA ANALYSIS |
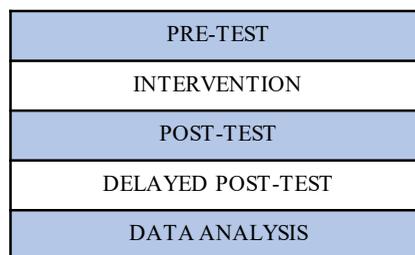
Figure 5. The schedule of the present study

Data Analysis. To investigate the effect of the PWIM on the acquisition of subjects' vocabulary depth knowledge, the scores obtained from pre-, post- and delayed post-tests were tabulated and duly analysed via the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). To assess the assumption of normality, Sharpiro-Wilk test was conducted as it is considered more appropriate than the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test due to the smaller sample size of the present study. Results suggested that samples are consistent with a Gaussian distribution as all the Sig. (p) values obtained are greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). Thus, allowing for the acceptance of the null hypothesis that sample distribution is normal and non-violation of the assumption of normality. Parametric procedures were employed.

RESULTS

Levene's Test Results

Levene's Test for Equality of Variance was conducted to test the assumption of homogeneity of variances whereby the null-hypothesis (H_o: $\sigma^2_1 = \sigma^2_2$) assumes no difference between the groups' variances. The results as in Table 2.

Table 2
Levene's Test for the assumption of homogeneity of variances

Test	F	*Sig.*
Pre-test	0.489	0.487
Post-test	0.545	0.463
Delayed post-test	1.117	0.295

As shown, the Sig. (p) value obtained for the pre-, post- and delayed posttest was higher than 0.05 at 0.487, 0.463 and 0.0295 respectively; resulting in the null hypothesis of no difference between the groups' variances accepted given that value of $p > 0.05$. This indicates that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met and no significant difference detected between the variances of the two groups.

Pre-test Results

To ascertain for baseline similarity in vocabulary depth knowledge between the two groups, pre-test scores were analysed via an independent sample t-test. Tabulated results at 2.60 (SD = 0.814) and 2.57 (SD = 0.728) for the experimental and control group respectively denote achievement of baseline similarity between these two groups. Table 3 shows that the pre-test mean scores for both experimental and control group differed only slightly, 0.03.

Table 3
Pre-test results: Vocabulary depth knowledge

Group	n	Pre-test	
		M	SD
Experimental	30	2.60	0.814
Control	30	2.57	0.728

Additionally, employing an alpha level of 0.05, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine if statistically significant differences exist between the pre-test group means.

The null hypothesis of no significant difference in vocabulary depth at the pre-test level between groups was tested. Table 4 shows that at this level, with the Sig. (p) value obtained at more than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$) at $p = 0.868$, there is no statistically significant difference between group means. Thus, allowing for the acceptance of the null hypothesis of no significant difference in vocabulary depth between the Experimental group and the Control group; both groups

Table 4
Independent Samples T-test: Comparison between groups for pre-test

Equal variances assumed	*t*-test for Equality of Means					95% confidence interval of the difference	
	t	*df*	Sig.	M diff	SE diff	Lower bound	Upper bound
Pre-test	0.167	58	0.868	0.033	0.199	-0.366	0.432

possessed comparable vocabulary depth knowledge at the pre-test level.

Post-test Results

Vocabulary Knowledge Recall for Depth. To answer the first research question, the mean scores of the post-test for both experimental and control group were compared. As detected in Table 5, the mean score for the experimental group's post-test is 5.13 (SD = 0.900) as compared to 4.73 (SD = 0.691) for the control group. These numbers illustrated a higher score (M = 5.13) for the experimental group, thus indicating a higher vocabulary depth knowledge recall for those exposed to the intervention.

In addition, employing an alpha level of 0.05, an independent samples t-test was conducted to determine for statistically significant differences between the post-test group means; the first hypothesis tested. Referring to Table 6, the Sig. (p) value documented at p = 0.005 is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), denoting statistically significant differences between group means at the post-test level. Therefore, overall results signify that the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group in vocabulary depth knowledge recall.

Table 5
Post-test results: Vocabulary knowledge recall for depth

Group	n	Post-test	
		M	SD
Experimental	30	5.13	0.900
Control	30	4.73	0.691

Post-test / Delayed Post-test Results

Vocabulary Knowledge Retention for Depth. The descriptive statistics in Tables 7 and 8 provide answers to the second research question and hypothesis. Table 7 shows the mean difference in the post- and delayed post-test scored by participants that measured the retention of vocabulary knowledge. The experimental group recorded 0.90 (SD = 0.548) while the control group obtained 1.33 (SD = 0.479), a larger difference in mean scores than the experimental group that indicates lower retention. Basically, retention is based on how well knowledge is maintained after a certain period of experiencing an intervention. Therefore, more knowledge lost (bigger difference) equates lower retention.

Following that, the existing differences were checked for statistic significance with the employment of an alpha level of 0.05. As seen in Table 8, the Sig. (p) value obtained is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) at p

Table 6
Independent Samples T-test: Comparison between groups for post-test

	t-test for Equality of Means					95% confidence interval of the difference	
Equal variances assumed	t	df	Sig.	M diff	SE diff	Lower bound	Upper bound
Post-test	1.931	58	0.005	0.604	0.307	0.105	0.815

= 0.002, indicating statistically significant differences between group mean at the post- and delayed post-test level; the null hypothesis of no significant difference in the retention of vocabulary depth between groups was tested. Overall, results signify that the experimental group out-performed the control group significantly in vocabulary depth knowledge retention.

Table 7
Post- and Delayed post-test results: Vocabulary knowledge retention for depth

Group	n	Differences between Post-test and Delayed Post-test	
		M	SD
Experimental	30	0.90	0.548
Control	30	1.33	0.479

Table 8
Independent Samples T-test: Comparison between groups for differences in post- and delayed post-test

Equal variances assumed	*t*-test for Equality of Means					95% confidence interval of the difference	
	t	*df*	Sig.	M diff	SE diff	Lower bound	Upper bound
Post-test	-3.261	58	0.002	0.433	0.133	-0.699	-0.167

DISCUSSIONS

In employing PWIM on a group of young learners with the aim of exploring the effectiveness of the approach on vocabulary learning, specifically to measure vocabulary depth, opportunities for incidental vocabulary learning through speaking and listening as well as deliberate teaching and learning could be detected. The overall results have reflected significant differences in the mean scores of the post-test and post-test/delayed post-test between the groups. Descriptive statistics show that the experimental group which experienced the PWIM intervention recorded statistically significantly higher vocabulary recall and retention (see Table 6 & 8 respectively) than did the individuals in the control group. Thus, conclusions reached are that the recall and retention of vocabulary depth knowledge

are effectively enhanced through the PWIM model of teaching.

Recall ability is likely enhanced through conceptual processing as observed within the framework of PWIM. This deduction is in accord with previous frameworks of vocabulary knowledge by Roediger (as cited in Lee et al., 2017) that advocated conceptual processing for word recall and recognition, and that improved conceptual coding forms the basis for PSE. Based on data collected from this research effort, it seems that pictures are superior in the recall due to being encoded with higher conceptual processing in addition to repetition for effective retrieval which lends support to Thornbury's (2004) research findings. As shown, PWIM's framework comprises multiple cycles that entail the repeating of new words induced. Obviously, meaningful

repetitions play a significant role in the storage and retrieval of information/ knowledge as found reiterated in the work of researchers renowned in this domain of study. For instance, Nagy et al's findings in 1987 were referred to by Krashen (2013) and Webb (2008).

Based on this study's positive findings on vocabulary depth recall, it appears that picture stimuli do surpass word stimuli every time for superior memory performance, as asserted in PSE. This was similarly highlighted in McBride and Dosher's (2002) work. In the Malaysian context, Tan and Parimala (2014) discovered in a more recent study that young learners demonstrated greater recall ability when pictures were elaborated with verbal accompaniment. Also, distractions for words tended to incur greater decline in memory performance compared to pictures.

The superior performance in vocabulary depth retention by those in the experimental group, as exhibited in this study's output (see Table 8), evinced the effectiveness of combining images with text in the context of retention of new information. A study carried out by Lee (2013) on using pictures with Malaysian pupils similarly documented improved vocabulary retention though it was the breadth and not depth dimension. Evidently, the combination of picture and text works towards fostering and enhancing of information retention. This supports the stance taken by researchers such as Nemati (2009) and Makoto and Jeffa (2002) on utilising pictures for enhanced second language learning. While Nemati

(2009) emphasized that one should not undermine the efficacy of images for long term retention, Makoto and Jaffa (2002) expounded on the virtue of combining of picture and text with annotations for better recall and retention based on the post and delayed posttests results in their experimental study. Evidently, as discovered by Anderson (2009), the meaningfulness content of an item can be crucial to the retention of information.

Notwithstanding the markedly strong support for multiple repetitions for effective knowledge retention, Nemati (2009) had rebuffed the shallower processes of repetitions when it came to effective retention. Instead, a deeper level processing of the target words was advocated. Even as early as in the 1990s, Schmitt and Schmitt (1995) had advocated a more profound processing level as retention necessitates deeper and richer semantic processing; rote repetitions is simply not adequate if effective long term retention is the ultimate goal. Nevertheless, this study's significantly positive findings, as in Lee's (2013) research study on breadth, denote that multiple repetitions produce affirmative effects on vocabulary recall and retention. It is to be mentioned that PWIM upholds meaningful repetitions rather than rote repetitions in its lesson structure.

Though numerous studies on PWIM can be detected of late, especially by Indonesian researchers, many of these studies explored its impact on writing skills. Take, for instance, Yuniati (2015) who carried out a study on writing recount

text while Yuniyarsih and Saun (2014) focused on the narrative writing skills of high school students via PWIM. As for Nurani and Rosyada (2017), their area of research covered high school students' communicative competence via PWIM. Positive findings may be documented for the above-mentioned research but then such studies cannot be considered comparable since the focuses of the studies differ from that of the present study.

Previous PWIM studies on vocabulary acquisition specifically include efforts by Yurfalah (2014), Jiang (2014), Lee (2013) and Li (2011). Even so, differences between theirs and the present study lie in the domain measured, test instruments, age of subjects among others. Yurfalah (2014) measured her subjects for vocabulary breadth recall and at the same time examined their perceptions on how PWIM impacted their vocabulary learning in class. As for Jiang, a mainland Chinese who conducted his study on Chinese learners in 2014, he combined both vocabulary breadth and depth in one test instrument to investigate vocabulary recall. Likewise, Li (2011) who similarly integrated both depth and breadth into a single test to examine fourth-grade Swedish pupils' ($n = 16$) second language vocabulary acquisition that did not extend beyond a post-test. Hence, there is no differentiation in the vocabulary dimension when findings were reported. On the other hand, Lee (2013) assessed her subjects for vocabulary retention but her study did not extend to cover depth. Therefore, among recent comparable studies mentioned, either it

was limited to exploring vocabulary recall only or recall and retention for breadth, or else it examined breadth and depth as one. Although all studies mentioned have posted positive findings, at best it can only be generalized that this study's research findings are in tandem with the findings of previous PWIM studies on vocabulary learning that similarly documented positive results. To the researchers' best knowledge there are no published studies that similarly explored the influence of PWIM on the recall and retention of young learners' vocabulary depth as what this paper has achieved.

Modestly, it can be claimed that this study's findings are more comprehensive and extensive as compared to other studies similar in nature in that subjects were measured for both recall and retention, targeting vocabulary depth knowledge precisely though admittedly the results are far from being all-conclusive.

CONCLUSION

Recall and retention of vocabulary knowledge, akin to learning, could be explored against a milieu of hypotheses that strive to elucidate the why and how of these two processes. Substantiated findings of this study indicate effective recall and retention of vocabulary depth among young learners when pictures are creatively and diligently applied for language learning. Both hypotheses are also supported in that pictures facilitate recall and retention of vocabulary knowledge when the concept attainment and inductive thinking model

are duly incorporated into a framework that is aligned to an instructional setting that adheres to Ramey and Ramey's (2002) development priming mechanisms.

Nonetheless, a blanket acknowledgement of the results is deemed unacceptable to some as the effectiveness of visual imagery may not appertain to lexical across the board. For instance, pictures may not work as successfully with abstract words. Concreteness versus vagueness in terms of word substance could be vital if not deciding factor in the dynamics of language learning via a picture-text combo. Providing food for thought, this notion stands to prompt future research on the effectiveness of pictures against lexical of varying abstractness for enhanced vocabulary teaching and learning, consequently bridging a gap in vocabulary acquisition research via pictures.

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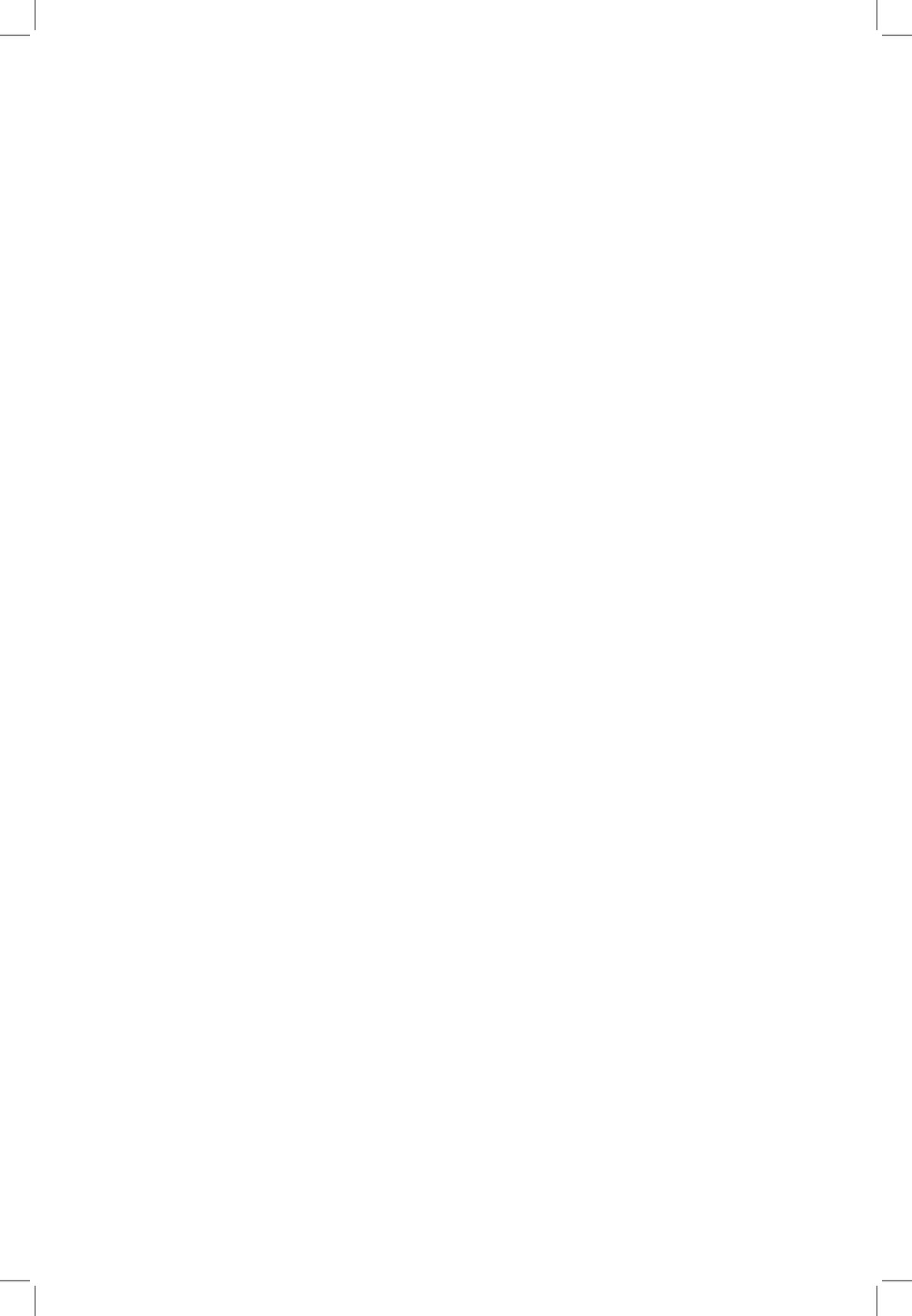
Case Study

ESL Teachers' HOT Pedagogical Practices via ICT: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

Higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) are part of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025, which was implemented into the school system to spark a new trend in the way young Malaysians learn and acquire knowledge. The aim of the study was to obtain greater insights into the teaching pedagogies of English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers. This study underlies various types of information and communication technologies (ICT) usages in the classes, examine ESL teachers' challenges in integrating ICT in their classes for promoting HOTS and determines the types of higher-order thinking (HOT) activities that are being conducted in classes. A purposive sampling method was used to select 40 participants who then responded to a questionnaire. The respondents comprised ESL teachers from selected secondary schools in Penang. This study found that ESL teachers lacked pedagogical knowledge of HOT especially in ICT and experience various ICT challenges in their pedagogical practices. This study is pertinent as it highlights a need for the Education Ministry to take serious measures in ascertaining experts in particular fields of pedagogical knowledge and provide training for the teachers to be capable of infusing thinking skills into content instruction.

Keywords: ESL teachers, higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), information and communication technologies (ICT), Malaysian education system, secondary schools

INTRODUCTION

The advent of Malaysia's aspiration to highlight an education system that is able to compete globally, directing the country's focus to information and communication technologies (ICT) and innovations. Bingmilas (2009) stressed that ICT usage in classroom settings provided a significant edge for students to learn and thrive in the digital age. Hilbert (2015) asserted that the evolving nature of technology greatly improved social development. With the power of ICT, everyone possesses the potential to achieve considerable success (Barak et al., 2007). Technology gives rise to convenient communication methods. As schools have yet to advance from the industrial era, teachers have to update their teaching pedagogies to meet the 21st century standards (Bates, 2015).

Coherent instruction and assessment encourage active learning through numerous higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) activities (Reigeluth & Karnopp, 2013). Levin and Schrum (2013) discovered that the implementation of ICT in schools assisted teachers in producing effective teaching and active learning among students. Subran (2013) stressed that the major advantages of using ICT to promote HOTS were in the utilization of HOTS via pedagogical practices, which helped in terms of sharing, interactivity, and collaboration among students.

The preliminary report of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 highlighted that English teachers in schools did not sufficiently engage students in HOTS, as they were still more comfortable with the old school lecture format. A study by Ganapathy and Kaur (2014) discovered that teachers lacked pedagogical knowledge and the expertise to innovate their practices by integrating HOT skills in their lessons. Ganapathy and Kaur (2014) asserted that teachers should implement realistic contexts in various situations into classroom assessments and activities, as this would promote HOTS among students in the ESL classroom.

A significant percentage (60%) of public examination questions will soon test students' grasps of HOTS and this mandates teacher to equip themselves with HOT pedagogies (Ministry of Education, 2000). Brookhart (2010) stressed that HOTS emphasized on life beyond school. Time is required to promote HOTS in the ESL classroom, as it is more complex compared to lower-order thinking skills. However, teachers today have to change from their old-school lecture-based format into an actively engaging classroom with the students in order to promote HOTS, which can be made easier through ICT.

Teachers today should focus on scaffolding methods such as modelling, guidance, and hints to assist students in acquiring HOTS (Hassaskhah, 2011). ICT allows students to interact with one another effectively by encouraging convenient group discussions. In line with the sociocultural theory, teachers can assist students through ICT by engaging them through active learning environments. ICT enables students to actively search for answers themselves.

HOTS can be effectively taught in schools with the power of ICT as highlighted by Ali (2012) and Yee et al. (2015).

Therefore, this research attempts to address the following research objectives: to examine ESL teachers' usage of ICT to promote HOTS, in the English language classroom at selected secondary schools in Penang and to determine the challenges experienced by ESL teachers, when using ICT to promote HOTS in the English language classroom at selected secondary schools in Penang. In addition, the research questions of the study are: 1) To what extent do the ESL teachers use ICT to promote HOTS in the English language classroom at selected secondary schools in Penang?; 2) What are the challenges experienced by ESL teachers when using ICT to promote HOTS in the English language classroom at selected secondary schools in Penang?

Related Literature

Wastiau et al. (2013) discovered that many teachers were aware of application software including desktop applications, presentation software, internet applications, and media communication. In Wastiau et al.'s (2013) study, teachers gave positive reviews regarding the relevance and importance of ICT to facilitate students' critical skills. However, Wastiau et al.'s (2013) study did not provide insight into the challenges encountered by teachers throughout the process of using ICT in teaching.

In Nguyễn and Nguyễn's (2017) study, active discussion and sharing of ideas were found to be uncommon among students.

This scenario had resulted in many students failing to engage in HOTS, as they were only taught with traditional methods of teaching. The results of the study also showed that many students only possessed preliminary skills, as only the most active and intelligent students would complete most of the work by themselves or for their groups.

Ganapathy (2016) advocated that the Malaysian higher education system had significantly matured over the years. The surge in student enrolment, worldwide acknowledgement of research publications, patents, and institutional quality and intake of international students have directed the education system's focus into innovation, technology, critical skills, and real-world applications. The accomplishments can attest to the many innovations of the Malaysian academic community, the private sector's support and the profound contribution that the Government has made. Malaysia's commitment to providing a top-tier education propels the Ministry of Education's focus towards ICT and HOTS, ensuring that the country's education system is up to par with the elite countries. Globalized online learning and the current focus gearing towards ICT reinforced the country's education efficiency by facilitating solid grounds for students to actively acquire knowledge via the usage of ICT. Ganapathy's (2016) study is recent and the findings further supported that ESL teachers had not been able to effectively cope with the transition into the 21st century teaching pedagogies with ICT utilization. ESL teachers were found to be faced with several

challenges which prevented them from venturing into ICT dominant teaching styles.

Majumdar (2015) highlighted that ICT could transform the nature and process of the learning environment into a new culture. As ICT alters the teacher-centred learning into an interactive and engaging environment, ICT can effectively facilitate active learning, where students can utilize their knowledge and apply them in various situations and contexts. Majumdar's study is effective in displaying that learning is not mere knowledge transmission, but requires active construction. Learners have to undergo a paradigm shift from the old school method of teaching and learning into the student-centred active way of knowledge acquisition. Majumdar's (2015) study demonstrated that ICT encouraged HOTS acquisition and enabled students to construct knowledge more effectively. Majumdar's (2015) study elaborated on the recent paradigm shifts in education, demonstrating that teachers' professional development in ICT usage embodied and shaped the teaching pedagogies which teachers were able to apply in their classes. The study also discovered the changes in the learners' roles, curricula and delivery and the media applications.

Wheeliham's (2011) study discovered that creative and innovative students would thrive in the 21st century, as they had the capacity to adapt and create new opportunities. The 21st century requires the younger generation to master the application of HOTS in their daily lives. Sicilia (2005) highlighted that teachers faced many

challenges in using ICT during their lessons such as unloaded browser, no internet connection, and unfunctional computers or other equipment. In addition, according to Afshari et al. (2009), teachers are reluctant to use technology in their class.

Subran's (2011) article entitled "Developing Higher-Order Thinking with ICT", stressed on three major components of Web 2.0 which promoted interactivity among users. It is a platform allowing people to collaborate and share information online via blogs, wikis and Social Networks. Waycott et al.'s (2010) study entitled "Digital Divides? Student and Staff Perceptions of Information and Communication Technologies" discovered that most staff gave positive reviews towards ICT usage in enhancing learning and were highly well equipped with knowledge and skills on education technology while students did not have a special preference for increased integration of ICT in their studies. Subran's (2013) study also found that various HOTS were acquired by students via Social Networks, as it was very likely for students to develop HOTS, when they analyzed, evaluated and created new information based on their group work or other students' work. ICT tools enable students to create their own views and ideas based on their knowledge, experience, and influence from the comments of others. They may reflect on materials to appraise their suitability to the topic of concern and appraise comments from others to gauge their personal capabilities.

Zuraina (2009) conducted a study

named "A Case Study on Collaborative Learning to Promote Higher Thinking Skills (HOTS) among English as a Second Language (ESL) Learners" which aimed to examine the experience of UMP students in using collaborative learning to promote their higher-order thinking skills. From Zuraina's (2009) study, it was found that many class activities should be implemented with collaborative learning involving HOTS. HOTS activities necessitating students to produce invention at the synthesis level and reviewing their self- evaluation, were key elements to prepare students to thrive in the 21st century. The usage of ICT is able to provide numerous insights into students' critical thinking skills. Collaborative learning among students facilitates the acquisition of HOTS such as in activities involving comparing (analysis level), categorising (synthesis level) and explaining (evaluation level), where students are able to acquire and apply their knowledge in various contexts and situations. Social media and search engines enable teachers to facilitate group discussions among students easily.

Lorenzo (2016) stated that beneficiary schools faced significant issues in project implementation pertaining to ICT implementation in schools. Among the problems faced included hardware failure, the difficulty of software package usage, lack of follow-up on capability building, no available internet connection, restricted laboratory access, and shortage of repair/maintenance of laboratory equipment. Lorenzo's (2016) study is relevant as his research project demonstrated that teachers are satisfied with the administration, substance and the projection of ICT integration into the education system. While Lorenzo's (2016) study is significant in supporting the importance of ICT in education, further research is required to successfully address the gaps in ICT knowledge and pedagogical practices in schools.

Ganapathy and Kaur's (2014) study found that teachers did not have the necessary pedagogical knowledge for creating innovations in integrating HOTS in the classroom setting. Ganapathy and Kaur's (2014) study affirmed that teachers were not well-versed with HOT teaching pedagogies which in turn resulted in students performing worse in the HOTS packed examinations such as in PT3 and SPM. The drop-in top scorers for both examinations is an attestation that there is a loophole in ESL teachers' HOT teaching pedagogical practices and students' performance on HOT questions. This reveals that there exists a gap in the literature for HOTS implementation, as to whether ESL teachers are capable of teaching HOTS effectively. Thus, teachers are advised to teach in contexts, which highlight a few key areas. Among the focuses of HOT teaching are, forming background knowledge, classifying and separating information into groups, arranging items to ensure coherency and accuracy, forming a hypothesis, analysing various components and piecing them together and problem-solving activities. Students should be taught by the ESL teachers on the optimal ways to

analyse, classify or arrange the information.

Ganapathy and Kaur's (2014) study had shown that teachers played a vital role in updating their pedagogical practices by integrating subject matters with HOTS implementation. This is to facilitate students' engagement and attract their interest in engaging in the active acquisition of knowledge. Ganapathy and Kaur (2014) also asserted that teachers should ensure their assessments and classroom exercises incorporated realistic contexts and problems to promote HOTS acquisition among students. In short, teachers' own creativity plays a major part in how they engage students with HOT activities such as challenging existing beliefs and past information in order to cultivate the students' HOTS. From the results of the study, most students were interested and fascinated to use Facebook to actively search for information such as obtaining new knowledge by sharing and discussing among their friends. This discovery further reinforces that ICT has the power to promote HOTS in classroom settings, where students are provided with ample opportunities to actively search for information, analyse and evaluate the information found through the internet. After the active acquisition of information, students will then be able to create their own information and opinions, and thus, share with the class, by further highlighting active discussions in promoting HOTS with ICT.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) is based on three theories namely the Bloom's taxonomy, sociocultural theory, and constructivist approach. The teaching of HOTS via ICT in the ESL classroom highlights only the three main skills, namely analysing, applying and evaluating. The research answers whether ESL teachers agree or disagree with the introduction of HOT activities in classrooms via ICT.

The constructivist approach proposes that prior knowledge is necessary for meaningful learning, as active learning leads to actual knowledge acquisition. ESL teachers in secondary schools should teach students to apply their knowledge gained in schools in real-life contexts. As such, the ESL teachers' usage of ICT to promote HOTS is evidenced via the constructivist approach, further emphasising the ESL teachers' role in engaging students' interest to actively search for the information through ICT tools.

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory highlighted that the interaction between teachers and students of learning and teaching activities in schools plays an important role in HOTS acquisition, and such interactions can be easily conducted through ICT. More in-depth views of student-teacher interaction could be obtained via HOT activities and ICT tools.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed the quantitative approach where questionnaires were administered among ESL teachers. Forty ESL teachers were purposively selected
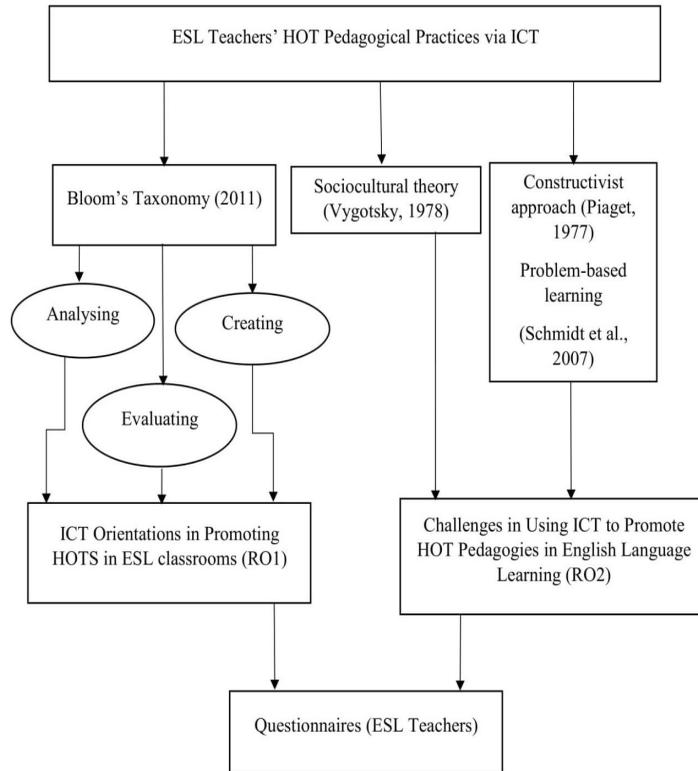
Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

for this study. The questionnaire was administered to the teachers and data were analysed. As for the study instrument, the questionnaire was adapted from Ganapathy et al.'s (2017) study due to its relevance towards the study. Further literature on HOTS and the importance of ICT were used to update and fortify the questionnaire with the base concept of Bloom's taxonomy of learning. The reliability of this study was validated through Cronbach's alpha test, with a 0.97 overall consistency score. Forty questionnaires are a good representative of the overall population of ESL teachers in Penang.

The study's research questions homed

in on the understanding of the practices related to the Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers' perspectives regarding the utilisation of ICT in the teaching of English in schools in promoting HOTS. Descriptive statistics including frequency, mean score and standard deviation were produced through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 22. The quantitative findings provided a key understanding of the latest ESL teachers' HOT pedagogical practices via ICT. A reading of 0.861 was obtained from the Cronbach's Alpha reliability statistic, indicating reliable data.

Permission was first obtained from

the Ministry of Education to conduct the research in secondary schools, then the State Education Department approved the research to be conducted in schools in Penang. After the affirmation from the Education Planning and Research Division (EPRD), permission was obtained from the principals of the respective schools.

The school principals only permitted ESL teachers who had free periods at that time to participate in the questionnaires on a voluntary basis, due to the tight teaching schedules of ESL teachers. ESL teachers with less than 5 years of teaching experience were prioritised in this study.

Sampling

Purposive sampling is selected for the research to ensure the respondents are from similar backgrounds. The sampling of the study was narrowed down to a group of secondary school ESL teachers who had less than five years of working experience. The effectiveness of teaching HOTS using ICT was evaluated through the study, as the frequency of ICT tools used is calibrated. The challenges encountered by ESL teachers when teaching HOTS were also determined in the study. The results helped provide a picture of whether the ESL teachers are able to effectively deliver critical knowledge to the students.

Data Analysis

The ESL teachers were briefed by the researcher to answer the questionnaire items as truthfully as their responses are used as reliable data. The frequency of ESL teachers using ICT to teach HOTS was reflected in the data collected. The mean and standard deviation readings were analysed through SPSS format Version 22. The results of the study answer the research questions of the study which were to understand the practices of Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers' perspectives regarding the utilisation of ICT in the teaching of English in schools in promoting HOTS and to determine the challenges faced by ESL teachers in teaching HOTS via ICT. The data collected addresses the research objectives of the study by shedding light on the ESL teachers' usage of ICT to promote HOTS and the challenges faced while promoting HOTS via ICT in schools.

RESULTS

The types of ICT used by teachers and their frequency of usage were analysed in this study. Table 1 displays the preferred ICT tools by ESL teachers in secondary schools. Hypermedia/multimedia has the highest mean (3.18) among the collected data. The internet has the lowest mean at just 1.70 which means that most teachers agree that the internet is commonly utilized in classes. Desktop applications have the highest standard deviation, at 1.137 while the internet has the lowest standard deviation at just 0.853. The database has the second-highest mean at 3.00 but is the third highest in terms of standard deviation (1.038), behind desktop application (1.137) and digital telecommunication (1.062).

Table 2 analyses the usage of ICT

Table 1

Types of ICT tools preferred by ESL teachers

Types of ICT	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Desktop application	40	1	5	2.13	1.137
Presentation software	40	1	5	2.25	1.032
Digital Telecommunication	40	1	5	2.53	1.062
E-learning portal	40	1	5	2.73	0.933
Web2.0	40	1	4	2.07	0.888
Internet	40	1	3	1.70	0.853
Hypermedia/ Multimedia	40	1	5	3.18	0.984
Database	40	1	5	3.00	1.038

Notes: 1= Strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Not sure, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree

in promoting HOTS activities. From 40 respondents, challenging existing beliefs has the highest mean (mean = 3.35) among all the HOTS activities being conducted through ICT. Group activities have the highest mean among all the HOTS activities being conducted through ICT. Engaging guest speakers had the second highest mean among the selected items, with a mean of 3.32. Interactive lectures have the highest standard deviation at 0.981 while the lowest standard deviation goes to relating information to the real world with a standard deviation score of 0.687.

From Table 3, data were collected on the challenges faced by ESL teachers in using ICT to promote HOTS. Teachers having no idea how to start in implementing ICT in their lessons has the highest mean at 3.08. On the other hand, poor internet connectivity has the lowest mean at just 1.70. For standard deviation, the difficulty for teachers to adapt to the new focus on

ICT in promoting HOTS has the lowest standard deviation at 0.526. Poor internet connectivity has the highest standard deviation at 0.758 while lack in ICT skills and the lack of technology guidance, as well as the learning of HOTS without ICT, have a tied score at second-highest, with a standard deviation at 0.716.

DISCUSSIONS

The total population of ESL teachers cannot be precisely measured in this study but the findings from this study were able to provide an accurate representation of the current situation. The ESL teachers reported that they are aware of the importance of ICT but face difficulties implementing them into their classes. In short, teachers are still not well adept at adapting their pedagogical practices into HOTS focused practices via ICT.

The results of the questionnaires show

Table 2

Types of HOTS activities conducted by ESL teachers via ICT

Using ICT to promote HOTS activities	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Case study	40	2	5	3.30	0.883
Brainstorming	40	1	4	2.28	0.816
Interactive lectures	40	1	5	2.75	0.981
Problem solving	40	1	4	2.55	0.815
Problem based learning (PBL)	40	2	5	3.05	0.846
Higher level questions	40	1	4	2.80	0.723
Reflection experience	40	1	5	2.28	0.847
Oral presentation	40	1	4	2.30	0.758
Group activity	40	1	4	2.15	0.770
Idea exploration	40	1	4	2.55	0.815
Sequence questions	40	1	4	2.55	0.876
Engage thinking beyond reading	40	1	4	2.78	0.733
Formulating hypothesis	40	2	5	3.18	0.874
Analyse critically	40	1	5	3.00	0.784
Synthesise information	40	2	5	3.18	0.712
Analyse functionally	40	1	4	2.90	0.841
Evaluate info	40	2	5	2.95	0.783
Creative thinking	40	1	4	2.50	0.751
Apply knowledge in new situations	40	1	4	2.37	0.774
Complete multifaceted tasks	40	1	5	2.47	0.816
Demonstrating creative thinking rewards	40	1	4	2.30	0.823
Formulate hypothesis rewards	40	1	5	2.83	0.813
Synthesis info rewards	40	1	5	2.78	0.920
Relate information to real world	40	1	4	2.70	0.687
Apply new skills in new contexts	40	1	5	2.95	0.714
Draw inferences	40	1	5	2.85	0.921
Answer assigned tasks	40	1	5	2.77	0.862
Engage guest speakers	40	1	5	3.32	0.917
Challenge existing beliefs	40	2	5	3.35	0.802
Explain solution process	40	1	5	2.98	0.733

Notes: 1 = Strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Not sure, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree

Table 3

Types of challenges encountered by ESL teachers in promoting HOTS via ICT

Challenges in using ICT to promote HOTS	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lack ICT skills	40	2	4	3.00	0.716
Lack technology guidance	40	2	4	2.88	0.516
ICT rapidly changing	40	1	3	1.83	0.712
Difficult to adapt	40	2	4	2.93	0.526
Poor internet connectivity	40	1	3	1.70	0.758
Requires extra time and effort	40	1	3	2.08	0.572
Difficulty in using software	40	1	3	2.05	0.639
HOTS learning without ICT	40	1	4	2.72	0.716
No idea how to start	40	2	4	3.08	0.616
Influenced by friends	40	2	4	2.78	0.660

Notes: 1 = Strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Not sure, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree

that ICT tools enable HOT activities to be effectively conducted in the classroom. A desktop application and presentation software are commonly used by teachers. Desktop applications and presentation software are both easy to use and easily accessible in schools as these applications are provided by most schools. ESL teachers acknowledge the importance of these ICT tools as shown from the results collected with the majority of ESL teachers using them frequently to promote HOT activities. This discovery is in line with Wastiau et al.'s (2013) study which found that teachers had positive views on the benefits of ICT utilisation in schools. These ICT tools are able to create more entertaining and attractive classes for students, with the added ubiquity of inserting videos and related graphics.

Among the various HOT activities, group activities are the most popular HOT activities being conducted by teachers in the classroom. Activities in groups enable students to actively analyse, evaluate and create information independently as each student plays a part in completing the group activities. Each student is given a specific role in group activities. From the results collected, ESL teachers prefer to conduct group activities and brainstorming activities as these classroom activities promote active learning, providing students with ample opportunities to actively acquire information by searching answers for themselves. This finding is supported by Nguyen and Nguyen's (2017) who discovered that the explicit instruction of HOTS in the learning and assessment improved students' learning of linguistics. While ESL teachers in the study agreed with conducting group and brainstorming activities, many HOT activities were left unexplored. Engaging the guest speakers or challenging existing

beliefs are rarely being conducted by the ESL teachers, which means they are rarely prioritized as preferred HOT activities. This finding also relates to the results on the types of challenges by ESL teachers in promoting HOTS via ICT from Table 3, with many ESL teachers stressing that they have no idea where to start on HOT activities via ICT utilization. The data on the types of HOTS activities conducted by ESL teachers via ICT and the types of challenges encountered by ESL teachers in promoting HOTS via ICT from Table 2 and Table 3 concur with each other as ESL teachers have no idea where to start engaging students with guest speakers or encouraging students to challenge existing beliefs as these activities are rarely being explored in the education setting.

The internet is the most widely used ICT tool in the study and this supports the finding that ESL teachers are aware of the ICT's significance in expanding their teaching efficiency. As the internet has numerous uses such as for search engines and connecting with the world through social media, ESL teachers are able to easily recognize its utility even in classroom settings. The ESL teachers do not face any difficulty in using the internet as they are only limited to a poor internet connection as the main challenge. ESL teachers also do not require much guidance to use the internet in teaching as the application is easy to use and information is obtained with simple clicks. This scenario reinforces the fact that internet is the most widely used ICT tool by ESL teachers as it is both easy

to use and does not require much guidance from other ESL teachers, with most ESL teachers already using the application, they are positively influenced by their peers to use the internet. This data is in line with numerous studies, mainly Ali (2012) and Yee et. al.'s (2015) study which advocated that learning in schools could be augmented through the power of ICT. Lorenzo's (2016) study on the effectiveness of the computer and the internet in public high schools also supported the findings in this study. Lorenzo (2016) found that integrating ICT in education promoted classroom learning and instruction by enabling wide access to additional information. The results collected support Lorenzo's (2016) findings as ESL teachers commonly use the internet to promote active learning and discussion, thanks to the application's ability to provide border-less information from all around the world. As there are various contexts globally that incite students' interest, the internet is a suitable platform for teachers to use in classroom settings to promote HOTS.

The data in this study indicated that ESL teachers only implemented ICT in their classes sparingly. Most of the respondents answered 'Not sure' about their usage of ICT to promote HOTS. Examples from the results collected include, the ESL teachers answered mostly 'Not sure' for conducting activities to challenge existing beliefs and activities on synthesizing information. Case studies and problem-based learning are both not commonly conducted in the classroom environment, as shown by the ESL teachers in the study who answered that

they are not sure whether they can conduct these activities or whether they can or the ways to use ICT to promote these activities effectively. This is mainly due to the fact they were not clear on the utility of ICT and their advantages. This discovery is in line with Ganapathy et al.'s (2016) study which found that ESL lecturers faced challenges that had to be urgently addressed in order to facilitate learning via ICT integration as a supplementary tool in promoting HOTS. While both Ganapathy et al. (2017) and Lorenzo's (2016) study showed the numerous challenges bound with conducting HOT activities via ICT utilisation, this study is significant in showing specifically what types of HOT activities which ESL teachers are uncomfortable with. Case studies, problem-based learning and challenging existing beliefs are among the activities avoided by ESL teachers to promote in the ESL classroom, especially when they struggle to utilise ICT applications to assist them in these activities.

Most of the ESL teachers responded that logistics is an issue for the utilisation of ICT in promoting HOTS in schools, mainly due to poor internet connectivity. A mean score of 1.70 was obtained from the study as most teachers agreed that terrible internet connectivity restricted their ability to utilize ICT to promote HOTS. As internet connection is necessary for connecting to social media, search engines and online software, the unreliable internet connection in schools proved to be a significant hindrance to ESL teachers who attempted to promote HOTS via ICT.

From the study, the main challenge of promoting HOTS via ICT is found to be logistic challenges. This is supported by Sicilia's (2005) study, which found that the difficulty to access the computers and poor quality of resources were major hindrances to ICT utilisation in schools. The results of this study concur with Sicilia's (2005) study as ESL teachers commented that they have to move from the class into the ICT laboratories. Additional time is also needed to line the students and prepare them to enter the ICT laboratories. These drawbacks are significant, therefore the ESL teachers opted not to use ICT applications due to logistic challenges.

CONCLUSION

In short, while teachers mentioned that they were aware of the importance of ICT in promoting HOTS, they still needed to update their HOTS pedagogical practices via ICT so they were able to effectively teach HOTS lessons in schools. Wheeliham (2011) advocated that creativity and innovation were the keys to success in today's modern world. Challenges are inevitable when teachers try to incorporate HOTS via ICT tools. Among the challenges faced by teachers included lack of ICT skills, the difficulty of using certain ICT software and the rapidly changing nature of ICT resulted in difficulties in coping with ICT. Bingimlas (2009) proposed that teacher's lack of competence and lack of access to resources were major setbacks for integrating ICT into science education. This study further explores the field and

confirmed that ESL teachers do indeed face challenges in logistics and personal skills when attempting to integrate ICT into their pedagogical practices. The study also specifies on the types of specific challenges encountered by ESL teachers in using ICT to promote HOTS and also the various HOT activities which are avoided by ESL teachers because of certain restrictions, such as requiring further exploration; an example would be challenging existing beliefs, as ESL teachers in the past only conducted the chalk and talk method, and students were never given sufficient opportunities to ask and actively obtain information. They were only passive receivers of what was taught to them.

However, the power of ICT enables the active creation and usage of information among both students and teachers alike. It can be concluded that the acquisition of HOTS can be better taught by teachers who possess effective HOT pedagogical practices via ICT as even the ESL teachers themselves affirmed the importance of ICT though they are discouraged by the various challenges bound with the utilization.

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Case Study

Relevance of Modality Markers in Translating from Spanish into English: A Case Study of *Los Intereses Creados*

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ABSTRACT

The function of modality is to express the degree of the intrinsic and extrinsic assessment and judgement of a speaker or writer in terms of truth-value in propositions. One of the branches of translation studies is pure descriptive translation studies, which can be a product-oriented, function-oriented, or process-oriented. This study is product-oriented in that it examines descriptively an existing translation. This paper is a case study of Jacinto Benavente's drama, entitled *"Los Intereses Creados"*. The study was done qualitatively and quantitatively to describe the relevance and translatability of modality markers from Spanish into English. The investigation was done in a hyponym of literary translation, drama. Both source text and target text were wholly read. The data related to modality were identified, collected, and analysed. The analyses were carried out, following Toolan's theory of modality. The analyses revealed that the English target text used more modality markers than the Spanish source text. The research revealed also that the frequency and infrequency of modality were more determined by language peculiarities and norms than by the translator; it indicates that the peculiarities and norms of both Spanish and English languages are the determinants of the translation procedures of modality.

Keywords: Modalities, norms, peculiarities, shifts, translation

INTRODUCTION

Translation has undergone a lot of stages and it has become an independent discipline in the 20th century due to the paper presented by Holmes (2000), entitled "The Name and Nature of Translation Studies." A translation is a discipline that categorizes itself into scientific, legal, computational or literary

translation. Newmark (1983) illustrated that translation dealt with two elements: the invariant element (the information) and the variant element (the communicative and associative elements).

Vinay (1996) stated that the problem of translation was a problem of thinking because the ways people think were different from one language to another. That is why it is necessary to distinguish between translation errors and purely grammatical (or stylistic) errors in the target text. Wilss (1996) believed that translation was "an intelligent activity" which was not inborn but acquired through the suitable learning process. Its problem solving requires that each problem is given specific consideration and capacity. Catford (1965) defined translation as a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another. He was of the opinion that translation and linguistics were interrelated. He believed that translation theory must depend on general linguistic theory.

However, translation literature has fallen short of studying deeply meaning and linguistic aspects, which can be determined by language peculiarities. This is because the main problems of translation are problems related to meaning gain and meaning loss. Therefore, the aims of this paper are to investigate and specify language peculiarities that determine the occurrence of modality in translating from Spanish into English. The objectives of this paper are:

    (a) to examine the translation of modalities;

    (b) to investigate language peculiarities and language norms that determine the occurrences of modality from Spanish into English;

    (c) to evaluate the meaning loss and meaning gain in the translatability of modality.

The study in this paper follows Toolan's (1998) theory of modality. Due to the wide range of modalities, this study limits itself to expressive modality. The tested hypothesis of the researchers is that the translator's latitude may affect the meaning of modality in translation. Moreover, this study is significant in that the literature review on modality translation reveals that there is a gap of knowledge on the relevance of modality markers in drama translation and language peculiarities in translating from Spanish into English. It is also significant because it is expected to contribute to the translation field, and help translators, interpreters, linguists, and translation students to know how to identify the functionality of modality and to deal with the problems of modality translation from Spanish into English.

Literature Review

Drama Translation. Barbara and Crampton (1989) were of the opinion that the translation of drama needed to be done more closely with the production skills than the faithfulness to the original since it differentiated between readability and speakability. Basnett-McGuire (1985) considered the difficulty of translation

to be in the nature of the text in terms of linguistic features on which performability must depend.

Ferenčík (1970) stated that the evolution of literary works translation functions through objective factors outside the work *per se* like the time, language evolution, criterions, reader, others, and subjective factors inside the work itself like the author, translator, subject, level of literary quality, and others. Snell-Hornby (1997) discussed that semiotics had become necessary in the study of drama. It dealt with signs like icon (similarity between the icon and the object it represents), index (contextual connection or physical contiguity between sign and object), and symbol (the laws and cultural conventions that allowed the interpretation of the connection between sign and object.

El-Shiyab (1997) stated that translators could face serious problems in translating theatrical texts because they did not only contain linguistic, social, and cultural features but also paralinguistic ones. In theatre translation, paralinguistic features "have to be understood as if they were performed."

Modality. Owing to language differences and the linguistic systems of languages, translation studies has to focus on language functionality. According to Schäffner (1999) linguistic translation studies "were basically interested in the norms of the language systems. The linguistic units of the source language (SL) and target language (TL) were compared in order to set up mechanisms (in the sense of normative translation principles) for overcoming differences in language structures" during the translation activity in order to achieve the desired communication. Among the units of languages and translation, modality plays a big role because it is a meaning carrier. In the same vein, modality, Crystal and Davy (1969) pointed out, was a semantic grammatical aspect, which was not classified as a significant feature of a province, status, and genre; it only depended on "the suitability of form to subject matter", which made it be a stylistic means to achieve utterance goals. For Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), the function of modality was to express the attitude of the speaker towards the utterance, according to whether it was considered a fact, a belief, a necessity, and others. They argued that it was a language-specific expressive means in that every language had its own modal expressive markers.

However, Carter et al. (1997) stated that modality had to do with the relationship between the writer and the reader of the text. Moreover, Bell (1991) wrote that there was a difference between mood, modality and modulation. The mood is concerned with the relationships among subject, predicator, and complement. These relationships function in terms of social value and syntactic structure and communicative value. Modality is used to express a communicator's opinion in terms of probability or frequency, whereas modulation is used to express proposals rather than propositions.

English modal auxiliaries are can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would, must,

ought to, used to, need, and dare (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1985). However, Halliday and Natthiessen (2004) pointed out that modality dealt with the speaker's judgement, or request of the judgement of the listener, on the status of what was being said. It can be characterized by 'indeterminacy', which is related to the nature of the systems. They classify modality into probability, usuality, obligation, and inclination. The orientation of modality can be subjective, objective, explicit, or implicit; the value of modality can be either high or low and the polarity of modality can be either direct or transferred. Moreover, Depraetera and Reed (2006) argued that English modality embodied a range of semantic notions such as ability, possibility, hypotheticality, obligation, and imperative meaning, which played a semantic impact on the speaker or the addressee in an utterance.

Toolan (1998), classified modality into two. First is expressing modality, which can be either verbs or adverbs. It can express (a) probability (certainly, likely, belief, will, may, can, obvious); (b) obligation (should, must need to); (c) willingness (would, will); and (d) usuality (always, never, rarely, occasionally, often). Their function is to qualify the communicative strength and weakness of the speaker's utterances and reveal the speaker's attitude and judgements. Second is metaphorized or advanced modality, which is a kind of modality which is different from the conventional modal expressions. Saeed (2003) categorized modality into (a) epistemic modality and (b) deontic modality. In the former, the speaker

signalled degrees of knowledge, whereas, in the latter, the speaker expressed his attitude to social factors of obligation, responsibility and permission.

Spanish modality uses modal markers like *poder, saber, deber, hay que, soler, tener que* to express 'various shades of meaning like possibility and suggestions, speculations, obligation, probability or supposition (Butt & Benjamin, 2004; Kattan-Ibarra & Pountain, 2003, Muñoz & Thacker, 2006).

Salazar-Garcia (2018) pointed out that epistemic contents intervened at the higher layers, whereas deontic and facultative contents had a lower scope. Lavid et al. (2016) studied the annotation of modality from the functional/semantic perspective in terms of commonalities shared between English and Spanish and the syntactic perspective in terms of language-specific preferences. They pointed out that there were high inter-annotator agreement rates for both the coarser functional-semantic tags as well as for the more specific subtypes. Comparing Spanish and French, Laca (2016) studied epistemic modality and perfect morphology; she pointed out that the semantic contrast between a deictic tense (the present) and an anaphoric tense (the imperfect) evidenced by epistemic modals demonstrated that tense morphology on modals was interpretable.

METHODS

The study of this paper followed Toolan's theory (1998) of expressive modality. The text used in this study as an instrument of the

study was a hyponym of literature, drama. The text was chosen to carry out this study for convenience; it was expected to be useful in other genres. The source text (ST) was a play by Jacinto Benavente, entitled "Los Intereses Creados". It was translated "The Bonds of Interest" by J.G. Underhill and published by Frederick Ungar Publishing Co, New York (1967).

The corpus is justified in that it was written by a Nobel Prize winner for literature in 1922, who is considered the foremost Spanish dramatist of the 20th century. The translator, John Garrett Underhill is an American author and stage producer who has translated the works of Jacinto Benavente. The publisher is Frederick Ungar Publishing Company founded in 1940 and has published over 2,000 titles.

This study was both quantitative and qualitative and it was done manually for convenience. In doing so, the original and translated texts were wholly read, the modality markers were identified and collected. Then, the analyses were carried out in the source text and the target text (TT), following the systematic classification of expressive modalities according to Toolan's theory. That is, first, probability modality was identified, collected, and analyzed; secondly, the modality of obligation was identified, collected and analyzed; third, the modality of willingness was identified, collected and analyzed; fourthly, the modality of usuality was identified, collected and analyzed. Some examples related to the problems of transiting expressive modalities from

Spanish into English would be analyzed and discussed; the analyzed occurrences of the ST would be underlined, whereas the analyzed occurrences of the TT would be underlined and bolded. The source language (SL) is Spanish and the target language (TL) is English. Due to the limitation of space, the pages of similar occurrences will be given in each discussion category.

RESULTS

Table 1 to 4 show the results of the frequency and infrequency of expressive modality. The results reveal that the expressive modality is used more frequently in the target text than in the source text due to language peculiarities and norms, which are fully discussed in the discussion of this paper.

DISCUSSIONS

Following Toolan (1998), expressing modality is a way by which a speaker or writer can express their attitude and judgement in terms of probability, obligation, willingness and usuality by using modal markers.

Probability

In this category, although there is some literal translation as far as a modality of probability is concerned, more modal markers of probability are found to be used in the TT than in the ST due to some language peculiarities, for example:

> *No lo diréis por mí, que he visto amanecer muchas veces cuando no tenía donde acostarme.* (p. 36).

Table 1
Modality of probability

Spanish language	Occurrence frequency	English language	Occurrence frequency
Poder	**28**	Can	**58**
Poder	**5**	Could	**19**
Future suffixe *(ré, ras, rá, remos, réis, ràn)*	**87**	Will	**150**
Conditional	**10**	Would	**59**
Future suffix	**30**	Shall	**50**
Poder	**11**	May	**13**
Poder	**4**	Might	**9**
None	**None**	Believe	**None**
None	**None**	Obvious	**None**
None	**None**	Certainly	**3**
None	**None**	Likely	**None**
None	**None**	Perhaps	**2**

Table 2
Modality of obligation

Spanish language	Occurrence frequency	English language	Occurrence frequency
Deber / haber de	**12**	Should	**30**
Deber / haber de	**11**	Must	**28**
None	**None**	Need to	**None**

Table 3
Modality of willingness

Spanish language	Occurrence frequency	English language	Occurrence frequency
Future suffixe *(ré, ras, rá, remos, réis, ràn)*	**None**	Will	**11**
Conditional	**None**	Would	**7**

Table 4
Modality of usuality

Spanish language	Occurrence frequency	English language	Occurrence frequency
Siempre	**6**	Always	**19**
Nunca	**27**	Never	**31**
None	**None**	Rarely	**None**
Nunca	**1**	Hardly	**1**
None	**None**	Occasionally	**None**
Más veces	**1**	Often	**1**

That **cannot** truthfully be said of me. I have often seen the sunrise when I had no place to lay my head. (p.37).

In the above extracts, no modal marker is used in the source extract, whereas a modal marker of probability, 'can', is used in the target extract. The verb, *diréis*, is in the simple future. But in the target text, a modal auxiliary is used before a verb in the passive voice. The reader is left to infer the aspect of probability in the source extract, whereas, in the target extract, the reader understands concretely that there is an aspect of probability by the use of 'can'. The translation procedure used here is modulation in that there is a shift of perception from abstractness to concreteness and from active voice to passive voice. These occurrences are found to occur on pages 16, 20, 46, 60, 80, 84, 92, 94, 100, 104, 118, 120, 136, 144, 154, 156, 158, 162, 166, 132, 146, and 156 of the ST, which correspond to pages 17, 21, 47, 61, 81, 85, 93, 95, 101, 105, 119, 121, 137, 145, 155, 157, 159, 163, 167, 133, 147, and 157 of the TT.

Sometimes, the category of modulation is not from abstractness to concreteness; it can be by shifting the point of view, for example:

No he de volver a casa de mi padre después de su acción horrible. (p. 132).

I **can** never go back to my father's house - not after the horrible thing which he did last night. (p. 133).

In the above extracts, *he de* is used in the source extract; it is from *haber de*. *Haber de* in Spanish is used to express obligation and imperative mood, which can be translated into English with having to and will have to (Kattán-Ibarra, 2003). However, in the TT, a modal marker of probability, 'can', is used. The translation procedure used here is modulation; in this aspect, there is a shift of point of view in that the translator shifts from an obligation modality to a modality of probability. The use of 'can' is because of the source sentence, *no he de volver a casa de mi padre después de su acción horrible* can also sound Spanish if it is translated as, '*no puedo volver a casa de mi padre después de su acción horrible.*' These cases are found to occur also in other places on pages 132, 146, 148, and 156 of the ST, which correspond to pages 147, 149, and 157 of the TT. Moreover, "*no he de volver a casa*" can be translated as "I will not have to go back to my father's house". Therefore, the modulation procedure is not required by the SL and TL peculiarities. However, the decision of the translator is optional since it is not required by the peculiarities of the SL and TL.

'May' is another marker of probability. It is found that it is more used in the TT than in the ST, for example:

Y yo también he de beber, aunque sea atrevimiento. (p. 50).

And I too must drink, though it **may** seem presumtuous. (p. 51).

In the above extracts, no modal marker is used in the source extract, whereas

a modal marker, 'may', is used in the target extract. In the source extract, the verb is in the subjunctive because it is preceded by subordinating conjunction that must be followed by a verb in the subjunctive. The use of the subjunctive gives a sense of abstract improbability and unlikeliness; the subjunctive tú is used in Spanish to express desires, doubts, the unknown, the abstract, and emotions, which the reader or listener infer abstractly. Unlike the source extract, there is a sense of probability and that aspect of probability is concretely expressed by using 'may' in the target extract. The translation procedure used by the translator is modulation in that the translator shifts from abstractness to concreteness and from the subjunctive mood to the indicative mood. Syntactically speaking, the subjunctive is required in the SL because of the use of the verb after the subordinating conjunction, '*aunque*'. In this case, no subjunctive mood is required in the SL. Therefore, the translator has respected the SL and TL specificity. This case of using the modal marker, 'may or might' in the target extract to replace some abstractness occurrences in the ST are also found to occur elsewhere in the texts on pages 47, 92 and 160 of the ST, which correspond to pages 49, 93 and 161 of the TT.

'Will' and 'shall' are other modal markers that are found to occur more in the TT than in the ST due to language peculiarities, for example:

Lo que he pensado es que tú has de hablar poco y desabrido, para

darte aires de persona de calidad ; de vez en cuando te permito que descargues algún golpe sobre mis costillas… (p. 20)

The best thing, it seems to me, **will** be for you to talk as little as possible, but be very impressive when you do so and put on the airs of a gentleman of quality. Then, from time to time, I **will** let you strike me across the back. (p. 21)

In the above extracts, no modal marker is used in the source extract, whereas a modal marker, 'will', is used in the target extract. The verbs in the source extracts, *es* from *ser* and *permito* from *permitir* are in the simple present and they are not preceded by any modal marker; the reader is left to infer abstractly the aspect of probability. However, in the target extract, the modal marker, 'will', is used before the verbs, be and let, which concretely indicates the aspect of probability. The translation procedure used by the translator is modulation. These cases are found to occur elsewhere in the texts on pages 24, 26, 28, 30, 38, 46, 48, 50, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64, 66, 68, 58, 96, 98, 108, 114, 116, 118, 122, 128, 130, 132, 138, 142, 146, 150, 152, 154, 164, 166, and 168 of the ST, which correspond to pages 25, 27, 29, 31, 39, 47, 49, 51, 57, 59, 61, 63, 65, 67, 69, 59, 97, 99, 109, 115, 117, 119, 123, 129, 131, 133, 139, 143, 147, 151, 153, 155, 165, 167, and 169 of the TT. These cases are also found to occur elsewhere with 'would' in the texts on pages 22, 44, 74, 118, 124, 126, 149,

156, and 160 of the ST, which correspond to pages 23, 45, 75, 119, 125, 127, 150, 157 and 161 of the TT.

Apart from abstractness, another aspect of modulation is found to determine the translation of probability modality, for example:

> *¡Esto ha de ser mi ruina! Con tan gran señor en mi casa.* (p. 40).

> This **will** be the ruin of me ! With such a dignitary stopping in my house. (p. 41).

In the above extracts, a modal marker of obligation is used in the source extract, whereas in the target extract a modal marker of probability is used. In the source extract the modal marker, *ha de* is from the verb *haber de* comes is used before the verb, *ser*; it means must and indicates obligation. Unlike the source extract, a modal marker, will is used before the verb, 'be' to express probability. The translation procedure used here is modulation in that the translator shifts from one category of modality to another category with a different point of view. Such cases are found to occur elsewhere in the texts on pages 20, 26, 28. 31, 38, 58, 80, 116, 138, 146, 150,154, 160, and 164 of the ST, which correspond to pages 21, 27, 29, 32, 39, 59, 81, 117, 139, 147, 151, 155, 161, and 165 of the TT. Semantically speaking, the sentence in the TT can be translated literally as 'this has to be my ruin!' Therefore, the modulation used by the translator is optional because it is not required by the TL peculiarities. The following is another example:

> *Debió advertir al señor Capitain. El le hubiera acompañado gustoso.* (p. 106).

> He out, certainly, to have notified the Captain. He **would** have been delighted to have gone with him. (p. 107).

In the above extracts, no modal marker of probability is used, whereas a modal marker of probability is used in the target extract. In the source extract, the verb, *hubiera acompañado gustoso*, is in the past perfect subjunctive, which makes the reader infer abstractly the probability aspect. In the target extract a modal marker of probability, 'would', and is used; it concretely indicates to the reader the probability aspect. Such cases are found to occur elsewhere in the ST on pages 20, 30, 34, 56, 60, 64, 68, 90, 92, 94, 106, and 115, which correspond to pages 21, 31, 35, 57, 61, 65, 69, 91, 93, 95, 107, and 117 of the TT. In this case, the translator has used modulation by replacing the subjunctive mood with the conditional mood in the TT; this kind of modulation is obligatory because it is required by the TL peculiarities.

'Shall' is also a probability marker that is found to occur more in the TT than in the ST due to language norms and peculiarities, for example:

> *Corre y separa a tu hija de ese hombre, y no la permitas que baile con él ni que vuelva a escucharle en su vida.* (p. 84).

Run and separate your daughter from this man and never permit her to dance with him again, no, nor to listen to him, so long as she **shall** live. (p. 85).

In the above extracts, no modal marker is used in the source extract to indicate probability, whereas a modal marker is used in the target extract to express probability. In the source extract, the reader is left to infer abstractly the probability aspect. However, in the target extract, a modal marker, 'shall', is used, which make the reader see and comprehend the aspect of probability concretely through the modal marker, 'shall'. The translation procedure used in this case is modulation in that the translator shifts from abstractedness to concreteness. This case is found to occur elsewhere in the texts on pages 102, 120, 126, 144, and 160 of the ST, which correspond to pages 103, 121, 127, 145, and 161 of the TT. In this case, modulation is optional in that it is not required by the TL peculiarities; the sentence can be translated literally as, 'no, nor to listen to him for all of her life.' This indicates that the translator uses, sometimes, oblique translation techniques unnecessarily.

It is also found that 'shall' is sometimes modulated from *haber de* and *poder*, for example:

Y yo <u>he de</u> traer a toda mi compañía con antorchas y luminarias. (p.50).

I **shall** bring my whole company with torches and festival lights. (p. 51).

In the aforesaid extracts, a modal marker of obligation is used in the source extract, whereas in the target extract a modal marker of probability is used. In the source extract, *he de* is from *haber de*, which indicates that obligation is used before the verb. Nevertheless, in the target extract, a modal marker of probability, shall, is used. In this case, the translator has used a modulation translation procedure in that the translator shifts from the obligation to probability. This case is found to occur elsewhere in the texts on pages 58, 72, 102, 128, 130, 134, 148, 152, and 168 of the ST, which correspond to pages 59, 73, 103, 129, 131, 135, 149, 153, and 169 of the TT. In this case, modulation is optional in that it is not required by the TL peculiarities; the sentence can be translated literally as 'I have to bring my whole company with torches and festival lights.' This indicates that the translator uses, sometimes, oblique translation techniques unnecessarily.

'Certainly' is the last probability marker which is found to be used. It is found to occur only in the TT, for example:

Debió <u>advertir</u> al señor Capitán. (p. 106).

He ought, **certainly**, to have notified the Captain. (p.107).

In the above extracts, there is no probability modality in the source extract, whereas in the target extract there is a modality marker of probability, 'certainly'. The use of the modal marker of probability marker in the target extract is optional in

that it is not determined by language norms and peculiarities. The sentence can sound English if it is translated as 'he ought to have notified the Captain.' This case is found to occur elsewhere in the texts on pages 155, and 162 of the ST, which correspond to pages 155 and 163 of the TT.

Obligation

'Should' is one of the modal markers of obligation; it is found that it is more used in the TT than in the ST, for example:

> *El autor sólo pide que aniñéis cuanto sea posible vuestro espíritu.* (p. 14).

> He asks only that you **should** be as young in spirit as possible. (p. 15).

In the above extracts, no modal marker is used in the source extract, whereas a modal marker is used in the target extract. In the source extract the verb, *aniñéis* is in the present subjunctive, and the reader must infer the obligation abstractly and contextually. Nevertheless, in the target extract, the modal marker of obligation 'should' indicates the modal aspect of obligation concretely. But like the case in the ST, the subjunctive can be used in the TT to express a hypothetical idea. The translation procedure used here in this category is modulation in that the translator moves from abstractness to concreteness. This case occur elsewhere on the texts on pages 18, 24, 30, 40, 52, 56, 70, 74, 76, 92, 114, 136, 150, 152, 156, and 162 of the ST, which correspond to pages 19, 25, 31, 41, 53, 57,

71, 75, 77, 93, 115, 137, 151, 153, 157 and 163 of the TT. In this case, modulation is optional in that it is not required by the TL peculiarities; the sentence can be translated literally as 'he asks only that you be as young in spirit as possible.' This indicates that the translator uses, sometimes, oblique translation techniques unnecessarily.

'Must' is another modal marker of obligation that is found to be more used in the TT than in the ST, for example:

> *¡En qué poco te estimas! Pues qué, un hombre por sí, nada vale?* (p. 24).

> How low an opinion you **must** have of yourself! Is a man in himself, then, worth nothing? (p. 25).

In the above extracts, there is no modal marker in the source extract, whereas in the target extract, a modal marker, must is used before the verb, 'have' to express obligation. In the source extract, the reader is left to infer the modal aspect abstractly. In the target extract, the reader directly can know that the clause contains an obligation by reading the modal marker of obligation, 'must'. The translation procedure used to translate this aspect is modulation because of the translator shifts from abstractness to obligation. This occurrence is found to occur elsewhere in the texts on pages 32, 46, 48, 56, 74, 84, 88, 94, 98, 100, 112, 126, and 134 of the ST, which correspond to pages 33, 47, 49, 57, 75, 85, 89, 95, 99, 101, 113, 127, and 135 of the TT. In this case, modulation is optional in that it is not required by

the TL peculiarities; the sentence can be translated literally as, 'how low an opinion you have of yourself!' This indicates that the translator uses, sometimes, oblique translation techniques unnecessarily.

Willingness

The markers of willingness that are found to occur in the texts are 'will' and 'would'. They are found to occur more in the TT than in the ST, for example :

> *De vez en cuando te permito que descargues algún golpe sobre mis costillas…* (p. 20).

> Then from time to time, I **will** let you strike me across the back. (p. 21).

In the above extracts, no modal marker is used in the source extract, whereas a modal marker is used in the target extract. In the source extract, the verb is in the present; the willingness aspect is not used and the reader has to infer that abstractly. Nevertheless, in the target extract, the modal marker, 'will', is used to express willingness. Normally 'will' come after the pronouns, you, he, she, it, and they when it expresses probability. But when it is used with the pronoun I and the pronoun we, it expresses willingness. This case is found to occur elsewhere in the texts on pages 20, 24, 30, 42, 96, 114, 150, and 154 of the ST, which correspond to pages 21, 25, 31, 43, 97, 115, 151, and 155 of the TT. In this case, the modal auxiliary is required in the TL because it indicates that the subject

will do an action willingly. Therefore, the modulation is obligatory.

'Would' is another marker of willingness, which is found to occur more in the TT than in the ST, for example :

> *Yo sé de vuestra historia mil notables sucesos que, referidos, me asegurarian toda vuestra confianza…* (p. 68).

> I am acquainted with a thousand notable events of your history, which, if they were told, **would** alone be sufficient to assure me of your attention… (p. 69).

In the above extracts, the verb, *asegurarian* is in the conditional tense; the conditional suffix in Spanish has two meanings, (a) conditional meaning and (b) a willingness modal aspect. Like the conditional suffix in Spanish, the modal marker, 'would', can be used to express both conditionality and willingness modality. The translation procedure used in this aspect by the translator is literal translation procedure in that the conditional tense in Spanish is translated with 'would' plus a verb. This case is found to be used elsewhere in texts on pages 70, 78, 80, 108, 126, 144, 148, 152, 158, and 162 of the ST, which correspond to pages 71, 79, 81, 109, 127, 145, 149, 153, 159, and 163 of the TT.

Usuality

The markers of usuality, which indicate how frequently the proposition is true, are found to occur on the texts. They are: ever, never,

always, perhaps, often, and rarely. They are found to occur more in the TT than in the ST because of language norms and peculiarities, for example:

> *yo, no; pero mi señor, como tan señor, conoce a cuantos poetas existen y <u>existieron</u>, siempre que sean dignos de ese nombre.* (p. 42).

> No, I do not; but my master, being such a great gentleman, knows all the poets who exist or who **ever** did exist, provided always that they were worthy of the name. (p. 43).

In the above extracts, no modal marker is used in the source extract, whereas in the target extract a modal marker of usuality is used. In the source extract, the verb, *existieron* from *existir* is not preceded by any modal marker, which makes the reader infer abstractively the usuality aspect. However, in the target extract, a modal marker of usuality is concretely expressed by the modal marker, ever. The translation procedure used by the translator is modulation in that he shifts from abstractness to concreteness. This case is found to occur elsewhere in the texts on pages 42, 44, 52, 54, 62, 70, 78, 90, 92, 104, 120, 124, 126, 152, 154, and 162 of the ST, which correspond to pages 43, 45. 53, 55, 63, 71, 79, 91, 93, 105, 121, 125, 127, 153, 155, and 163 of the TT. In this case, modulation is optional in that it is not required by the TL peculiarities; the sentence can be translated literally as, '… all the poets who exist or who existed.'

This indicates that the translator uses, sometimes, oblique translation techniques unnecessarily.

'Never' is a marker of usuality, which is found to be used more on the TT than in the ST, for example :

> *El mundo está ya viejo y chochea ; el Arte <u>no</u> se resigna a envejecer, y por parecer niño finge balbuceos…* (p. 16).

> The world has grown old, but art **never** can recocile itself to growing old, and so, to seem young again, it descends to thses fripperies. (p. 17).

In the above extracts, a negative particle, 'no' is used in the source extract, whereas in the target extract a modal marker, 'never', is used to express modality of usuality. The translation procedure used here is modulation in that the translator shifts from negativeness to a negative modal aspect of usuality. This case is found to occur elsewhere in the texts on pages, 30, 40, 58, 84, 90, 110, 116, 118, 120, 126, 130, 132, 138, 150, and 162 of the ST, which correspond to pages 31, 41, 59, 85, 91, 111, 117, 119, 121, 127, 131, 133, 139, and 163 of the TT. In this case, modulation is optional in that it is not required by the TL peculiarities; the sentence can be translated literally as, 'the world has grown old, but art cannot reconcile itself to growing old…' This indicates that the translator uses, sometimes, oblique translation techniques unnecessarily.

'Always' is a modal marker of usuality, which is found to occur more in the TT than in the ST, for example:

> *Ponte en mis manos, que nada conviene tanto a un hombre como llevar a su lado quien haga notar sus méritos…* (p. 20).

> There is nothing so useful to a man as to have someone always at his heels to point out his merits… (p. 21).

In the above extracts, no modal marker of usuality is used in the source extract, whereas in the target extract a modal marker of usuality, 'always', is used. The reader in the source extract is left to infer the modality aspect abstractively. However, in the target extract, the reader can concretely see the modality aspect, expressed by the modal marker of usuality, 'always'. The translation procedure used here is also modulation in that the translator shifts from abstractness to concreteness. This aspect is found to occur elsewhere in the texts on pages 26, 36, 54, and 96 of the ST, which correspond to pages 27, 37, 55, and 97 of the TT. In this case, modulation is optional in that it is not required by the TL peculiarities; the sentence can be translated literally as, '*there is nothing so useful to a man as to have someone at his heels to point out his merits….*' This indicates that translator uses, sometimes, oblique translation techniques unnecessarily.

CONCLUSION

The research on modality markers from Spanish into English carried out in a hyponym of literature, drama reveals that the English language is characterized by using more expressive modality marker than the Spanish language. It is found that language peculiarities and norms play a big role in the translatability of Spanish modality into English. Abstractness is found to affect modalities in Spanish, whereas concreteness and norms preference are found to enhance modality in English. These language peculiarities and norms are found to be determinants of translation procedures; the research reveals that the translation procedures that function in translating expressive modality are literal translation procedure and modulation translation procedure, which are determined by language peculiarities and language preference norms, which give the translator some options in decision-making. English expressive modal occurrences are found to be modulated from the Spanish occurrences of abstractness. Sometimes, the Spanish obligation modality, *haber de* is modulated to the English modal marker of probability, 'shall'; the Spanish negative particle, 'no' is modulated to the English modal marker of frequency, 'never' in cases related to language peculiarities and norms. Modality of probability is affected more in the ST by the SL peculiarity of abstractness; it is enhanced more in the TT than in the ST because of the peculiarity of concreteness and norms of preference to demonstrate attitude and judgement. The same happens

with the other modality markers of obligation, willingness, and usuality. Due to those language peculiarities and norms, the research reveals that both literal translation and modulation are functional in the translatability of expressive modalities from Spanish into English. Expressive English modality is found to enhance more the expressive means of drama performativity. All in all, this study has been done on one co-hyponym of literature. However, the findings offer insights and recommend that other studies should be done on other drama translations and other text types for more concrete results.

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SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

Case Study

Conflict of Culture in Translation: A Case Study of AbdelrahmanMunif's Novel *Cities of Salt: Al-Teeh*

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ABSTRACT

Translation of culture-bound lexical items in texts has been uneasy task because languages differ from one culture to another and so not all linguistic items can be translated from the source language (SL) into the target language (TL). Sometimes translation may not meet the intent of the original author of a text. Translators, therefore, find themselves in conflict with the SL in a way that the speakers of the SL who have come across the translated text in the TL find faults in most of the translated text. This paper investigates the problems encountered when translating a text by a culturally different translator. The paper seeks to unearth the problems found in the translation of the novel, *Cities of Salt: Al-Teeh* which is written in Arabic Bedouin and translated into English by Peter Theroux, a native English speaker. Little research has been done on the effects of Bedouin culture on the quality of the translation of texts written in Bedouin dialect. To achieve its purpose, the study used a descriptive research design involving the adscription of culture-bound translated lexical items in the novel. Translated lexical items were purposively sampled focusing on culturally bound items. The data were then subjected to content analysis within the framework of Newmark's cultural domains. The results revealed that culture-bound lexical items had been mistranslated, failing to attain intended meaning. The findings of this study could be used to improve the quality of the translation of culture-bound lexical items from SL to TL.

Keywords: Bedouin culturally-bound expressions, Peter Theroux, source language, target language, translation

INTRODUCTION

Translation is the process through which a text is reproduced from a source language to a target language by a translator who should be bilingual and bicultural as well. What this means is that the translator must

not only be competent in both languages but must also be aware of the cultural connotations of the languages. This is because the translator is merely a message conveyor and is expected to maintain the stylistic features of the original text. The maintenance of stylistic features is for the purposes of conveying an equivalent message of the source text into the target language. This follows Newmark's (1988) argument that the translator's aim tends to be similar to that of the author's himself.

It is important to note that translation is not merely an exchange of words and meanings from one language to another but a communication process as well. This means that as the translator goes about his/her business, he/she must take into consideration the fact that he/she does not only match the words from SL to TL but is under obligation to communicate as much as possible the cultural connotations associated with the SL text. This is in order that different cultures are brought together so that the native speakers of the TL may have a taste of the cultural exchanges with the native speakers of the SL. This, therefore, means that the translator should observe equivalence in textual materials whenever he/she translates a text. This is based on the fact that translation is about the replacement of the textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language (Catford, 1965). Shunnaq's (1998) definition of translation is grounded on that of Catford's (1965). Shunnaq stated theorists of translation agreed that translation was the rendering of the same ideas from the source

language into the target language. Shunnaq concluded that the translator was both a text producer and receiver.

The conflict that the translators find themselves in is that sometimes they may not find it easy to translate the style, the lexical items and the associated cultural themes found in the source text. Ilyas (1989) explained that this was because languages differed in the areas of lexemes, grammar, phonology, graphology, as well as in their formal and contextual meaning. Therefore, much time has to be spent by the translator to produce a target language text (TLT) which should be as much as possible natural and genuine as the source language text (SLT). The overriding question, therefore, is whether it is possible to produce such a text. This paper seeks to address problems faced by translators particularly those who may not be aware of the knowledge of the culture that defines the source language. To identify problems faced by translators in their attempt to translate culture-bound lexical items, the paper was guided by the research question on the effects of cultural conflict on the quality of translation. A case study of the novel, *Cities of Salt: Al-Teeh* written in Bedouin dialect by Munif (1983) and translated into the target language, English, by Peter Theroux in 1987 was selected. The choice of this novel was based on the fact that it was translated by a translator with a different cultural background from that of the novelist, hence an expectation of cultural conflict in the translation. The choice of this novel was also guided by the observation that there are mistakes related to culture made by the translator and no such

study on the effects of cultural conflict on the quality of this work has been undertaken.

The findings of the research question are deemed important in three ways: first, they will present an avenue through which translators will reflect on the culturally-related lexical items associated with the culture of the original authors and cultural connotations of the source language. Second, they will provide a platform for further discussion of the appropriateness of translations of texts and bridge a gap between the target language and the source language. Third, the findings of this paper could as well spark an interest in re-translating the novel understudy, taking into consideration the suggestions from the discussions of this paper.

Literature Review

As discussed in the previous section, translation involves a reproduction of work from a source language into a target language by a translator who should be bilingual and bicultural as well. A translator, therefore, has to be competent in both the SL and the TL. Language competency is governed by some linguistic factors which are dependent on linguistic universals such as phonology, morphology, semantics and syntax. These universals may vary according to external factors such as the geographical location of the translators. The linguistic factor, dialect, as observed by Petyt (1980) can be viewed as distinctive linguistic features of a language used by a given group of people within a particular geographical location to communicate.

Dialects may differ in lexical, phonological or grammatical properties. Some scholars including Crystal (1992) had referred to a dialect as a variety of language. Bedouin dialect in which *Cities of Salt: Al-Teeh* is written is a subpart of the Jordanian Arabic different from Standard Arabic in terms of phonology, grammar and vocabulary. Following Crystal's (1992) observation on the difference between a language and a dialect, it is important to find out how a dialectal property of Bedouin affects the quality of the translation of the novel *Cities of Salt: Al-Teeh*into English.

It is worth noting also that every translated text originates as an expression of some contradiction between the transmitter's culture and the model reader's culture. The contradictory kind of translation, according to Farghal and Shunnaq (1999) is common in inter-lingual translation characterized by linguistic differences that may be attributed to cultural differences. As observed by Catford (1965) as well as Farghal and Shunnaq (1999), the translator's aim is to find out what is referred to as adequate translation equivalence. Adequate translation equivalence is an empirical phenomenon which can be discovered by comparing the source language text with the target language text (Baker, 1992). Therefore, the choice of a suitable equivalent in a given context depends on some linguistic aspects which include the dialect being translated as well as extra-linguistic factors (Baker, 1992). The case studies by Baker (1992), Catford (1965) as well as Farghal and Shunnaq (1999)

on translation equivalence, provide an invaluable resource to the current study as they highlight the underlying factors other than linguistic competence that affects the quality of works of translation. The study is informed to a great extent that mistranslation experienced in most translated texts are grounded on cultural differences in the writer of a text and the translator of the text.

A number of studies have been done on the effects of the cultural gap on the quality of translating culture-bound lexical items. These studies have also highlighted how the translators have been arriving at translation equivalents despite the cultural gaps. For instance, Al-Rikaby et al. (2018) posited that it became difficult to translate culture-bound terms and proper names into the target language. They attested this using Marlowe's play *Doctor Faustus* written in English and translated into Arabic. In their comparative analysis of the English version of the text and the translated version, they found that the transmitter used domestication and foreignisation of culture-bound terms and proper names to come up with translation equivalents. They argued that the transmitter also employed Newmark and Coilie's taxonomies in arriving at the equivalents. In support of the influence of culture on translation, Safarnejad et al. (2014) in their analysis of a translation of metaphors from Persian to English using a cognitive approach, argued that any kind of translation required an understanding of cultural contexts. Invaluable as the studies on cultural influence on the translation by Al-Rikaby et al. (2018) as well as Safarnejad

et al. (2014) are to the present one; a few contradictions are inevitable in the quality of the translation of *Cities of Salt: Al-Teeh* to the TL. This is based on the observation that there is always a culture gap among communities and this gap attributes to the outcome of a work of translation.

This paper, therefore, is aimed at identifying and discussing the problems facing translators in the course of translating texts with Bedouin idiomatic expressions as well as their terminology from Arabic into English specifically in Theroux's translation of Munif's (1983) novel; *Cities of salt: Al-Teeh*. The problematic issues are related to problems resulting from differences between Arabic and English cultures. The translator finds himself powerless in providing the appropriate cultural equivalents, especially when it comes to translating something of Bedouin culture-specific nature. Such cultural difficulties are discussed in this paper in relation to Theroux's translation and possible solutions are suggested to bridge the gap caused by cultural conflicts.

The art of translation has also been viewed by different quarters as a genuine reflection of the actual aspects of different civilizations. Culture has been the major point of contact between human beings since the very beginning of life. It is true, therefore, to say that many societies express culture through language making the relationship between culture and language symbiotic. Newmark (1988) classified culture under the following categories: ecological expressions which deal with the effect of environment on language; the

second category is the material culture that includes food, clothes, transport and others; the third category is a social culture which includes many activities related to the life of people. The fourth category includes organizations, customs, and concepts. Finally, the fifth category discusses gestures and habits. Adopted in this paper are five domains namely ecological, social culture, organizations (heritage), material culture and gesture and habits.

Theoretical Framework

The present study grounds itself on Newmark's (1988) strategies of translating cultural terms between two different languages. Table 1 summarizes Newmark's taxonomy which poses specific translation strategies and their corresponding features. Table 2 includes the number of items purposively selected and discussed for each of Newmark's domain.

Table 1
Newmark's (1988) taxonomy for cultural bound terms

Strategies	Feature/ Procedures
Transference	Transferring a SL term in a TL term
Naturalization	The SL word is adapted first Ito the normal pronunciation, then into the normal morphology of the TL
Cultural equivalent	A cultural word in the SL is replaced by with a TL one
Functional equivalent	Using a culture-neutral word
Descriptive equivalent	The meaning of the Bedouin expression or term is explained using several words
Componential analysis	Comparing a SL word with a TL one which has a similar meaning but is not a clear one-to-one equivalent
Synonymy	A near target language equivalent
Through-translation	Literal translation of common collocations, names of organization and components of compounds
Shifts or transpositions	A change in grammar from SL to TL
Modulation	Occurs when the message of the original text reproduced in conformity with the current norms of the TL.
Recognized translation	Using the official or the generally accepted translation of any institutional term
Compensation	Occurs when a loss in one part of a sentence is compensated in another one
Paraphrase	The meaning of a Bedouin term is explained in detail
Couplets	Combining two different procedures
Notes	Additional information is added to the translation

Table 2
The number of items described in the study

Newmark's cultural domains	Number of items described in this study for each domain
Ecological domain	Three items
Social culture	Two items
Organizations, customs, and religious ideas	Five items
Material culture	One item
Gestures and habits	Two items

METHODS

This study adopted the descriptive research design. The design involved the selection of the items to be investigated based on the content of the items which in this case were culturally based items. These items were then described and analyzed using a content analysis approach in order to draw conclusions and generalizations. This study was procedural: First, the researcher purposively marked the lexical items that are culturally bound in the translated version of the original text. Second, the marked items were subjected to content analysis in which case the researcher analysed the translation of the novel *Cities of Salt: Al-Teeh* and the intended equivalents. Lexical items from the translated text were then compared to those from the source text then thematically categorized under the five domains according to Newmark's (1988) categorization which are ecological; social culture; gesture and habits and organizations, material culture. The paper basically follows the following procedure in its analysis: identifying the problematic expressions, idioms, sentences or utterances with their translations as rendered by Theroux; comparing the intended meaning in the source text; proposing alternative translations for the given examples and finally analyzing them in terms of Newmark's five categories.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

According to the findings of this study, most lexical-bound expressions, Bedouin fixed expression, proverbs, and idioms in the novel *Cities of Salt: Al-Teeh* are either mistranslated because of the poor cultural background of the translator, or they are literally translated into English. The literal translation of expressions in this novel is found to result in meanings that are not context-based hence a failure to meet the original author's intended meaning by the translator. It is also obvious from the findings provided in this study that the principle of emotiveness in the original text is missed the English translated text. Findings in this study are categorised following Newmark's (1988) five domains of translation.

This paper analysed the data on the basis of Newmark's five domains in translating cultural expressions of two or more cultures. Through this, strategies or inconvenient translations of the source language expressions made by Theroux in accordance with the level of formality, mistranslations, and non-translated expressions and/or idioms are discussed.

It highlighted some examples of translated items purposively selected. An introduction to each category as well as illustrative examples is provided followed by an analysis together with their translation. A suggested translation is also presented if the situation necessitates. The judgment criterion for the translated items is based on adequacy criteria which are considered as suitable, not suitable, and rejected.

Ecological Domain

Newmark (1988) made an assertion that most cultural words were easily detectable. This is because they are always associated with a

particular language and therefore not easily translated literally. If the literal translation is done, the meaning gets distorted. Ecological domain associates the relationship between language and the environment in which it operates. This means that language is shaped by the environment from where the speaker geographically occupies.

According to Newmark (1988), geographical features can normally be distinguished from other cultural terms in that they are usually value-free and that their diffusion depends on the importance of their country of origin as well as their degree of specificity. This paper observes that the translator is not quite successful in finding the corresponding equivalent in the target language particularly in the instances involving ecological related terms. Geographical features form part of the ecology and as Larson (1998) pointed out, lack of corresponding equivalence might be attributed to differences in geographical semantics in the source language and the target language. The difference leads to what Stolze (2009) called semantic void or lexical gap. In addition, colour terms constitute another interesting part of cultural divergence among languages. Names of animals as well as names of rivers or local winds that are part of the area that might constitute a problem to some translators who attempt to translate cultural words encountered within different novels. Consider the translation below.

1. اذا ردت تحمر عينك, فما كل الناس تخاف
العين الحمرا
(Munif,1983, p. 88)

2. "If you want to redden your eyes that not everyone is afraid of red-eye." (Theroux, 1983, p. 88).

Theroux uses the literal equivalent to translate the SL statement, ignoring the connotative meaning found in the SL expression. The colour 'red' in the SL statement is used in the Arabic traditions as well as the English traditions as a sign of anger, embarrassment or feeling upset. Theroux's translation though close to the intended meaning of the SL statement does not seem to have fully captured the meaning, thereby creating a distorted image. The speaker in the SL statement in the item 1 above meant the case when the addressee wants people to fear him by showing the sign of anger, yet not all people, according to the SL speaker, would feel scared of or fear him.

The colour 'red', according to Cobuild's (1987) English dictionary in the case when you say that someone's face is red means that it is redder than its normal colour because they are embarrassed, angry or out of breath". In addition to that, it also points out that "if someone reddens; their face reddens or their face turns pink often could be because they are embarrassed or angry.

In some instances, a translator might translate an Arabic idiomatic expression for instance; "إذا ردت تحمر عينك" ideationally if he could not find an appropriate equivalent in English that has the same function as that in Arabic, in order to give appropriate translation of the SL statement in the Arabic expression above, as shown in item 3.

3. "If you want to be rough with people, not all people fear a rough man." (Proposed translation)

On the other hand, pointing to someone as red-faced might give the negative connotation rather than the positive one. For example, when one tells a person that he has a red face he might mean that he belongs to the Indians or he is part of their tribe. Accordingly, instead of using the connotative way in referring to the sign of anger, we can use either the connotative or the denotative method whichever serves the purpose. Another example from this cultural category is shown in the following example whose translation is given in item 4.

4.   اربط الدهما تحت ذيك الشجرة
(Munif, 1983, p. 77)

5. "Tie the horse under that tree." (Theroux, 1987, p. 57)

It seems that Theroux's translation in item 5 above has followed the deletion procedure in translation to avoid translating the word *Dahma,* which is filled with emotiveness and evaluativeness. The Bedouins used to name their horses with different names taken from their environment as a kind of linkage with their environment and to express their admiration for the beauty of their horses. The name *Dahma,* means darkness or deep black, Anis et al. (1978) indicate that *Dahma*is was taken from the colour of the sky during the night when the sky is out of stars (p. 300). A suggested way here is to transliterate the word *Dahma*and to provide a footnote to

explain its meaning to the TL readers. The suggested translation, in this case, would be as shown in item 6.

6. "Tie *Dahma* (the horse) under that tree."

The same way of naming the horses can be applied to example (7).

7.   خيال الشقرا
(Munif, 1983, p. 78)

8. Rode it like a champion (Theroux, 1987, p. 58).

Arabs feel very proud when they own horses as has been said above and they name them after an incident or according to the colour of the horses. Arabs treat their horses as a member of their families and sometimes even more than that. Theroux's translation tries to establish a similar image to that found in the SL expression. Yet the TL expression does not reach the desired result. The SL expression is filled with emotiveness. The SL expression refers to the knight as well as the horse at the same time, while the TL version ignores the role of the horse totally.

Despite his failure to find near-synonym equivalents in the TL in the translation of the text, "Cities of Salt: *Al-Teeh*", Theroux has managed to provide appropriate equivalents of some geographical terms, for instance, the expression 'Zawan', when he translated it as 'weeds' which means a 'useless plant that hinders or prevent the growth of the useful ones', instead of using the word 'darnel' that does not give the intended meaning of the

SL expression. As for the word '*Ajaj*', it is the name of the local wind that is filled with dust and small particles when it blows. Since the Bedouin environment is filled with sand and dust, this kind of wind is very familiar to them. Theroux translated the word as swirling dust.'

Munif's text also contains names of some animals and birds that are geographically speaking, a characteristic of the Arab desert. Though the word '*jerboa*' is included in the English dictionary yet this lexical term needs a degree of detail. For desert birds such as '*Al-Qata*', Theroux mistranslates this name into 'cats', because this bird only lives in the desert and Theroux is from a western country, in which there are no such birds. It is suggested that such names must be transliterated and then if there is equivalence in English, we provide it as '*sandgrouse*', with a footnote to state that these animals and birds live only in the desert.

Social Culture

Social aspects are very important characteristics of the social culture of nations (Newmark, 1988). In improvising the strategies for finding an appropriate equivalent of an SL in a TL, Newmark (1988), described social culture category as a constitution of activities and rituals that were related to the life of people. Munifasserts that many of these activities and rituals that are specific to the Bedouin culture. Arabs in general and Bedouins, in particular, believe that unless you slaughter an animal for new objects that you have

bought and smear blood on them; those objects will be envied by other people, as expressed by Munif in the following example:

9.   إذا ما كان ذبح لسيارته, لازم نبعثلو دم واحد من هالكلاب

(Munif, 1983, p. 456)

Theroux could not understand this social specific ritual, so he mistranslates it thus:

10. "If we don't wreck his trucks, we'll let him see the blood of one of those dogs." (Theroux, 1987, p. 490)

The ritual addressed in the abovementioned example is well-known and widely practised by Bedouin communities. However, the translation made by Theroux is misleading and confusing for the TL reader. It also disturbs the image found in the source text. It seems that Theroux's poor cultural knowledge of the Bedouin rituals as well as in Munif's linguistic style that uses figurative language extensively in the novel leads to this unsatisfactory and meaningless translation. The following is a proposed translation to the above-mentioned sentence:

11. "If he has not slaughtered an animal for his new car, we will send him the blood of one of these dogs." (Proposed translation)

A footnote is also required to explain why this ritual is widely practised in the Arab world. Another example that belongs to this category is the following:

12. الخويا يصلون بعد كم يوم ونريدكم تبيضون
الوجه وتكونون بالشغل مثل النار وبالطاعة
مثل المحبس باليد

(Munif, 1983, p. 173)

13. "The friends are arriving in a few days and we want you to do your utmost for them to work hard and obey them as if you were their servants."
(Theroux, 1987, p. 180)

This is translated as in item 14.

14. "We want you to do your utmost for them." (Proposed translation)

It is clear that Theroux has presented an equivalent that lacks the connotative meaning found in the SL expression. The SL expression is filled with emotiveness as well as evaluativeness because the speaker here tries to elevate the feelings of pride among the workers, which Theroux fails to capture and render into English.

Organizations, Customs, and Religious Ideas

Each nation has its own heritage which distinguishes it from other nations; this heritage includes customs, traditions and religious beliefs. One of the most important and unique customs that Arabs especially the Bedouins are proud of is hospitality, which is always attributed to those who have honour and dignity. For the most part of Arab history, hospitality was one of the most benevolent attributes of the Arabs. The host has to be generous with his guests; otherwise, he will lose his respect among

others. The guest, in turn, must express his satisfaction by using particular expressions like the one used by Munif in the following example:

15. منازل عامرة ودايمة
(Munif, 1983, p. 273)

16. "Beautiful and lasting residences."
(Theroux, 1987, p. 292)

The sentence in item 15 is misunderstood by Theroux, or he cannot find an appropriate equivalent in the English language so he translates it literally thus distorting the image found in the source text. The SL text is also charged with emotiveness which the TL text lacks. The English reader will not be able to capture the meaning of the translated text; even if he could, he would not feel the same enjoyment as the Arabic reader. The expression should be translated into item 17 below:

17. "May God bless this home."
(Proposed translation)

Religious features are used to present cultural implications for translation. It is obvious that Islam and the Quran have had a great impact on Arabic life and culture and that the emotive overtone of some Arabic religious expressions is not fully understood by the native speakers of English. Translators, therefore, encounter serious problems when attempting to render certain religious expressions or sentences that imply religious connotations. Munif's text is full of such expressions. The expression "وكل الله" was used extensively

by Munif and was translated by Theroux into "Trust in God". This expression has different pragmatic connotations in Arabic that are determined by the context which is ignored by the translator. The following two examples and their English counterparts illustrate this point:

18. لا تخاف, نمشي, نمشي, بس وكل الله
(Munif, 1983, p. 280)

19. "Trust in God"(Theroux, 1987, p. 292)

It seems that Theroux could not capture the exact meaning of this expression so he translated it literally into 'trust in God', which is not meant in the original text. A relevant translation for this expression in this context is as shown in item 20.

20. "Calm down" (Proposed translation)

The same expression in the example in item 21 means exactly as "Trust in God" which provides evidence to show that the meaning of this Arabic expression differs according to the context in which it is used, which Theroux ignores or could not capture since he opted for literal translation to handle the problems encountered in this novel.

21. وكلي الله يا سارة.. الزمان طويل
(Munif, 1983, p. 22)

22. "Trust in God Sara"
(Theroux, 1987, p. 16)

Religion, as discussed above, dominates Arabic as well as Bedouin culture; therefore expressions of this kind are expected and frequent in most of their speeches. This fact is clear in Munif's novel which creates a real challenge and a test to Theroux's ability to understand thus transfer them into English. It seems that Theroux was unable to capture the intended meaning of such culture-bound expressions. The following example makes this point clear:

23. والله يا بن راشد, كل ابن ادم اخرتو خرقة
(Munif, 1983, p. 79)

24. "By God, IbnRashed, every man has a hole in his ass" (Theroux, 1987, p. 78)

The proverbial expression in item 23 is charged with religious implications and indicates some kind of threat to everyone that life is very short and everyone has an end. So when translating such expressions the translator has to keep in mind that there should be an equivalent that has the same meaning without losing the emotiveness of that expression, without equivalence, translating the expression ideationally is the best choice. Theroux misunderstands this utterance and his translation disturbs the meaning and gives an inaccurate translation, the only justification for that is his poor Bedouin cultural background. To overcome such problems the following translation would serve the same meaning but lacks the emotiveness that the SL expression has.

25. "Remember IbnRashed, life is ephemeral" (Proposed translation)

Idiomatic expressions are another problematic area in translation especially between languages of remote origins such as Arabic and English. Barkema (1996) defines idioms as lexicalized expressions with idiosyncratic meanings. They are not translated literally, as their meaning cannot be guessed from their elements (Ajaaj & Mohammed, 2014). Therefore translators usually feel powerless when dealing with such expressions since idioms are not easily translated so they opt for literal or word-for-word strategies to overcome this problem which resulted in either a change in meaning or meaningless translation (Jabbari, 2016). Jabbari recommended that translators should deal with these expressions in context and searched for the real meaning conveyed by that particular idiom and thought about the cultural connotation as well.

A number of Arabic Bedouin fixed idiomatic expressions was used in Munif's novel and was mistranslated into English by Theroux due to inappropriate strategies used to convey these expressions as well as the lack of cultural background needed in such situations. The following is a clear example of this area:

26. جماعتنا وحنا ادرى بهم, اما سراجين او ظلمة, طلقة ثانية وتلاقيهم بالظهرة

(Munif, 1983, p. 22)

27. We know our own people, <u>day and night</u> one more shot and they will all be in Zahra (Theroux, 1987, p. 16)

The idiomatic expression "اما سراجين او ظلمة" is a fixed expression used only by the Bedouins to indicate behaving in a distracted, crazy way which Theroux translates literally into "*Day and Night*", which distorts the image found in the SL expression. Therefore, ideational or functional translation is better with these expressions.

The following is a proposed translation for this expression:

28. We know our people, like a chicken with its head cut off, one more shot and they will all be over *Zahra* (the hill).

Theroux also transliterates the word 'الظهرة' '*Zahra*' without any translation or footnote to explain the meaning of this word which is simply translated into a *hill*.

Material Culture

Munif mentioned only once a piece of cloth that Bedouins used to wear which showed somehow a tradition that Bedouin clothing style was different from the western culture. Theroux transliterated the word into '*ghotra*' (p. 136) which was misleading for the English reader so providing a footnote to explain this would be better as '*Ghotra*' is a white head-dress used by Arabs in general and Bedouins in particular.'

Gestures and Habits

Gestures and habits are a phenomenal part of the Arabic culture and language therefore revolves around them. Language and culture

dictate each other and therefore it is difficult to separate the two in the translation of an Arabic text.

One of the distinctive habits practised by Bedouins in the selection of names of newborns, names of places and animals. Bedouins choose these names in relation to their environment or after an important event or incident. Consider the name '*Dyab'* (Munif, 1983, p. 53), which was transliterated by Theroux (1987, p.19) as '*Zyab*'without explaining the reason behind the naming. The child named '*Dyab'* means 'a child who was born in the year when a wolf attacked his father's sheep' so he named him '*Dyab'* which is the plural form of the word '*Deeb'*. The translated version of the story seems to ignore this reason and only provides a transliterated name '*Zyab'*.

Bedouin Common nouns, also, created a challenge to Theroux since they were culture-specific terms, and they required a good knowledge of the Bedouin culture to understand them first in the TLT, and then rendered them into English. Theroux in his translation failed to capture most of these nouns because of his lack of knowledge of Bedouin culture. The following example will explain this point:

29.　　　　مالك شغلة الا تضحك مثل العجيان
(Munif,1983, p. 37)

30. You have been doing nothing but laughing like a <u>hyena</u>! (Theroux,1987, p. 33)

The word "عجيان" 'Ijyan' is the plural of "عجي" 'Ajy' which is a Bedouin fixed

expression used only by some Bedouin tribes living in Jordan to refer to little kids; this term is also mistranslated by Theroux into "Hyena". It seems that Theroux tried his best to use the contextual factors to guess the meaning of this expression but he failed. The choice made by Theroux changed the meaning completely and distorted the image found in the SLT. The following is a proposed translation for the abovementioned example:

31. You have been doing nothing but chuckling like kids!(Proposed translation)

CONCLUSION

This paper is an attempt to investigate the dilemma that a translator finds him/herself in when translating texts from a culturally different environment from his/her own. The paper is a case study of Theroux's translation of Munif's (1983) novel *Cities of Salt: Al-Teeh*. The source language is Arabic Bedouin while the target language is English. Because of the scope of this paper, it was not possible to discuss all the (mis)translated linguistic and ideological translations of this novel. The conclusion of this paper is that the translation of culturally-related linguistic and ideological items is a challenging task as the translator is expected not only to be bilingual in both the source language and the target language but also bicultural in the cultures involved. This is because the relationship between language and culture is symbiotic and until the translator is conversant with the two

cultures and languages, the work will not convey the message as was intended by the original author.

The main finding of this paper is that in translating a text, the translator should not only be concerned with literal translation but also take into consideration the connotative meanings as well as the cultural underpinnings of the source text because the translator is only a conveyor and a bridge between the source language and the audience of the target language. This paper also found that a dialect must be translated into a dialect rather than into standard language if not, the target message will not have the same influence as the source message. The paper establishes that transliteration is a good strategy when the translator is faced by names such as desert animals and/or names of places. It also determines that there is a correlation between the translator's native language and the type of translation equivalence opted for.

This paper employs Newmark's (1988) classification of cultural domains in the analysis of ecological; material; social; organizational, customs and concepts, and gestures and habits. The analysis of the examples in the text has shown that Theroux's translation as a lot of lexical gaps. To fill these gaps, this paper recommends making footnotes as one way of clarification or providing more information about cultural items likely to be mistranslated and in cases without equivalents, translating the expression ideationally is the best choice. It also recommends that during translation, the translator can seek the services of a person from the culture from which the original text is written.

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Several works by same author in the same year	**Information prominent' (the author's name is within parentheses):** … (Fullan, 1996a, 1997b) … Or **'Author prominent' (the author's name is outside the parentheses):** Fullan (1996a, 1996b) …	Fullan, M. (1996a). Leadership for change. In *International handbook for educational leadership and administration.* New York, United States: Kluwer Academic. Fullan, M. (1996b). *The new meaning of educational change.* London, United Kingdom: Casell.
Several authors, different years referred to collectively in your work	**List sources alphabetically by family name in the in-text reference in the order in which they appear in the Reference List.** The cyclical process (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Dick, 2000) suggests…	Carr, W., & Kemmis, S. (1986). *Becoming critical: Education knowledge and action research.* London, United Kingdom: Falmer Press. Dick, B. (2000). *A beginner's guide to action research.* Retrieved June 1, 2019, from http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/guide.html

Journals

Journals	Insertion in Text	In Reference List
Journal article with 1-2 authors	**Information prominent' (the author's name is within parentheses):** … (Kramer & Bloggs, 2002)… Or **'Author prominent' (the author's name is outside the parentheses):** Kramer and Bloggs (2002) …	Kramer, E., & Bloggs, T. (2002). On quality in art and art therapy. *American Journal of Art Therapy*, *40*, 218-231.
Journal article with 3 or more authors (Pertanika's format)	*For all in-text references, list only the firrst author's family name and followed by* 'et al.' **Information prominent' (the author's name is within parentheses):** … (Erlo et al., 2008) … Or **'Author prominent' (the author's name is outside the parentheses):** Erlo et al. (2008) …	Elo, A., Ervasti, J., Kuosma, E., & Mattila, P. (2008). Evaluation of an organizational stress management program in a municipal public works organization. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, *13*(1), 10-23. doi: 10.1037/1076-8998.13.1.10
Journal article with 6 - 7 authors	*For all in-text references, list only the firrst author's family name and followed by* 'et al.' **Information prominent' (the author's name is within parentheses):** … (Restouin et al., 2009) … Or **'Author prominent' (the author's name is outside the parentheses):** Restouin et al. (2008) …	Restouin, A., Aresta, S., Prébet, T., Borg, J., Badache, A., & Collette, Y. (2009). A simplified, 96-well–adapted, ATP luminescence–based motility assay. *BioTechniques*, *47*, 871–875. doi: 10.2144/000113250
Journal article with more than 8 or more authors	**Information prominent' (the author's name is within parentheses):** … (Steel et al., 2010).. Or **'Author prominent' (the author's name is outside the parentheses):** Steel et al. (2010) …	Steel, J., Youssef, M., Pfeifer, R., Ramirez, J. M., Probst, C., Sellei, R., ... Pape, H. C. (2010). Health-related quality of life in patients with multiple injuries and traumatic brain injury 10+ years postinjury. *Journal of Trauma: Injury, Infection, and Critical Care, 69*(3), 523-531. doi: 10.1097/TA.0b013e3181e90c24

| Journal article with DOI | **Information prominent' (the author's name is within parentheses):**

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'Author prominent' (the author's name is outside the parentheses):

Shaw et al. (2005) … | Shaw, K., O'Rourke, P., Del Mar, C., & Kenardy, J. (2005). Psychological interventions for overweight or obesity. *The Cochrane database of systematic reviews* (2). doi:10.1002/14651858.CD003818. pub2 |

Newspapers

Newspapers	Insertion in Text	In Reference List
Newspaper article – with an author	… (Waterford, 2007)...	Waterford, J. (2007, May 30). Bill of rights gets it wrong. *The Canberra Times*, p. 11.
Newspaper article – without an author	… ("Internet pioneer", 2007) …	Internet pioneer to oversee network redesign. (2007, May 28). *The Canberra Times*, p. 15.
Article in an newsletter	… ("Australians and the Western Front", 2009) ...	Australians and the Western Front. (2009, November). *Ozculture newsletter*. Retrieved June 1, 2019, from http://www.cultureandrecreation. gov.au/ newsletter/

Conference / Seminar Papers

Conference / Seminar Papers	Insertion in Text	In Reference List
Print – *If the paper is from a book, use the book chapter citation format. If it is from regularly published proceedings (e.g. annual), use the Journal article citation format.*	… (Edge, 1996) … Or Edge (1996) …	Edge, M. (1996). Lifetime prediction: Fact or fancy? In M. S. Koch, T. Padfield, J. S. Johnsen, & U. B. Kejser (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Conference on Research Techniques in Photographic Conservation* (pp. 97-100). Copenhagen, Denmark: Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts.
Online	… (Tester, 2008) … Or Tester (2008) …	Tester, J. W. (2008). The future of geothermal energy as a major global energy supplier. In H. Gurgenci & A. R. Budd (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Sir Mark Oliphant International Frontiers of Science and Technology Australian Geothermal Energy Conference*, Canberra, Australia: Geoscience Australia. Retrieved June 1, 2019, from http://www.ga.gov. au/image_cache/ GA11825.pdf

Government Publications

Government Publications	Insertion in Text	In Reference List
Government as author	**First in-text reference: Spell out the full name with the abbreviation of the body.** … (Department of Finance and Administration [DOFA], 2006) … **Subsequent in-text reference/s:** **Use the abbreviation of the body.** … (DOFA, 2006)…	Department of Finance and Administration. (2006). Delivering Australian Government services: Managing multiple channels. Canberra, Australia: Author.
Government report - online	**First in-text reference: Spell out the full name with the abbreviation of the body.** … (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet [PM&C], 2008) … **Subsequent in-text reference/s:** **Use the abbreviation of the body.** … (PM&C, 2008)…	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. (2008). *Families in Australia: 2008.* Retrieved June 1, 2019, from http://www.....

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Abbreviations: Define alphabetically, other than abbreviations that can be used without definition. Words or phrases that are abbreviated in the introduction and following text should be written out in full the first time that they appear in the text, with each abbreviated form in parenthesis. Include the common name or scientific name, or both, of animal and plant materials.

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