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A Method to Push Students' Speaking Ability in English Foreign Language Classroom

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Abstract

This paper is aimed at finding the effectiveness of using the debating method in teaching towards students speaking ability at the second-grade students of MAN 1 Majene. It was conducted from July to September 2019. This research used a quasi-experimental design. It involved 50 students from two groups, Experimental Class (26 students) and Control Class (24 students). The experimental class was taught by using the debating method whereas the control class was taught by using the conventional method. The data were obtained by using pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was given to both groups before the treatment and the post-test was given after the treatment only for experiment class. The data of the pre-test and post-test of both classes were analyzed by using SPSS. After the data were tested and found to be homogeneous and normal, the hypothesis was tested using an independent sample T-Test. The result of the research shows that the difference in the speaking ability between the students taught using the debating method and taught conventionally is significant. It can be seen in the result of the hypothesis testing through the independent sample T-Test. The significance value is lower than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis of this study is accepted. It means that the use of the debating method in teaching was believed to improve students speaking ability at the second-grade students of MAN 1 Majene.

Introduction

Language is one of the most important aspects of communication and it is used as a tool to communicate with another. We should know that English is one of the languages that is mostly used in the world and has become an international language for a long time ago which is used in many countries. In Indonesia, English has been being studied for all of school grades since junior high school based on the curriculum that has been applied in our country (Kemendikbud 2013) so, English became the students' necessity as the subject which is very important to understand. This is one of the reasons for the importance of English in our life, especially for the education sector.

English learners required not only to understand and deliver a message in written form, but they should be able to understand and give the message orally, so English offer four skill that should be mastered for language learners, they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing skill. Aswad et al. (2019) in this research, the researcher will focus on speaking skill which is very important, speaking is important because speaking and human being cannot be separated from each other. According to Rubiati (2010), speaking is an activity used by someone to communicate with others, it takes place everywhere and has become part of our daily activities. When someone speaks, they interact and use the language to express their ideas, feelings, and thoughts (Maming et al, 2019). Desita, Lidya Ratna (2017) stated speaking ability offer the students to be able to communicate their opinions, feelings, and expression with no limitation of different native language, culture and country. Speaking is the most important aspect of providing communication nicely, efficiently, and articulately. Furthermore, speaking is linked to success in life, as it occupies and important position individually and sosially (M Aswad, 2017; Yassi, 2020, Desmiyanti, 2020).

Based on the experts' statements, we can conclude that speaking is an important aspect of our daily activities to interact and communicate with another, how to express our ideas, feelings and thought to other people orally, so that's the reason for the importance of speaking in our life.

The researcher has done observation and collect the school data from MAN 1 Majene, and based on the observation it shows that many students could not give opinions and responds to another opinion in English. They were not able to give their opinions and responds to another opinion whether they agree or disagree with someone's opinions. They kept quiet when the teacher asked them. They were passive in speaking especially if the teacher asked them about their opinions. They were afraid of giving opinions and responds to another's opinions because they didn't know how to deliver their opinions or their arguments. The students afraid to make mistakes, they also did not know the expressions of giving opinions and responding to another's opinions. In the same case Ginusty (2014), stated some problems were still found in the students' abilities in English, especially in speaking. The students' speaking ability was relatively low. They had difficulties in expressing ideas and opinions orally as they were afraid of making mistakes and not confident to speak English. Students' speaking problems can be solved by giving some teaching methods. According to (M Aswad 2017), to build up the students' ability, the teacher must be creative to design many communicative activities in the classroom, and the way to invent it, the teacher should use the kinds of methods in the teaching process, and on this research, the researcher offered debating method as one of the teaching methods which means to solve the students' speaking problems. Debating is the process of presenting ideas or opinions which two opposing parties by trying to defend their ideas or opinions. Debating can be conducted in classes as a tool to make students practice their speaking skills, Schunner (2002), stated that debate fosters students' active learning by giving them responsibility to understand course content, an approach that completely transforms their perspective from passive to active.

Basically, through debating, students could improve their critical thinking and improving communication skills. Othman (2013) stated debate encourages students to learn course content better, since they are engaged in the course content actively, broadly, deeply and personally. It also trains them to assess the data they get daily. In addition, debating provides a valuable opportunity to develop learners' speaking ability. Through debating, students will enjoy speaking and express their opinions or ideas and it can improve their speaking ability. Furthermore, through debating students would be easier to communicate and express their opinions or ideas.

Method

The design of research used by the researcher in this study was Quasi-Experimental design, which was a nonequivalent control group design that used two classes, they were experimental class and control class. The researcher gave pretest to all of the classes mean to measure the students' ability before given treatment and posttest to measure the students' achievement after given treatment, but in this study only experiment class that given treatment because the researcher wants to find out the students' achievement after given treatment.

The population in this study was taken from second-grade students of MAN 1 Majene academic year of 2018/2019, which consists of three classes, they are XI Agama I, XI Agama II, and XI Agama III. This research used two classes were XI AGAMA III (experimental class) and XI AGAMA II (control class) as the sample that was chosen by using cluster technique sampling, because in this grade students have the similarity of scoring that was proved by data in the last semester, then the researcher chose the sample which was reputed could represent all of the populations.

The instrument of the research, the researcher used some of the instruments to collect the data that were interview sheet which was used to measure the students's ability before giving treatment (pretest), then the researcher used the rating scale to gave score based on the students' ability, and after given the treatment (only experiment class) then, the researcher gave the posttest to find out the students' improvement.

For data collection, the researcher observed (complete participation observe) in the class and take a role as an English teacher, and the observation steps as follow:

1. In the first meeting, the researcher gave the questions by using the interview sheet mean to measure the students' ability before given the treatment. The questions of the interview sheet gave chance to students to spoke one by one about the theme on the interview sheet so the researcher would be easier to know the students' ability.
2. In the second meeting, the researcher gave the treatment and the technique of debating, how to think critically, how to give a good statement, argument and solution towards every motion that want to solve
3. In the next classes, the students would be given the motions or problems to debated while the researcher observed during the classes process by using a rating scale to measure the student's improvement and every meeting the researcher gave different motions to improve students' understanding and their critical thinking.
4. In the last meeting, the researcher gave an interview as a posttest by using an interview sheet, on this meeting the researcher just want to measure or know the students' achievement after giving the treatment and then would be compared with the first class.

Findings and Discussion

The findings of this research explained the students' scores of pretest and posttest in experimental class and control class and also the improvement of students' speaking skill after applying the debating method in teaching. Before giving the treatment, the researcher gave the interview sheet as the pretest in both classes. The pretest aimed to know the prior knowledge of students speaking.

It could be seen from the students' scores of pre-test and post-test that the result of the pretest indicated that both of experimental class and control class had no different scores and most of them were difficult in speaking. After given the treatment there was an improvement of the experimental class and it was proven by the result of the posttest showed that both classes had different scores which the experimental class got higher scores than the control class. It means that there was a significant improvement of the experimental class after they were taught by using the debating method while the control class showed that there was no significant improvement and the same result had been found in the previous study, which was conducted by Nuraeni (2014) so, it proved that applying debating method was effectively improve overall the aspects of speaking.

Applying the debating method in class, the students would enjoy practicing their speaking ability, they could improve their critical thinking, they could correct their pronunciation, and also the improvement of vocabularies. In other words debating method could solve the problems of speaking and the result of this research parallel with the benefit of debating which had been found by Rubiati, (2010) in her research.

We could conclude that the result of this research showed that the implementation of the debating method in teaching was effective to improve the students' speaking ability. Applying the debating method in teaching helps the students to present new ideas, and improve their critical thinking so that they could give a good response to someone's opinions and arguments.

Conclusions

Based on the results and discussions, it can be concluded that the implementation of the debating method in teaching in the teaching speaking was believed to be effective to improve the students' speaking ability. The results of this research revealed the improvements contributed by the implementation of the debating method in teaching. And the Pedagogical implication of the research that Teachers can make a variety of techniques especially teaching speaking the classroom, good techniques, and easy to be understood by the students. One of the most important contributions of research on teachers' beliefs is that the beliefs that teachers hold about teaching and learning influence their effective teaching in the classroom.

Based on the conclusion above, the researcher presents some suggestions as follows:

1. This research can be used as the new reference for the next researcher that want to do experimental research particularly of research towards students' speaking improvement
2. Debating method will be a good teaching method which gives a good effect on students' speaking improvement and can be applied by the teachers.
3. Debating method can be used by the students as a good way to improve their speaking ability.

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Politeness Strategies of Minangkabau Ethnic in Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the politeness strategies that have been used by members of a group of people involved in the cooking process for wedding preparation of Minangkabau Ethnic in West Sumatera Indonesia. This study shows the gaps that bald-on politeness is the core interaction in the cooking process and off-record politeness is more proper to the Minangkabau tradition. Drawing on descriptive-qualitative approach, this study was conducted at 11 regencies in West Sumatera and involved 80 participants selected in purposive sampling. The interviews were conducted with six *Bundo Kanduang* (term addressed to a woman appointed as the one to whom the members of the certain clan in

Minangkabau ethnic discuss with), six custom leaders, and three intellectual people originally from Minangkabau. Records and note-taking were also used to collect the data. In addition, the aspect related to politeness, norms, and tradition was applied to analyze the data and consider the power, distance, rate of imposition, and context. The results show that in the cooking process, the members of the group of people involved perform bald-on records when the rate of imposition is low. Specifically, the tradition regulates the role of each member of these people, and bald on record is used as the affirmation. Positive and negative politeness strategies represent the distance. The speakers are from different social backgrounds and they have to be careful choosing the dictions. Body gestures and suprasegmental aspects are also under consideration. Being polite in Minangkabau ethnic is mostly indicated by body language/gesture, intonation, and speed of speech. The off-record strategy is carried out when the utterances are addressed to the more powerful and respected people like *Bundo Kanduang* or the wife of the custom leaders. In certain situations, the strategy might be diverged depending on the context.

Keywords: *Cooking process, Minangkabau ethnic, Politeness Strategy, Wedding Preparation*

Introduction

This paper covers a pragmatic analysis that focuses on how the people involved in the cooking process for wedding preparation in Minangkabau ethnic perform politeness. Minangkabau is one of the four biggest ethnicities in Indonesia. This Minangkabau is identical to the matrilineal system where the lineage comes from the mother. There is also a tradition of Minangkabau people called *marantau* 'wandering' that the men leave their home town to seek for a better life. *Marantau* becomes the philosophy of Minangkabau ethnic depicted in the proverb *ka rantau madang di hulu, ba buah ba bungo balun, marantau bujang dahulu, di kampuang baguno balun* 'Minangkabau men go wandering to achieve knowledge, experience, and skills' (Hastuti et al., 2013).

Another tradition of Minangkabau people is *gotong-royong'* mutual cooperation'. Every member of society has awareness toward others in many aspects such as preparing a wedding party, building a house, or planting as well as harvesting rice in the fields. They will cooperatively help those who are carrying out the event and come without being asked. It has become their habit.

In preparing a wedding party, one process to be done is cooking. This cooking process is commonly conducted three days before the date of the party by some women. Each of these women has her own role based on their social background. The activities requiring energy like stirring the *rendang* 'Minangkabau traditional food' using large curry or cooking the rice using very large pot are done by men from certain social class. Moreover, these two activities use firewood and can only be done by those who are accustomed to doing that.

People who get involved in the cooking process for wedding preparation come from variously social and cultural backgrounds (Budiharso, 2016). They even are not Minangkabaunese but staying in the village where the wedding is conducted. In this cooking activity, communication among them is running. Even though Minangkabau people are not identical in social level as Javanese, Balinese, and Sundanese, they have the *kato nan ampek* as the rule of speaking (Navies, 2017; Revita, et al., 2017). *Kato nan ampek* 'the four words' become the guidance for Minangkabaunese to communicate by considering the age, the distance, and the power of the interlocutor. The execution of *kato nan ampek* is in line with the politeness (Revita, 2009; Mujiyani, 2020) performed via language.

As a means of communication, language becomes the central element in every process of it. In order to make a successful communication, the language that has been used has to be controlled (Solikhah & Budiharso, 2020a). In other words, successful communication or interaction must be followed by acceptable strategies. One of the categories of acceptable strategies is being polite. Polite means that the strategies carried out do not threaten the hearer's face (Brown, 2015). Face refers to the respect that an individual has for him or herself and the maintaining of self-esteem in public or in private situations. As asserted by Yule et al., (2010), politeness is employed to show awareness of another person's face. Politeness can be related to situations of social distance or closeness. Politeness also involves taking account of the other's feelings. Thus, being polite means that someone is trying to taking care of others' feelings, making them comfortable while having interaction with them (Amer et al., 2020; Beeching & Murphy, 2019; Rosyidha et al., 2019; Fauzan, 2017).

Being polite is not universal but local. To be polite is closely related to social, cultural, psychological, and religious contexts. Being polite can be analogized as acting by considering the norms and traditions of the society. Speakers are expected to pay attention to some factors that will influence the smoothness of their relationship with other such as solidarity power, distance, respect, intimacy, and social customs while they live in any society (Solikhah & Budiharso, 2020b). It is of great impossibility to create a happy and peaceful interaction with other social members as ones are impolite. The followings are the example of the utterances in Minangkabau language produced during the cooking process.

W1 : *Makan lah lai!*
Let's enjoy the food!

W2 : *Iyo, tambuah!*
'Oke, get more food.'

W1 : *Makan lai!* '
'Come on! Eat, please!'.

W2 : *Iyo, iyo*.
'Oke, oke.'

The conversation above occurred during a cooking activity for wedding preparation in Nagari Salayo Solok. A woman (W2) who just came in was offered to eat by another woman who was eating. The woman (W2) replayed the offer by offering back the woman who was eating to add more food. If it is related to cooperative principles (Grice, 1975), the flow of the conversation between W1 and W2 does not match. W1 and W2 seem to disobey the maxim of quality. (Leech, 1983) noted that the violence of cooperative principles is in order to fulfill the politeness principles. Being cooperative is sometimes contradictory to being polite (Khairiah et al., 2020; Oktavianus & Revita, 2013). Thus, contextually, none of them is offended because none of their faces has been threatened. Each W1 and W2 used the appropriate strategy in communication that made them saving faces (FSAs) and being polite to each other.

Research Questions

Drawing politeness strategies and FSAs as the cornerstone for our concept, this study is guided by following the research questions:

a) How do the participants of the group of people involved in the cooking process for the wedding party at Minangkabau ethnic in Indonesia perform politeness and saving other faces in communication?

b) What are the considerations of these participants to select a certain strategy of being polite and saving one's face in their communication during the cooking process for a wedding party at Minangkabau ethnic in Indonesia?

Review of Related Literature

Face

The concept of face is similar to public self-image. The face is related to the emotional and social sense of self that everyone had and expected to be recognized. This face is emotionally invested, lost, maintained, or enhanced but must be constantly attended to in interaction. In communication, the face is considered as want, so that one might know each other's desires. In general, people cooperated (and assumed each other's cooperation) in maintaining ones' face in interaction. Such cooperation is based on the mutual vulnerability of face.

The face theory is coined by Brown and Levinson (1987), comprising three pillars, namely a) face, b) FTA, and c) politeness strategies. FTA is the result of imposing or directing other persons regardless of the politeness (Yule, 2006). To cope with an FTA, speakers can avoid by quantifying the rate of the impositions (Lam et al., 2019; Prayitno et al., 2019; Revita, Trioclarise, et al., 2017). Such a way of solution is applicable in the cooking process where the participants involved try to minimize insulting others (Leech, 1983). The speakers are expected to carefully choose dictions and use the appropriate strategies of politeness in order the disharmony in communication can be avoided. Politeness could be defined as a means of showing awareness and consideration for another person's face.

Politeness

Politeness can be defined as getting involved in communicating with other people using appropriate utterances or strategies in the light of their relationship (Revita, 2009). Inappropriate linguistic choices may be considered rude (Culpeper, 2011, 2013; Kecskes & Kecskes, 2014; Mills, 2009a). Janam, 2019; Rahayu & Suryadi, 2019; Ihsan, 2019; Probosini, 2020; Sumarta, 2019; Utami, 2019 explore that politeness is related to psychological state, something that is emotionally invested and that can be lost, maintained, or enhanced and must be constantly attended to in the interaction. Being polite can be presented by being friendly or giving respect to the hearer and avoid threatening other's feelings. Furthermore, Brown and Levinson (1987) assert face as the public self-image that a person wants for himself. It is divided into two notions, namely, Negative face, or the desire for autonomy and positive face, or the desire of connection with others.

Politeness is used as a means employed to show awareness of another person's face (Yule, 2006). Face means the respect that an individual has for him or herself and the maintaining of self-esteem in public or in private situations. Furthermore, Mills (2003) declares that politeness is an act of showing respect toward the person who we are talking to and avoiding any offenses that are directed to him. In other words, politeness is an expression of concern for the feelings of others.

Politeness is an aspect of pragmatics that is used in a language determined by an external context. A polite person can make others feel comfortable. People might know whether people are being polite or impolite through the way they speak. Holmes (1996) defines politeness as behavior that actively expresses positive concern for others, as well as non-imposing distancing behavior. Being polite involves speaking to participants in order to make a good relationship. Politeness has the same ideas as being tactful, modest, and nice to other people.

Such awareness was shown through the general politeness, which we used language. Politeness itself was socially prescribed. We must constantly adjust to others in our social relationships, and we must do that in ways each society deems appropriate to its existence and functioning. It does not mean that we always are polite.

From some definitions above, the concept of politeness can be remarked as the study of how people used their awareness toward other people's faces and also considered who people are. Being polite is the indication of showing a good manner or attitude to the hearer.

Politeness Strategies

Brown and Levinson (1987) identified four politeness strategies or general behavioral patterns that speakers can apply, namely (1) Bald-on Record Strategy (without strategy), (2) Positive politeness strategy, (3) Negative politeness strategy (4) Off-record politeness strategy (indirect or subtle strategy). A description of each of these politeness strategies will be presented in the following sections.

Bald-on Record strategy is in accordance with the principle of efficiency in communication, as outlined in Grice maxim (Grice, 1975). With this strategy, the speaker does not make any effort to minimize the threat to the face of the speaker or to reduce the consequences of actions that threaten the face (FTA). Strategies like this will result in the interlocutor feeling shocked, embarrassed, and uncomfortable. This strategy is widely used by speakers and interlocutors who already know each other well, for example, between friends or between family members. This strategy is manifested in direct imperative sentences. Usually, this strategy is also used to express emergencies. The speaker needs the attention very soon, especially before anything else, because of its importance. In cases of great urgency or desperation, compensation would actually decrease the communicated urgency. For example,

(1) Help!

(2)Watch out!

The exclamation point showed that there are no other choices in that situation. The speakers needed help from the hearer (1) and wanted to warn the hearer of danger or an accident that might happen (2).

Bald on record is also used as the strategy when the speaker says something as if great efficiency is necessary for attention-getters, as the task-oriented or paradigmatic form of instruction, to show the sympathetic advice or warnings, granting permission for something, invitations, welcoming as well as greeting and farewell. Using imperative utterances are still regarded as polite as it is implemented in the proper context.

Positive politeness strategy is used to show intimacy to interlocutors who are not close to the speaker. To facilitate the interaction, the speaker tries to give the impression of the same fate and as if he has the same desire as the interlocutor and is considered as a shared desire that is truly desired together. This strategy is aimed directly at the positive face of the speaker so that the wishes of the speaker are seen as a shared desire between the speaker and the speaker. This strategy also serves as an accelerator of social relations with others. By using it, the speaker shows that he wants to be more familiar with the interlocutor. In other words, relationships become more intimate and reflect group cohesiveness. This strategy seeks to minimize the distance between the speaker and the interlocutor by expressing attention and friendship. Thus, the speaker minimizes the FTA. Using the mechanisms claiming common ground, this conveys that speaker and hearer are cooperators and fulfilling hearer's want.

A negative politeness strategy is an action taken to redeem the opponent's negative face and the desire of the speaker to be free from the burden with the intention that his actions and intent are not disturbed and not constrained. This action is nothing but the basis of valuing behavior, which is also found in the positive politeness strategy. The difference is that this strategy is more specific and more focused because the speaker displays supporting functions to minimize certain burdens as something that cannot be avoided by the interlocutor. The main focus of using this strategy is to assume that the speaker is most likely to put the burden or disturbance on the speaker because he has entered the opposite speaker area. It is assumed that there is a certain social distance or certain obstacles in the situation. This politeness strategy is realized in ten ways or actions such as: (1) implying indirectly, (2) asking questions or avoiding, (3) being pessimistic, (4) minimizing the burden of requests, (5) demeaning, (6) asking sorry, (7) personalization of the speaker and interlocutor, (8) putting the threatening action as a general rule, (9) nominalization, (10) Stating clearly that the action of the interlocutor is very valuable to the speaker.

Off-record politeness strategy is realized in a disguised way and does not represent a clear communicative purpose. With this strategy, the speaker takes himself out of action by allowing the interlocutor to interpret an action himself. This strategy is used if the speaker wants to take a threatening action but does not want to be responsible for the action. This strategy is contrary to the Grice maxim, namely the relevance maxim, the maximum quantity, the maximum quality, and the regularity maxim.

Wedding Tradition in Minangkabau

As one of Indonesia's most prominent four ethnics groups, Minangkabau is identical to its uniqueness, called the matrilineal system where the lineage comes from the mother. Women in Minangkabau are put in a particular position that they play an essential role in society. In Minangkabau, all treasure (land) is inherited to the daughters, and the sons are only controlling its use.

When a man marries Minangkabau woman, he will stay at the woman's house. The man is called *urang sumando'* son in law.' *Urang sumando* is very respectful, and they have flagged as *abu di ateh tunggua'* ashes on the stove.' This metaphor means that the son in law must be respected. He is like the guest that must be well serviced.

Its philosophy is in line with how Minangkabau prepares very well when they welcome this *urang sumando* at a wedding party. The various foods are served. *Rendang* as one of Minangkabau traditional food must be one of them. The food made of meat cooked with coconut milk and some other herbs and spices is regarded as the king of Minangkabau traditional food. Being served with other traditional foods such as curry chicken, fish, patties, or beef jerky, *rendang* represents respect and appreciation. Thus, a group of people, generally consisting of mothers, will gather to cook together. The host usually built a tent for cooking. The cooking is done at least a week before the party. It is because cooking *rendang* as the main food cannot be done in one day. It needs more than three days to get well-done *rendang*. Besides, they will also make traditional snacks, such as *pinyaram* (a food made from glutinous rice, mixed with coconut milk and fried), *nasi kuning* (cooked glutinous rice and given turmeric to make it yellow), or muffin. These women, sometimes also involved men, are together cooking for preparing for the wedding party. These foods are served to the guests who are coming to the party.

Methods

The research applied a descriptive qualitative approach and used a case study in the Minangkabau ethnic in Indonesia. The study's focus is the politeness used by the participants involved in the cooking process for the wedding party. In the cooking process, some women, as well as certain men, interacted. There around ten to fifteen women and men got involved. These people were from various social, geographical, and cultural backgrounds. The utterances produced also vary. There were many reasons considering the choice of strategies of politeness in communicating. There were 80 participants involved in this research from six regencies in West Sumatera. West Sumatera is administratively where Minangkabau people live. These participants comprised 67 women and 13 men. There were no specific criteria for the informant but those staying at the village where the cooking process was conducted. The research was done from August to December 2019. Commonly, Minangkabau people prefer to carry out the wedding party after Ied Mubarak until the end of the year. It is related to the philosophy of the people that getting married between two Eid is not good. They call the time as *bulan anyuik* (Revita, 2015). At the time, people commonly need a lot of money. They had spent much money on Eid Al-Fitr as well as Eid Mubarak. Moreover, the time after Eid Al-Fitr is the beginning of the students to go to school. Again, people have to prepare for this that requires a lot of money.

Data were taken through a) recording the dialogs among the people in the cooking process, b) observing and taking field notes during the communication based on the research purposes, c) having a deep interview but unstructured format to let the interviewees provide the information related to the utterances produced, norms, and tradition in the research area. Each village has its own distinctive and specific way of regulation in speaking (Navies, 2017). For the interviews, six *Bundo kanduang*, six custom leaders, three intellectuals were involved. See tables 1 and 2 for the data-collection process.

Table 1

Research Area

Name of the Village	Regency	Time Collecting Data
Pauh	Padang	12 – 15 August 2019
Panyalaian	Padang Panjang	1 – 3 September 2019
Tanjung Alam	Tanah Datar	23 – 25 September 2019
Padusunan	Padang Pariaman	10 -1 2 October 2019
Baso	Agam	4 – 6 November 2019
Sarilamak	50 Kota	24 – 24 December 2019

There were six villages from six regencies representing nineteen regencies in West Sumatera. It is based on the consideration that Minangkabau people's area is divided into two, darek ’land’ and *rantau* ‘coastal area’. Padang Panjang, Tanah Datar, Agam, and 50 Kota are *darek,* and

Padang and Padang Pariaman are *rantau*. The number of regencies from *darek* is more than *rantau.* That is why only two from *rantau* and four from *darek* were taken as the research area. Each area was lebeled P (Padang), PP (Padang Panjang), TN (Tanah Datar), PPn (Padang Pariaman), A (Agam), and K (50 Kota).

Tabel 2

Profiles of the Women and Men involved in the Cooking Process

Name	*Age*	*Research Area*
W1 – W4	50 ≤ Age	Padang
W5 – W7	40 ≤ Age < 50	
W8 – W9	40 > Age	
M 1	40 < Age	
W10 - W14	50 ≤ Age	Padang Pariaman
W15 – W17	40 ≤ Age < 50	
W18 – W19	40 > Age	
M2 – M3	40 < Age	
W20 – W23	50 ≤ Age	Tanah Datar
W24 – W27	40 ≤ Age < 50	
W28 – W31	40 > Age	
M4 – M4	40 < Age	
W32 – W34	50 ≤ Age	Padang Panjang
W35 – W39	40 ≤ Age < 50	
W40 – W43	40 > Age	
M7 – M9	40 < Age	
W44 – W46	50 ≤ Age	50 Kota
W47 – W49	40 ≤ Age < 50	
W50 – W56	40 > Age	
M10 – M11	40 < Age	
W57 – W61	50 ≤ Age	Agam
W62 – W66	40 ≤ Age < 50	
W67 – W70	40 > Age	

M12- M13	40 < Age

The participants labeled as W for woman and M for man were numbered based on sex, age, and the area of the interaction. The age was also grouped into those whose age was more than 50 years, those who were around 40 to 50, and those who were less than 40. It is related to the consideration of the strategy used in using polite utterances because Minangkabau society has the rule of speaking called as *kato nan ampek* (Revita, 2009). *Kato nan ampek* is basically used by considering the age of the interlocutor. Besides, the distance, social status, rate of imposition, and power become other factors that influence the choice of the strategy of politeness (Hickey, 2014; Leech, 2014; Zheng & Xu, 2019).

The data were analyzed based on the politeness strategy theories proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). The concepts about context from the social, geographical, and cultural background (Fetzer & Osiho, 2011; Michau et al., 2015; Mills, 2009b; Budiharso & Arbain, 2019) were used to analyze the data. Each context was labeled as (+S) for social, (+G) for geographical, and (+C) for cultural context. That Minangkabau people have *kato nan ampek* where ages become the consideration in communicating, but power, distance, and rate of imposition were also examined. Power, then, was symbolized by (+P) to indicate speaking partners who were more powerful than other speakers, (+D) and (-D) for social distance or gap, (+I) for a high degree of imposition and (-I) for no imposition.

Results and Discussion

The objective of this study was to examine the strategy of politeness used by the participants involved in the cooking process for the wedding party. There were some contemplations used to select one strategy among many strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987). It is exemplified through the dialogues extricated from the data analysis.

Dialog (1) was the interaction between two women (W1 and W8). W1 is the relative of the householder of the wedding and W2 is the village mate. The dialogue indicated that the host is more powerful than the interlocutor. It is shown by the use of the bald-on record strategy to ask this interlocutor to eat.

Dialog (1)

Bald-on record strategy

Speaker: the relative of the householder (W1, 60 years old)

Interlocutor : village mate (W8, 36 years old) Location: Pauh, Padang Speech context: Social context (+S), Distance between the participants (+D), Speaker is more powerful (+P), Degree of imposition (-I)

W1 : *Makan, makan lai*.
‘Have eat, please!’

W8 : *Iyo, iyo. Paruiklah kanyang. Basambia sadang mamasak.*
‘Yes. I am full. I have something to eat while cooking.’

W1 : *Ndak ado, do. Makan dulu (sambal menarik tangan W8 ke dalam rumah).*
‘No.’ You must eat (while pulling W8’s hand into the house).’

Both W1 and W8 took part in the cooking process. As W8 planned to go home, she asked for permission from the householder. W1 knew that W8 did not eat yet requested W8 to eat. W8 refused because she felt full. The request was made by using a bald-on record. The use of imperative sentence implies the directness for a request was chosen because socially, W1 is much older than W8, W1 is the relative of the householder who was indicating the power, and W1 is also from a respected family.

The low degree of imposition made W1 prefer using bald on-record. W8 would not be asserted by this strategy. Moreover, in Minangkabau, in such context, the householder will be shy when those who helped them cooking did not eat at her home. That is why W1 pruned the distance between them by pulling W8’s hands to get into the home to eat. If W8 still refused, the householder would wrap some kinds of food to be taken home.

W1 reduced her power, social position, and social distance at her second-time talk. Pulling hands and forcing ones to eat is one strategy in Minangkabau to show politeness. Even it is ashamed not serving food for those who come to their houses. For Minangkabau people, the guests are kings that must be respected (Navies, 2017).

The different strategy will be used by the speaker when it is addressed to the interlocutor who is more powerful, has the degree of imposition, and the age is more as being shown in dialog 2.

Dialog (2)

Negative politeness strategy

Speaker: a woman who was seeking for her sandals (W17, 42 years old)
Interlocutor : a woman (W 12, 58 years old)
Location: Padusunan, Padang Pariamn
Speech context: Social context (+S), Distance between the participants (+D), Speaker is less powerful (-P), Degree of imposition (+I)

W17 : ***Tek.*** *Maaf, Tek. Sarupo tarompa awak ya, Tek?*

'Aunty. I am sorry, Aunty. Do we have the same sandals?'

W12 : *Antah. Baa tu?*

'I don't know. Why?'

W17 : *Sarupo bana tarompa wak mungkin ndak, Tek. Warna jo gadangnyo.*

'We have exactly similar sandals. The color and size.'

W12 : *Ma lo ka samo* (sambal memperhatikan kakinya). *O iyo. Ndak tarompa Etek do. Untuang lai kau kecekkan. Maaf yo.*

' It is impossible (while looking at her foot). I am sorry. It is not my sandals. Fortunately, you informed me. I apologize.'

W12 was leaving the house where she just cooked for the wedding party. She did not find her sandals, but she saw her sandals were with an older woman. To claim that they belonged to her in front of many people would impose W12. It is possible to threaten W12's face. W17 used negative politeness using an interrogative sentence. W17 regarded as if she wanted to assure that they had similar sandals. An interrogative sentence for the request function is one feature of indirectness. Indirectness is one strategy to be polite in communication. Being indirect can save one's face even though it is risky and costly (Yule, 2006; Astia, 2020; Brown, 2015; Ghazzoul, 2019). Not all people successfully implement indirectness in communication, nor all people could get the meaning of the indirect utterances.

Minangkabau people tend to speak indirectly. The indirectness is indicated by the preference to use figurative language (Navies, 2017; Revita et al., 2012). This is also a way to save one's face. Certain people can only understand figurative language, and it possibly hides the high degree imposed- utterances. For example, a woman is analogized with a flower and a man is with a bee. Such a way of communicating is depicted in Minangkabau proverb *alun takilek* *alah takalam* ' Minangkabau people could interpret things that are not explicitly stated'. It is called as the philosophy of wisdom of speaking (Revita, et al., 2017).

The strategy used by W17 was considering the face of W12. If W17 directly claimed that W12 wrongly wear her sandals, W12 might be ashamed and her face was threatened. W12 is older than W17, that the speaker is expected to speak more politely. It is in accordance with the regulation of *kato nan ampek* that is *kato mandaki* where the interlocutor is older than the speaker. Socially and culturally, the speaker had to speak in such a way though W12 is socially higher than W17. Moreover, the imposition is quite high as the interlocutor steadfastly claimed that the sandals belonged to her. Speaker could argue but she would be regarded as impolite because having an argument with the old is not highly recommended in Minangkabau. The old must be respected. When they make a mistake, they should be informed politely.

Dialog (3)

Positive politeness strategy

Speaker: a woman who was asking a man to bring rendang to the house (W35, 65 years old) Interlocutor : a man (M7, 35 years old) Location: Panyalaian, Padang Panjang Speech context: Social context (+S), Distance between the participants (+D), Speaker more powerful (+P), Degree of imposition (+I)

W35 : *Nanda sayang, toloang etek maangkek randang ko ka teh rumah.*
'My dear son, Please take this *rending* home!'

M7 : *Nan di kuali, Tek?*
'*Rendang* that is in the frying pan, *Aunty?'*

W35 : *Iyo, anakku sayang.*
'Yes, my dearest son.'

W35 is a woman around 65 years old. She is well-known as a cheerful person and easy to get along with people both young and old. She is very skillful at cooking. People often invited her to be the chef in the cooking process for the wedding. Besides, she is a very humble and helpful person. Without being asked, she would come to help others, not only cooking but also anything else she could afford. Wherever she is, people will always be happy. She could create happiness without insulting others. She is also able to direct others in her way.

To request a man to take a heavy frying pan containing *rendang*, W35 used positive politeness. She utilized the strategy of inclusive for the address term *nanda sayang* ‘dearest son’. There is no blood relationship between them. W35 is the mother of M7. Even they are not relative. The use of this *nanda sayang* is the way to include the interlocutor as her family. She behaved as if the M7 was her son that she could ask to do something. Socially, W35 is older than the interlocutor. She was as old as the interlocutor’s mother. By using this addressee, W35 tried to minimize the range of the imposition. Normally, in Minangkabau, men are respectfully positioned. Those who are taking things are from low-class society. There is a group of people called *janang* ‘when there is a party, their position is in the kitchen, cooking for the grunts.’ However, in the current situation, this group of people has economically got better. They live prosperously. It changes their mindset toward their role in society. They would not want to be commanded nor requested to do the rough part in the cooking process.

Based on the information of *Bundo Kanduang* and the custom leaders, actually, there are some levels of people involved in the cooking process. The lowest is those who do rough work like grinding chilies, grating coconut, stirring the rendang in the cauldron or washing dishes. The mid-level is those who determine and tasting the seasoning. The highest is those who are spooning foods into the plates. These people are commonly from socially high-class people or *Bundo Kanduang*. The food will not be spooned yet as these people do not begin it.

M7, in this case, is not part of *janang* but he was a relative of the householder that helped the women in the kitchen incidentally. Implicitly, M7 may refuse if he did not want to help.

The positive politeness strategy used by W35 reduced the range of imposition. Both participants had power from a different point of view. Speaker was more powerful because she is much older than M7. M7 was more powerful because he is part of the householders. Both W35 and M7 successfully positioned themselves in communication. By utilizing *nanda* plus *sayang* and closed by addressing M7 with *anakku sayang* ‘my dearest son,’ the interlocutor happily met what W35 wanted. He even did it with a smile on his face showing genuineness.

Inclusiveness is one strategy that Minangkabau people do in communication. Commonly, inclusiveness is used in the use of address terms (Revita, 2013). For example, the pronoun *kito* ‘we’ is used to refer to the speaker ‘I”. *Kito* formally means you + me. However, to be polite, the speaker sometimes utilized *kito* instead of *ambo* ‘I’. Speaker wanted to reduce the power and shorten the distance in order M7 did feel insulted and threatened.

Each strategy of politeness was implemented based on the context and some considerations of the speakers related to power, distance, or rate of imposition. The occurrence of politeness strategies in the cooking process in Minangkabau is drawn in the following diagram 1.

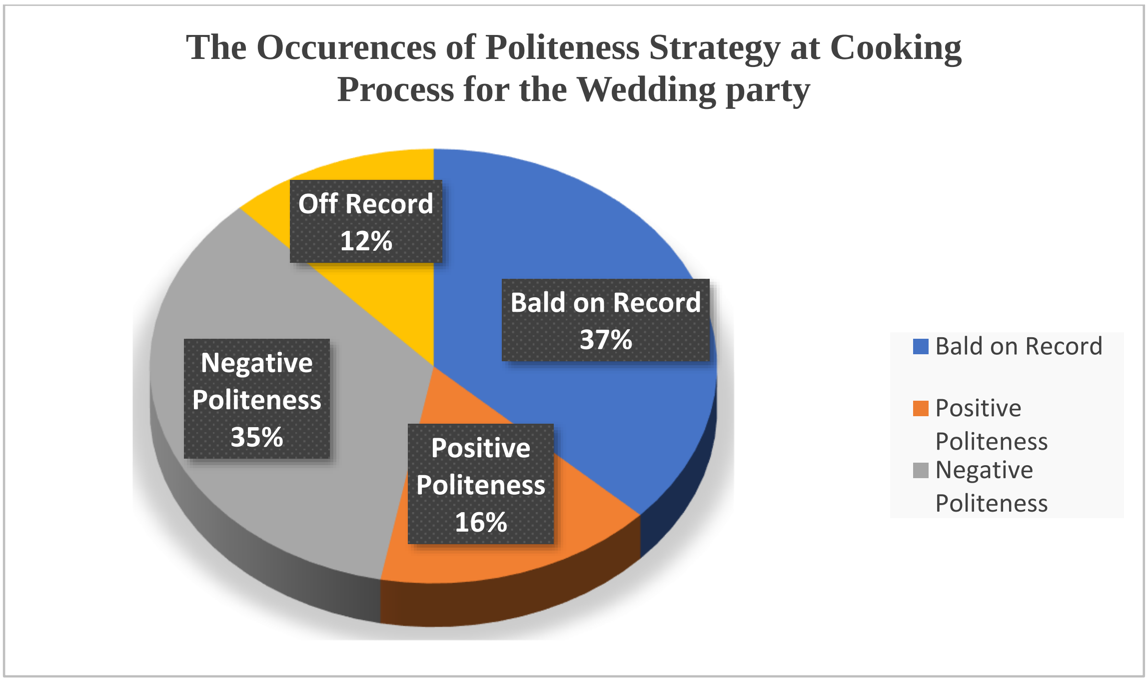

Diagram 1. The Occurences of Politeness Strategy at Cooking Process for the Wedding

Bald on record strategy occurs as the most dominant communication among the people involved in the cooking process for the wedding party. It is due to the situation where many participants were from a similar social class.

There are two factors that influence the application of politeness strategies. They are the payoffs and the sociological variables of circumstances between the speaker and the hearer. The gains refer to the result of the strategy and the sociological variables involve three variables: social distance, the relative power, and the rank of imposition. Bald on record strategy allowed speakers and hearers to clarify the intended meaning the speakers want to convey (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Both speaker and hearer, as a result, can avoid the danger of being misunderstood. Speaker can avoid being regarded as the manipulator, being misunderstood, and the speaker can also have the chance to give compensation for the face that has been threatened.

The negative politeness strategy is oriented mainly towards partially redressing hearers' negative face. It minimizes particular impositions on the hearers so that the speakers can satisfy the hearers" want to have his or her freedom of action in interpreting the utterances spoken by the speakers. By applying negative politeness, the speaker can show respect and deference toward the hearer for the FTA that he makes. Besides, the speakers can maintain the social distance among the parties involved and avoid the threats for potential face loss.

Positive politeness allows the speaker to satisfy the hearer's positive faces as if the speaker recognizes the hearer's wants and himself wants to be achieved. Besides, the speaker can avoid or minimize the debt implications of the FTA. As a result, a positive politeness strategy leads to mutual friendship, solidarity, and equal participants.

The off-record strategy allowed the speaker to avoid the responsibility for the potentially face-damaging interpretations. The speaker can avoid the potential FTAs by allowing the hearer to interpret the intended meaning of certain utterances themselves. The speaker can also give the hearer an opportunity to be seen as caring toward the speaker.

The choice of the politeness strategy was mainly on the consideration of the payoffs and relative power. Both the speakers and hearers involved in interaction had a distant relation. There are distance and different power between the participants. Even the power of the hearer affects the choice of the strategy used by the speaker. The degree of politeness depends on the speaker and hearer's position and the relationship between them.

Pedagogical Implication

To conclude, this study can draw politeness use in the traditional nuances of cooking process in Minangkabau local wisdom. Teaching politeness should include to perform politeness strategy that the inclusion local wisdom of Minangkabau tradition is the main teaching materials and teaching models. The values are also the exposure of teaching moral wisdom based on values where society is highly appreciated. The bald-on and off-record politeness strategies on Minangkabau tradition are topics that pragmatic syllabus should present in the teaching a language.

Conclusion

Politeness is closely related to how speaker saves one's face in communication. Being polite will be in line with the use of some strategies. There are many strategies politeness: bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record. Each strategy is used depending on certain considerations: power, social distance, and rate of imposition.

In a certain ethnic, like Minangkabau, politeness aspects not only concern the three considerations above, but there is a tradition, norm, and culture to be considered. Moreover, Minangkabau people have the rule of communication called as *kato nan ampek*. The implementation of *kato nan ampek* is another way of implementing politeness. If it is related to the three considerations, *kato nan ampek* is similar to power and social distance. These two factors are influential in selecting the strategy of being polite in communication. By involving body language, the Minangkabau ethnic implements politeness (Revita, 2009).

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Learning Oral Communication Skills through Dramatic Dialogues: A Case Study of Graduates of Pakistani Universities

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Abstract

Language, in any society, serves as a tool of communication among human beings. Likewise, literature also is helpful in communicating between author and reader. Language and literature are inseparable because author uses language to convey the desired message (literature).Therefore, both are an integral part of communicative process. They cannot be separated due to their interdependence. Real reflection and representation of any culture is not possible without literature and language. This research paper is an investigation to judge that how the dramatic performance of the dialogue in classroom is helpful in learning English as a second language. The study also aims at exploring that to what extent communication through ESL is helpful in conveying the desired message. Selected dialogues of the Shakespearean Tragedy *King Lear* have been delivered and performed by the two groups of forty students to judge their capability to communicate through dramatic dialogue. Pre-test and post-test applied to judge the performance of the students. It has been noticed that there was significant

improvement in students'post-test performance. The students had not only improved in pronunciation but also in their confidence level observed through their body language and facial expression. The data has been collected and analyzed through observation and recordings.

Keywords: *Teaching Communication, Dramatic Dialogues, English Language, Oral communication*

Introduction

Nowadays, English has become a globalized language spoken by people from different culutural and linguistic background particularly after the tremendous advances in technology (Alzeebaree & Yavuz, 2017, as cited in Alzeebaree & Hasan, 2020).

Language is a communicative tool that establishes a collaboration among individuals. Success in any sector and smooth dealing in the modern world depends upon a clear understanding of a received language data. Due to the advent of globalization, English turned out one of the significant languages working internationally around the globe. Therefore, to follow the pace of contemporary world, learning English as a secondary language happened to be a need of foreign populace.Crystal, D. (2003). In the field of linguistics varied techniques and methods were presented as models to help guide the language teachers in easing the learners' difficulties to learn English as a second language. Oral communication skills involve both the listening and speaking skills of a language and practicing dramatic dialogues is one popular method in trend to acquire proficiency in any language.Koda, K. (2005). Typically, it is heard from the professionals advising their students to watch movies or TV shows to learn a language. This activity of performing dramatic dialogues not only help the learners to get proficient in learning their target language but also get fluency in communicative speech because of practicing role acts. Shakespeare in his play '*As You Like It'* says that all the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players; and that they have their exits and their entrances which implies that humans merely act a role-play in their time. This assumption helps the teachers and learners to get acquainted with different experiences and scenarios in a formal ESL classroom. Moreover, performing dramatic dialogue activities provide them with an opportunity to precisely understand the language used in context and practice on fluency. The learners acquire an in-depth knowledge about the language and also practice its correct pronunciation through such exercises.Baker, A. (2014). According to Murphy, J. M. (1991), in his article "Oral communication in TESOL: Integrating Speaking, Listening, and

Pronunciation" highlighted that oral communication skills involve two basic skills of learning a language i-e speaking and listening with an aim to use correct pronunciation. Speech cannot be separated from listening and vice versa. Therefore, for every listener there is a speaker to whom he listens and responds. His article is aimed to provide knowledge for teaching English as a secondary language.

Furthermore, learning oral communication through literature has proved effective in many cases. The research "Developing oral proficiency and motivation through script-based and improvisational drama" by Guzel, M. C. (2017), aimed to highlight the significance of literatureutilization in oral communications to cope with the problems faced by highly demotivated students learning a second language through traditional methods. The researcher carried out a study to find out the effectiveness of the improvised script-based drama role in developing communicative skills. It is one of the spirited techniques used by teachers of ESL to motivate and help the learners learning English as a foreign language.

Aldavero, V. A. (2007), drew out several beneficial results of drama techniques in learning English. According to his findings one of the main problems faced by a learner is of speech or verbal expression. The researcher provided different activities and creative drama to his students which was proved helpful in practicing their communication and also in development of oral skills. He conducted a two-week drama project to provide a conducive environment for learners to exchange dialogues with each other in groups and to scribble their own drafts later for presentations. The learners were found to behave positively towards their projects and learn enthusiastically. Their confidence level, use of language, and proficiency was also marked. The learners chose their roles in drama according to their level of perception. He further, elaborated a conclusion at the end of the project that the students increased their communication skills and developed awareness of English language and vocabulary during their learning.

Athiemoolam, L. (2013), in "Using drama-in-education to Facilitate Active Participation and the Enhancement of Oral Communication Skills among First Year Pre-service Teachers", conducted a research on pre-service teachers. The purpose was to understand the success and failure of oral communication skill proficiency via drama-in-education. The researcher conducted a case study of 63 fresh language teachers. Drama-role was concluded to be a remarkable practice for learning English as a secondary language and proved helpful in enhancing the critical and creative skills of those pre-service teachers. It helped boost their confidence level as well.

All in all, a case study conducted upon Pakistani students proved that can be beneficial in their acquisition of English as a secondary language. Moreover, the dramatic dialogues selected from Shakespeare made it productive for the learners to understand literature vividly in their discussion sessions, using selected vocabulary from the text in their daily discourse, and also helped them to practice its correct pronunciation. Thus, the oral communication through dramatic dialogues in learning English as a second language proved a beneficial establishment in the field of TESOL.

Literature Review

Students sometimes encounter oral communication problems in a foreign language, and this can lead to a lack of interest in learning the language. So, it is necessary to master the skill of oral communication. In English language learning, oral communication is considered an essential skill for students. Students need to master this skill. Oral communication is a vital aspect of the teaching and learning of the English language (Supriya, 2018). Speaking is perhaps the most significant and striking element of a language. It is the most common type for exchanging ideas and information between humans (Máster&Curso, 2015).

Speaking is the most mentally demanding of the four language abilities (Guiora, 1972). Speaking is a part of everyday life that should be developed in subtle and thorough language by everyone. Kayi (2006) opines that speaking is the process of constructing and communicating meaning in a variety of ways through the use of oral and non-oral symbols. Effective interaction is to speak nicely and effectively with other individuals. Speaking is synonymous with life's progress since it holds a significant role both personally and socially (Ullas, 2008).

Mastering oral skills have become an integral part of English language learning. An EFL learner who has good oral communication skills can effectively convey their message to the targeted audience (Pauliková, 2018). Communication is the oral or written exchange of ideas between individuals. Byrne (1986) describes oral communication as “a two-way process between the speaker and the listener”. Such oral communication skills are considered useful in improving the learning of English (Staab,1992).

The role of drama as a language learning tool has been acknowledged in the last thirty years (Ulas, 2008). It was used as a training and teaching methodology in other fields before being introduced for teaching oral communication skills (Ashton,2005).

Dramatic dialogues are used as an instrument for initiating the process of learning a second language. It can offer new possibilities for speech skills to be mastered (Ronke, 2005). In improving the speaking abilities of learners, dramatic dialogues may play a vital part. Ultimately, drama in the language classroom is important because it provides a lens for learners to use their creativity. It builds upon the ability of students to mimic and express themselves (Davies, 1990). Drama is an alternative technique to develop the speaking skills of students. The drama will enable learners to express themselves in the spoken English language (Masoumi, 2018).

Dramatic dialogues aid in the development of oral skills in a classroom setting. It allows students to learn the target language. For language practice, it provides a practical setting. Learning English through drama makes the process of learning more fun (Samantaray, 2014). It is one of the teaching methods that help students improve their oral skills. It is fact that Pakistan is multilingual society where English language learning is not an easy task (Mahmood, et al,2020).

Dramatic dialogues provide spoken language with a rich source of understandable feedback. It becomes a strong teaching and learning instrument (Anton, 2006). Drama activities help students improve fluency in oral English skills. Drama helps students to look at language from a different perspective, from a more detailed linguistic point of view, to go behind the words to the acts they are to do in the language. The acquisition of speaking skills through drama helps to encourage students' linguistic abilities (Trivedi, 2013).

One of the core concepts of the social element of oral communication is the ability to speak fluently. The oral abilities of students in the English language have not been improved, so they feel unable to use English outside the classroom. Trivedi (2013) suggests that students should be taught English through drama. This will help them to develop good speaking skills. Drama dialogues also help the text to be better understood and better performed. Drama approaches combine mind and emotions and empower learners by enabling them to use their personalities and experiences as language production tools (Maley& Duff, 1978; Medriano & Bautista,2020; Zemni & Alrefaee, 2020). The drama practice helps students achieve their full potential by accurately relating the drama events while they learn the language (Arnold, 1999). While performing dramatic dialogues, they are expected to understand and empathize with the position they are assigned to this also helps them grow as an individual, and also to improve their oral communication skills.Dewi (2011) conducted a study on how the students speaking skills are enhanced with the help of dialogues. Class Action Research is employed as the technique for gathering data. The results reveal that teaching oral communication through dialogues is an efficient way of developing students' speaking skills.

Supriya (2018) surveyed how drama can aid in improving the speaking skills of students. This study utilized action research as its research method. This study utilized action research as its research method. The results reveal that with the help of dialogues, there was a remarkable improvement in the students' oral communication. Samantaray (2014) investigated the part played by drama in enhancing the English speaking skills. His research points out that using drama for teaching English does affect the learning ability of students, and it aids in improving their speaking skills.

Gill (2013) studied how drama helps in improving the English speaking skills of foreign students. The introduction of drama as a teaching method improved the performance of the students to a certain extent.Masoumi (2018) did a study on EFL learners on how drama as a teaching tool was utilized to teach communication. This study revealed that the oral skills of students did improve to a certain extent.

Ishak (2009) researched the part played by drama to develop oral skills. Observation and interviews were utilized as tools for collecting information from the respondents. It was concluded that drama helped in the development of the subjects speaking skills.In his research, Aldavero (2008) showed how drama activities promote oral communication. This study points out that drama techniques are useful in the enhancement of oral skills. Alam&Bashiruddin (2013) investigated how the English speaking skills of Pakistani public school students could be enhanced. According to this study, the traditional methods of teaching oral skills should be modified.

However, research on learning oral communication skills through dramatic dialogues has not been conducted on Pakistani students studying at the BS level in Pakistani universities. Therefore, this study explores the part played by dramatic dialogues in the learning of oral communication skills.

Research Methodology

This is purely qualitative research where data has been collected by using classroom observation as research method, where activities are recorded through technology (Audio & Videos) to observe the body language and pronunciation of the students. The researcher has participated as complete observer. This classroom observation is based upon formal and informal observation as the dramatic dialogues have been recorded at different occasion during class room observation. The students of M.Phil. English Literature semester 3   are under observation. They performed different plays in the forms of groups within classroom. They tried to learn oral communication through dramatic dialogues. These practiceweres completely based upon the proper learning of L2 through dramatic dialogues. The students have played the role of performer as well as of audience.   The recordings of classroom observation have provided the data to check the improvement. There has been observed a clear difference between the first recording and the recording at the end of the semester.

Data Analysis

Dramatic dialogues have a specific sound pattern, gestures, pauses, timing, dramatic devices and facial expressions during interpersonal communication. These dramatic devices help the audience in understanding the feelings and emotions of different characters in one hand, and also create dramatic environment on the other hand.Hardison, D. M., &Sonchaeng, C. (2005). Different dramatic terms and their use help in understanding the dramatic conversation smoothly. The oral communication between the sender and receiver can also be judged through dialogue delivery.

The dramatic performance of the students during classroom teaching also affects their oral communication skills. Rehearsal of the dialogue delivery has positive effect on their communication and pronunciation. These practices help in understanding the communication of the characters to audience.Harmer, J. (2007). One can argue that dramatic rehearsals during classroom teaching play the role of strategy of second language learning in its true sense. They learn the complete attitude and aptitude of the target language through dramatic dialogue. Non-native speakers of developing countries learn English through different genres of literature. InBoonkit, K. (2010). this global world of today the learners are learning English oral communication through internet as well.

In developing countries, understanding of the second language is possible through bookish knowledge and internet while its use comes through dialogue delivery. Hamouda, A. (2013)This dialogue delivery helps in understanding the practical usage of the target language, and aptitude of the natives' speakers in the usage of the language. Pakistan society is multicultural and multi-lingual society where learning English is slightly difficult as compare to learning English in bilingual societies (Mahmood, et al, 2020). A second language learner has to deal with three languages in society (mother longue, national language and target language). Gilmore, A. (2007). Students' role as a performers and audiences play a vital role in developing and enhancing communication skills of the students. It is also fact that seeing movies and dramas also enhance the communication and listening skills of the student.Boggs, J. G., Mickel, A. E., &Holtom, B. C. (2007). They feel engaged in audio-visual activities in Movie Theater. These practices help the students in enhancing their commutation skills in one hand and build their confidence on the other hand. With the passage of time the learner articulates the tongue same like the native speakers. It has been observed that behavioral changes also occur due to the performance of the students. They try to copy the complete culture of L2. This cultural adaptation leads towards the natives' cultural changes.

To convey the message properly, the sender and receiver must be aware from the culture of the target language. Otherwise, there remains a communication gap between the sender and receiverSomsai, S., &Intaraprasert, C. (2011). Gesture language supports in understanding the verbal message to some extent but not completely. The awareness of the culture provides a clear picture to the audience about different dialogues.Lindelof, A. M., & Hansen, L. E. (2015). It also increases the confidence level in performers and they perform and pronounce the dialogue properly and correctly.

The rehearsal improved the performers oral communication skills through improving pronunciation, pauses, timing, build confidence and silence. It also developed the interest of the audience because they understood the message completely.

The data has been collected from M. Phil 3rd semester students to teach oral communication through dramatic dialogues. The students were divided into two groups to check the performance of the individuals.

Oral communication refers to the interchange of ideas between sender and receiver. It is a two-way process in which both sides exchange their views (emotions and feelings), and opinions with each other. Oral communication is a part of our daily routine. Its importance can never be denied. This research is based on classroom observation where participants are the students of M. Phil English Literature. The course they are reading is Classical drama. Since the chosen universities are the universities and the students are non-native speakers of English language. The research is aimed at finding that when the participants are the task of performing the very assigned play written in English language,how and to what extent they are successful in delivering the meaning/message to the audience. They play they were assigned to perform was the one written by William Shakespeare *King Lear*. The participants rehearsed the play before their final performance. Following points are to be considered while making an analysis:pronunciation,dialogue delivery,body language/facial expressions,pauses, comprehension before starting the performance participants were found confused.

Pre-Test

As the participants were not trained actors, English was not their native language and they were supposed to deliver the dialogues of a classical drama;keeping in view all the above mentioned situation and status of the participants, following observations were recorded:

1. Lack of Confidencein performers' Speech

Participants had not learned the dialogues by heart. Therefore, when they delivered these dialogues, their facial expressions were not aligned with the dialogue delivery astheir whole attention was towards reading the text and they forgot to give attention to the dramatic situation as mentioned in the text. The performer who was playing the part of King Lear, found it difficult to learn long speech made by the king, so he preferred to read it from the book. It was the speech in Act 1, Scene 1 where king was telling about the division of states among his daughters. The speech comprised of nineteen lines, that the performer could not learn by heart. Resultantly he was found lacking in confidence, whereas audience could not grasp the importance of the scene in its real sense. This situation led to their loss of confidence as well as lack of audience comprehension.

2. Mispronunciation of Dialogues

Their dialogue delivery was found lacking in proper English pronunciation.Shakespearean plays are known for their rich vocabulary and they demand proper delivery in order to grasp theimportance of the word in its context.During pre-test, it was observed that there were many words which the performers were unable to deliver with proper pronunciation. Following are the few words and phrases which were mispronounced by the learners: “Hereditary”,“Burgundy “,“Majesty “,“Propinquity “,“Jewels “,‘'Tis the infirmity’. Their poor pronunciation resulted in lack of audience comprehension. Although, mispronunciation does not affect the meaning of the word yet it has its effects on the level of understanding of the audience.

3. Facial Expressions /Body Language

The performers were not up to the mark in terms of body language and facial expressions. The reason being the lack of coordination between performer’s ability to understand the meaning of the dialogue and their skill of presenting the dialogue with proper bodily movements and facial expressions. For example, a dialogue delivered” by the performer who was playing the part of King Lear was: “Peace, Kent!

Come not between the dragon and his wrath.” (Act 1 Scene 1,Lines*:* 126-127)

When the performer delivered this dialogue, it was observed that he could not coordinate his facial expressions with the word spoken. When he asked “peace”, to Kent, in order to make her calm. A comma, after the word peace, shows that there must be a pause and the performer should show this pause with the help of his facial expressions.But it was found missing in the performance.

4. Timing, Pauses and Silences

Their speech was stretched without proper stresses and pauses on words. For example, a dialogue delivered by Goneril “We must do something, and i' th' heat.”(Act II Scene 1, line 72) In this dialogue the word “i' th’, ‘in’ is not written in its full form. The performer during the performance was observed unaware of the fact that how to pronounce such word. He could not give the pause to pronounce the apostrophe.

Post-Test

Above mentioned analysis was a description of the performer’s dialogue delivery in pretest at the start of the semester. The students had performed the different plays throughout the semester, but as a test the students performed the same drama *king Lear* at the end of the semester. The researcher participated as an observer and recorded that play to compare it with the pretest performance. The following observations have been observed in the post-test analysis.

Categories	**Improvement**
Confidence level	80%
Comprehension level/audience interest	85%
Pronunciation	75%
Body language/facial expression	90%
Timing, pauses	88%

Conclusion

The above mentioned analysis conducted on Pakistani M.Phil. English literature students, was meant to explore the role of dramatic dialogues in improving their oral communication skills. As it has been mentioned earlier that research focused on the participants’ ability to comprehend drama dialogues, dialogue delivery/pronunciation, their body language and timing. Observation is divided into two parts: pre-test and post-test. It was observed that when participants were made to work on their weak areas through rehearsal of the plays again and again, a remarkable improvement was seen in their performance at the end of the semester.So, it can be concluded that mode of dramatic dialogue can be very helpful in improving oral communication skills of learning English language.

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Scholastic Performance in English between Tribal and Non-Tribal Students of Senior Secondary Level in Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) of Assam State, India

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Abstract

The primary objective of the research is to investigate the scholastic performance in English between students from tribal and non-tribal backgrounds of senior secondary level in Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) of Assam, India. Random Sampling Technique was used in selecting school students of senior secondary level and students at Junior colleges as respondents. The sample comprised of 1578 twelfth grade students of both genders from tribal and non-tribal backgrounds. Gender wise and category wise comparisons were done by using inferential and descriptive statistics like mean, S.D. and independent samples t-test. Performance in twelfth grade for the academic years 2019-20 was taken as sample of the study. Analyzing the results obtained from the statistics it was concluded that a noticeable difference was seen between boys and girls, girls from tribal and non-tribal backgrounds, boys and girls from the same tribal backgrounds, and boys and girls from non-tribal backgrounds of twelfth-grade senior secondary students, whereas no significant difference was found in case of boys from tribal and non-tribal backgrounds.

Keywords: *English performance, gender, tribal and non-tribal, senior secondary.*

Introduction

India is a land of different cultures, languages, and ethnicity. Language has always been a binding factor for the overall development of societies at large. In this modern era where English has become the bread winner of the masses, acquiring the basics of the language has become a compulsion for both tribal and non-tribal groups in India. Tribal in India lead a more complicated and challenging life having to struggle hard for continued existence and improvement. There is a big difference in the academic performance of students from various social backgrounds both from tribal and non- tribal framework. In comparison with the non-tribal groups, the tribal groups fall short in physical, intellectual, and social aspects of their living. Deprivation of normal basic amenities may have resulted in their short comings. Dr. C. R. John and Prof. B. G. Singh (2014) observes “In such deprivations, cognitive structure of tribal students might not have developed so they might not feel the need to learn and gain new experiences which resulted in intellectual weakness and this might be the reason that they show low performance academically”. (p. 1)

The Scheduled Tribes (STs) constitute a large percentage of population in India and hence for a country to have a unified development it is essential for the government to see that these tribes are inclusive of development. The society of our country is greatly stratified based on caste grading, religion, language, and geographical location. According to Census of India-2011, the number of Scheduled Tribes (STs) is 10,42,81,034, which constitute 8.6% of the total Indian population. These numbers speak for themselves that the Scheduled Tribes are the most economically backward and socially marginalized masses in India. In the state of Assam, a total of 3,308,570 people belong to the STs category, constituting 12.4% of the total population of Assam. (Census of India, 2011). Azad Ahmad Andrabi (2015) observes that “though the Government of India has been making concerted efforts since independence to bridge the socio-economic gap between the advantaged and disadvantaged groups, STs have remained socially, economically, culturally, and educationally backward because of their specific occupational and geographical conditions” (p. 1279). Aware of the situations that prevail in tribal India the study strives to find if those situations that prevail in the tribal areas have any direct affect on the language reception between the students of tribal and non-tribal backgrounds in Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) of Assam, India.

Definition of key words

Scheduled tribes are mentioned in the constitution of India, Article 366 (25) as, “such tribes or tribal communities or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to the Scheduled Tribes (ST’s) for the purposes of the constitution”. Although in the Article 342, Scheduled Tribes (STs) symbolizes the tribes or tribal communities that are notified by the President. The procedure that is followed to identify Scheduled Tribes in India is by following certain aspects like geographical location, economic backwardness, distinctiveness in language and culture, and the shyness of the contact to the outer world of the nominated group. The term 'Non-tribal' referred to in the current research at hand means those students who do not come under the category of any tribe.

Literature Review

The topic, academic competence and personality traits of scheduled castes and tribes, in India underwent a great deal of research. In the study of Rawat (1991), it was found that both non-tribal and tribal students stood on the same lines regarding their performance and general mental ability. A study design by Vijayalaxmi and Natesan (1992) on elements influencing academic performance and the results obtained therein indicated that boys had a lower mean academic performance compared to that of girls. Mavi and Patel, (1997) found a noticeable difference between students of tribal and non-tribal backgrounds in their academic performances. This difference can be noticed in their personality, intelligence, level of aspiration and academic performance, but not in the concept of their self. All the struggle to improve the rate of enrolment, retention, and level of performance of the tribal children in school education has not yielded results that may be categorized as being up to the mark. Rao (1999) in his study states that any welfare development program in India should be directed towards the most underprivileged and neglected groups in the society referred here as Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). These groups are economically backward and have been oppressed by the landlords and rural gentry over a long period. Therefore, the government needs to put in sincere efforts to help improve the quality of the life of SCs and STs. A major indicator in measuring the performance and learning outcomes of a child is by gauging the child's learning efficiency, knowledge acquisition, and social and moral growth (Aggarwal, 2000; Govinda, 2002). Most of the studies revealed that the factors related to physical infrastructure, medium of instruction, teachers and socio- cultural background of children have negatively been affecting the schooling of tribal. A number of studies indicated the low educational aspirations of tribal students are a key factor in school dropout and their low performance and it remains a matter of serious concern for government as well as educationist (Anitha, 2000; Kanungo and Akshay, 2005; Mohanty, 2012 Medriano & De Vera, 2020; Gatcho & Ramos, 2020). Li (2007) concluded that in most countries' girl students average score is significantly lower than their boy counterparts in the final years of secondary school in courses like mathematical literacy and advanced mathematics. According to a research done by Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), a skill-related gender difference among younger students were evidently found (Mullis, 2007). Vera and Vera (2018) concluded and recommended that "students' 'academic performance in English subject' is significantly associated to their listening skills, while 'academic performance in English subject' and 'exposure to mass media types' are significantly associated to their speaking skills" (p. 49). Maleki and Zangani (2007) had undertaken a study and found that "there is a positive correlation between English language proficiency and achievement in English speaking and writing subjects" (p. 93). Moreover, recent studies show that both in terms of participation and performance between gender, the gap that once seemed to be huge is bridging faster in favor of girls, (Jha and Kelleher, 2006). Kishor and Mahant (2010) found a considerable difference in the attitude of students towards studies among the tribal and non-tribal students and 'liking for studies' in 'dimension of student's attitude towards studies' scale. Talawar and Das (2014) positive pointed out a direct association between academic performance and mental health of secondary school tribal students of Assam, which is similar with the studies of Taviyad Manshingbhai (2013), and Verma (2013). Kumar (2020) concluded that the skills in English language is a vital factor in defining the academic performance of the pupils in various institutions. Gheyathaldin and Shishakly (2020) found in his study that English proficiency plays an important role in a student's academic achievement. Behera and Samal (2015) on their study on secondary school students found a noteworthy difference between students from tribal and non-tribal backgrounds, boys from tribal and non-tribal backgrounds, girls from tribal and non-tribal backgrounds, tribal students from rural background and non- tribal students from the same background, and urban students with tribal backdrop and urban students with non- tribal backdrop in their educational ambitions. Andrabi (2015) found a sizeable variance between tribal and non-tribal adolescents but an insignificant variation was noticed between male and female adolescents on their degree of academic performance, whereas non-tribal adolescents were found academically advanced than tribal students. Goerge and Rajaguru (2016) conducted, "Intelligence and Performance of Tribal and Non-Tribal Students in the Nilgiris District of Tamil Nadu, India", and concluded that the academic performance of the tribal children is similar to their counterparts belonging to the non-tribal community; whereas the level of intelligence of tribal children was lower than non-tribal children. They also found that individual intelligence has a direst and strong correlation with an individual's academic performance. Naqvi and Khan (2018) concluded that educational aspiration level among the students of scheduled tribe and non-tribal background was almost equal. They also noticed a similar trend in respect to their academic performances. They also found that both the boy and the girl students have the same aspiration towards education. However, Lalit Lalitav Mohakud (2013) found a significant difference in the performance of English language by students of the secondary level in West

Bengal. Moreover, they found a definite and significant association between the level of educational aspirations and academic performance of general category students, but in case of scheduled tribe students it is positive and very low and not significant. Little to no research is available in India as well as abroad in context that focuses on performance in English among secondary and higher secondary school students belonging to Tribal and non-tribal backgrounds. Thus, the present study focuses on to investigate the performance in English among higher secondary school students with reference to category and gender.

Objectives of the Research

The study is guided by the following research objectives.

1. To study and compare the level of performance in English between boys' and girls' students of twelfth grade.
2. To study and compare the level of performance in English between students from tribal and non-tribal backgrounds of twelfth grade.
3. To study and compare the level of performance in English between students from tribal and non-tribal backgrounds in respect to their gender of twelfth grade.

Hypotheses

The present study considered the following null hypotheses here under.

H_o1: There is no significant difference in English performance between boys and girls students of twelfth grade.

H_o2: There is no significant difference in English performance between tribal and non-tribal students of twelfth grade.

H_o3: There is no significant difference in English performance between tribal boys and non-tribal boys students of twelfth grade.

H_o4: There is no significant difference in English performance between tribal girls and non-tribal girls students of twelfth grade.

H_o5: There is no significant difference in English performance between tribal boys and tribal girls students of twelfth grade.

H_o6: There is no significant difference in English performance between non-tribal boys and non-tribal girls students of twelfth grade.

Methodology

i. **Methods:** The primary purpose of the investigation was to examine the academic performance in English of secondary and higher secondary level students of Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) of Assam. The study at hand has been planned and executed on the lines of descriptive framework. It aims at including the level of self-concept in respect to gender and classification. The technique of the inquiry was restricted to a descriptive and analytical approach, the approach of the report includes gathering, tabularization and significant examination of the data; and depiction of appropriate conclusions. Thus, explanation of the exploration is evidently merged with examination, association, distinction, explanation, and assessment.

ii. **Variables Studied:**

(a) An output or dependent variable i.e. Performance.

(b) Two independent variables i.e. Gender (boys and girls) and Category (tribal and non- tribal).

iii. **Population and Sample:** All the students of twelfth grade (higher secondary) studying in different government and private secondary schools, higher secondary schools, junior colleges and colleges in Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) of Assam (India), affiliated to State Board of Assam, constitute the population of the study. A sample of 1578 students of English stream was collected randomly of twelfth grade students in Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) of Assam for the study. Of the 1578 twelfth grade students, 998 were boys and the rest 580 were girls; 894 were tribal and rest of 684 were non-tribal. On the other hand, 32 higher secondary schools, junior colleges and colleges were randomly selected for the study. The allocation of the sample has been shown in the following tables.

Table-1: Displaying the allocation of sample session-wise.

Session	Higher Secondary Marks
2019-20	2020

Table-2: Showing the distribution of sample of twelfth grade.

Grade	Category		Total
Twelfth Grade	Tribal	Boys=531	894
		Girls=363	
	Non-Tribal	Boys=467	684
		Girls =217	
Total			1578

iv. **Analysis of Data:** The collected data were thoroughly arranged in tabular form and then analyzed with statistical tools.

v. **Statistics employed:** The information accumulated were subjected to various statistical techniques. The following is the list of statistics that were used in the study:

- Descriptive Statistics: Descriptive statistics were carried out to uncover the type of sampling distribution for the variable. Statistics such as Mean, and S.D. were calculated in order to achieve this purpose.
- Inferential Statistics: To ascertain if any substantial mean variance was there between performance and student groups within the variable quantity under consideration a T-test was adopted.

Results and Discussion

A hypothetical interpretation has been given in order to present the self-explanatory of the result systematically by using the results presented in the tables that follow.

Table-3: Difference in academic performance in English between boys and girls of twelfth grade students.

Grade	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of significance
12^{th} Grade	Boys	998	54.69	15.526	8.350	Significant at 0.05 level
	Girls	580	61.45	15.451		

It can be inferred based on Table-3 that the ‘t’ value attained is greater than the table value at 0.05 level. From this it is henceforth established that there is a significant difference in English performance between boys’ and girls’ students of twelfth grade i.e. girls have a higher mean academic performance compared to boys. Hence the null hypothesis **H_o1** is rejected.

Table-4: Difference in academic performance in English between tribal and non-tribal students of twelfth grade.

Grade	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of significance
12^{th} Grade	Tribal	894	56.69	15.091	1.381	Not Significant
	Non-tribal	684	57.80	16.743		

Table-4 shows that the ‘t’ value obtained is lesser than the table value at 0.05 and hence there is no substantial difference in English performance between the students of tribal and non-tribal backgrounds of twelfth grade. Hence the null hypothesis **H_o2** is accepted.

Table-5: Difference in academic performance in English between the students of tribal boys and non- tribal boys of twelfth grade.

Grade	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of significance
12th Grade	Tribal Boys	531	54.59	15.196	.217	Not Significant
	Non-tribal Boys	467	54.81	15.909		

Like in the previous cases mentioned before, Table-5 shows that there is no considerable difference between the mean value for boys of tribal and non-tribal background in twelfth grade (higher secondary) and hence the null hypothesis **H_o3** is accepted. The null hypothesis signifies that there is no considerable difference in English performance between tribal boys and non-tribal boys of twelfth grade.

Table-6: Difference in academic performance in English between tribal girls and non- tribal girl students of twelfth grade.

Grade	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of significance
12th Grade	Tribal Girls	363	59.77	14.413	3.417	Significant at 0.05level
	Non-tribal Girls	217	64.26	16.707		

It is clear from Table-6 that the ‘t’ value obtained is greater than the table value at 0.05 level of twelfth grade students and therefore there is a considerable difference in English performance between tribal girls and non-tribal girls of twelfth grade i.e. non-tribal girls have a higher mean academic performance compared to tribal girls. Hence the null hypothesis **H_o4** is rejected.

Table-7: Difference in academic performance in English between tribal boys and tribal girls’ students of twelfth grade.

Grade	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of significance
12th Grade	Tribal Boys	531	54.59	15.196	5.108	Significant at 0.05level
	Tribal Girls	363	59.77	14.413		

From Table-7, a significant difference can be noticed between the mean value for tribal boys and tribal girls of twelfth grade. Therefore, the null hypothesis **H_o5** is rejected. The rejection of the null hypothesis showed that there is a substantial variance in English performance between tribal boys and tribal girls of twelfth grade i.e. tribal girls' academic performance have a higher mean as compared to the tribal boys.

Table-8: Difference in academic performance in English between non-tribal boys and non-tribal girls' students of twelfth grade.

Grade	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of significance
12^{th} Grade	Non-Tribal Boys	467	54.81	15.909	7.117	Significant at 0.05level
	Non-Tribal Girls	217	64.26	16.707		

Like previous results it is found that there is a substantial distinction amid the mean value for non-tribal boys and non-tribal girls in higher secondary stage displayed in Table-8, i.e. non-tribal girls have a higher mean academic performance compared to non-tribal boys and hence the null hypothesis **H_o6** rejected.

Findings of the Study

The chief objective of the current research was to decide if any significant disparities are traced among the students from tribal and non-tribal backgrounds in respect to their English performance. The following were the findings that were revealed due to the application of descriptive and inferential statistics for the data:

- A substantial difference in respect to their English performance was found between the boys and girls of higher secondary school.
- A substantial difference in respect to their English performance was found between the girls of tribal and non-tribal background of higher secondary school.
- A substantial difference in respect to their English performance was found between the tribal boys and tribal girls of higher secondary school.
- A substantial difference in respect to their English performance was found between the non-tribal boys and non-tribal girls of higher secondary level.

It is evident by observing the Tables 3,6, and 8 that the level of performance was better in girls than that of boys; non-tribal girls performed better than tribal girls; tribal girls performed better than tribal boys; and non-tribal girls performed better than non-tribal boys in respect to their Academic performance in English. In respect to the findings above a concrete conclusion can be made about a substantial difference between the girls' academic performance in English as that of the boys. It also points out that the girl students showed more advantage to their boy counterparts in setting the proper level of academic performance in English.

Suggestions for Further Research

The sample taken in this study was delimited to Tribal and non- tribal students at the State Board affiliated schools in the State of Assam, India. Samples of other nature must be included in upcoming efforts to imitate and broaden the findings of the research, e.g., Tribal and non-tribal students from other Boards, other States, other educational institutions, students from others streams like nursing, vocational courses, and the like has to be included in the sample. Societal-economic status of the students in the sample, their parents, and their extended families has not been considered and hence it's affect on the academic performance could not be measured. Further investigations can also be made in the similar direction that was pointed in the current study. For example, researchers may further their investigation by asking the following questions:

- Is there a similarity between the strategies devised by students from tribal and non-tribal backgrounds in regard to the academic performance? Why? Why not?
- Is the development of the personality of the student been influenced by their cultural aspects?
- A comparative study can be conducted by examining the personal profiles of students from different ethnic groups from different states of the country.
- A research for ascertaining the difference in academic performance of different strata in the society.

i.e. Academic performance between majority and minority community, tribes of different ethnicity, and Castes of different communities may be conducted.

- Family Structure, Parental Behavior and Conservatism study in Tribal and Non-Tribal College students of Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) of Assam may be attempted.
- Other forms of tests can be conducted for much specific assessment on academic performance.

A qualitative and quantitative investigation can be made further on the merit of these questions. The field of emotional intelligence and personality will be enriched by answering these questions and will also enable facilitate more effective teaching and learning by knowledgeable educators.

Conclusion

The Govt. of India has frequently admitted and accepted that the tribal populations are underprivileged in terms of education and it has recognized to address the issues related to it. The government has taken many initiatives such as *Madhyamik Siksha Kendra, Siksha Bondhu, School Inspectors, Village Education Communities*, etc., to upheld the universal education a success. The study has examined the scholastic performance in English between the students of tribal and non-tribal backgrounds of senior secondary level of BTR of Assam state, India. It was established that there is a considerable distinction between boys and girls, tribal girls and non-tribal girls, tribal boys and tribal girls, and non-tribal boys and non-tribal girls of twelfth grade students. However, the study shows that there is only a marginal difference found in case of tribal boys and non-tribal boys. Further, the study reveals that there is a substantial difference between the girls' academic performance in English as that of the boys. It also points out that the girl students showed more advantage to their boy counterparts in setting the proper level of academic performance in English. So as to enhance the academic achievement in English of the boy students, measures are to be taken by the various stakeholders. The proclamation "each one can learn, and each one can achieve" will be proved in the true sense if every individual is emancipated mentally and all are able to reach their goal with proper level of performance. Therefore, all the students should be goal-oriented and genuine guidance and counselling should be afforded making him/her realized the importance of English in particular and overall academic improvement in general. It's very obligatory and inevitable to push up the tribal and non-tribal boy students and bring them up to the level of the girls in respect to the overall academic performance otherwise a balance success may not be predictable.

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The ‘English’ Problem: MD Analysis of Reporting World in South Asian Newspapers

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Abstract

This study seeks to analyze linguistic variations among the varieties of English used in press in South Asia, i.e., Pakistan, India and Bangladesh (erstwhile pre-partition British India) in comparison with British English. We argue that these three distinct varieties of English have effectively evolved in this varied region where English was introduced through colonization. A corpus of World Reportage (WR) of 288 texts was analyzed using Biber's (1988) multi-dimensional model. Regression method was used for the computation of factor scores while analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to find the linguistic variations in the texts. The results provide substantial evidence that each country has developed its style of WR. Notably, however, Indian WR falls closer to the British WR to produce informational, narrative, non-argumentative and abstract discourse whereas Bangladeshi WR falls closer to British WR to produce explicit discourse. Further, Pakistani WR is found to be a distinct variety in comparison to all. The findings suggest that English language teaching, particularly ESP textbooks should include various varieties of English so that the journalism students are exposed to various writing styles of WR. The corpus developed for this study can also serve as the basis for designing curriculum and textbooks for journalism students.

Keywords: *ESP, Multi-dimensional analysis, press reportage, register analysis, South Asian English, world reportage*

Introduction

Pakistan, Bangladesh and India share interesting history: Pakistan and India appeared as independent countries after winning independence from the British Raj in 1947 and Bangladesh got independence from Pakistan in 1971. As these countries were one before separation, they share largely the same cultural, ethnic, religious, linguistic and geographical backgrounds (Hickey, 2009). They also share the early history of the usage of English and its origin with one another. English was first introduced to these South Asian countries through colonization. During the British Raj, English gained political domain and socio-economic status so well that even after independence both the countries India and Pakistan (including Bangladesh known as East Pakistan then) maintained the role of English in the new states (Mahboob, 2003). English, which initially spread in British India because of socio-political and economic factors, continued to enjoy the status of one of the main languages in this part of the world. However, on later stages, various other factors like the influence of indigenous languages (Schilk et al., 2012), non-native English language teachers, religions, local cultures, etc., started indigenizing English in the sub-continent.

There are certain attempts at studying the localized Englishes: South Asian English (e.g., Tickell, 2016; Kachru et al., 2009; Brians, 2003) and to be more precise Indian English (Nandi, 2013; Gargesh, 2008, etc) and Pakistani English (Shakir and Deuber, 2018; Asghar et al., 2018) in comparison with British English. However, most of the research studies (like Islam, 2018; Quayum & Hassan, 2018; Huq, 2018) on Bangladeshi English are confined to English language teaching only. There are some attempts at comparing Pakistani and Indian Englishes (e.g., Taimur-ul-Hassan and Seyal, 2016; Saffee, 2016; Hussain, 2015; Batang, Dayag–Vecaldo, & Medriano Jr, 2018). In addition, previous studies have largely been limited to individual linguistic features to comparing one variety of English with British or American English. However, there is a need to explore linguistic variation which occurs in 'one' variety of English learnt at the same origin/ source when it crosses the borders of Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. The present study, therefore, is an attempt to explore the linguistic variations in written corpora of the selected South Asian regions, i.e., Pakistan, Bangladesh and India, which remained British colony known as the Indian subcontinent/ British India. The study uses Biber's multi-dimensional (1988) approach as a framework which investigates overall patterns of linguistic variations.

A Review of the Studies on South Asian Englishes (SAE)

English as an international language is used as a shared means of communication also known as lingua franca throughout the world. In most of the South Asian countries, the English language was introduced via colonization. However, with the passage of time, different varieties of English have emerged, roughly defined by the national borders between South Asian nations i.e., Bangladeshi English, Indian English, Nepali English, Pakistani English, Sri Lankan English. With the emergence of *Englishes,* researchers in South Asia started paying attention to the features associated with new *Englishes*. Many researchers worked on South Asian *Englishes* (e.g., Kirkpatrick, 2014; Schilk et al., 2012; Kachru & Smith, 2009; Baumgardner, 1996; Go Silk et al. 2020; Bedu, 2020)and based on their findings, these *Englishes* were considered distinct varieties.

According to Hickey (2009: 536) "[t]he dominance of English in the public lives of South Asia (except Nepal and Bhutan, which were not part of the empire) is a legacy of the British colonialism with its administration and the establishment of English in their educational system". He further adds that South Asia is a 'socio-linguistic' area which shared 'phonological, syntactic, lexical and stylistic features' to a great extent. Some elements influence the English of a particular country. Kachru et al., (2009: 178) assert, "Although it is fairly homogeneous across the region, sharing linguistic features and tendencies at virtually all linguistic levels, there are also differences based on various factors". Non-native English language teachers, religions and local cultures indigenizing English in the sub-continent are some of the factors that influence English language of a region. Kirkpatrick (2014) adds that the mother tongue of a speaker is also an important factor that influences his/her English. Estai and Savarabadi (2020) are of the view that EFL teachers with regard to EIL must be culturally aware. According to Schilk et al., (2012: 139), "[i]t is obvious that there are also historical and functional differences between South Asian *Englishes* contributing to the manifestation of linguistic variation across varieties of English in the sub-continent". So, with the emergence of the new varieties of English, these indigenized *Englishes* became the centre of the attention of many researchers. British Empire in South Asia (now Pakistan, Bangladesh and India, erstwhile British colony) is one of them.

The works of Rahman (1990), Baumgardner (1993) and Tallat (2002) are considered to be pioneering works on the Pakistani variety of English, but they are mostly impressionistic and attempt to establish Pakistani English as a distinct variety on the basis of individual linguistic features. Biber (1988) introduces a more comprehensive approach to study the co-occurrence of linguistic features instead of individual linguistic aspects. Many researchers used this approach to study registers throughout the world. For instance, Thompson et al., (2017) conducted a multi-dimensional analysis to explore the linguistic features in the corpus of journal articles in environmental studies. Egbert (2015) investigated the linguistic variations across three publication types, i.e., academic books, university textbooks and journal articles from two disciplines, i.e., Biology and History using Biber's multi-dimensional modal. There are a few studies that used multi-dimensional modal on the languages other than English. For example, Biber and Hared (1994) conducted multi-dimensional analysis on Somali language. Likewise, Kim and Biber (1994) conducted MD modal on Korean, Jang (1998) on Taiwanese, Biber et al., (2006) and Ascencon-Delaney (2014) on Spanish and Sardinha et al, (2014) on Portugese language. Moreover, Burt and Bauer (1996) and Westin and Geisler (2002) conducted a diachronic study of press editorials by using multi-dimensional modal.

With register coming into prominence as a major predictor of linguistic variation (Atkinson & Biber, 1994), various studies explored a number of registers to establish it as a separate/ independent variety of English. Researchers in Pakistan (e.g., Shakir and Deuber, 2019; Asghar et al, 2018; Shakir and Deuber, 2018) also used the model of co-occurring linguistic features and worked on various registers of English used in Pakistan establishing it as an independent variety of English.

As far as Bangladesh is concerned, there is no significant study which focuses on Bangladeshi English as a separate variety. Most of the studies (e.g., Islam, 2018; Sultana, 2014; Rahman, 2005; Arifa, 2000) either investigated the attitude of students in learning English language or teaching English skills including the methods for English language teacher's education.

Kachru (1997) identifies a number of Indian English features which are common in South Asian varieties of *Englishes*. The results of his study show that a sub-variety or register could be used according to its language function. Though some studies compare Pakistani and Indian English such as (Hassan and Seyal, 2016; Saffee (2016); Sajjad, 2015; Uzair er al., 2012) yet no study analyzes the linguistic features of Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi *Englishes* in comparison with British English to find out whether after independence these countries maintained the role and the usage of English in the new states or developed their own varieties of *Englishes*. This study aims at analyzing the WR of Pakistani, Indian and Bangladesh press in comparison with British WR. In other words, it attempts to analyze these Englishes in comparison with British English in order to explore how far the varieties of English used in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh are similar to or different from British English.

Corpus Compilation and Methods

The world news category within press reportage was selected as the register in focus of this study. The corpus developed for this study consisted of 288 texts (332,791 words). Data was collected from four leading newspapers from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh (erstwhile British colony) and Britain. 72 texts from each county were taken as a sample for the study (see table 1 for detail). The length of the texts varies from 800 to 1200. Their frequencies were normalized to per 1,000 words.

Table 1. Text sample and word counts in World Reportage corpus

	Pakistan	India	Bangladesh	Britain	Total
Text & Word counts	72 (88,288)	72 (77,734)	72(77,529)	72(89,240)	288 (332,791)

*Word counts are in parenthesis

Biber's (1988) multi-dimensional model (for details see appendix 1) was used as a framework for this study. Biber (1988) tagger was used to grammatically annotate the World Reportage corpus. In order to assign grammatical categories to the lexical items, all the text files (288) were run through the Biber tagger. Biber (1988) identified 67 linguistic features. These 67 linguistic features were categorized in 16 grammatical categories, viz, (A) tense and aspect markers, (B) place and time adverbial, (C) pronouns and pro-verbs, (D) questions, (E) nominal forms, (F) passives, (G) stative forms, (H) subordination features, (I) prepositional phrases, adjectives, and adverbs, (J) lexical specificity, (K) lexical classes, (L) modals, (M) specialized verb classes, (N) reduced forms and dispreferred structures, (O) coordination, and (P) negation (Biber,1988: 72). (For detail, see appendix 2)

For the computation of factor scores, the regression method was used in this study. The last step within the quantitative analysis was to quantify the linguistic variations among the selected countries. For this purpose, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. Finally, the communicative functions associated with each dimension were interpreted based on the linguistic composition of the dimension.

Linguistic Analysis of World Reportage

This section presents a quantitative and functional interpretation of World Reportage (WR) of Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi English press on Biber's (1988) five textual dimensions. It also compares WR of these countries and that of Britain in the linguistic space which co-occurring patterns define providing deep insight to the teachers of writing in journalism and media studies. So far as dimension 1 is concerned, it is labeled as Involved vs. Informational discourse. The linguistic features on positive polarity perform the function of involvedness. On the other hand, linguistic features on negative polarity together produce informational discourse. Different factors are linear combinations of the original variables and they represent different groupings of high frequency co-occurring linguistic features. Correlation can be positive or negative indicating the degree to which two linguistic features vary in relation to each other. While a large positive correlation shows that the linguistic features systematically occur together, a large negative correlation indicates a complementary distribution of linguistic features specifying that the linguistic features covary, in a manner that if one linguistic feature is present, the other must be absent (Biber, 1988).

Figure 1 shows that all the countries produce informational discourse in their WR, however, there is significant statistical difference among the mean values of all the countries. Linguistic features like nouns, preposition and attributive adjective produce informational discourse. In comparison with WR of other countries, Bangladeshi WR, with mean score (-19.82), produces the highest informational discourse. Pakistani WR with mean score (-19.06), is slightly less informational than Bangladeshi WR. Among these three countries, Indian WR register produces the least informational discourse. Figure 1 shows that the mean score of British WR is -14.9. When WR category of these South Asian countries is compared to that of Britain, Indian WR, with mean score (-17.14), has been found the closest to that of Britain in producing informational discourse on dimension 1. The difference between British and Bangladeshi WR register is the highest.

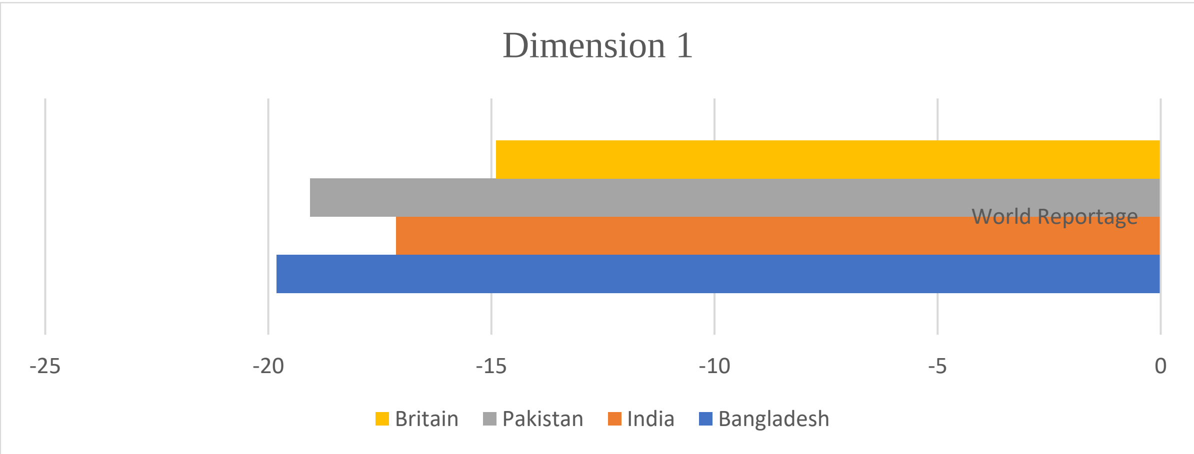

Figure 1. Linguistic variation of World Reportage of Britain, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh on dimension 1

Nouns, prepositions and attributive adjective are all informational in one way or the other (Biber, 1988). The normalized mean score of *nouns* in Pakistani, Indian and British WR (351.91, 352.68 and 345.35 respectively) is quite low as compared to Bangladeshi WR (360.52). Further, attributive adjectives elaborate nominal information and pack information using relatively less words and structures (Sardinha & Pinto, 2014). In Bangladeshi WR, attributive adjectives with normalized mean frequency of (57.70) show the highest score in comparison with Pakistani (56.52), Indian (53.77) and British WR (50.19) suggesting that

Bangladeshi WR is the most informational among the selected countries. Preposition is one among the other linguistic features that produce informational discourse. Preposition is considered to be "a device for integrating information into idea unit" (Biber et al., 2007: 74) and prepositional phrases serve to integrate high amounts of information into a text (Biber, 1988). The normalized mean scores of prepositions in Pakistani WR (126.23) is close to Bangladeshi WR (125.58). The mean normalized frequency of prepositions in Indian WR (120.95) and British WR (119.53) are considerably less than Pakistani WR and Bangladeshi WR.

In example (1), taken from Indian newspaper, *The Hindu*, the italicized words are the examples of linguistic features that together perform a function of producing information in the text. In the following example, nouns like *research, equipment, ICBM, rocket, Kim, year, day, country, UN, missile, sanctions, month, Pyongyang, test and Weapons* produce informational discourse. In the likewise manner, preposition like *in, under* and *on* also produce informational discourse. Moreover, the presence of attributive adjectives like *cutting edge, actively progressing, last stage, New year's Day, last month, largest nuclear test, successful ICBM test, significant step* and *secretive Pyongyang's weapons* enhance the presence of informational discourse.

(1) *Research* and development of *cutting edge* arms *equipment* is *actively progressing* and *ICBM rocket test* launch preparation is *in* its *last stage*," Mr. *Kim* said during a televised *New Year's Day* speech. The *country* has been *under UN* sanctions since 2006 over its *nuclear* and *ballistic missile* tests. The *sanctions* were tightened *last month* after *Pyongyang* conducted its fifth and *largest nuclear test on* Sept. 9. A *successful ICBM test* launch would mark a *significant step* forward for *secretive Pyongyang's weapons* capability. (The Hindu, India, January 1, 2017.)

Linguistic features like nouns (*China, Neighbours, Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines, Taiwan, Vietnam, Xi, head, serious, complex, Zhang Zhijun)*, preposition (*in*) and attributive adjectives (*South China Sea, self-ruled Taiwan, New Year's greetings, New Year's message, uncertain factors, Taiwan Strait*) together perform the function of producing Informational discourse. Example (2) is taken from British newspaper, *Daily Mail*. It includes informational linguistic features. The italicized words produce Informational discourse of British press reportage.

(2) *China* claims most of the *South China Sea*. *Neighbours Brunei, Malaysia*, the *Philippines, Taiwan* and *Vietnam* also have claims. While Xi made no direct mention

of *self-ruled Taiwan*, aside from extending *New Year's greetings* to them, the *head* of *China's* policy-making *Taiwan* Affairs Office *in* his *New Year's message* said that 2017 would see uncertainty. "Looking ahead to 2017, the situation *in* the *Taiwan Strait* is *complex* and *serious*, and the development of relations are facing many *uncertain factors* and risk," *Zhang Zhijun* said. (Daily Mail, Britain, January 1, 2017)

Dimension 2 is labelled as Narrative vs. Non-narrative concerns. While, positive linguistic features including past tense verb, third-person pronoun, verb-perfect aspect and public verbs produce narrative discourse, negative linguistic features produce non-narrative discourse. On this dimension, all the countries show narrative concern in their world press reportage. Figure 2 shows that there is a significant statistical difference between the mean scores of all the countries. In comparison with WR of other countries, WR of Bangladesh (2.05) is the most narrative. Pakistan (1.8) shows slightly less narrative discourse production than Bangladesh. The figure shows that Britain with mean score of (0.8) is the least narrative as compared to the selected South Asian countries. When the mean scores of WR of these South Asian countries are compared to that of Britain, India with the mean score of (1.55) is found closest to Britain in producing narrative discourse. In contrast, the difference between British and Bangladeshi WR is the highest.

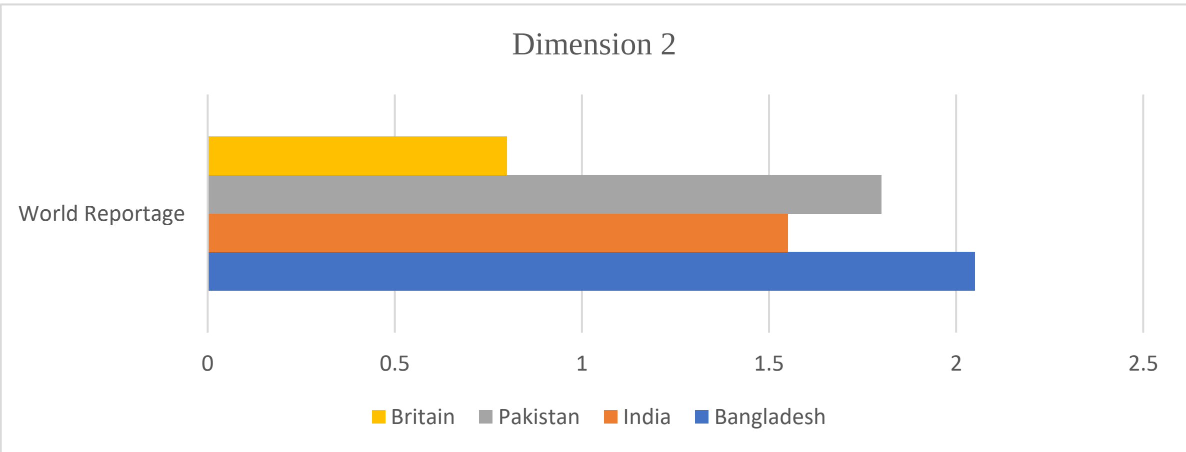

Figure 2. Linguistic variation of World Reportage of Britain, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh on dimension 2

Past tense verbs, public verbs, and third-person pronoun can be considered as primary markers of narrative discourse (Biber, 1988). Past tense verbs describe past events. The mean normalized scores of past tense verb in Pakistani, Indian and British WR (47.15, 43.48, 41.7, respectively) are less than the scores of Bangladeshi WR (48.50). Bangladeshi WR, therefore, is the most narrative amongst Pakistani, Indian and British WR. In addition, to past tense verbs, public verbs are also the markers of indirect speech (Biber, 1988). Bangladeshi WR with a high mean normalized score of public verbs (15.97) is more indirect in comparison with Indian (13.21) and British (10.71) WR. However, it is relatively close to Pakistani WR (15.24). Further, third-person pronouns mark reference to animate, especially human (Orsan & Evans, 2001) and narrative discourse heavily depend on it. In British WR, the mean normalized frequency of third-person pronoun (28.20) is the highest in comparison with Indian (24.56), Pakistani (18.57) and Bangladeshi (18.30) WR.

In example (3), the italicized words are the linguistic features that produce narrative discourse. Past tense verb is the main marker of narration. They narrate the events that took place in the past. Past tense verbs like *left, expressed, continued, was responsible, said* and *pressed on* produce narrative discourse. The presence of third-person pronoun like *she, he, his,* and public verbs like *expressed*, *remarks*, *said* also make the text narrative.

(3) U.S. President-elect Donald Trump on Saturday *left* open the possibility of meeting with Taiwan's President if *she* visits the United States after *he* is sworn in on Jan. 20 and also *expressed continued* scepticism over whether Russia *was responsible* for computer hacks of Democratic Party officials. In *remarks* to reporters upon entering a New Year's Eve celebration at *his* Mar-a-Lago estate, Mr. Trump *said*, "We'll see," when *pressed on* whether *he* would meet Tsai Ing-wen, Taiwan's President if *she* were to be in the United States at any point after *he* becomes President. (The Hindu, India, January 1, 2017)

In example (4) the linguistic features like past tense verb (*disagreed, sought, born, allowed, conducted, gathered*), third-person pronoun (*who*) and public verbs (*suggested, clarify)* show the dense presence of linguistic features that produce narrative discourse. Moreover, verb-perfect aspect marks action in past time with current relevance. In example (4), verb-perfect aspect like *has suggested* produces narrative discourse.

(4) Most Americans, however, don't think the country should show a preference for Christian refugees, as Trump *has suggested*. Some 56 percent, including 72 percent of Democrats and 45 percent of Republicans, *disagreed* that the country should "welcome Christian refugees, but not Muslim ones." On Tuesday, the Trump administration *sought* to *clarify* that citizens of U.S. ally Israel *who* were *born* in Arab

countries would be *allowed* into the United States. The Reuters/Ipsos poll was *conducted* online in English in all 50 states. It *gathered* poll responses from 1,201 people including 453 Democrats and 478 Republicans. (Daily Mail, Britain, February 1, 2017)

So far as dimension 3 is concerned, it is labelled as Explicit vs. Situation dependent discourse. The linguistic features on positive polarity like wh-pronoun-relative clause-object position, wh-pronoun-relative clause-subject position, pied-piping, coordinating conjunction and singular noun-nominalization produce explicit discourse. Whereas, negative linguistic features like adverb of time and adverb of place produce situation-dependent discourse. Interestingly, all linguistic features show explicit discourse production in WR. Figure 3 shows that there is a significant statistical difference among the mean values of all the countries. In comparison with WR of the other countries, Indian WR, with the mean score of (4.95), is the most explicit. Pakistan (4.7) is slightly less explicit than India and Britain (3.26) is the least explicit among the selected countries. When WR category of these South Asian countries is compared to that of Britain, Bangladesh (3.54), in terms of its mean score, is found closest to Britain. In contrast, the difference between British and Indian WR is the highest.

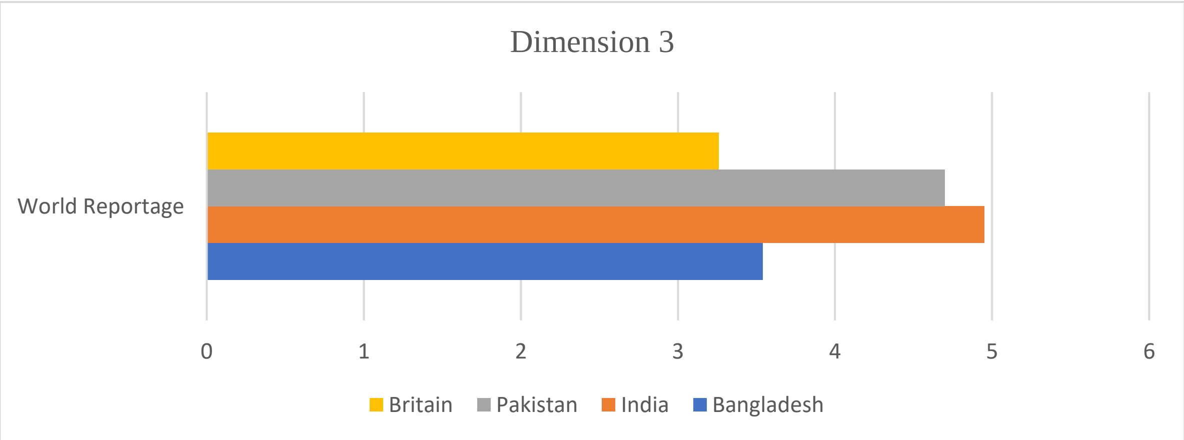

Figure 3. Linguistic variation of World Reportage of Britain, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh on dimension 3

Noun-nominalization and pied-piping are considered to be devices for explicit identification of referents in a text (Biber, 1988). Shireen (2017) finds that singular noun-nominalization is used to integrate information into fewer words. Nominalization, which is a primary marker of producing explicit discourse, occurs more frequently in Indian WR (68.29) in comparison with Bangladeshi (66.45), Pakistani (65.04) and British (54.92) WR. Further, pied-piping constructions are found more in written discourse than spoken discourse (Biber et al., 2007).

Each country shows the significant mean normalized frequency of pied-piping in their WR. Interestingly, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and British WR have the same normalized frequency of pied-piping (i.e., 0.49). However, the mean normalized frequency of pied-piping in Indian WR (0.38) is considerably less than Pakistani, Bangladeshi and British WR.

Example (5), from Bangladeshi newspaper, Daily Observer, shows the presence of noun-nominalization like *realising*, *developing, threaten* and Wh clauses like *Kim Jong-Il who died* and *Donald Trump, who took to Twitter*, produce explicit discourse.

(5) Analysts are divided over how close Pyongyang is to *realising* its full nuclear ambitions, but all agree it has made enormous strides since Kim took over as leader from his father *Kim Jong-Il who died* in December 2011. Kim Jong-Un said in a New Year's speech that Pyongyang was in the "final stages" of *developing* an intercontinental ballistic missile of the kind that could *threaten* US territory. The address drew a swift response from US president-elect *Donald Trump, who took to Twitter* vowing to halt Pyongyang in its tracks. (Daily Observer, Bangladesh, January 2, 2017)

Excerpt (6) from *Daily Mail* exhibits a high frequency of nominalization (*security, operation, fugitive assailant, foreigners, reporters, coalition, militants* and *borders*) and relative clauses (*who gave her name, who was in the club* and *all three of us heard that*).

(6) "At first we thought some men were fighting with each other," said a Lebanese woman *who gave her name* as Hadeel and *who was in the club* with her husband and a friend…"We heard the guy screaming Allahu Akbar (God is Greatest), *all three of us heard that ...* A massive *security operation* unfolded to track down the *fugitive assailant* or *assailants* and any conspirators…Reina were *foreigners* but only 21 bodies had so far been identified. He told *reporters* 69 people were in hospital, four of them in critical condition. Turkey is part of the U.S.-led *coalition* against Islamic State and launched an incursion into Syria in August to drive the radical Sunni *militants* from its *borders*. (Daily Mail, Britain, January 1, 2017)

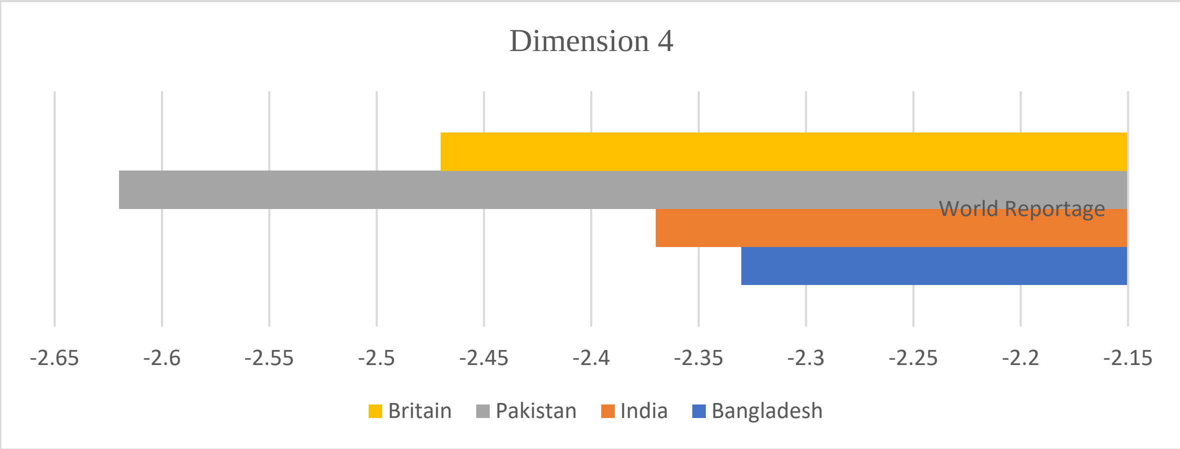

Figure 4. Linguistic variation of World Reportage of Britain, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh on dimension 4

On dimension 4, linguistic features like *infinitive verb, modal of prediction, suasive verb, subordinating conjunction-conditional, modal of necessity* and *adverb within auxiliary* on positive polarity produce Argumentative discourse. This dimension is labelled as Overt Expression of Argumentation/Persuasion. This dimension does not have any negative linguistic feature in Biber's (1988) study. However, in the present study *pronoun it, private verbs* and *hedges* produce non-argumentative discourse. Figure 4 shows that all the selected countries produce non-argumentative discourse in their WR, however, there is a significant difference between the mean scores of all the countries. In comparison with WR of other countries, Pakistan (-2.62) is the most non-argumentative. India with a mean score of (-2.37) is less non-argumentative than Pakistan. Bangladesh (-2.33) is the least non-argumentative among the other countries. Like dimension 1 and 3, on this dimension also India, in its mean score, is the closest to Britain (-2.47). However, the difference between British and Pakistani WR is the highest on this dimension.

Pronoun *it* marks inexplicitness and a non-informational focus in a discourse (Biber et al., 2007). The mean frequency of pronoun *it* in Pakistani WR (8.75) is quite high in comparison to its frequency in Bangladeshi (8.54), Indian (8.53) and British (7.95) WR, which suggests that Pakistani WR is the most non-argumentative among them. Biber (1988: 105) asserts, "Private verbs are used for the overt expression of private attitudes, thoughts, and emotions". They are the main markers of producing non-argumentative discourse. The mean normalized scores of private verbs in Pakistani (5.83), Bangladeshi (6.05), Indian (6.35) and British WR (8.06) suggest that these countries produce non-argumentative discourse in their WR. Hedges are markers of uncertainty (Biber, 1988). The mean normalized frequency of hedges in British WR (0.35) is considerably high in comparison with Pakistani (0.24), Bangladeshi (0.19) and Indian (0.27) WR.

Example (7) has been taken from the Indian newspaper, *The Telegraph*. It shows the dense presence of pronoun *it* and private verbs like *warned* and hedges like *but*. It indicates that WR from the Pakistani newspaper shows the presence of linguistic features which produce non-argumentative discourse.

(7) Actress Meryl Streep used her acceptance speech for the Cecil B. DeMille Award at the Golden Globes to call out President-elect Donald Trump for mocking a disabled New York Times reporter in 2015, and *warned* that a free press would need to be defended. *But* there was one performance this year that stunned me. *It* sank *its* hooks in my heart. Not because *it* was good; there was nothing good about *it*. But *it* was effective and *it* did its job. *It* made *its* intended audience laugh, and show their teeth. *It* was that moment when the person asking to sit in the most respected seat in our country imitated a disabled reporter. (The Telegraph, India, January 1, 2017)

Example (8) is taken from British newspaper, *Daily Mail*. In this example the words like *it, urged* and *address* are the features of non-argumentative discourse.

(8) The statement says anti-Semitic attitudes and national security fears were among the reasons for turning away Jewish refugees. The museum says there are legitimate refugees fleeing Syrian President Bashar Assad's regime and genocidal acts by the Islamic State group…*Its* statement *urged* that U.S. policy should *address* security concerns while protecting legitimate refugees. (Daily Mail, Britain, February 1, 2017)

Dimension 5 is labelled as Impersonal (abstract) vs. Non-impersonal (Non-abstract) style. The linguistic features on positive polarity like adverb-conjunct, agentless passive verb, passive verb, passive postnominal modifier and subordinating conjunction show the abstract or impersonal style in text. Linguistic features type /token ratio on negative polarity show the non-abstract or non-impersonal style of discourse production. Figure 5 shows that all the countries in their WR show abstract style of writing, however, there is a significant statistical difference between the mean values of all the countries. In comparison with WR of other countries, Bangladeshi WR (1.79) is the most impersonal. India with a mean score of (1.33) is less impersonal than Bangladesh. Pakistan (1.28) is the least abstract among the other selected South Asian countries.

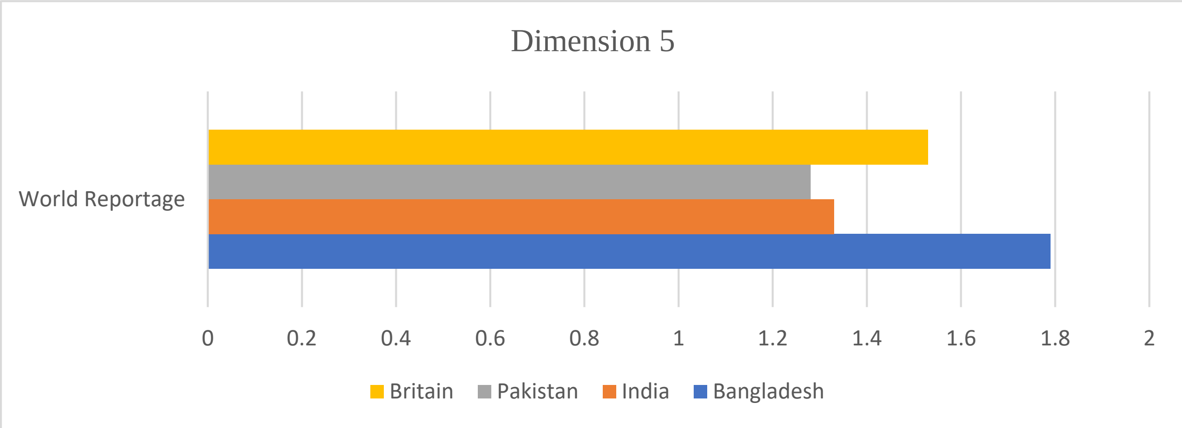

Figure 5. Linguistic variation of World Reportage of Britain, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh on dimension 5

Passive constructions, conjuncts and agentless passive verbs present abstract information (Biber, 1988). Passive constructions dropped agent, thus resulting in a more abstract discourse. In Bangladeshi WR, passives with a normalized mean frequency of (1.95) show the highest score when compared to Pakistani, Indian and Britain WR (1.71, 1.77 and 1.67, respectively). This comparison indicates that WR of Bangladesh is the most abstract among the selected countries. Conjuncts mark the logical relationship between clauses (Shaves, 2012) and they are the main marker of producing abstract discourse. The mean frequencies of adverbial conjunct in Pakistani (1.76), Bangladeshi (1.80), Indian (2.19) and British WR (2.16) indicate that the WR of these countries produces abstract discourse. "Discourse with very frequent passive constructions is typically abstract and technical in content and formal in style" (Biber, 1988: 112). In British WR, passive verbs with a normalized mean frequency of (9.69) show the highest score in comparison with Pakistani (8.68), Bangladeshi (8.93), Indian (8.43) WR.

When WR category of these South Asian countries is compared to that of Britain, India is found the closest to Britain (1.53) in producing impersonal discourse on dimension 5. The difference between British and Bangladeshi WR register is the highest. See extract (9) for example:

(9) Antonio Guterres took the reins of the United Nations on New Year's Day, promising to be a "bridge-builder" but facing an antagonistic incoming U.S. *administration led by Donald Trump* who thinks the world body's 193 member states do nothing except talk and have a good time. Mr. Guterres said the values enshrined in the U.N. Charter that

should define the world that today's children inherit peace, justice, respect, human rights, tolerance and solidarity are threatened, "*most often by fear*." (The Hindu, India, January 2, 2017)

In example (9), the italicized words highlight the linguistic features like *administration led by Donald Trump*, *most often by fear* that produce abstract style of information.

(10) I understand that the *country was founded* on immigrants," said Hoffman, who participated in the poll. "Please, I get that. But I'm worried that refugees are coming in and *being supported by* my tax dollars."…Most Americans**,** *however*, don't think the country should show a preference for Christian refugees, as Trump has suggested. Some 56 percent, including 72 percent of Democrats and 45 percent of Republicans, disagreed that the country should "welcome Christian refugees, but not Muslim ones. (Daily Mail, Britain, February 1, 2017)

In example (10), taken from *Daily Mail*, the presence of words like *country was founded, being supported by my tax dollars* and *however* are the examples of linguistic features associated with abstract style of discourse.

Conclusion & Future Direction

As referred to in the beginning, the current study compared the WR of the three countries, i.e., Pakistan, India and Bangladesh (where English was introduced through colonization) with British WR on Biber's (1988) five textual dimensions. On dimension 1, all the countries produce Informational discourse, however, there is a marked difference between the mean scores of Bangladeshi and British WR. As far as British and Indian WR are concerned, their production of Informational discourse is quite similar. On dimension 2, although all the countries produce narrative discourse, the difference between Bangladeshi WR and British WR is the highest. Indian WR falls quite close to British WR in its mean score. So far as dimension 3 is concerned, all the countries produce explicit discourse in their WR. However, on this dimension, Indian WR demonstrates a great variance in its mean scores from British WR. British WR and Bangladeshi WR are almost similar in producing explicit discourse. On dimension 4, all the countries produce non-argumentative discourse in their WR. On this dimension also, there is less difference between the mean scores of British and Indian WR and there is a large difference between the mean scores of British and Pakistani WR. On dimension

5, all the countries show abstract style in their WR. Again British WR and Indian WR are quite common in their abstract style of WR. However, there is a significant difference between the mean scores of British and Bangladeshi WR.

Overall, the results of World press reportage show that on D1, D2, D4 and D5 Indian WR and British WR are close in producing informational, narrative, non-argumentative and abstract discourse. Only on D3 Bangladeshi WR is close to British WR in producing explicit discourse. Pakistani WR is significantly different from British WR on all the five dimensions. Although English language was introduced to all the three countries, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, through British colonization, the results of the study provide substantial evidence that each country has developed its style of newspaper reportage, particularly WR. However, it is important to note that Indian WR is quite close to British WR. Further, Pakistani WR is a distinct variety as compared to Indian, Bangladeshi and British WR.

Future researchers may observe linguistic variations among the other sub-categories of press reportage of the selected countries or other South Asian countries. Further, this study is corpus-based. It might also be possible to go beyond the findings of the present study and probe the reasons behind the identified linguistic variation and dimensions. The findings and corpus of this study are useful for syllabus designers of English for specific purpose. While ESP teachers are well aware of the fact that the register of journalism is conspicuously different from other registers, they also need to be aware that this register shows further variation as each country has developed its own norms which is demonstrated through the findings of this study. Initially, the learners are required to follow the traditional models of journalistic writing. However, on later stages, they must be exposed to the varieties of journalistic writings developed in different countries through corpus-based English language teaching so that they can analyse the actual patterns of writing in journalism.

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Appendix 1

Co-occurring Linguistic Features on Five Textual Dimensions of 1988 MD analysis of Press Reportage

Dimension 1: Involved vs. Informational Discourse

Positive Feature

Private Verbs

'That' deletion

Verb (uninflected present, imperative & third Person)

Second Person pronoun/Possessive

Verb 'Do'

Demonstrative Pronoun

Adverb/Qualifier-Emphatic (e.g., just, really)

First person pronoun/possessive

Pronoun 'it'

Verb 'Be' (uninflected present tense, verb, and auxiliary)

Sub-ordinating Conjunction-Causative

Discourse Particle

Nominal Pronoun

Adverbial –Hedge

Adverbial/Qualifier-Amplifier

Wh-question

Modals of Possibility

Co-ordinating conjunction-clausal connector

Wh-clause

Stranded Preposition

…………………………

Negative Features

Dimension 3: Explicit Vs. Situation Dependent Discourse

Positive Feature

Wh-pronoun-relative clause-object position

Wh-pronoun-relative clause-subject- position

Wh-pronoun-relative clause-object position

With prepositional fronting (pied-piping)

Nominalization

Coordinating Conjunction –phrasal connector

Singular noun-nominalization

…………………………

Negative Features

Adverb of time

Adverb of Place

Adverb Other

Dimension 4: Overt Expression of Argumentation /Persuasion

Positive Features

Infinitive Verb

Modal of Prediction

Persuasive Verb

Subordinating conjunction-conditional

Modal of Necessity

Adverb within auxiliary

…………………………

Negative Features

(no negative features)

Nouns (excluding gerund

Preposition

Attributive Adjective

Dimension 2: Narrative vs. Non narrative Concerns

Positive Feature

Past Tense Verb

Third person pronoun (except ‘it’)

Verb-perfect Aspect

Public Verbs

…………………………

Negative Features

(No negative Features)

Dimension 5: Impersonal (Abstract) VS. Non impersonal (Non-Abstract Style)

Positive Features

Adverbial-conjuncts

Agentless Passive verb

Passive verb + by

Passive Post nominal modifier

Subordinating conjunction-Other

…………………………

Negative Features

(no negative features)

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Correcting the Wrongs of the Past: Ethics of Love and Continuity Countering the Abstraction and Erasure of the Other in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

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Abstract

This article situates Arundhati Roy's complex and multilayered novel *The God of Small Things* (1997) within the tenets and subtle nuances of ecofeminism and thus featuring the intersections between the degradation of nature and the oppression of women and other "subaltern" groups. Ecofeminism, our theoretical parameter, pertains to most sociopolitical and cultural dynamic tensions rendered by the transformation of sustainable interactions with land from a central part of the ecosystem (that should be venerated and even sanctified) into an object or a commodity that has a cash value. Most of the existing scholarship on the novel has focused on the ecofeminist and postcolonial implications without paying attention to Roy's cogent postulation vis-a-vis the role of love as a panacea for all social and cultural inequities and ills. Roy does not opt for revolution or radical upheavals in order to redress the wrongs of the past and mitigate institutionalized orders and norms. Rather, she dwells on the centrality of "small things" as initiating and bringing about gradual yet comprehensive transformations in people's awareness of the Other, be it nature or those who subsist on it. Against hierarchical and patriarchal structures, love overcomes the rift between the self and the other, so it disrupts ideologies of exploitation, polarization, and abstraction, because it blurs the demarcations of gender, class, and caste. Contending that ecofeminism is primarily a domain of empathy between the center and the periphery, the researchers explore love in the broadest sense of the word. Espousing a compounded nexus of all forms of oppression, Roy, in line with ecofeminist configurations and hypotheses, looks at the world with holistic eyes divulging the deep intricacies of all organisms and how they are bound up with each other and how we cannot separate one entity from the other.

Keywords: *Arundhati Roy, love, ecofeminism, intersections, nature, history, caste, gender.*

Introduction

Ecofeminism as a Theory of Love:

Adams (1993) warns against consciously or unconsciously relegating women to the realm of nature on the ground that such an association, instead of elevating nature, degrades female figures to the disadvantaged ground of nature, and nature to the realm of the sinister. She terms this process as "transference" or "metaphorizing" and rejects such a romanticized pairing of women and nature, for this correlation adds insult to injury and mutes women by taking them to the level of nature instead of elevating both parties. Adams (1993) "demonstrated how metaphors of patriarchy simultaneously feminize nature and naturalize women" (p. 1). This problematic bond places ecofeminists in disarray, for it aggravates the already docile status of women in patriarchal cultures and thereby yielding more prejudice against women and nature. Patriarchal forces and agents have immensely subordinated and stigmatized women and nature, especially when they are juxtaposed as our mothers that should always show empathy and love unconditionally.

In theory, representing nature as the "caring mother" humanizes nature, but in practice, these links "will not achieve the desired aim of making our behaviors more environmentally sound, but will instead help to maintain the mutually supportive, exploitive stances we take toward our mother and toward our environment" (Roach, 1996, p. 53). Thus, nature and women are supposed to unreservedly concede and sacrifice because they are culturally and socially trained to be in such a pigeonhole. In order to counteract these reductive discourses binding women and nature, Roach (1996) points out that thinkers must “see clearly the Earth as Earth and not as the mother or female we have imagined the earth to be” (p. 55). The researchers cautiously utilize ecofeminism (ecological feminism) as a theory of love deconstructing the dialectical pairs blamed for the spread of Western metaphysics polarizing the world based on gender and class, guaranteeing that they do not fall prey to the paradigms they are trying to debunk. Thus, they reject a romanticized deep ecologist reckoning of nature as a female figure, because such a parallel legitimizes bias against both entities. Processes of abstraction, "transference," degradation, stereotyping, and sometimes idealization have served as pretexts for the exploitation and manipulation of women, people of color, and colonized countries. (We frequently use Gramsci's wide-ranging reference to these groups as "subaltern")

The underlying premise of ecofeminism is that no theory (by itself) is capable of yielding a full investigation of the myriad complications and injustices prompted by patriarchy in its various forms. Rather, these two critical domains complete each other and thus, in symbiosis, redeem the shortcomings of any single theory per se. These theories comprise a syllogism vis-a-vis other reductive or reactionary critical theories that engender more divisions among different organisms. Adopting a blend of these theories eliminates any temptations and diminutions, and it also naturalizes feminism and expands its scope, not to mention that these approaches guard against separatist feminism, because such a practice contradicts the very spirit of these domains. The two approaches, intertwined, eschew patriarchal supremacies and fallacies of subsumption, exclusion, or death of the Other endorsing a continuity and an interconnectedness with the Other. If anything, ecofeminism adopts a holistic point of view.

Many ecofeminists have fulminated against the underpinnings that contribute to the compounded domination of women, non-dominant groups, and nature. Plumwood (1993), for instance, hypothesizes that ecological degradation originates from Western dualisms or ontologies that divide the world into polarizations of subjects and objects, transforming humans' view of nature from a spiritual living organism into an object of consumption. Plumwood (1993) attributes these distorting perceptions and ideologies to Manichean ways of thinking that render the other as less rational ending up objectifying the other and stripping it off any intrinsic value. She advocates dismantling these dualistic ideologies in order to undo injustices dictating relations among the components of the dryad, arguing for "a non-hierarchical concept of difference" among all entities (Plumwood, p. 60).

Concurring with Plumwood, Hawkins posits that Western dichotomies constitute the locus behind the many discontinuities and injustices pervading the world and thus place non-dominant groups and nature at the bottom of the sociopolitical ladder. Warren (1994) tackles the "unjustifiably dominated" as "those who are excluded, marginalized, devalued, pathologized or naturalized . . .in Western systems of unjustified domination-subordination relationships" (xiv), adverting to them as "Others." These others, according to Warren, encompass "women, people of color, children, and the poor and . . .animals, forest, and the land" (xiv).

Literature Review and Introduction:

Kunhi and Kunhi (2017) analyze the novel as a perfect example on ecofeminism where Roy "utilizes various techniques reflecting modes of revolt of Nature in terms of the muted group theory and backchannel communication motifs" (p. 1). The authors reiterate that women and nature are intertwined and thus "function on a parallel plane" (p. 1). They affirm that nature is a recurring motif in the novel and demonstrate the manifold analogies between Ammu and "the river that functions as a microcosm of the ecosystem" (p. 1). Sonali Das (2018) evaluates the novel in terms of postcolonial subalternity which, for her, takes a number of levels and angles in light of the Indian/British dichotomies. She explicates that the British child Sophie Mol is an embodiment of British magisterial dominance and prestige in India, so she is given a "glorifying funeral ceremony" in contrast to "the irreverent, unceremonial deaths and burials of Valutha and Ammu" (pp. 42-43). The researchers are in accord with the above arguments, but they pay more attention to loving the other as the most fundamental discursive remedy contesting and curbing ideologies of imperialism and patriarchy on all levels.

Teeming with dynamic characters whose struggles, recuperations, and dissent to totalizing logic negotiate vital questions in India, *The God of Small Things* is highly celebrated for its intricately interwoven multiple narratives and for the various possibilities of meaning and interpretations its text engenders. Set in post-independent, postcolonial India, the novel exposes the fiasco of post-independence dialogics between those in power and the subaltern groups. It concomitantly inaugurates the success of these interactions between the center and the periphery where limitations are transcended because of love. Here, women, non-dominant groups, and nature bear the brunt of local and imperial ideologies implicated in forces of patriarchy, ones that suppress women, destroy nature, and marginalize and inferiorize the "Other."

The novel appeals to ecofeminist tones, underpinnings, and architectonics overcoming subsumptive ideologies and authorities of patriarchal “dysfunctional” systems in search for voice and representation. Roy's text mainly elucidates the whole problematics of voice and point of view in the sense that it is not a whole view, but a *point* of view, nothing more: a legacy of the Indian past and a dilemma of its present political and social reality. This situation is manifested in the transformations the voices of the main characters have undergone and are still undergoing.

The caste system, further intensified and exacerbated by neoliberal policies ravaging the ecosystem, remains a divisive paradigm in Indian society and Indian culture. Thus, most of the sociopolitical problems in Indian culture are attributed to unethical infringements on communal natural resources combined with the iniquitous caste system which was officially outlawed in 1949, but practically it still perpetuates divisions in India. Admitting that overthrowing the caste system and gender double standards involves a strenuous and pertinacious struggle, Roy holds that only love can purge such monologic acts from people's minds. Practiced long before British colonialism in India, the caste system, as most critics speculate, was further adapted and nurtured by the British colonial powers which played a central role in keeping women and the poor in an inferior position. According to Tickell (2007), "Alongside the oppression of women, the most enduring form of social inequity in India is the caste system” (p. 81). Here, the novel foregrounds the caste system as a prevalent sociopolitical mechanism positioning subaltern groups at the bottom of the sociopolitical ladder. Shukla and Bareli (2009) declare that “[e]ven after attaining political autonomy, there has been no improvement in the status they hold. Caste still continues to play a highly important role in shaping the lives of the masses. Today there are about 250 million Untouchables" (p. 963).

Problems of social justice, caste, and gender are, in part, the repercussions of a fundamental capitalist and imperialist cupidity for the accumulation of money and power at the expense of the subalterns Hence, addressing the disproportionate distribution of wealth and power resulting from ruthless encroachments on the ecosystem and "maldevelopment" requires a holistic look at the root causes of these quandaries which tend to be triggered by the same forces. Overall, we cannot separate the economic wellbeing or social justice from morality and our ethics (love) toward all life forms.

The God of Small Things, through its multiple plots and complex, multifaceted depictions and characters, interweaves a canvas of a frame story which makes the major story of the novel.

The primary narrative, stretching for twenty-four hours, involves Rahel's return to Ayemenem, a small Indian village, from the United States. The second dominant narrative, lasting for two weeks, begins with the arrival of Sophie Mol, the cousin of Rahel and Estha in India in 1969 and culminates several days after Sophie drowns dead in the Meenachal River. These two shifting frame stories, reverberating with larger sociopolitical implications, alternate, diverge, and eventually converge in a uniquely crafted manuscript, one that uses the story of the affluent, landowning Syrian Christian Ipe family as a microcosm for the story of India.

Despite their seeming linear alternations, these two narratives have a fragmented, nonlinear time frame with a temporal gap between them—they bounce between linearity and nonlinearity and ephemerally shift to serve the central themes of the novel.

For example, the frame story chronologically recounts Rahel's return to Ayemenem in order to "reunite" with her twin brother Estha and ends with them sleeping together. This reunion between the twins is emblematic of the interdependence of all life forms. Organisms (nature is included) are as bound as Rahel and Estha, so their "incest" is highly symbolic: "Rahel never wrote to him [Estha]. There are things that you can't do-like writing letters to a part of yourself. To your feet or hair. Or heart" (p. 156). In contrast, the second main narrative takes Sophie's funeral as its starting point and concludes with Valutha and Ammu's inter-caste liaison, conceived as a violation against the generally approved caste system in India. The affair between Ammu and Valutha is a process in which "the unthinkable became the thinkable and the impossible really happened" (p. 31). Valutha is an untouchable toiling in the pickle factory of the family, so Ammu's romance with him transcends barriers of class and caste and forges a path of optimism against hierarchal ethics of effacement and obliteration. In Ammu's words, "When you hurt people, they begin to *love* you less. That's what careless and mordant words do. They make people *love* you a little less" (Our emphasis, p. 107). Ammu hopes that Valutha will share her passion against the ridiculous social standards: "She hoped that under his careful cloak of cheerfulness he housed a living, breathing anger against the smug, ordered world" (p. 166). Likewise, rising above the superimposed fixities of caste and class, the twins Estha and Rahel carve a warm fatherly relationship (based on mutual love) with Valutha. Roy's use of manifold techniques and frameworks allows for parallel scenes at the end of the novel, unveiling the social and cultural rules shaping social interactions and, as Roy puts it, dictating "who should be loved. And how. And how much" (p. 33).

Here, the novel prioritizes the role of love as the only force capable of aesthetic productivity, as an act of appreciation and reciprocal reverence. Only in correlation with the loved and esteemed party is fullness of the manifold possible. Love, in this context, precludes any attempt at objectification or abstraction, for abstraction is tantamount to erasing and even murdering the abstracted Other. Just like stereotyping and stigmatization, abstraction thwarts any intimacy with the abstracted or ossified party, robbing the other of its animism and spirit and legitimizing forms of violence against it. Such an approach toward the other entails a denial of the other's right to express itself, depriving it of its weight and merit.

Because of lack of love, women within the upper class are also marginalized and their capacities are undermined. Ammu, the most unfaltering and accommodating character who has developed her proclivity for equality, refuses to internalize norms imparted by her society and feels alienated from her captious parents Pappachi and Mammachi because of their gender double standards. For instance, while Ammu is deprived of pursuing her college education, her brother Chacko is sent to Oxford. Ammu is scorned for getting a divorce whereas Chacko is solaced. Worst of all, exasperated, Mammachi and Baby Kochamma immure Ammu in her bedroom and chastise her for desecrating the honor of the family by having an affair with an untouchable. In fact, Mammachi goes into a state of frenzy when she discovers the affair between her daughter and an untouchable, assailing and demonizing her daughter and her lover.

"Mammachi "thought" of her daughter naked, coupling in the mud with a man who was nothing but a filthy *coolie*. She imagined it in vivid detail: a Paravan's coarse black hand on her daughter's breast. His mouth on hers. His black hips jerking between her parted legs. The sound of their breathing. His particular Paravan smell. Like animals, Mammachi thought and nearly vomited." (p. 131)

The love affair of Ammu and Valutha, an unconscionable transgression against the laws of the caste system, "climbed to unaffordable heights"—resulting in the murder of Valutha and the exile of Ammu. While at the same time, she boastfully justifies her son's need to have "libertine relationships with the women in the factory" (p. 168). Shockingly, Baby Kochamma accepts Mammachi's explanation and the idea that Mammachi bribes untouchable women, whom she deems naïve malleable tools in the hands of the upper class, so that they will continue to have sex with her son and comfort him. Likewise, the novel permeates with aspersions and obloquies demeaning untouchables and equating them with low animals. Mammachi, for instance, uses reproachful language with Vellya Paapen, the father of Valutha, just because she knows his social stratum, giving herself the right to stigmatize and offend him. She shouts at him when he comes to confess his son's relationship with Ammu: "Drunken dog! Drunken Paravan liar!" (p. 256).

Challenging gender double standards and refuting disparaging images of women as sentimental and irrational, Ammu salvages an independent identity and voice driving her to escape her parents' suffocating atmosphere. However, after getting married, she feels more humiliated and objectified, especially when her misogynist husband tries to use her body in order to save his job. Unlike most other characters who blindly accept the rules of the caste system, Ammu and her children refuse to abide by its constraints and go beyond its revulsions and antagonisms. Ammu and her children are not welcome back in Aymenem because her children are seen as a mixture of Hindu and Christian faith in a strict Christian family that rejects interfaith marriages and vilifies those belonging to the lower stratum.

Nonetheless, Ammu's socially condemned bond with Valutha inaugurates a dialogical discourse with him, transcending the divides and barriers of culture and tradition. This affiliation proves that discourses pitting the self against the non-self are illusory and not natural, or at least not as wide as dualistic philosophies hold. The boundaries can always be surpassed, just to reveal that "pure self" is a fallacy. The dialogical experience will manifest the otherness of the self and the centrality of the other, so love is not a consequence of lack that makes it instrumental. Ethics of abstraction and rejection of the other are monologic and one-sided, engendering more polarizations and divisions. Protesting against harmful traditions, “Ammu said that human beings were creatures of habit, and it was amazing the kind of things one could get used to” (p. 50). Dussel (1998) suggests breaking through what he calls "reductionistc fallacies," holding that “Philosophy, especially ethics, needs to break with this reductive horizon in order to open itself to the ‘world,’ the ‘planetary’ sphere” (p. 4). Here, Roy enacts a trenchant critique of preserving negative traditions and social hierarchies of the past, underlining the inevitability of change, but this disruption of the status quo will not take place all of a sudden. Rather, it begins with riling "small things." To quote,

"Perhaps it’s true that things can change in a day. That a few dozen hours can affect the outcome of whole lifetimes. And that when they do, those few dozen hours, like the salvaged remains of a burned house—the charred clock, the singed photograph, the scorched furniture—must be resurrected from the ruins and examined. Preserved. Accounted for. Little events, ordinary things, smashed and reconstituted. Imbued with new meaning. Suddenly they become the bleached bones of a story." (p. 32)

Even the family business and the epitome of its socioeconomic status, ironically named Paradise Pickles & Preserves, serves as a potent symbol of the erosion of old memories and notions to which the family stick. In this factory where caste is subsumed under labor, items are pickled in order to last longer much like the family try to hold onto classist and patriarchal ideologies and arrangements. Interestingly enough, the jars of pickles produced in the factory leak, proving that old-fashioned demarcations and arrangements cannot be preserved forever, but, at the same time, they are not easy to deconstruct. Another significant symbol of overcoming the rupture between landowners and laborers exists in "the banana jam" made in the pickle factory. Neither can it be classified as jam nor jelly; banana jam, much like love, blurs the boundaries of class and gender and thus poses as a threat to the status quo: "They used to make. . . banana jam (illegally) after the FPO (Food Products Organization) banned it because according to their specifications it was neither jam nor jelly. Too thin for jelly and too thick for jam. An ambiguous, unclassifiable consistency" (p. 30-31).

Roy begins her novel with an invocation or a detailed description of place where the shrinking of the languid river foreshadows tragic developments for those who rely on it for their sustenance and even for those who consider it inconsequential. Many end up jobless begging like slaves ensuing the shrinking and pollution of the river. Not only is the water of the river subsiding because of mega-dam constructions, but also the little water that remains in the river is contaminated because of poisonous materials such as insecticides and pesticides trashed in the river. Roy features the river as emitting "of shit and pesticides bought with *World Bank loans*. Most of the fish had died. The ones that survived suffered from fin-rot and had broken out in boils" (our emphasis, p. 13). In the place of breezes, there is a terrible effluvium resulting from irresponsible human dumping that mingles with the water of the river and becomes the toxic food of fish. These same fish become the food of people (mostly rich ones) who end up consuming the same waste they dump in the river. These reductive, unscrupulous, and violent practices are injurious to the victim and victimizer, the lower and the upper classes.

Much like human waste, the World Bank funds "development" projects and offers exponential loans that occlude the progress of third-world countries and strip them off any power even on their own soil. This is how the World Bank engenders aversion and discontinuity and wreaks havoc on third-world countries. These loans augment social hierarchies and imbalances and end up hitting subalterns particularly hard. For Comfort (2008), "Central to this narrative project is the novel’s interrogation of the commodity logic that underlies the construction of patriarchal ideological formations under capitalist imperialism" (p. 1). She remarks that there has been a "classic shift in mode of production from home-working to factory-labor that marginalizes bourgeois women in a private sphere, while introducing the super-exploitation of subaltern groups, especially of working-class women and low caste laborers" (p. 6). There should be environmentally friendly transactions replacing the loans of the World Bank. One of the most ecological and effective economic transaction is the barter system in which people do not use money. They, instead, exchange goods for goods to satisfy basic needs, and many times some needs are never satisfied. The barter system is sympathetic with the ecological system. People exchange their products for other products creating a balance in their environment. Cash crops are colonial, and this kind of agriculture does not only substitute indigenous plants and animals, but it also alters people's relationship with the environment. Most people started to overwork their land to be able to pay the taxes, or to keep up with the new arising institutions. As a result of "maldevelopment," elicited by neoliberal policies conceptualizing nature as an object of capitalist accumulation, the river, which used to be charming and clean, transforms with time:

"Years later, when Rahel returned to the river, it greeted her with a ghastly skull's smile, with holes where teeth had been, and a limp hand raised from a hospital bed. Both things had happened. It had shrunk. And she had grown. Downriver, a saltwater barrage had been built, in exchange for votes from the influential paddy-farmer lobby. The barrage regulated the inflow of salt water from the backwaters that opened into the Arabian Sea. So now they had two harvests a year instead of one. More rice, for the price of a river." (p. 124)

The destruction of the river is the toll levied on subalterns for neoliberal capitalism, materialism, and avarice. This capitalist-driven perception of nature as a commodity void of any spirituality, is best articulated by Marx (1977) where, under capitalism, "For the first time, nature becomes purely an object for humankind, purely a matter of utility" (p. 409). Instead of being a spiritual entity whose laws should be respected, nature, under the new world system, "ceases to be recognized as a power for itself; and the theoretical discovery of its autonomous laws appears merely as a ruse so as to subjugate it under human needs, whether as an object of consumption or as a means of production" (p. 410). Comfort (2008) attests to the damaging role of the neoliberal policies adopted by the Indian government on the subalterns:

"The impact of privatization, IMF structural adjustment, and the whole host of market-based policies adopted by the Indian government after 1991, which constitute an even more intensive regime of accumulation and commodification, is evoked in the novel in the images of the river now dammed up with funding from the World Bank, and of the commodification of the History House into a global tourist site." (p. 23)

In addition, originally, most people worked for themselves and sometimes they would even barter labor for labor, but with neoliberal capitalism, people are classified according to rules of hierarchy. We are not holding that before colonialism people were living in paradise, but life was more morally oriented. Much like the caste system, slavery roots pertain to colonial piracy and sloth: having somebody do one's business; the slaves were mainly brought to handle jobs related to land, agriculture, and animals because it is degrading to the master to soil his hands, where he should handle paperwork and live in luxury. Not only the land, but also those whose lives are contingent on it have been subject to exploitation and abuse. If slavery today is formally abolished, those connected to the earth remain socially and economically marginalized and excluded.

In line with the degraded state of the river which is shrunk and defeated, Rahel, who enacts an identity, returns home after a long absence. Here, one can easily decipher the parallel commodification and objectification of nature and women's bodies, especially the one between Rahel and Ammu, on the one hand, and the river, on the other, as they are subjugated and commodified. The trees are covered with dust—"dustgreen trees"—due to man's defective activities. Much like subaltern groups, nature suffers under the brunt of so-called man's development. After Ammu's (physical and spiritual) suffocation by her society, one "couldn't see the river from the window anymore" (p. 31). After her death, "The river was no more than a swollen drain now" (p. 124). Much like Ammu, the river "was choked with a succulent weed, whose furred brown roots waved like thin tentacles under water. Bronze winged lily-trotters walked across it splay-footed, cautious" (p. 124)

Love also counteracts abstraction processes and tendencies to exclude and deny the other. Various classes are actively involved on all levels—mental, psychological, emotional. They are components of the same act without a tendency to classify them a priori and hierarchically. Even more, sharing (love) entails and constitutes cherishing the world of the other and realizing that they also have a share in one's world, going beyond self-other limitations. In Roy's words, "Change is one thing. Acceptance is another" (p. 251). Such an attitude repudiates the attempts of androcentric, ethnocentric, and egocentric groups that fallaciously prejudge the other as lower or as inferior to the self. Roy touches on this as a pattern of cultural collision, suppression, and substitution, accentuating the venues in which certain groups are compelled to alter their habits and relationships with one another and with nature as a result of a jumble of supremacies that fail to treasure the other beyond any cash value and thus rip it off any intrinsic value. Roy's text is bent on interrupting these austerities, attempting to correct the status quo in defense of the subalterns.

Conclusion

The world, albeit its multifarious divisions, is still one organic unit; any affliction to part of it harms the rest of the body. It is true that subalterns suffer more as a result of ecological destruction, but the damage will end up hitting all people, so responsibility is collective. Indifference, in T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* is the core of corruption and is equated with sterility and destruction. The moment the Parsival knight asks, "What ails you, Uncle?" life is restored for the question is an act of communication, care, and a willingness to enter into a dialogue. Roy's ethics foreground a principle of collectivism against the solipsistic "dualistic fallacies" popularizing ethics of hatred and exclusion. Difference and diversity propagate and sustain existence; difference should not be a reason why people defame and demonize others. Difference is not ontologically evil, but it has been made so for power-induced impulses. The roots of the division of people into high and low are deeply economically driven. Dialogical perspectives should substitute monological ones. Besides, this strategy makes possible the continuation of voice in the face of historical reality of political cleansing. Dialogism entails sharing the world of the other, a task happening only when there is respect and acceptance.

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Explicit Inputs and Concept Mastery: A Case in Indonesian Language for Foreigners (ILF) Instruction

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Abstract

Inputs in language instruction is delivered explicitly and implicitly. These were experimented by scholars in order to give students optimal input for language acquisition. This study was in attempt to search whether or not explicit inputs was visible to enhance students' mastery of concept. In addition, it also searched what kind of input design effectively increased students' knowledge of forms. Ninety students of Indonesian language for foreigners (ILF) were involved as research participants who learn Indonesian language in five different universities in Bali. Data of research were pre-test and post-test score which was analysed with descriptive statistic tool. In addition, qualitative data of what design of input was visible for students' achievement increase was obtained through observation. Data analysis revealed that explicit input was visible to improve students' knowledge of form. Upon the ten session class involving the activity of giving explicit inputs they were given test 2. Result of the test showed that they obtained significantly rising achievement, from 68.51 to 95.78 with the increasing point of 27.27 or percentage of increase 39.80%. The inputs delivered by instructor were furnished with concept or stages of problem clarification and explicit concept building. The stages resulted in students' increase of awareness.

Keywords: *explicit input, concept mastery, grammar, Indonesian language for foreigners' class, Bali.*

Introduction

Second language acquisition (SLA) has been a wide pot of research data and a fertile farm of research which has been attracting much attention of linguists and teachers. Much watch had been paid to cope with language acquisition as well as language learning, two of what are considered to be efficacious ways for learners in developing their second language knowledge (Krashen, 1985). Ellis (1985) claimed that acquisition is used to refer to picking up a second language through exposure, while learning is used to refer to the conscious study of a second language. Both of them, especially in acquisition, the learners cope with the so called 'input'.

Discussion on input as a single and small part of language acquisition has been like a pendulum swing, much support has been given to it but in other way it has also received many contradictive arguments. In another word, researchers, linguists, and language teachers have not stopped giving appreciation to one's idea and blaming to other's ideas. Krashen's (1980) gleaming idea of 'monitor model' particularly 'input hypothesis' has been raising disputes. Input giving during learning activity had been observed differently by some scholars. The first perspective is called 'input hypothesis' (Krashen, 1980, 1983, 1985) and the second is 'input and interaction hypothesis' (Long, 1980, 1983a, 1985; Pica, Young & Doughty, 1987). Both perspectives at their time were considered helpful to add idea and a hand in enriching theories in SLA. Thus, many experts in SLA advocated the existence and success of them, especially input hypothesis.

According to Krashen (1985), input hypothesis is comprehensible input which can lead to acquisition. Input is the most essential element based on which learners of the language can get knowledge used to produce other various forms. It is a knowledge instructors introduced to learners in order for them to have treasure to produce more expressions of the language. Input can be constant or static and dynamic. The more helpful input is the batter acquisition it is going to be, since it enables learners to develop and modify the forms they know had acquired. This input is comprehensible that learners can receive and process. However, Krashen (1985) proposed that input should also be challenging, i.e. it is able to give something new to learners on the basis of their prior knowledge. Thus, it shall be something which is one step further the learners' concept or knowledge about the language. Their current competence is called base-line input which is symbolized as *i*, and the comprehensible input which is added to the base-line input is that which is symbolized as *i + 1*. Learners move from their current level of competence (formularized with *i*) by being given comprehensible input (formularized with *i* + 1) to reach higher level of competence. Unfortunately, soon after it establishment, input hypothesis received some contradictive commentary and in other way some support.

Related Previous Study

A number of researchers in field of SLA have doubted the validity of input hypothesis (White, 1987; Liu, 2015; Brown, 2000; McLaughlin, 1987; Gregg, 1984), on the contrary, some researchers relied on and even applied this hypothesis in pedagogical intervention (Min, 2016; Wu, 2010; Bahrani, 2014; Doughty & Long, 2003, Ellis & He, 1999; Gass & Varonis, 1994; Long, 1983).

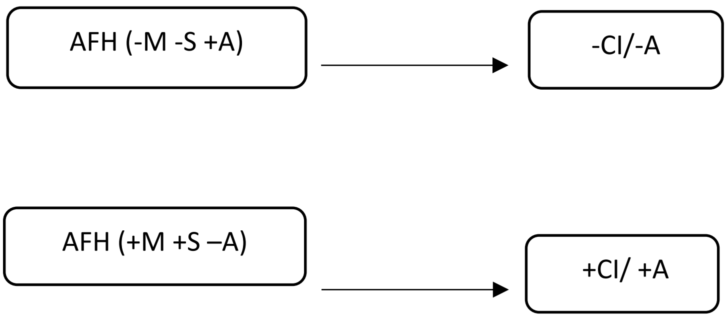
White (1987) argued that input hypothesis was vague. Apart from its proven feasibility partially, it still, even much, has invalidity. Input hypothesis failed to address which changes in learners' knowledge of language is improved. As language knowledge comprises of grammar, structure, syntax, it does not explicitly explain what and to what extent learners' knowledge is improved seeing from their current treasure. Changes in this case are not identified in detail. The condition whether it works and how it relates to learners' existing form, grammar, or structures is not also clarified. In addition, giving comprehensible input is the thing which is not as easy as teaching learners a topic of grammar pursuant to lesson plan provided without taking care of their needs. It is not a teacher-centred lesson of grammar but a student-centred one which focuses on what they need to obtain so that they are able to use the language in a communicative event. The problem in this case is how to identify learners' current state of grammar knowledge. As it proposed that only students who know what input they need (learner-defined) which is relevant to their requirement for language improvement, teachers as outsider need not give input (modified input) to learners. Krashen (1985) strongly believes that learners really know unconsciously what input they really need. The problem is how to know whether or not it is going to be comprehensible input if teachers are not allowed to give modified input. Other misleading condition is that comprehensible input or modified input learners make as they know what they need in the acquisition process will be going beyond if learners fail to define L2 and make wrong generalization that L2 is like L1. This condition will enable learners to make incorrect and inadequate inputs.

Apart from these critics, Liu (2015) also found that Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis is invalid and inadequate for three reasons: vagueness, simplification of input, and over claims. Comprehensible input was not defined strictly that other readers cannot find the clear intention of what it is going to deliver. It is not certain that what formula *i+1* and what 'comprehensible input really mean'. The formula *i+1* was first means 'the next level along the natural order', or 'structure of the next stage' thus other scholars define it as' unknown (Mc.Laughlin, 1987), or 'the level of language already acquired' (Lightbown and Spada, 2006). The simplification of input seems to be confusing, as there are many assumptions from other scholars who have understood it, such as the speech of caretaker like that of motherese or baby talk (Gregg, 1984; Suryasa et al. 2019). Comprehensible input is also assumed to be the same as simplified input, caretaker, or foreigner talk. This theory is also considered to be an overall theory as the result of an over claim one. Input hypothesis is said to be the only and the most critical theory of SLA. In a number of cases, acquisition can occur without input but merely caused by one's existing syntactic or lexical knowledge (internal factor) or other factor, e.g. a child L2 learner can use a language automatically for communicative purposes but he/she does not fully understand or accurately the meaning of those expression (Nation and Meara, 2010). In other case, input hypothesis even should be supplemented by other theory, such as output hypothesis, interactional hypothesis, or feedback and negotiation of meaning (Lightbown and Spada, 2006; Xu et al. 2019). Krashen's (1985) theory was also considered to be too broad and sweeping, not valid as well as failed to show evidence (McLaughlin, 1987; Gregg, 1984; Lightbown and Spada, 2006) and oversimplified (Brown, 2000).

Apart from it shortage of clarity, the theory, on the other hand, was also given appreciation for some reasons by some scholars and is implemented in some schools. Min (2016) applied theory of input hypothesis and affective filter hypothesis in colleges of English listening teaching in order to investigate whether both theories are able to improve students' listening comprehension ability at vocational college. Min (2016) believes that listening is considered to be an integral part of SLA from which students can obtain input for language acquisition. Through listening, students can acquire language skill, improve listening comprehension, and promote their intelligence and practical application of English. This proposition of Min's (2016) was supported by the proof that both theories proposed by Krashen (1985) were supportive. As her observation result, current English listening teaching situation in vocational colleges undergoes weakness seeing from two dimensions, student and teacher. Students have weak English foundation and low learning interest, insufficient background knowledge of listening materials, lack of learning motivation and self-confidence, and lack of correct listening strategy. Teachers also outmoded teaching pattern and had simple teaching method as well as traditional view point of, and insufficient attention to English listening.

Input hypothesis ($i + 1$) was helpful for teacher in designing teaching materials for listening. By recognizing students' base-line knowledge of the subject taught, teachers were able to create needs-based materials, teaching strategies, and its assessment pattern. Affected filter hypothesis also contributes to advantages in the teaching. Learners' acquisition of comprehensible input mostly hindered by two factors, internal and external factor. Internal factor includes learners characteristics related to the learning, and external factor includes situation and condition of learning material, learning site, learning facilities and instructor. As internal factor far much determines learners' success in acquisition and current learning condition indicates that students have lack learning motivation, interest and self-confidence, 'affected filter hypothesis' is considered to be the key to overcome the hindrance. Affected filter hypothesis consists of three major factors which learners have to control to succeed in acquisition, they are 'motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety'. In order to maximize comprehensible input (CI) learners obtain, they have to pass the level of the three aspects in affected filter hypothesis (AFH). The following markers indicate: +M (strong motivation); +S (strong self-confidence); -A (controlled anxiety); -M (weak motivation); +S (weak self-confidence), and + A (strong or uncontrolled anxiety); -CI/-A (less comprehensible input/ less acquisition); and +CI/+A (strong comprehensible input/ strong acquisition). Simply, his finding can be illustrated with a figure as follows.

Figure 1. Min's (2016) AFH effect to CI



Min (2016) formulates the listening teaching stages into three, such as pre-listening, while listening, post listening. Pre-listening includes integrating listening materials based on students' level of ability (*i*) and preparing background information. The while listening stage includes cultivating strategies of listening comprehension and strengthening students' confidence and reducing students anxiety. And the post listening consists of guiding students to analyse and to solve problem and combining listening training with other language practice. The activity in the while-listening stage triggers students to lower their AF level, and activity in the post-listening stage can rise their confidence (lower AF level).

Wu (2010) applied input hypothesis for teaching listening and speaking of college English in order to recognize if input hypothesis (IH) was helpful for teaching listening and speaking. It was also in an endeavour to recognize significance of natural order hypothesis and input hypothesis. According to Wu (2010), learners can develop their second language (L2) knowledge in two ways, they are 'acquisition' which is subconsciously happens by picking up an L2 through exposure, and 'learning' is a conscious effort to study L2. In relation to Krahsen's (1985) finding, Wu (2010) states that learners can progress along with the natural order by understanding inputs that contain structures a little bit beyond their current level of competence (*i* +1). To ward his finding upon an observation of current situation of listening and speaking teaching, such as unsatisfying teaching materials and ineffective learners, he suggested a number of solution, such as improvement of teaching materials in terms of comprehensibility of materials, significance of teaching materials, arrangement of teaching materials as well as continuity of teaching materials, and improvement of teaching procedure. To cope with the issues, he recommends a strategic teaching stages, including: warm up activity, response to the feedback, oral presentation and group discussion, formative assessment, and appropriate error analysis. Wu's (2010) finding clarified that comprehensible input (CI) can trigger learners' interest in listening materials and thus intensify their desire to listen. Listening with willingness will drive them to gain better comprehension, acquire some language, cultural background and related information beyond language. This hypothesis was also found helpful to build confidence and improve their critical thinking through activities such as presentation and group discussion so that they can reduce their level of anxiety. In addition, it was proved that the more they listen and understand, the more they will produce utterances in verbal communication event. These evidence simply indicate that IH and CI was visible.

The work of Bahrani's (2014) was in an attempt to highlight the role of language input in SLA. Input is associated with any language forms or structures available to be used for SL learners. And, the visible and comprehended input learners can receive to be used for expressing their thought in verbal communication events is called intake. In realizing acquisition process, there are two perspectives on how input is possessed in order to be output. Gass and Selinker (1994) propose a model of SLA which contains six main stages, such as '(1) language input; (2) apperceived input; (3) comprehensible input; (4) intake; (5) integration; and (6) output'. Apperceived input is the stage where some of language inputs are noticed by language learners as they have specific feature like frequency, prior knowledge, affect and attention. Comprehended input is the stage where the inputs apperceived are comprehended. The next stage is utilizing the comprehended input to be intake. Integration is a process to integrate the intake with prior knowledge before becoming output, i.e. writing or speaking. While Ellis (1997) proposed an acquisition model comprising of four stages, they are input, intake, knowledge and output. To sum up, Bahrani (2014) positively believed that SLA will not occur in a vacuum, it requires inputs. However, inputs should be processed and modified accordingly to meet needs of learners (Dougthy & Long, 2003; Nguyễn Quang Nhật et al. 2019).

Zhang (2009) also investigated how input, interaction, and output function in the development of learners' oral fluency. He proposed three aspects which determine success of language learners' fluency, such as input, interaction, and output. Input is the language data which the learner is exposed to. Input in L2 acquisition must be available and processed. Interaction is an exchanges where utterances or inputs are not entirely understood. In this case participants have to interrupt the dialog in order to understand what it is about. Output language or utterances learners successfully produce. Gass (2001) stated that there are four functions of output, such as to test hypothesis about form and meaning; to receive crucial feedback; to force a shift from more meaning-based processing of SL; and to develop fluency and automaticity in inter-language production. And fluency is defined as the ability to speak or read quickly, accurately, and without hesitation, with automatic execution of pronunciation, grammatical processing, and words recognition. The analysis revealed that the three aspects (input, interaction, and output) play an essential role in acquisition. To gain the knowledge, reading extensively is the most important way for learners to gain input. Sufficient input the age of twelve makes L2 acquisition easy and complete. Non-native speakers (NNSs) will be able to possess near native-like proficiency in EFL context if he/she has plenty of time for learning English, adequate exposure to spoken and written variety, real needs to use English, and treat English as a means of communication not as a subject to be learned.

Implementation of input and output-based instruction was also undertaken by Hamavandy (2015). That research was merely in an attempt to compare differential potential of SLA output-based task and input-based teaching of English grammar. Specifically, it investigated: (1) if output requirement results in a significant differences on learning grammar better than by providing input for learners; and (2) if there is significance between the two output tasks (picture-cued production, and editing reconstruction tasks). Input in this sense is meant as comprehensible input defined by Krashen (1985, Loschky (1994) as ample input which is both comprehensible and slightly beyond learners' current linguistic level. And output is the output that extends the linguistic repertoire of the learners (Swain, 1985). Hamavandy (2015) found that input-based only teaching grammar for participants outperformed those with output-required class. In addition, the two tasks implemented could not exert any differential influence on ultimate acquisition of the target structure. Comparison between input-based and output-based activities was also undertaken by Namaziandost, Dehkordi, and Shafiee (2019). That research basically was intended to draw whether or not input-based activities have any significant effect on EFL learners' vocabulary, whether or not output-based activities have any significant effect on EFL learners' vocabulary, and which approach of the two is more effective on EFL learners' vocabulary enrichment. Result of analysis showed that learners given input-based instruction were more productive than those given output-based instruction. In addition, it successfully mapped that both input-based and output-based approach had similar effects on learners' performance in productive knowledge vocabulary.

All of the studies on implementation of inputs have similarity with and supportive to this study. Two studies only focused on input to be implemented in teaching (Bahrani, 2014; Wu, 2010) while other studies tried to combine inputs with other aspects in SLA, such as input, interaction, and output (Zhang, 2009), input-based instruction and output-based instruction (Hamavandy, 2015; Namaziandost, Dehkordi, Shafiee, 2019; Suwija et al. 2019), and input and affected filter (Min, 2016). One study has similar object of analysis with this research, i.e. grammar or form (Hamavandy, 2015; Gareth Morgan & Abdulaziz Alfehaid (2019)). Other studies focused on different objects, such as teaching listening and speaking (Wu, 2010), listening (Min, 2016), vocabulary (Namaziandost, Dehkordi, Shafiee, 2019), and oral fluency (Zhang, 2009). However, Hamavandy (2015) implemented two aspects of SLA, input and output, while this study only focused on one aspect that is input. Hamavandy's (2015) experimental and quantitative research involved 45 Iranian Elementary learners of English who were divided into three groups of experiment group 1 (EG1), experiment group 2 (EG2), and control group. All group were given picture-cued production task for EG1 and editing reconstructive task of English grammar tense for EG2. EG1 was entitled to produce a text and EG2 was required to check the tense of verb in sentences and correct them if they were found inappropriate. Data were analysed with SPSS 21. However, this recent research is a qualitative research aiming to measure learners' input (effect of inputs and their perception and suggestion on the input for better acquisition). In addition, this study involved 90 foreign learners of Indonesian language. As in Hamavandy's (2015) study, this study also involved pre-test and post-test to be compared to see the approach effectiveness. Based on what was discussed above, this study aimed to fill in the gap by answering the following questions:

1. Does explicit input have significant effect on foreign learners of Indonesian language?
2. How was the inputs designed to improve learners' grammar mastery?

Method

Participants

This study involved ninety foreign learners of Indonesian spreading out in five universities in Bali who have been learning Indonesian language intensively for almost a year. They are from a number of countries, including Eastern Europe, Germany, some African countries, and American and Asian countries. Their ages ranged between twenty and thirty five years old. They were studying Indonesian language at some university administering Darmasiswa program, such as Bali State Polytechnic, Saraswati Teacher Training Institute at Tabanan-Bali, Saraswati Institute of Foreign Language at Denpasar-Bali, Udayana University, and Indonesia Art Institute Denpasar-Bali. All participants were included in one group who were given an experimental study. This study was a part of research and development study. In this stage, a part of the designed learning model that is module-based self-directed learning (SDL) for learning Indonesian language, i.e. input enhancement was undertaken to experiment its effectiveness for learners' knowledge and skills of grammar improvement.

Data, Instrument and Instructional Materials

The primary data of the study were pre-test and post-test results. However, some secondary data were also obtained during the treatment, including learners' awareness, perception, and students' comment on the inputs and the learning process. To obtain the primary data, a test consisting of forty grammar questions both 'structure' and 'written expression' was implemented. This test was in purpose to measure their grammar mastery level and improvement prior to and upon the treatment. While the secondary data was obtained through interview and discussion with the learners. Treatment upon the pre-test was given for ten times. To execute this, there were ten modules prepared each of which was given in every session. The module include all materials lined with syllabus and learning book that is book A1 provided by Darmasiswa program. Every module was designed in such a way which consists of title of module, introduction to material and learning objectives, theory related to the topic, some examples, and exercise.

Procedure

There are a number of phases undertaken to execute this study. It was initiated with giving pre-test to recognize the leaners' basic grammar competence. The test consisting of forty questions for both structure and written expressions were given for forty minutes. The test, which was used to measure learners' based line performance and final performance, involves all materials of modules used during to treatment activities. Prior to its use, the instrument was validated by an expert qualified in the area of assessment. The post-test was given upon treatment execution. Measuring their competence after treatment is an essential effort to evidence whether or not the treatment is considered successful.

The treatment, which was undertaken for a number of meetings, was given for ten sessions. This was done as there were ten modules provided for the activities. As the goal of the study was to prove a challenging and complicated approach, a ten-meeting session was assumed to be sufficient rather than less than that number. In addition, that length of time gave enough opportunity for researcher to do a depth and a more comprehensive observation. For treating classes with the designed approach, researcher assigned instructor of each class to teach. Prior to the teaching, each instructor was trained with steps of teaching. This SDL class is not a pure SDL and totally executed with autonomous learning method. The lesson also included some work of assistance of instructors particularly that of checking learners' work 1, giving inputs. The teaching stages included opening the class, distributing modules to learners, checking learners' work 1, giving learners input, checking learners' work 2, and scoring learners' work. Opening the class and distributing modules to learners took place for about 5 minutes and learners were provided with the most length of lesson time to work out the exercise. Instructors' length of time to check learners work took only 7 minutes for both the checking learners' work 1 and checking learners' work 2. And giving inputs done between the checking learners' work 1 and checking learners' work 2 needed 10 minutes. The lesson length of time was done regularly for all lessons. Apart from these, observation, in depth interview, and focused group discussion were also done to obtained other secondary data, which simply essential to add and enrich knowledge about the learners competence, optimize information, suggestion, and comment from learners regarding lesson execution.

Analysis

Data analysis was done in two ways. The primary data of learners' based line performance and their progress in form of scores were analysed with statistical analysis method. In this case it used descriptive statistics tool. Result of analysis of the two tests were compared to see the trend, the tendency whether or not their achievement is considered declining or rising. The second data of secondary was analysed qualitatively by comparing with related theory or proposition to see if they are in line with the theory or reveal different situation. The different situation was then clarified to find its specification so that it could be stated new finding.

Result and Discussion

Students' Achievement

Result of descriptive statistic indicated that there was improvement on students' competence upon the learning cycle. It was proven with the increase in students' scores in some aspects. It can be clearly seen that in the first cycle, they obtained average score of 68.51. It significantly increased to be 95.78. The students' minimum score in the first cycle was 60.00 which increased dramatically to be 90.00 in the second cycle. The same case also occurred with their maximum score, i.e. from 75.00 in first cycle to 100.00 in the second cycle. The range of also appeared differently. The scores' range in cycle one was bigger than that in second cycle, they were 15.00 and 10.00 respectively. The median and modus advocated that students were successful. Their median and modus in the first cycle was similar, i.e. 70 and they increased to 95 for both aspects in the second cycle.

Table 1. Students' Descriptive Statistic scores

Treatment Cycle	Data Description					
	Adventures	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Median	Modus
T1	68.51	60.00	75.00	15.00	70	70
T2	95.78	90.00	100.00	10.00	95	95

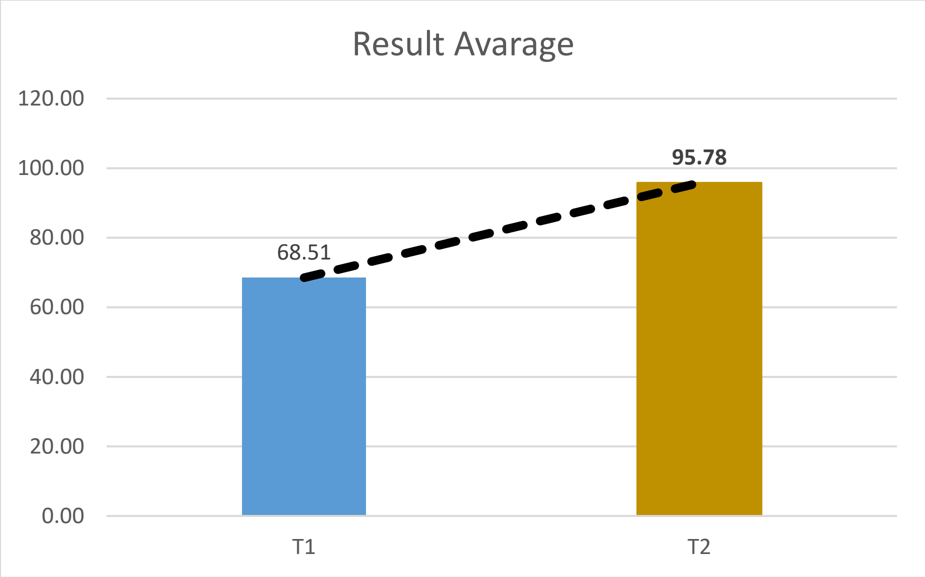
The result of students' achievement strongly explains that there was a positive progress of students from cycle one to cycle two. The progress was indicated with increase in students' achievement of 27.27 or students' achievement percentage of 39.80. This condition implied that explicit instruction of grammar of Indonesian language was effective toward students' Indonesian grammar mastery. In other word, the explicit inputs teachers gave was effective to support students' achievement.

Table 2. Students' Descriptive Statistic scores

Result Average			
T1	T2	Increase	% Increase
68.51	95.78	27.27	39.80

The students' achievement progress is drawn as follow. The cart clearly indicate that the average score increase from 68.51 in first cycle to be 95.78 in the second cycle.

Figure 1. Learners' Average Result



Modified Explicit Inputs

Indonesian language or form instruction for foreigners involved some parts of activities in it, one of which is giving input. Giving input in this experimental study did not stand alone partially but it was closely related to prior of post input giving activities. The input given in the instructional activity was explicit input, i.e. that which is given explicitly by using specific learning materials and in a specific stage of learning. The explicit input was showed to learners upon they recognized their mistake in producing sentences. As exercises of each module used for the learning center (LC) program required learners to answer all questions by producing sentences in accordance with their direction, learners had to perform their skill by producing grammatical sentences.

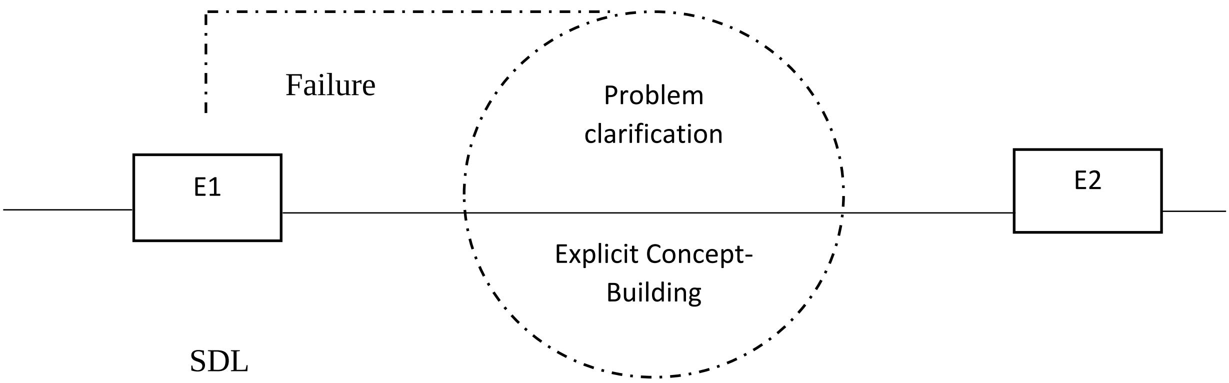
Explicit instruction was proven to be more effective to enhance learners' production of sentences (Spada & Tomita, 2010; Nguyen, Pham & Pham, 2012). The success of explicit grammar input exposure in instruction was advocated in this research by explaining the correct form of sentences. The correct answers consisted of language or form, rule explanation, and correct spelling. Explanation of language or form included information about how sentences should be made to be grammatically correct. Explanation of rule includes information about notion or regulation of the sentences pursuant to tenses, subject, active and passive marker, positive and negative forms, or other notions.

As this study, most of explicit-based instruction of grammar in ESL or EFL classroom have been focusing on grammar specifically (Norris & Ortega, 2000; Tode, 2007; Akakura, 2012; Fordyce, 2013; Chan, 2018; and Umeda, Snape, Yusa & Wiltshier, 2017). However, those study only focused on grammar items but not other aspects. On the contrary, another approach called implicit-based input teaching in SLA was consider less effective for learners performance thus carried out much less frequently (White, 1998), which excluded rule explanation, providing only exemplar of a rule so that the learners can infer the rule without focusing their attention on forms (Ellis, 2005; Ellis et al., 2002; Ellis, 2009; Norris & Ortega, 2000). The implicit approach given much attention was input enhancement approach, an implicit method of teaching rule or forms which draw learners attention to specific grammatical form (White, 1998), which is the process by which specific linguistic features become more salient to learners (Sharwood Smith, 1991). And of all approaches, meaning-based output and traditional approach is noted to be the least effective (Moradi & Farvandi, 2016).

However, this study, apart from discussing grammar only, also tried to expose other aspects, such rule, word choices, intonation, and other rules. In addition, it modified the language or form of input and designed in form of formula for learners to recognize it easily. Bahrani (2014) advocated that input should be modified and processed in SLA in order to meet learners' needs but he did not give clarification on how to modify it appropriately. This research successfully included explicit concept-building which learners really required during the learning so that they were able to memorize the concept a lot longer. Explicit concept-building was an input designed by drawing a general formula for describing sentences with the same forms.

This input was given between evaluation 1 (E1) and evaluation 2 (E2). After learners got their work checked in E1, they recognized some failure on their work. After recognizing the mistakes, learners then got instructors to clarify the mistakes, in this case we can trigger their awareness of the correct form by building explicit concept. This approach was effective for them to develop their knowledge of the form and optimize their sentence production, thus it was found meaningful (Widanta, 2020b). The illustration of the stages can be seen in the following figure.

Figure 2. Illustration of process of giving input



Problem Clarification

Problem clarification is the moment when learners obtained clarity of what and where the mistakes were in sentences they produced. Problem clarification was made in two ways, by asking instructor directly through consultation or by action that instructor gave them information initiatively before being asked to do so. The former is learners-initiated which drive learners' awareness while the latter is instructor-initiated. The former was done by the faster learners and the latter was done by the slower learners. Of the two ways, the former mostly done by the learners in the entire sessions. This stage was effective for learners to experience since it could trigger their attention to the real problem. It was carried out since they were confused to indicate where the mistake was or which the mistakes were in the sentence(s) they produced. Unknowing the mistakes seemed to make them unaware of their weakness and it leaded them not to decide what to do.

This stage was done between E1 and E2 activities. Upon E1 activity, students found that they failed to get recommended score to be recorded in the credit point card (CPC), the score which is above 70. Thus, learners were confused and got conflict in their mind as their prior knowledge and the belief they have been having was not in accordance with the real grammatical rule of the language. The gap triggered learners to consult their work to instructor. Explanation given was in form of theory or rule which located the problem, by giving them examples, meta-linguistic rule, and other related explanation. Some learners particularly those grouped in the slower learners could receive the clarification slowly. This was proved with the fact that most of them delivered many questions upon the explanation given before they came back to their seats to revise their work. And some other students who are considered to be the latter group could comprehend the explanation quickly. In addition, this kind of learners even could reconstruct other type of sentences delivering the same sense. This situation indicate that problem clarification they did really was really of much benefit to them.

Explicit Concept Building

The extended examples learners could make led in an importance change to them. They could make feedback toward their mistakes and even proposed a new idea to build a related different perception. They, particularly the a bit faster learners, could make up their mind to paraphrase the input given by instructor and construct new examples of sentence closely associated with the topic of discussion. Apart from realizing their comprehension in form of revision upon instructor's explanation, they were also able to reconstruct new sentence samples and even made generalization in form of formula or structures of those sentences. Although the formulas they tried to construct were not totally correct in line with real grammatical rules, but their endeavour was more than enough to show that they gained and successfully built a concept in their mind on the structures. Their result of reconstruction of sentences and formula was based on their knowledge of English as their L1 or SL. Thus, some of the formulas were made similar with the English language structure. Most of the forms of noun phrase (NP), verb phrase (VP), adjective phrase (Adj. P) and adverbial phrase (Adv. P) relied on the English structure. Thus some of them were mistaken and some were appropriate.

English NP	Indonesian NP
Adj. – N	N – Adj.
N1 – N2	N2 – N1
new book (1-2)	buku baru (2-1)
green tea (1-2)	teh hijau (2-1)
leather hat (1-2)	topi kulit (2-1)

English VP	Indonesian VP
V – Adv.	V - Adv
eat fast (1-2)	*makan dengan cepat* (1-2)
dance beautifully (1-2)	*menari dengan indah* (1-2)
speak loudly (1-2)	*berbicara dengan keras* (1-2)

English Adv.P	Indonesian Adv.P
Adv. – N	Adv. - N

on the way (1-2)	*di dalam perjalanan* (1-2)
on the left (1-2)	*di sebelah kiri* (1-2)
across from the bank (1-2)	*di seberang bank* (1-2)

English Adj.P	Indonesian Adj.P
Adv. – Adj	Adv. - Adj
very pretty (1-2)	*sangat cantik* (1-2)
less expensive (1-2)	*kurang mahal* (1-2)
far more interesting (1-2-3)	*jauh lebih mearik* (1-2-3)

Their concept on the phrases was almost correct, there were only a few mistakes made. This was caused by their common relying on the English language. The mistakes were obviously seen on the case of NP where they merely constructed the Indonesian NP like the English NP. The construction should be shifted from the English NP formula 'modifier-noun' (1-2) to be the Indonesian NP formula 'noun-modifier' (2-1). While the other formula, such as Adj.P, Adv.P, and VP are in line with the English language construction.

Misconception also occurred when making sentences. As their relying on the English language, some sentence structure were seen misleading. The use of NP in sentence 'Ini adalah baru sepeda motor' seemed to adopt English version 'This is a new motorcycle'. Beside a mistake on constructing NP, 'baru sepeda motor*', the use of the word 'adalah' seemed to adopt English sentence using be 'is'. In Indonesian rule, 'is' can be meant 'adalah', but this word is used when we want to make a definition of something, such as in 'Language is a media of communication' '*Bahasa adalah sebuah media komunikasi*. Thus the sentence formula explained to the learners was S – NP. Other formulas offered to enrich their knowledge of forms were S – VP (*Dia menari dengan indah*: 'she dances beautifully'), S – Adv.P (*saya di dalam perjalanan:* 'I am on the way), dan S – Adj. P (*Baju ini jauh lebih mahal*; 'This shirt is far more expensive'). Giving such formulas to them seemed to be very effective that they could have a sign based on what they could produce Indonesian sentences appropriately. The success of giving explicit input to enhance learners' performance in producing grammatical sentences proved that explicit approach is effective in form-focused instruction (Norris & Ortega, 2000; Tode, 2007; Akakura, 2012; Fordyce, 2013; Chan, 2018; and Umeda, Snape, Yusa & Wiltshier, 2017). Learners' success in performance of producing correct output was led by a situation where they succeeded in noticing the comprehensible input and made it an intake (Schmidt, 1990; Widanta, *et al.*, 2017). The intake led in their success in producing grammatical sentences and drawing a concept.

Learners' Concept Mastery

To sum up the topic of the lesson in that special session, the instructor closed it by giving them formulas based on what they could comprehend the materials easily. The formulas given were phrases and sentence formulas. The phrases formula were N – Adj.; V – Adv.; Adv. – N; and Adv. – Adj. They were all used or functioned as a verb (V) i.e. a segment put after subject (S) and as a complement (Comp.) i.e. a segment put after V. While the sentence structure formulas were based on complement used. The formulas were broken down in sentences to ease them to comprehend. The formulas are as follows:

1. S – Compl. which can be broken down into:
   S – (N-Adj.) 'Ini sebuah buku baru' (It is a new book) (using NP)
   S – (Adv-N) 'Saya di seberang bank' (I am across from the bank) (using Adv.P)
   S – (Adv.-Adj) 'Mobil ini sangat mahal' (The car is very expensive) (using Adj.P)
2. S – V
   S – (V-Adv.) 'John makan dengan cepat' (John eats quickly) (using VP)
3. S – V – NP 'Anita membeli buku baru' (Anita buys a new book)
4. S – V – Adv.P 'Smith berdiri di depan mobilnya' (Smith stands up in front of his car.
5. S – V – N det. Adj.P 'Saya membeli mobil yang sangat mahal' (I bought a car which is very expensive).

These formulas were made in relation to how learners thought about the concept they have learned and how they tried to develop them using their prior knowledge. However, most of formulas they had in their mind were adjusted and modified to meet their needs. Thus modifying formula in order to ease learners to master the concept is very effective (Bahrani, 2014).

Teaching Stages

Teaching stages involved in the instruction of Indonesian language for foreigner (ILF) classes made use some stages, such as opening the class, distributing modules, checking learners' work 1, giving input, checking learners' work 2, and scoring learners' work.

Opening class

Opening class includes some activities, such as greeting learners, explaining the unit of the materials learners were assigned to do at the occasion, as well as duration learners take to complete the module.

Distributing modules

This was the second step where modules including answer sheets and collecting students, membership and credit point card were carried out.

Checking learners' work 1

This step included checking and giving learners result of their works. In this stage, they were given information on number of mistakes, which part of sentence is mistaken, as well as the temporary score they obtained.

Giving input

It was the climax of the learning process where learners had to be clear of the problem and the solution. Thus giving input was done upon their clarifying their problems. Clarifying problem was a stage where learners could show their awareness of problem. The fact indicated that their levels of awareness were different since learners came back to consult their problems with instructor in different moment. Some could made their mind to consult immediately after their being given comment, while others did it slowly. Up on their problem clarification, instructor give them input which was explicit on the forms. The explicit concept building occurred in this stage. By being given comment, examples, correction in form of meta-linguistic, they could receive and comprehend it and finally came up with meaningful revision. Explicit comprehensible input inform of phase and sentence formulas was of much benefit to them.

Checking learners' work 2

It was done after they distributed their work revision. This stage was easier as instructor just checked their revision. And finally, scoring was done by recording their score obtained in CPC.

Scoring learners' work

This is the last step which was done by recording learners' score obtained. Upon their revising their works after being given explicit input in the form of examples, expanded examples, and formula of phrases and sentences they came back again with their revision. Their work was then checked again and given score. The final scores which were above the passing grade were then recorded in CPC.

These steps succeeded in rising learners' score as it contained giving explicit input which could enable learners to build their concept. This was successfully carried out since the assistance of learners' problem clarification. Framing teaching stages seemed to be effective as instructor has a standard procedure of undertaking the instruction (Wu, 2010; Min, 2016). However, Wu (2010) implemented different steps, such as 'warm up, respond to feedback, oral presentation and group discussion, formative assessment, as well as appropriate error analysis' as he taught listening and speaking to learners. He triggered learners' attention and awareness by giving error analysis activity and feedback which were given implicitly but this study prioritized giving explicit input. Min (2016) applied three steps, such as 'pre-teaching, while teaching, and post-teaching' to give learners comprehensible input and affected filter. His steps were not identified more deeply how input was given. Input was advocated more implicitly than explicitly. This might be energized as the instruction was focused on listening. However, those two teaching phase might be completed with giving explicit inputs as learners required an ability to master grammatical rule of the language by developing their cognitive, one of which by making their own concept.

Rising Learners' Awareness

Other aspect the explicit input giving contributed was learners' increased awareness. Awareness is a situation where learners are conscious on what is being learned. The explicit comprehensible input instructor gave during the instruction was proven to be potential for learners to understand. Apart from language or form or in pragmatics domain it is usually called pragma-linguistic aspect, the method also could raise learners' consciousness of socio-pragmatic competence, i.e. the ability to choose utterances appropriately in accordance with context (Widanta, 2020a). It could be enhanced by giving the students a number of questions consisting knowledge of different social context. As Schmidt (1993) stated, conscious awareness in acquisition is important. It can be achieved by improving learners' attention, for instance to pragmatic competence. The awareness learners obtained was due to the explicitly given input. It is aligned with what Shokouhi's (2016) ideas. However, apart from explicit instruction, she also believed that giving implicit instruction enhances learners' awareness. She strongly believed that when there is raising awareness in learners, they can learn better to produce something pragmatically and explicit and implicit instruction helped them distinguish the speech act of request at beginning. Although all learners finally gained high scores, learners who gained high score earlier were noted to have higher awareness. The awareness was not resulted by the effort of giving awareness rising task, like video sequence (Alcon, 2007), contextualized examples and role play (Martinez-Flor, 2008) or audio-visual program (Alcon, 2010) but by giving them input that they really noticed.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Pursuant to research questions, there are two main explanation which can conclude the research. In term of effectiveness of explicit input delivery, ILF learners found the strategy was found effective to improve students' achievement. The students' increase of achievement was clearly promoted by the exposure of explicit inputs delivered with special technic. It was proven by the facts that students' increase in scores obtained. They could increase 27.27 point or 39.80% from their base-line score of 68.51 to 95.78.

The inputs were given explicitly through instructional stages, such as opening class, distributing modules, checking learners' work 1, giving input, checking learners' work 2, and scoring learners' work. However, input delivered to students were modified to meet the students' real needs. The inputs were given upon they recognized their mistakes. By explaining the correct forms, explain the rule, and other aspects, such as intonation, word choices. The inputs were modified the form to be general formulas to ease the students' comprehension. It is in accordance with Bahrani's (2014) idea. The modified explicit inputs were able to promote learners awareness and longer memorization of the topic.

The success of explicit inputs toward students' achievement was also supported by some phases, such as problem clarification, explicit concept building, and rising learners' awareness. There were two kinds of problem clarification, learners-initiated and instructor-initiated. Learners-initiated problem clarification was the most activity done by the students. They were active asking questions on grammar they found hard to answer. Clarifying the mistakes they made and asking for solution made them able to make up their mind. They could paraphrase inputs obtained and construct new concept, thus the explicit concept building occurred. Learners' active in clarifying problem and in making up solution leaded in their awareness rising. Awareness is very important in acquisition (Schmidt, 1993).

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Translating Cultural Markers and Najdi Dialects in Contemporary Saudi Novels from a Skopos Theory Perspective

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Abstract

Translating cultural marks in Saudi novel is a novel topic which has not been examined adequately. The number of the studies done in this area is few. Therefore, the current study is mainly interested in assessing how far the translators who are concerned with Saudi literature were able to translate the cultural marks embedded in these novels. In addition, the study questions the validity of translating cultural marks into target text and whether the cultural equivalence in English culture can present a solution and what are the problems that affect the transfer of cultural marks? To achieve this end, the study has examined cultural markers in connection with Skopos theories of translation. Following the assessment of samples from selected Saudi translated novels into English, the study has found that the translators relied heavily on the communicative translation strategy and translators have avoided translating cultural marks and elements into English.

Keywords: Cultural Marks, Cultural bound-elements, Idiomatic Expressions, Skopos theory of translation.

Introduction

This paper is mainly concerned with assessing the translation of cultural markers and dialectal and idiomatic expressions embedded in selected Saudi novels like the Girls of Riyadh. The selected novels were chosen in relation to how far the writers used cultural marks and cultural bound elements while writing these works. Cultural marker is defined "as words and combinations of words denoting objects and concepts, characteristics of the way of life, the culture, the social and historical development of one nation and alien to another"(Newmark,1988, p.31). Arabic literature has frequently been translated into English literature; therefore, translation studies abound with many studies that address the problems of translating Arabic literature into English. These studies focused on the issues relating to the literary translation aspects. However, studies addressing the translation problems of Saudi literature remain scarce and few and those studies addressing the issues of translating cultural marks into foreign languages are known for their scarcity. The assessment will be based on Skopos theory of translation, trying to provide answer to the following questions:

1- How can the cultural marks aspects affect the translation of *the selected translation samples?*
2- What is the validity of the proposed approach for assessing the selected translation samples?

Review of literature.

Hartman (2012) argues that the translation of the *Saudi literature* represents a remarkable translational problems because these works are replete with cultural marks. One major features of cultural marks is "playing with her register of Arabic including Saudi dialect, Americanized Arabic, and the like"(Hartman, 2012, p.17). In order to overcome the problems of rendering cultural marks, translator tend to adopt foreignization for keeping the overall effect of Saudi culture in the target text; however, adopting foreignization may create exotic and a strange text for the target readership. In addition, using the approach of domestication may impede translators from maintaining the cultural marks into the target language.

Translating texts culture-bound elements in fiction can affect the idea of providing a comprehensible and precise translation into English. That is to say, the translator is responsible for rendering the cultural marks of the source text to the target text without escaping the rules of loyalty and fidelity or oversimplifying the cultural component in the translation. At the same time, if a translator tries to keep the cultural dimension without a linguistic and cultural compromise between the SL and TL, he may produce an exotic text in the target language which is incomprehensible to the target readership.

To sort out such a translational problem, Bassnett (2002) follows Anne Cluysennar's work on literary stylistics, the purpose of which is to keep the cultural markers at the expense of certain linguistic aspects. Bassnett recommended using a hermeneutical circle approach for rendering such texts based on cultural marks. The hermeneutical circle implies that a translator has to understand the smaller units of a text in order to understand its larger units and vice versa. In this way, if a translator faces a difficulty to understand or render the cultural markers, he has to understand its meaning within the larger context of his text, which may be extended to read an entire tradition that deal with such an issue. However, sometimes, translating the whole meaning of the text may force a translator to ignore translating the cultural markers and elements. Therefore, a text may be stripped of its overall effect and literary style. However, maintaining such exotic elements in the TLT may create what is known by Hornby (1995) as a hybrid text that includes strange, exotic and indigestible elements in the TL, which impede understanding and the naturalization of the translation so that a translated text may either assimilate such exoticism and strangeness or reject it. However, the notion of hybrid text seems to be inapplicable to texts belonging to totally different cultures, which is a clear example in both Arabic and English cultures. Therefore, interjecting elements from the SL into texts may incur many translation problems. For example, a translator may not able to decide which norms in the source text need to be maintained in the TLT and which do not. In addition, such a process requires what Vermeer (1989/2000) calls the bicultural translator. Bassnett and Lefevere (1990) argue that culture is the most important unit in translation. It is more significant than words or texts. However, they suggest those culture-bound elements, religious elements, traditional tools, concepts and customs and traditions peculiar to the SL and which have no conceptual or cultural equivalence in the target text can be either omitted or translated literally. That is to say, when a translator is faced with certain types of expressions in the SL, he has the freedom of omitting these terms and expressions or translating them literally. However, both choices are deemed to be incongruent with the nature of fictional texts embedded with these exotic and strange expressions simply because these dialectal terms and culture-bound elements are responsible for bestowing pragmatic and aesthetic effects on such types of texts, and therefore stripping these texts of their cultural elements will convert their genres from fiction into ordinary texts, and in this way, TLT has become denuded of its aesthetic form and has lost its literary style.

Methodology

The current study uses Skopos theory as an methodology for assessing the translation quality of the translation of cultural markers embedded in Saudi novels, the translation of which requires such a type of theory that emphasizes the interdependence of language and culture.

While evaluating the translation, a number of explicit terminological terms is used with their special references like,

First of all, translational action; which is a specific type of cultural transfer.

Second, translatum simply defined as the final product of the translation process in the target text.

Third, information offer refers to the process of translation where translation is done via communicating information from source text to target text.

Fourth, translational situation refers to the cultural and contextual background surrounding the text under translation and the psychological and social circumstances of the communication partners.

Fifth, language is not regarded only as written codes but also as physical gestures, signs, non-verbal language.

Adopting skopos theory as an approach for assessing the translation of the selected sample, these following criteria are used to assess the selected samples:

- whether a translator could maintain the same values in target text;
- how the individual attitudes of a translator could affect the source text;
- how a translator could adapt his translation to the different realties and new worlds;
- whether the text reproduces the sense of a text or just focus on the textual equivalence;
- whether the target translated text achieve the same effect;
- whether a translation congruent to the differences arising from different cultures entailing textual traditions.
- Whether a translation criterion is coherent, which is divided into intertextual coherence and Intratextual coherence.
- In Intratextual coherence, a translation has to be assessed in terms of the following sub-criteria:

I. Whether the smaller units of the translated text including its senses, metaphors, ambiguity and cultural specific elements and cultural bound elements are coherent and consistent throughout the entire text and can be construed in relation to understanding the whole text.

II. Whether translated text reflect textual circular coherence

III. Whether the translated text reflect the Intratextual coherence.

IV. Whether the translation uses the target language in the most idiomatic way.

V. Whether Recipient can interpret a message as sufficiently coherent in itself and with its situation

VI. Whether the translation achieves the sense of the text as a whole.

VII. Whether the translator fully realizes the differences in the background knowledge of the source and target recipients.

VIII. Whether the translation shows cultural and linguistic competence

- Whether the translated text reflects the intertextual coherence:

I. Intertextual coherence is mainly concerned with the relationship between the source and target texts in translation.

II. It questions the fidelity in translation; it verifies whether the translator can preserve faithfully the source text in the target text.

III. It is concerned with intertextual linguistic coherence.

IV. Therefore, intertextual coherence focuses on analyzing the expectations of the translator about the target recipient.

V. It starts from the presupposition that since the target and source recipients belong to different culture and language communities, and cultures and languages constitute specific systems, it is not possible for a translator to offer the same quality and the same quantity.

Discussion and Analysis

Examples of literal translation are rampant in the *Girls of Riyadh*, which have distorted the messages of the SL, thwarted the referential purpose and the pragmatic effect. Here is an example from*, the Girls of Riyadh*.

8.1-Examples of literal translation are introduced in the following table:

SL	Examples of translated texts
1	"that every weekend for the rest of your lives will be a total loss - not to mention the rest of the week"

2	"May good health knock her door"
3	Ma shaa Allah, God willing, no envy touch her, she's so pretty.
4	"It looks like she's carrying the whole wedding on her shoulders."
5	Gamrah's mother was a firm believer in the theory that "woman is to man as butter to the sun"
6	As for Gamrah, she started listening to her mother's anecdotes and treatises on "the enterprise of marriage" with heightened enjoyment and a sense of pride of a young man whose father offers him a cigarette to smoke in front of him for the first time.

1-The criteria of the skopos theory are used to evaluate the selected translated text. The "that every weekend for the rest of your lives will be a total loss - not to mention the rest of the week" (Al-Sanea & Booth 2007), is literally translated where it has missed the cultural and ethical values of the SL. For example, the Arabic text refers to the misfortune of the heroine of the novel from which she always complains and this condition of misfortune is used to give voice the oppressed Saudi females and describe their suffering in such a male dominating society. Therefore, this core message of that idiomatic saying is that disappointment and misfortune befalling us is beyond expectations. It seems that the individual tone of the translator has a sharp effect on the translatum in terms that he resorts to using literal translation in order to avoid falling into the trap of exoticism nor domestication; however, the translatum seems to unable to communicate the sense of the SL; in addition, translatum fails to meet the expectations of the target readership. The translator also fails to adapt his translatum to the new realities imposed by the new culture. A stock metaphor, Newmark argues, has to produce the same image in the TLT which has comparable frequency and currency in the appropriate TL. (1981,p.108). The translators have failed to even render the metaphorical language implicit in the work of art.

2-"May good health knock her door": this translation is too literal in the sense that it has nothing to do with the original text in which the heroine of the novel expressed her wishes of good health to one of her friends; the translators rendered the expression literally which has produced a comic and even confusing text to the target readership. The conceptual metaphor used in English to express the wishes of good health is different from its counterpart in Arabic, where in colloquial Arabic people used to personify health as a good visitor who visit people and provide them with health. The conceptual metaphor does not exist in the English culture. It seems that the translator tries to make the target text conveys the same effect as that in the source text but they failed to communicate it because of their inability to deal the translation problems resulting from the cultural markers embedded in the text.

3- Ma shaa Allah, God willing, no envy touch her, she's so pretty. The translators have produced mistranslation where God willing means inshallah, not Ma Sha Allah, which is used to express praise of someone's beauty or good quality. However, the translators neither use literal translation nor communicative translation. What is striking is that though one of the translators of team is Saudi, she did not notice the cultural difference in Arabic between Ma shallah and Inshallah, which undermines the intratextual coherence, which can be easily detected between the text and its contextual realities.

8.2- Examples of omissions

SL	TTL	Type of omission
1-	"The bride's sisters" "She seems a good girl"	Translator has omitted "dibra" which is a colloquial Najdi word which means "a clever housewife"
2*	"I think she really needs to ditch a few pounds and work out like you do."	The translator has omitted "sah, she is square"

The translatum exposes many examples of omission, ranging from words, expressions, idiomatic expressions, and proverbs to short paragraphs which undermine the fidelity of translation. In addition, cultural markers have been almost avoided in the TLT, which has largely affected the function of the target text and stripped the text its cultural and literary values and turns it into a mere prose text. The literary features of the novel derive their power and cultural effect from using dialectal terms and expressions; they, however, were omitted in the translation, which has distorted and manipulated the function of TLT. For example, following translation, "the bride's sisters, she seems a good girl" reflects clear examples of omission in the sense that Arabic words like "dibra" a colloquial najdi word, which means "a clever housewife" is omitted in the translation. The following translation "I think she really needs to ditch a few pounds and work out like you do" is another clear example of omission

The idea of omitting the dialectal elements in the TTL brings about several negative consequences on the translation quality of the work of art. For example, a new feature of Najdi contemporary dialect is shown in injecting English expressions in the speech of the upper-class girls and boys living in capital cities like Riyadh, which is reflective of the linguistic and cultural change occurring to Saudi culture. Therefore, omitting "sah, she is sequare" may undermine the function of the novel and manipulate the original meaning and deconstruct the fidelity to SL.

8.3- Some examples of communicative translation:

SL	Communicative translation
Wa dakhilik quli li qamours ma sar shyaa	"Please, tell Gamrah to calm down. It is nothing to worry".
Lestun m'arbzeen hun ma hada fal "	"No one is going to leave"
Umrkum, ma hattalum ousl alhash, almuham shufi el-bant hadi, am alyahaa mawahib"	You will never gossip 101. Anyway, check out that girl-she's got talent, all right.
Ez he samara leesh yahtoun laha faoundation abyad zai al taheen, mikhalyinha zarqaa wa fee farq wadeh been wajahaha wa raqbtaha yaa	By God, her make-up is painful! Her skin is too dark for such a chalky foundation. They have made her practically blue—and look at the contrast between her face and her neck. Ewwww… so vulgar.
Ya reethaha rahat al-mashaghal eli khyatat endu saduam badal ha-alaq eli amlito bi nafasha	I wish she had gone to the dressmaker who made Sadeem's dress instead of this mess she came up with herself.

Teesdaqin, ana sema’at in al-rasul daa le-elshina	“Can you believe it; I heard that Prophet Mohammed used to send up prayers for the unlovely one.”

It seems that the translator adopted the strategy of literal translation for addressing the problems of translation emanating from the excessive use of cultural markers and dilects and vernacular speech in the novel. The novelist has a purpose when using the cultural markers and dialectal terms and expressions in order to portray a living and vivid image of Saudi Arabia. The novelist tries to voice the difficult conditions of Saudi women and she finds in using dialect the best approach for revealing such a reality; therefore, dialectal and colloquial speech have become a reflective register of the prevalent linguistic structure, and this colors the traits of literary work and shape the life, ideology, thoughts, values system, social realities and belief in a certain way. Avoiding translating ST dialectal features will inevitably distort the purpose of the author and the objective of the novel which can be achieved through conveying the trouble and the pain of the Saudi women to the intentional society. The English reader wants to learn about the conditions of Saudi women; therefore, the Skopos of the translation is implied in delivering the exotic image of Saudi community with its cultural and historical details. Therefore, the translator has to depict the dialects and the cultural markers of the novel to the target culture. This may lead to create a kind of exoticism and foreignization where the target readership may encounter a strange world. The idea of exoticism and strangeness has become a necessity to the reader because it serves the purpose of the translation. Strangeness will compel the reader to search beyond the text and try to explore the truth of such a world. In this way, a translated text will encourage him to read more texts to understand the ambiguous messages of the translated text

The original work is linguistically crafted to represent the social realities of the Saudi feminine society. To achieve this end, the novelist employs its social register through the language and the speech of her characters. That is to say, Dickins et al. (2016:213) remark “that social register carries information about such things as the speaker’s education, social persona, occupation and professional standing.” Therefore, a translator has to choose a language that reflects the social status of the characters in the novel in order to avoid breaking with the fidelity of the source text. Choice of diction, lexical items, tone is a major element of representing the identity of Saudi girls. Choosing wrong social register changes the fictional characters’ social identity and therefore distorts the message of the original text. The novel purposefully employs vernacular speech and dialects in order to introduce what social stereotypes the characters belong to. These characters belong to strange and sometimes contradictory social categories embodying a kind of inner struggle between the emerging modernization of the Saudi community and the overwhelming sense of tradition and culture, which can be inferred from their lexical choices and their tonal and social registers that combine purely Bedouin dialectal features, Egyptian vernacular speech, Levantine expressions and Americanized Saudi speech. Avoiding the transfer of such a linguistic mosaic embedded in the structure of the novel may strip TLT of its affective meaning, function, and vivid description.

- Despite the fact that the novelist has contributed to translating her novel, her identity and her original feeling have not been clearly communicated in the translation where the translation draws heavily on literal and sometimes flat translation that has little to do with the real message of the author. The translation neither convinced the target readership of its naturalness and domestication nor communicates an exoticism of the original text. In addition, the translation does not reproduce the sense of the text at larger scale and it also fails to achieve the same effect because the translator often missed the translation of the cultural markers and dialectal expressions. In addition, the translation seems to be incongruent to the differences arising from different cultures entailing different traditions. Metaphorical expressions have been lost in translation which stripped translation its intratextual coherence where metaphorical and metonymical expressions have been literally translated. The smaller units of the translated text including its senses, metaphors, ambiguity and cultural specific elements and cultural bound elements are often omitted in the translation which affects the message of the original text. The translated text did not reflect the textual circular coherence at many aspects. The translation failed to use the target language in most idiomatic structure. The translators seldom use the cultural transplantation for rendering the idiomatic expressions and dialectal terms in the novel despite its effectiveness for translating dialectal expressions without losing either overall effect or style. The translators have infrequently made linguistic, stylistic, idiomatic adaptation to the target language culture where Arabic expressions were adapted to the target language culture as translates as barely which is a kind of clear cultural adaption. The translator has kept the use of cultural borrowing in the novel to a minimum and cultural borrowing is reflected in religious terms and expressions which can be justified simply because the religious equivalence in the target culture is conceptually different.

Conclusion

Assessing the translation of the cultural markers in the *Girls of Riyadh* in relation to Skopos theory of translation, one can find that the translator relies heavily on literal translation, the negative consequence of which is that it stripped novel its purpose. The novel lost its objective as a story narrates the real-life of the Saudi girls. Instead, the novel has turned into monotonous prose which is void of the soul of Saudi life. The work of art has lost its cultural value and its ethical and traditional message which the Western reader is trying to explore. The translated text does not reflect the intertextual coherence because there are clear discrepancies between the source and target texts in translation. The translation often preserves lack of fidelity to the source text. The translated text rarely considers the expectations of the target readership. Translating dialectal terms and expressions through equivalent dialectal terms and expression using skopos theory can help translator maintains the features of SL, its vividness, realism, and sense of intimacy, literary imagination, creativity and aesthetic effect in the TLT. Several translation theoreticians have come up against the appropriateness of rendering Arabic colloquial forms into English dialectal forms suggesting a kind of compensation. However, the idea of occasional addition (a kind of compensation) is a kind of translation across dialect where a translator may add colloquial expressions that maintain the effect of the SL in the TLT. Therefore, the study recommends the adoption of Skopos theory for rendering the cultural markers and dialectal expressions embedded in novels.

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The Efficiency of Task-Based Learning Approach (TBL) on Developing Saudi EFL Communication Skills

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of using task-based learning on developing communication skills in English for the first year university students. The researcher employed a sample of (100) EFL learners studying at a university in the Eastern Province in Saudi Arabia. The researcher chose two classes: one class functioned as the experimental group consisting of (50) students and the second one functioned as the control group consisting of (50) students. The traditional method was used in teaching the control group, while the task-based learning approach was used with the experimental one in the first term of the academic year (2019-2020).The researcher used three tools as a means of collecting data: an interview to find out the level of the students in communication skills, a test (pre & post-test), and an observation card to measure the communication skills of the students. The

collected data were analyzed and treated statistically. T-test and the effect size equation were used to measure the effect size of task-based learning approach on the experimental group in each domain of the test. The findings of the study revealed that there were significant differences in learning communication skills in English between both groups-in favor of the experimental group due to using the task-based learning.

Keywords: *Task-Based Learning Approach, Communication Skills, proposed framework, performance*.

Introduction

For human beings, language is the instrument of communication, thinking and transmitting thoughts to others. Learning a language requires time, willingness and effort to take risks. Learning a language needs practice, permanent exercise, and exposure. Memorizing great numbers of grammatical rules and vocabulary alone will not help too much if not used in real life situations. That’s why language teachers often ask their students to do tasks and communicate in class together following the principles of ‘task-based learning’ (Abeberese, Kumler & Linden, 2011).

According to Staton (1988), the world we live in now has rapid change and progress. There is no doubt that the processes of teaching and learning students and preparing them to live and adapt in this society need to be developed and changed so that students can acquire different knowledge, skills, experiences and values.

Cal, Fernández, & Gómez (2010) stated that professors must help students adapt to these rapid changes by giving them the opportunity to practice active learning, and to train them on how to be responsible for their own learning process, as well as on sensing and discovering different challenges and problems and how to deal with and solve them by themselves.

So, we must know the strengths and weaknesses that need to be improved and developed in students, and also we must respect their methods of thinking and find out their abilities and invest them in a good way by directing them to the proper techniques that enable to think, create and innovate effectively (Abeberese, et. al, 2011).

As cited in Sopacio & Bargos (2016) that people have many different languages all over the world. In any language, the communication skills are the same. Communication skills are defined as the exchange of thoughts, views and ideas with the intention of conveying information.

Communication skills are one of the elements of common skills that are very important between the students. Through their years in the classroom, students would have been exposed to different situations, in and outside of the university, where they have to use their communication skills, for example team work and class presentations. Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate the level of communication skills of the students (Shabana, 2014).

Check (2013) defined communication as a complicated transactional process to share information and thoughts between the teacher and the learner. It is a dynamic process of sending and receiving massage. The purpose of communication is to convey one's beliefs, ideas, thoughts or needs with clarity so as to reach a consensus or a mutually acceptable solution.

According to Hans (2014) the relationship between learning strategies and verbal classroom interactions is very important and plays a role in developing the scientific culture of learners. This process relies on the need for motivation to accomplish communicative tasks. Mousa (2018) stated that the teaching process is a communication process between the teacher and the learner, in which the teacher tries to provide students with skills and experiences using many educational methods and means.

Many approaches, relevant to the educational process, have arisen and seek to develop university subjects, including TBL approach. The TBL approach assists the teachers in designing the lesson and achieving the curriculum aims as it is highly efficient, and emphasizes self-learning, flexibility in application, and its use depends on the situation. And when the teacher allows the students to participate in the educational process, or gives the students free time to work in educational tasks; this will increase the excitement of the students' motivation to learn (Agha, 2015).

TBL offers the student an opportunity to do the task as they can. The focus of lesson activity is the task and the language is the instrument which the students use to complete the task. The task is an activity in which students use language to achieve a specific outcome. The task reflects situations from our life and learners focus on meaning. Making a phone call, booking a flight ticket, writing a letter, solving a problem, sharing ideas, giving instructions can all be considered as activities or tasks (Anjum, Kayani, & Jumani, 2019).

According to Rodriguez (2010), TBL is an approach where the planning of learning materials and teaching lessons are based on doing a task. A task refers to an activity where communication is necessary: for example; making decisions, solving a problem, designing or organizing a topic, or telling someone to do something. A task must involve the processing of information, and some kind of communication or interaction. In a task-based approach, learners learn by doing.

Ellis (2018) stated that TBL Approach aims to provide learners with a natural context for language use. Learners have abundant opportunities to interact. Thus, this interaction facilitates language acquisition. TBL Approach is a collaborative learning method. The teacher's role is only as a facilitator.

MacAulay (2019) declared that TBL gives learners a chance to reach the aim of the language in order to improve language proficiency with the teacher guidance. In TBL, learners place themselves in a real situation where communication skills are needed to accomplish the task. The language is used by the learner to do the tasks which are needed for a communication purpose in order to achieve aims.

TBL is one of the ways of implementing a communicative language teaching. TBL is an approach that has roots in the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method, and it is teaching and learning English through real life tasks. In order to fully acquire language, it must have real meaning and used in natural contexts.

Tang, Chiou and Jarsaillon (2015) revealed that TBL is effective in enhancing fluency, and useful in vocabulary acquisition. The main advantages of TBL are that language is used for real communication, and that at the stage where the learners are preparing their task, they are forced to consider language form in general rather than concentrating on a single form. So, the aim of task-based learning is to lead from accuracy to fluency (Moore, 2018).

Pilot Study

In the light of the observation and experience of the researcher of the present study in the field of English language teaching:

1. The researcher observed the little attention paid to developing communication skills in some universities.
2. By reviewing the directives of the Ministry of Education in which students are trained in active learning, enabling students to acquire a set of learning strategies and giving them an opportunity to contribute to the educational process.
3. In addition, a number of studies, which were conducted in TEFL field for creating a motivating climate and using suitable strategies including TBL approach to develop learners' language skills.
4. The above findings confirmed that there was a problem in developing English communication skills for many of the students. The results revealed that

students need to participate in the learning process to achieve fluency, flexibility, originality or elaboration. The researcher noticed that the students were unable to generate or associate ideas in a well-organized and coherent manner.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of the study could be summarized in the following statement:

The first-year university students lacked English communication skills. They are unable to reach fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration. Thus, in an attempt to solve this problem, the present study proposed the TBL approach as an attempt to develop the necessary communication skills for the students.

Research Questions

This research study is guided by two research questions as follows:

1. What are the necessary English communication skills for the university first year students?
2. What is the effect of the TBL on developing the necessary communication skills for the students?

Purpose of the Study

This study aims at:

1. Identifying the communication skills necessary for the first year university students.
2. Designing a suggested framework based on using the TBL approach.
3. Measuring the effect of the suggested framework based on using the TBL approach on developing the first year university students' EFL skills.

Significance of the Study

The importance of the current research lies in:

1. Drawing the attention of EFL specialists to use the Task-Based learning approach in order to use structured teaching strategies.
2. Improving the learning process and advancing the development process in the field of teaching.
3. Drawing the attention of EFL specialists to use the Task-Based learning approach as a means of encouraging students reflect their authentic ideas and thoughts.

4. Broadening the professor's awareness to the student's English communication skills to provide them with suitable activities that help improve their performances.
5. Drawing the attention of EFL professors to the importance of students' participation in learning process.

Limitations of the Study

Since it is beyond the limits of a single study to consider a wide range of factors, the present study was confined to:

1. A randomly assigned group of the first year university students
2. The communication skills necessary for the first year university students.
3. TBL approach to develop communication skills.
4. Two units of English students' book.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group on the communication skills pre- and post administration of the test in favour of the post test mean score.
2. There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre- and post tests in each communication skills in fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration in favour of the post- administration mean scores.
3. There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the post-administration of the EFL communication skills test in favour of the experimental group.

Variables of the Study

- ***Independent Variable:***

This refers to the treatment implemented with the experimental group in this study represented in a framework that is based on the Task-Based learning approach.

- ***Dependent Variable:***

This refers to the development in the experimental group's communication skills targeted by the treatment.

Operational Terms

Communication Skills

Communication has also been defined as sharing and giving meaning occurring at the same time through symbolic interactions. Communication skills have been defined as sharing and giving meaning occurring at the same time through symbolic interactions (Keshta, 2016)

Communication is the transfer of information from one person to another, whether or not it elicits confidenc (Staton, 2011).

Communication skills are defined as a person's ability to provide information that is easily understood by others (Rafeek, 2017).

In the present study, communication skills are defined as "the information and thoughts you want to deliver in an understandable way even orally or written."

Task-Based Learning Approach

TBL seems a possible option for the foreign language classroom because it enables students to learn the language and, at the same time, acquire the skills they need to live in society nowadays (Hismanoglu, 2011).

In the present study, Task-Based Learning (TBL) is defined as "an approach that supports self-learning, which is based on a set of successive steps and procedures that are implemented in order to provide learners with a set of integrated skills and requires understanding and accomplishing specific tasks with a goal and meaning."

Research Design Overview

The present study followed the analytical descriptive method for reviewing the related literature and previous studies. The design used in this study was a non-equivalent group design. This design is identical to the pre-test / post-test, control group / experimental group design in all aspects except that intact groups rather than randomly assigned ones are used.

Procedures of the Study

1. Reviewing literature and previous studies related to communication skills and Task-Based learning approach.
2. Designing a framework based on using TBL approach for developing the first year university students' communication skills.
3. Constructing a pre\post communication skills test for the first year university students and ensuring its validity and reliability.

4. Choosing a sample of students randomly and dividing it into an experimental and a control group.
5. Administrating the pre- communication skills test.
6. Implementing the proposed framework on the experimental group.
7. Administrating the post communication skills test.
8. Analysing the collected data statistically.
9. Interpreting results, conclusions, giving recommendations, and suggestions for further research.

Data Collection Methods

The present study made use of the following instruments:

1. Interviews

The researcher interviewed some teachers of English and asked them about the level of the students and how they communicate with each other or with teachers. Through their answers the researcher knew that the students communicate with difficulty.

List of Oral Communication Functions and Forms

A-The aim of the list

It is to identify the oral communication skills and functions that first year university students should obtain.

B- The Sources of Constructing the List

The researcher depended on different sources to construct the list. He explored books of oral communication and speaking skills. The researcher asked specialized teachers, instructors and professors who teach English about the main and sub-skills needed for oral communication skills among the first year university students.

C- Description of the List

The list includes the main oral communication skills. The researcher prepared these important skills which are necessary to be used in daily life through different situations.

D- Validity of the List of Oral Communication Functions

The researcher showed the list of oral communication functions to a number of English professors, teachers, and education specialists in order to judge the suitability and importance of the tool through adding, deleting or correcting. The juries' responses revealed that all the functions are very important.

2. Observation card

The observation card was used twice; first, it was used before applying the experiment to determine the level of the experimental group before applying the approach. The experimental group development in oral communication skills was the focus of the observation.

The researcher observed some of the first year university students while they were communicating to know how they communicate with each other or with their teachers. The researcher found that most of the students have a problem in EFL communication skills.

3. Test

Tests are the most useful tool of educational research as a data collecting technique and they provide material for most experimental studies in education. The test was prepared by the researcher to measure the students' communication skills. It was conducted before the experiment as a pre-test and after the experiment as a post-test.

Aim of the Test

The test aimed at measuring the effect of using TBL approach on developing first year EFL university students' oral communication skills i.e. (expression, fluency, vocabulary, understanding and grammar).

Sources of Constructing the Test

While constructing the test, the researcher depended basically on the previous studies and books about oral communication skills and on his experience as a teacher of English. Moreover, the researcher consulted some specialists in teaching English language.

Items of the Test

The test consisted of five (5) main questions related to the oral communication sub-skills. The items of the final version were distributed into five (5) questions as follows:

- What would you say in the following situation?
- Discuss the following topics.
- Finish the following sentences with words from the list
- Correct the underlined words.
- Choose the correct word between brackets.

Results

The main purpose of the present study was to develop the most important communication skills for a sample of first year university students through the use of a proposed framework. So, before implementing the framework with those students, a communication skills test was pre- administered to both the control and experimental groups of the study. Then, the t-test formula for independent two groups samples was used to ensure that there was no statistically significant difference between mean scores of the two groups before the experiment, and that any development in the experimental group skills would be due to implementing the proposed framework of TBL with them.

The following formula by Morad (2000) was employed:

$$"t" = \frac{M_1 - M_2}{\sqrt{\frac{(sd_1)^2 + (sd_2)^2}{(N-1)}}}$$

Where:

"t": the calculated value of the difference between mean scores.

M1: the mean scores of the experimental group students.

M2: the mean scores of the control group students.

Sd1: standard deviation of the experimental group.

Sd2: standard deviation of the control group.

N: Number of pairs of students.

The following table shows that there was no statistically significant difference between the mean score of the control and the experimental groups on the pre-administration of the test in the communication skills.

Table (1) "t" Value of the Difference Between the Mean Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups' students on the Pre-Administration of the test.

Group	**Std. Deviation**	**Mean**	**N N**	**Calculated t- value**	**Tabulated T**	**Sig**
Control	5.03065	26.8919	50	1.98	2.617	

Experimental	5.71298	29.0270	50			Non significan t at 0.01

From table (1) the calculated T-value (1.98) was lower than the tabulated T-value (2.617) with (72) degrees of freedom at (0.01) level of significance. Thus, there was no statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control group mean scores on the pre-administrations of the communication skills test. This was evidence that both groups were having almost at the same level of communication skills before the experiment.

Table (2): "t"-value of the difference between the mean scores of the experimental students on the post- pre administrations of the test. The following table shows that there was statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the control and the experimental groups on the pre- test in communication skills.

The above table indicates the following:

The calculated T-value (81.73) was significantly higher than the tabulated T-value (2.70) with (36) degrees of freedom at the (0.01) level of significance. Thus, there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental group mean scores on the pre and post communication skills test in favour of the post test.

Group	**Std.Devtion**	**Mean**	**N**	**Calculated t-value**	**Tabulated "T"**	**Sig**	**effect**
Pre-test	2.581	29.027	50	81.73	2.70	Significant at 0.01	Large effect
Post-test	5.712	92.054	50				

The mean score of the experimental group on the communication skills test post administration (92.054) was higher than their mean score on the pre administration (29.027). Thus, a development of the overall communication skills of the experimental group was proved, due to the proposed TBL framework as illustrated in the above table. Thus, the first hypothesis of the study was verified.

Table (3): Differences in the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre- and post-tests in each communication sub-skill.

Skill	Test	Mean	N	Deviation	Calculated t	Tabulated t	Sig
1-Communicative Expression	Pre	2.70	37	1.33	24.08	2.704	Significant at 0.01
	Post	7.56	37	0.64			
2-Fluency	Pre	2.05	37	1.10	32.84	2.704	Significant at 0.01
	Post	9.08	37	1.11			
3-Vocabulary	Pre	3.18	37	1.46	24.96	2.704	Significant at 0.01
	Post	8.94	37	0.66			
4 - Understanding	Pre	2.32	37	1.20	28.06	2.704	Significant at 0.01
	Post	7.67	37	0.74			
5-Grammar	Pre	3.64	37	1.53	24.09	2.704	Significant at 0.01
	Post	9.75	37	0.59			
	Post	8.27	37	1.30			

From the above table, it is clear that the calculated T-value of each of the communication sub skills was significantly higher than the tabulated T-value (2.704) with (36) degrees of freedom at (0.01) level of significance. Thus, there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental group mean scores of each communication skill on the pre/post administrations of the communication skills performance test in favour of the post administration of the test. Thus, the second hypothesis of the study was verified.

Table (4): Differences in the mean scores of the communication skills between the experimental and control group on post-test.

Group	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	Calculated - value	Tabulated T	Sig
Control	5.129	25.729	37	70.253	2.617	Significant at 0.01
Experimental	2.581	92.054	37			

The above table (4) confirms the following:
It was proved that the experimental group mean score was (92.054) which is higher than the mean score of the control group (25.729) on the post administration of the communication skills test. This is a highly significant difference which showed that the experimental group students attained remarkable higher scores than the control group students in the post-test. Therefore, development of the experimental group students' communication skills was due to the proposed TBL framework.

The calculated T-value (70.253) was significantly higher than the tabulated T-value (2.617) with (72) degrees of freedom at (0.01) level of significance. Thus, there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control group mean scores on the post administration of the communication skills test in favour of the experimental group students as illustrated in the above table. Thus, the third hypothesis of the study was verified.

Findings of the Study

Based on the statistical analysis performed on the data, the following findings were noticed:

1. There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group on the communication skills pre- and post tests in favour of the post test mean score.
2. There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group on the communication skills pre- and post-tests in every skill in favour of the post- administration mean scores.
3. There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the post-administration of the EFL communication skills test in favour of the experimental group.
4. The proposed TBL framework has a significant effect on developing EFL communication skills of the experimental group as a whole.

5. The targeted communication skills were developed at different rates.

6. The proposed TBL framework had increased the level of the experimental group students relevant to Task-Based learning used in communication skills.

In order to answer the first question of the present study, the researcher reviewed the literature, communication skills and provided a list of the necessary skills required for the first year university students to communicate easily. The skills were classified into four main skills as follows: a) Fluency, b) Flexibility, c) Originality and d) Elaboration.

In order to answer the second question, the researcher calculated the effect size of the suggested TBL framework on developing the required communication skills. The effect size was statistically large. This clarifies that the framework had a large effect size on developing communication skills using the Task-Based learning approach. Thus, the second question was answered.

Answering the study questions and verifying its hypotheses showed that the TBL approach had a large effect size on developing each of the skills required for the first year university students.

Based on the findings of this study, results showed that implementing the task-based learning approach as a tool to improve students' communication skills has significant effects on the students' communication skills. The researcher used different techniques and strategies during the lessons; different activities, tasks, worksheets, songs, games, pictures, realia, photos, and music.

English language lessons of communication skills were explained to students using different class organizations; individual work, pair-work and group work. This class organization created a lively, energetic, and positive learning atmosphere. These enjoyable activities affected positively and reduced the barriers of English language communication skill; shyness, hesitation, anxiety, worry and lack of knowledge.

It was also observed that the students gained great improvement in comprehension, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and vocabulary; oral communication skills.

Discussion

It can be claimed that after the implementation of TBL approach in the proposed framework, the experimental group students demonstrated tangible progress in the overall communication skills. This progress might be ascribed to several aspects:

First, the TBL approach was used as an operative teaching approach. It is proved to be motivating and effective. Using the TBL approach helps students to think and communicate easily. So, it mimics the way their brains think. It is used for any thinking or learning task. The TBL approach helps students to link ideas and make connections between information they want to deliver. This helped them to better communication. Through the TBL approach students generate ideas very quickly and are encouraged to explore different ways to think and communicate. Students can benefit greatly from the TBL approach because it is able to consume all the common skills found in creativity, flexibility, and organization of ideas. Through sessions, students followed many steps. First, they try to think with each other then write what they want to say after that say what they want.

Second, the design of the framework led to providing students with continuous evaluation and giving them an immediate feedback, which helped them greatly in integrating and developing their communication skills. The instructor's positive feedback encourages students to communicate easily with each other.

Noticeably, the feedback students received throughout each session was based on the integration of self-correction, interactive peer correction, and supplementary instructor intervention. It is worth mentioning that this feedback focuses on communication skills and increases their self-confidence and motivation at the same time.

In displaying the results of the study, the researcher presented an account of the development of experiment group students' communication skills due to the use of the TBL approach. This is shown in the difference between the pre and post administrations mean scores of the experimental group. The difference between the students' mean scores in the pre and post administrations of the test was statistically significant. This is because the students were aware of the importance of the TBL approach in developing communication skills. The research has shown positive results as the TBL approach brought about significant improvement in enhancing the communication skills of the students.

In addition, using the TBL approach motivated learners to get involved in the learning process and express themselves freely without hesitation. Thus, they felt free while generating their ideas and came up with unique and unexpected thoughts that were completely different from one student to another and they were able to deliver these thoughts.

The study findings can be beneficial for other researchers in the future as well, especially those who deal with difficulties pertaining to EFL communication skills or eager to use TBL approach for developing the performance of the students in EFL.

To sum up, the findings of the present study were positive. The hypotheses of the study were accepted through the statistical analysis of results, and all the study questions were answered. The proposed TBL framework has a significant effect on developing the most necessary communication skills for first year university students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussion of the present study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Communication skills should be given more attention in Saudi EFL classes. More time and effort should be exerted to develop these vital skills.
2. The proposed TBL framework in the present study can be adopted for teaching communication skills to students at other educational stages taking into consideration students' age, needs, interests, and linguistic proficiency levels.
3. Teachers should help students using the TB approach that plays an important role in communication skills and can assist students in developing knowledge about communication skills.
4. TB approach training should be incorporated into the syllabus of EFL communication skills teaching so as to raise students' awareness of factors in communication skills and to promote their autonomy in learning communication skills and in lifelong learning as well.
5. Students should be encouraged to be active instead of waiting passively for teachers' instructions. The teachers' role is to facilitate promoting students' awareness of the TB approach and to increase the appropriate application of the TB approach in communication skills.
6. Supportive feedback and motivational factors should be used with students throughout sessions' phases not only to assist the students identify their–weakness in communication skills and ways of overcoming them, but also to enhance their strengths. If this was earnestly accomplished, the students' motivation, initiation, autonomy, and involvement will increase.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, the following conclusions can be made:

1. The present study provided an evidence for the effectiveness of the proposed TBL framework on developing the most important communication skills for first year university students.
2. The communication skills targeted were developed at different rates of large effect.
3. TB approach allowed to generate, organise and connect many ideas so the framework proved to be effective in developing communication skills.
4. The results of the study provided evidence for the significant effect of the proposed TBL framework on increasing the experimental group use of the Task-Based learning approach in communication skills.
5. Designing the proposed TBL framework in a cycle form, led to providing the students with continuous evaluation and giving them an immediate feedback, which helped them greatly in developing their communication skills.
6. Using the TB approach helped students develop their communication level.

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Appendix

Communication skills test

Communicative Expression (A

Answer the following questions

Q1) What would you say in the following situation:

1)A:I think that hunting should be banned.

B-:…………………………………………………(agrees strongly)

2) A: Would you like to come with me for riding at weekend?

B:…………………………………………………………(refuse polity)

3) A: Your friend gave a birth.

B:…………………………………………… (congratulate her)

4) A: Your friend is carrying a big bag.

B:…………………………… ………………………(offer a help)

5) A: You broke your father's glasses.

B:…………………………… ………………………(apologize)

Fluency **(B**

Q2) Discuss the following topics:

There are lots of places to visit (1

What places are you going to visit?

What should you take to eat/drink/ wear?

……………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………

2) Arabic speakers are increasing every year.

Why is Arabic important?

In which countries do people speak Arabic?

……………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………

3) Attending collages is important.

Do you agree or not?

Why?

……………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

<u>Vocabulary</u> **(C**

<u>Q3) Finish the following sentences with words from the list:</u>

chat - instructions – pleased – tidy up – team

1.I'm very …………..to meet you again.

2.I love to ………. with my friend Nuha in the evening.

3.The red ………. haven't scored yet.

4.I …………….. my room everyday.

5.Before going on a hike, I'm going to give you some …………

<u>Understanding</u> **(D**

<u>Q4) Correct the underline words:</u>

1-I will go to the **<u>see</u>** tomorrow. ( )

2-She likes to eat **<u>bears</u>**. ( )

3-Please **<u>right</u>** your name. ( )

4-They **<u>sale</u>** to America. ( )

<u>Grammar</u> **(E**

<u>Q5) Choose the correct word between brackets:</u>

1.The number of people in the world (is – are – am) growing.

2.More people are (work – worked – working) hard to get money.

3.I (love – loving – loves) giraffes.

4.The Egyptian team have already (win – won – winning) the match.

5.Dad (have – has – had) just cleaned the car.

6. The football match has (yet- just – often) started.

7-I met my best friend (yesterday – tomorrow – tonight)

8-How (often – much – many) is this dress?

9-While she was watching TV, my dad (come – comes – came)

10-Jack (travel – traveling – travels) to his country every week.

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Voice in L2 Academic Writing:
Critical Insights from Previous Literature Review

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Abstract
Drawing on several empirical as well as theoretical studies of voice, we discuss the widespread and diverse use of voice and how voice can reflect the forceful expressions of individuals or be the intangible rhetorical quality that conveys the author's uniqueness. In specific, we first contextualize the history of voice and its definition in composition studies, which has been a controversial topic since the 1970s in the United States. We then follow this up with a historical

account of how composition studies started to give more attention to individual rights. Thereafter, we supplemented the-above-stated sections with a rundown of empirical studies relevant to voice. To this end and considering the current literature on voice in academic writing, researchers in the field need to consider the journey of voice as a project. Building on Bakhtin's (1981) concept of *ideological becoming*, we showcased some examples of how second language (L2) writers can develop different forms of voices across time and space. During the process of critical awareness and understanding ideological conflicts, L2 writers can to an extent transform their voice practices into a way of languaging and thinking out loud to become more proactive writers.

Keywords: *Voice, academic writing, ideological becoming*

Introduction

This paper aims to shed light on the main scholarships that have been conducted, theorized, and conceptualized around the term "voice" in second language writing. The western academic pedagogical practices have always encouraged students, including international ones and local ESL writers, to voice themselves and interact critically in writing, especially with their respective audience. Composing could even be more demanding for L2 writers (Kohls, 2013; CheeKeong, Yassin, & Abdulrahma, 2014), for not only do they have to learn the structural patterns of the language, but they are also expected to conform to many other, more subtle norms, which could be academic or associated with their respective disciplinary specializations. Among these norms is "voice," which is an indispensable concept in the discussion of English writing. L2 writers develop an L2 identity, an awareness of the L2 discourse community, and more likely a sense of voice in their texts (Shen, 1989). These L2 voices that are discursively constructed are inseparable from the writer's L1 voices, L2 writers' identities, and the previous educational and sociopolitical practices they have experienced.

To this end, writers interact and communicate with a range of audiences, hence, L2 writers can define themselves through language (e.g., lexical choices, stance, and mode—to name a few) and thus are given certain identities ascribed to them by readers. These choices that writers make mirror the discursive practices that have shaped their voices. Because of the myriad of factors involved in writing—such as linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural factors—writing, among other means of communications, voice is often perceived as a strenuous task: the writer has to organize thoughts, carefully choose the appropriate words, and logically put ideas in a rhetorically effective sequence. Nonetheless, writing is a powerful tool for languaging. It is also a journey of identity discovery. When a writer holds a pen and a piece of paper, they feel curious about the surprises or even heartbreaks down the writing road. With every thought that they come across while wandering in the excitingly mysterious labyrinth of the mind, writers feel they are finding another missing piece of their identity as a human and voice as a writer. Therefore, we would define writing as the whole process of conception, growth, pains of labor, and then the birth of ideas, which be might be called "the daughters of the mind" in Arabic!

In this paper, we first contextualize the history of voice and its definition in composition studies, which has been a controversial topic since the 1970s in the United States. Then, we explore relevant historical background: we highlight the US historical transition from writing as a product-based to a process-based pedagogy and, thus, a voicing opportunity. We follow this up with a historical account of how composition studies started to give more attention to individual rights. We also supplement the-above-stated sections with a rundown of a range of empirical studies relevant to voice. Finally, we dedicate a section that argues for the need for looking at voice as a form of languaging, a project, a process of ideological becoming; even though some previous empirical studies seem to suggest that voice is a project, this paper proposes nuanced ways of exploring voice for marginalized, underrepresented students, who come from authoritative educational backgrounds; this way can reveal the different dimensions of voice expressions in writing and the subtle macro factors that may (re)shape it. The rationale behind this proposal is that students who come from backgrounds where their choice and voice is heavily driven by macro ideological forces such as religious and relatively utilitarian societies are key in understanding the process of students' voice as a journey, especially when they study abroad to pursue their educational endeavor.

Voice: History, Definition, and Its Relation to Identity Studies

A Historical Background of The Development of Voice in Writing Studies

In this section, we introduce a glimpse of prominent figures and works in the historical development of voice both in mainstream composition and L2 writing. We then lay out how teaching writing from a product-based changed into a process-based pedagogy, which has played a critical role in empowering students to express their thoughts and voice in writing. Afterward, we present contesting varying definitions of voice in the field and its relationship with identity in writing.

Historically, the spark of voice in composition begins to be visible in the 1970s; specifically, in 1972, writers such as Donald Stewart, in *The Authentic Voice*, shed light on the undeniable fact that a writer can have a voice because of their self-discovery. These voices, as Stewart suggested, are what make writers unique, especially when they tell a story about their lives. Seventeen years after Stewart's comments on voice, Ede (2004), in *Work in progress: A guide to academic writing and revising,* adopted a more courageous view of voice—she stated that each writer writes differently for each occasion. She contended that writers develop or bring different situational voices for various genres in different settings. Following Ede, writers such as Elbow, who has been a prominent advocate for students' voices in their writing, started to publish books and articles on voice and students' empowerment during the process of writing and revision; for instance, Elbow (1992), in *Writing with Power*, stated that voice can empower writers to use their objective and subjective lenses during the revision process. In other words, Elbow echoed Steward's (1972) ideas that writers construct their voices when they know who they are, and, thus, they start to trust their voices in writing.

Moving on to a broader horizon of voice, Prior (2001) suggested that voice is a result of our sociohistorical experiences and the roles/identities we play in specific settings. He categorized voice into three different perspectives: *individual*, *social*, *and personal social ones.* His intention of this categorization was to "offer resources for getting beyond the binary of the personal and the social, for taking a complex view of agency as distributed across persons, practices, artifacts, and cultural activity systems" (p. 79). More specifically, Prior (2001) explicated that voice can be *personal* when the text can reflect some personal textual qualities tied to the writer's choices; it also can be *social* in a sense as it reflects writers' social identity or membership in a community. These choices of voices are molded by social and cultural forces and mediated through language. Prior (2001) further contended that voice can be social as it is "performed in practice when people speak as members of some group–projecting what they hope will be a recognizable voice of an ethnic or regional group, of a male or female, of a child or old person, of people who are well educated or not, of people who have some specialized knowledge" (p. 60). Writers can also draw their discourses from their previous backgrounds, experiences, and different social situations; thus, voice, as Prior contended, can be both *personal and social*. He described that voice "is simultaneously personal and social because discourse is understood as fundamentally historical, situated, and indexical" (p. 55).

Later, more pedagogical discussions about voice and its applications in the classroom emerged among compositionists. For example, in his article "Voice in Writing Again: Embracing Contraries," Elbow (2007) reconciled two conflicting perspectives on voice: how to use and overlook it strategically. He admitted that voice can be a very crucial tool in writing while it can also be misleading to readers since it can be highly influenced by the writer's history and culture and, thus, it constrains writers' objectivity. His main arguments were to encourage teachers to adopt the “the contrary stances” and work out a “both/and” approach that incorporates and overlooks voice rhetorically. Other scholars addressed the need to conduct more research on how L2 writers use voice (Kohls, 2013; Tardy, 2012; Hirvela & Belcher, 2001; Matsuda, 2001; Go Silk, et al., 2020; Zemni & Alrefaee,2020). For example, Kohls (2013) introduced 6 strategies to teach voice to L2 student writers. Incorporation of voice through these steps is not only meant to develop their writing skills but also to empower them as writers and as individuals. Kohls also expanded the concept of voice and includes readers (e.g., teachers, peers, etc.) as constructors of the writer’s voice; he asserted that voice is dialogical and grows “in the interaction between the two” (p.61). To add more texture to the understanding of voice in the teaching of writing, the following section explains the pedagogical development of teaching voice in composition studies.

Contextualizing Writing as a Voicing Process

To gain a deeper understanding of how voice pedagogically was addressed, it is important to highlight how teaching writing is perceived and what is the common practice that many compositionists follow. Unlike English literary studies, which historically came to dominate over and replace classics in the university by the end of the 19th century in the United States and England, the opposite happened in the field of rhetoric and composition (RC). By the middle of the 20th century in the US, scholars in English departments who were interested in classical rhetoric (the Sophists, Plato, Aristotle, etc.) decided to bring classical rhetoric back to the writing classroom (the practice of imitating the writing of others) (Lauer, 2006). In the 1970s and 80s, with open admissions, more students went to college, many of whom were perceived to need help with their writing skills (Shaughnessy, 1977; Bartholomae, 1986). In response to this demand, more scholars started researching theories and pedagogies of composition courses and how writers write. The growing literature, in turn, kept changing how writing was taught in the classroom.

Unlike the newer process-oriented philosophy of teaching writing, the teaching of writing in the past was focused on correct grammar and style, and little attention was given to the audience, invention, and feedback; depending on how it was taught, in other words, the product-based approach was a pedagogy that somewhat allowed less agency to students' voices and perpetuated the ideology of "feel nothing, say nothing language" (Macrorie, 1970, p. 18). However, in the late 60s and early 70s, the process approach, which encouraged student’s voice, expression of one’s thoughts, and creativity and denies the heavy emphasis on the ideology of correctness, was a reaction to the product approach (Zamel, 1976; Stewart, 1972; Murray, 1972; Emig, 1971).

Starting in the mid-1960s, many rhetoric and composition researchers had a distaste for the current traditional method of teaching writing since it dealt with writing as a product that is merely assigned, submitted, and evaluated and does not give much focus to assisting learners to start, explore thoughts, revise, write drafts, get feedback, and bring their voices to the text (Lauer, 2006). These scholars include Murray (1972) and his “Teaching Writing as a Process Not Product” and Hairston (1982) in her breakthrough article “The Winds of Change,” which echoes Murray’s philosophy of teaching writing as a process and aims to promote comfortability, free speech, individuality, and voice in academia. Hairston’s article supports Murray’s perspective in many other ways, too: she called for a transformative paradigm that shifts the field from a product-based pedagogy to a process-based one. She also contended that the theory of writing then was resisted by many writing teachers and that the product-based pedagogy surely "will dissipate when its advocates can demonstrate that it will solve problems that the traditional paradigm could not solve" (p.77). She also believed "that composition theorists and writing teachers can learn from Thomas Kuhn if they see his theory of scientific revolutions as an analogy that can illuminate developments that are taking place in our profession" (p.77). Both scholars, Murray and Hairston, perceived writing as a way for self-discovery, through which students can grow. Their ideas also resonate well with each other's; they almost agree, as Hairston (1982) stated, that "writers write, plan, revise, anticipate, and review throughout the writing process, moving back and forth among the different operations involved in writing without any apparent plan" (p.85).

So instead of the product-based approach to writing, many researchers have started to prefer thinking of writing as a composing process that starts by perception and entails, for example, phases of prewriting and planning (lists, outlines, etc.). Then, more researchers became interested in issues like investigating writing as an inquiry, analyzing the writing process of novice writers, and establishing social or cognitive theories of writing (Flower & Hayes,1981). Moreover, in the last decades of the 20th century, composition scholars have been giving more attention to particular areas of writing, such as invention and audience, modes of discourse and genres, style, voice, ethos, logos, pathos responding to, revising, evaluating texts, literacy development, writing a dysfunction, and writing diversity (Lauer, 2006). Then, new theories suggested that students need to find their authentic voice, which is the self-actualization or personality that is not only shown by the writer’s choices of vocabulary, structure, etc. but also can be developed through experimenting with writing processes involved in journals, meditation, and analogy, just to name a few. Bearing in mind the above-discussed historical development of the field, the following section discusses the meaning of voice in academic writing and the varying definitions provided by scholars of writing.

Voice: An Elusive Term

The term "voice" is a pivotal metaphor in the history of the mainstream composition classroom since the 1970s and still has a strong presence explicitly or implicitly in the US classroom (Zhao & Llosa, 2008; Yancey, 1999; Bowden, 1995). Scholars from various backgrounds acknowledge the agonistic, fluid (Bakhtin and Voloshinov, as cited in Keane, 1999), and polysemous (Tardy, 2012) nature of voice as it has been the subject of debate in the fields of linguistic anthropology, applied linguistics, L2 writing, and composition and rhetoric.

Defining voice in writing is not an easy feat, as Leggo (1991) explained: "as a poet and a teacher, I am constantly reminded that language is a slippery affair." He adds "I am not at all sure that I know what I mean by voice [in written discourse]" (p. 145). Even expressivists confessed that sometimes people celebrate voice without really defining it. Elbow (1994) stated "the term has been used in such a loose and celebratory way as to mean almost anything. It becomes a kind of warm fuzzy word: people say that writing has a voice if they like it or think it is good or has some virtue that is hard to pin down" (p. 2).

Moreover, the conflict around voice has attracted researchers to further explore its definitions, applications, and dimensions pedagogically and culturally (Kohls, 2013; Tardy, 2012; Matsduda, 2001; Boweden, 1995; Elbow, 1994). While much of the definition around identity, ideology, and subjectivities are multiple, shifting, and contradictory, voice and its definitions can also be in a state of flux and overlapping. In "The Rise of a Metaphor: 'Voice' in Composition Pedagogy," Bowden (1995) highlighted that there has never been a consistent methodology for how to define voice or even research it. Vandenberg (1996) commented on how voice is elusive in composition studies:

> The term voice in composition theory and pedagogy marks a profoundly wide intersection of meaning. It has been variously deployed as a rallying cry for expressivisim (Stewart, 1972), a symbol for the range of maturity in a schema of women's intellectual development (Belenky et al, 1986), as a marker for resistance to political oppression (hooks, 1998), and as a metaphor or replacement term for style, naturalness, persona, authority, essence, and a variety of other abstraction. (p.236)

Voice can also be simply a sincere presentation of the writer's critical stance on a subject. Hanauer (2015) explicated and expands the multidimensional interpretations of voice as "a metaphor that encompasses the ideas of agency, identity, authorship, ownership, writing style, linguistic register, rhetorical stance, and textually embodied self" (p. 69). Ivanic and Camps (2001), illustrated that voice does exist in written language, and it is "the heart of the act of writing" (Kirby, Kirby, & Liner, 2004, p. 76). Similarly, Hyland (2002) argued "writing always has a voice in the sense that it conveys a representation of a writer" (p. 5). Moreover, Matsuda (2011) asserted that voice can be defined as the writer's ability to bring their authentic ideas—the autonomy of thought—that distinguishes them from other writers. The autonomy of thought can be translated into the "expressions of the writer's views, authoritativeness, and authorial presence" (Ivanic & Camps, 2001, p.7). These expressions of voice are drawn from the discursive features that shape, construct, and reconstruct the writer's reality.

Voice can also transcend mere textual choices and be seen as a social empowerment tool. For instance, hooks (1989), in *Talking Back*, highlighted the importance of finding one's voice in society. She stated that "the idea of finding one's voice or having a voice assumes a primacy in talk, discourse, writing, and action," and she contended that voice is an act of resistance to the hegemonic discourse (p.12). In such a case, voice can become a tool that transforms the self and moves one from being an object to be a subject that is defined by oneself, not by others. hook's perspective on voice is somehow similar to Elbow's: they both assert that each writer can carry a voice that mirrors their ability to make their discourse visible in society and that reflects either individual or social concerns (Brooke, 2012; Kinloch, 2010). To complicate the concept of voice further and gain a broader dimension of its complexity with identity in writing, the following section clarifies the relationship between voice and identity in writing studies.

Voice and Identity: A Complicated Relationship

In this section, I shed light on the relationship between voice and identity, which are terms that are sometimes used synonymously or differently. While I acknowledge the interaction between voice and identity in writing, I created this section since as I have observed that some authors did not provide a crystal-clear explanation of the relationship between the two terms. Elbow (1994) pointed out the interaction between voice and identity as he states that the notion of voice is seen as the identity marker of the writer—each individual's voice can make them stand out from others. The dialectical relations between the two terms are also a product of socialization, historical events, power-relations, and imitation (Barnard, 2014). Other scholars such as Tardy (2012) and Canagarajah (2015) highlighted that voice can be seen as one aspect of the writer's identity. Tardy (2012) tied voice to identity and suggests that the choices of voice that writers make in their writing are decisions of the writer's identities. Morita (2004) provided a more expanded view on voice by incorporating the audience as co-constructers of one's voice and identity in writing. Morita (2004) stated that voice can be seen as an ascribed identity, projected by readers through the writer's choices. These voice choices can also be telltales of previous social and historical practices that molded the writer's identity (Rubin, 1995; Moore, 2002).

The link between identity and voice can also be best described as follows: voice is a process through which “social identities are represented, performed, transformed, evaluated, and contested" (Keane, 1999, p. 271). Moreover, Keane points out that “voices not only construct identities but also play them off against one another" (p. 272). That is, every writer has rhetorically, linguistically, ideologically, and socially available repertoires of representing themselves that coalesce into their voices. So, while we perceive voice as a sociopolitical site of struggle where writers discursively represent their ideologies through alignment and resistance, thus ideologically fashioning and negotiating agentive identities, we refer to writer’s identities as aspects that are related to the “author’s name, gender, race, nationality, linguistic background, perceived personality, or even life story” (Tardy, 2012, p.68). That is, we conceptualize identity as an overarching umbrella and analytical tool in education and the humanities, which is broader than voice in writing.

Empirical Studies on Voice

What we know about voice of the writer is largely based on empirical studies. Many researchers who investigated voice and socialization have employed a variety of theoretical frameworks and methodologies to unpack how voice is constructed, negotiated, perceived, and projected in the text. Indubitably, a large body of literature indicates that some researchers deem the output of voice construction in a text/or a society as development of the writer's linguistic, cultural, and social capital. Insights from other theoretical and methodological approaches, such as post-structural theory, feminist theory, sociocultural theory, narrative inquiry, and critical discourse analysis, have all influenced voice-related issues and addressed issues of identity construction and negotiation pertinent to writing and writers (Young, 2014; Vandenberg, 1996).

In this section, we frame this literature review section into five thematic categories: social visibility, language ideology, the universality of voice, intercultural influence on voice, and voice through peer-reviewed journals. These studies vary in their analysis as each researcher analyzed voice by conducting qualitative case studies, ethnographies, narratives, and the corpus- and text-based analysis. Although we do not claim to cover the full gamut of empirical studies on voice, we do consider a range of studies that may be considered representative of the main methods that have been used to address questions pertinent to voice in the second language field. A caveat, however, is due here: the following studies undoubtedly overlap in their scope for they deal with the same topic, and each tends to give more attention to certain relevant concepts, frameworks, contexts, and/or populations.

Voice as a Means of Social Visibility

Drawing on feminist epistemology, Annas (1985) in *Style as Politics* underlined women students' discovery of their voices and investigation of "the stylistic strategies that various women essayists have used to deal with the problem of writing as women in an authentic female voice in a context that often does not value what women have to say ..." (362). Such an attitude will help students, regardless of their gender, to see why certain students, genders, or populations employ others' discourses as in the case of Kathy in "Composing as a Woman," who realized "other voices and external truths were more powerful than her own" (Flynn, 1988). In the same vein, Moore (2002) observed how voice in her composition and gender class could empower her female students and how amazingly they connected voice to their real life. Carrie, one of her participants, stated that "the voice I describe [in the paper] is the one that enables me to be confident in my writing and successful in life" (p.17). Carrie also confirmed how classroom discourse about voice has empowered her outside of the classroom. In the bar where she works, she explains how some comments from males made her take the initiative and defend her position. As she explained, "Everyone calls me cutie or sweetie. And I tell them, my name's not sweetie; it's Carrie. I tell them all the time. And so now I've started calling them sweetie back!" (p.17). These instances suggest that teachers as well as students, especially L2 writers, need to pay attention to voice-related issues that make students feel authoritative, empowered, and integrated into the discourse community (Moore, 2002).

Unequivocally, negotiating and constructing one's voice in the text can be a messy process—a recursive path. Building her study on a poststructuralist perspective that views language as a site of social and political struggle, Fernsten (2008) utilized critical discourse analysis to understand the identity construction of her Korean student, Mandy, and the macro social and political world that molded her perceptions. The study explicated Mandy's multiple subjectivities and showcased how voice shifted from one situation to another to negotiate the complexity of her identity. Feinstein examined Mandy's journal entries and conferences with her throughout the semester. The study's findings revealed that Mandy was struggling to express her ideas and voice in writing. These fears were due to the teacher's authority and language ideologies toward "good writing." Mandy also felt that teachers have killed, with their power, her creativity in expressing her voice by making her align to the dominant discourse. Mandy was living in a conflict between what she believed and what her teachers wanted her to be. In other words, Mandy was resisting having her differences pigeonholed as "inferior" or "incorrect." She stated that "It's just a language difference. …You know it is nothing more than that" (p. 50). This example shows how the struggle over "correct" discourse can reveal ideological power-relation dynamics, which can play a vital role in the classroom. The chance to express one's voice is enabled and constrained by the social, ideological, and political factors through which access can be provided or denied to certain groups (Ivanič, 1998).

Language Ideology and Voice

Building on a previous large qualitative study, Olinger (2016) investigated how eight groups of relatively advanced writers (for example, advisers and advisees) from different fields perceive and practice disciplinary identities and voices. The researcher collected her data through literacy–history, text-based corpora, and interviews with the participants. One of her participants is Debojoy Chanda, a 30-year-old Ph.D. student in English at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign (UIUC). Olinger examines the written interactions between Debojoy and several people in his committee of study. Debojoy confessed that writing literacy was rarely practiced in his home country—there were only quizzes and end-of-the-year essay exams.

Olinger (2016) stated that Debojoy's identity as a writer is highly influenced by the "British colonial" language ideology that developed over 20 years in India. Debojoy describes his pre-US writing style during an interview as "bombastic," "stiff," "stilted," "flowery," "ornamental," and "archaic" (p. 128). Debojoy also asserted that his writing style and identity as a writer are affected by the so-called "Queen's English" even though no one speaks it in India. He believed "the more bombastic you were able to make your English [in writing], the more you were able to use highfalutin words in a manner that makes it difficult for the reader to understand, the better it is" (p.128).

This writing style, as Olinger contended, has also encouraged him to employ wordiness and superficial writing that is aimed only to please his professor, but not to express his true writerly voice/identity. He clearly stated that "the more material you write, somehow, the better it'll be considered, it'll just show you have learned more," and, "by extension, the more wordy you are, the better your paper will be" (p. 129). Olinger described that these typified meanings of Debojoy's discourse are influenced by "powerful language ideologies" about good writing and “about the very existence of Queen’s English” (p.129). His identity was manifested clearly in his writing and narrative as Debojoy utilized a plethora of signs that reflect his writerly persona, which include “the passive voice, wordiness, [and] the overuse of quotations” (p.129).

Moreover, Debojoy intentionally avoided the usage of “I” to keep his self-ego at bay and, thus, seemed more objective in his writing. His professor in the US, as a co-constructor of his identity, has also noticed this phenomenon and encouraged him to bring his voice into the text so that his agency would prevail as a scholar.

This resonates with Hyland (2002) in his corpus-based study titled “Disciplinary Identities: Individuality and Community in Academic Discourse.” He analyzed a corpus of 64 cross-disciplinary project reports (PR) written by final-year Hong Kong undergraduates. Aiming to find how student project self-reference in the text and how these choices can explain different communicative practices, Hyland focused on the frequency of first-person expressions as manifestations of students’ discoursal identities. Hyland confirmed also that the purpose of these final reports is to help the students enliven their academic voices; “apply theories and methods learned in their courses”; and “demonstrate the ability to effectively review literature, conduct research, analyses results and present findings” (p. 1096).

Hyland found that L2 students from Hong Kong did not feel comfortable using first-person pronouns because they were taught through their L1 literacy practices to avoid the authorial “I” or any self-projection in the text. The lack of voice and identity manifestation in student’s writing, as Hyland argued, springs from the social and educational practices that restrict students from projecting their authorial self in the text and downplay their role as writers and researchers in the field. Results showed that experienced writers, unlike students, were able to use first-person expressions four times to explicitly utilize rhetorical options and ensure personal presence, thus showcasing their authority in the field. In a similar study, Shen (1989) explained how long it took him to manifest his “self” in writing. His previous cultural and institutional practices affected his authorial voice in writing. For Shen, writing with voice meant reconstructing his identity because—in his home country, China—it is hard to write using the pronoun “I.” Instead, he used “we” as an effect of the collectivist norms.

Indeed, voice can also be traced in the form of narrative. The use of “I” is not only a subject or a pronoun but—most importantly—an act of constructing a self in a text (Journet, Boehm, & Britt 2011). In the field of composition, scholars such as Gilyard (1991), LeCourt (2004), and Villanueva (1993) have utilized "I" to "interrogate the relationship between identity and language by unpacking the historical, social, and language and literacy contexts that have shaped their lives and informed their theorizing of writing" (Young, 2014, 90).

These examples offer evidence of how writerly voice/identity is dynamic and co-constructed by the audience, textual choices, and institutional practices. Many of the students in these studies ultimately were able to change their L2 writing identity somehow by accepting the comments given by their audience or by interacting with other Western texts in academia. These experiences that they witnessed have constrained and/or nurtured their self-conception as writers, which proves that writerly voice/ identity can form, sediment, and evolve.

Intercultural Influence on Voice

Although she did not explicitly address how students construct and negotiate their L2 identities/voices in the writing classroom, Helen Fox (1994) presented in her ethnographic narrative book *Listening to the World: Cultural Issues in Academic Writing* the struggles of writing, identities, voices, and participation experienced by international students, especially non-Western ones, when studying at US universities. These students, as Fox argues, might have been intelligent, hard-working, and successful writers back home, but they—unfortunately—may very well fail to meet the expectations of their American professors because both cultural, institutional, and linguistic differences can greatly affect how they interact in many ways. The purpose of Fox's study is to explore how international, especially Eastern, students "express themselves through writing" and how "instructors often misunderstand them" (p. xiii). To do this, Fox interviewed seven professors as well as 16 graduate students from various countries. She also uses teaching journals as a reflective tool for understanding the dynamics of student identities in writing. The results of this study showed a great frustration, different composing styles, rhetorical strategies, and unique writerly voices. This result is not a shock, as Fox tends to draw on rhetoric of misunderstanding and difference, as quoted above, rather than on how L2 writers might actively find unique channels to express their identities regardless. Fox's labels, in my opinion, are similar to the "colonial dichotomies between the colonizer and the colonized" (Pennycook, 1998). Such rhetoric of differences might inevitably perpetuate the Othering of students L2 writing. Instead, taking on a critical approach can help researchers in L2 writing, such as Fox, as well as students to see how L2 writing students' subjectivities are formed and transformed across time and space through their writing practices.

For instance, Fox finds that the indirection in students' writing sometimes stems from the students' L1 culture and rhetorical practices. According to her, these writing styles differ from the US writing style, which should be “short, logical and to the point” and “whose tone should be polite and reasonable rather than strident or badgering” (p. 12). In other words, she contended that L2 students employ different strategies in their writing to avoid directness. For instance, Shu Ying, who tries to avoid any directness in his writing to preclude any potential insult to the audience, omits some elements from the text or adds too much information or stories that seem irrelevant to the assignment. Also, Fox explicated how international students, especially those who come from a collective culture, passively stick to collective voices to show harmony and unity.

Universality of Voice

Some scholars in the field of composition don't believe that voice exists in collectivist cultures. Instead, they believe that voice is linked to the individualist ideology that can only be found in an individualistic society. In his article "Voice in Japanese Written Discourse," Matsuda (2001) studied voice through discursive features. That is, he examines aspects of writing that are pertinent to the use of language itself. Such features may include orthography, diction, grammatical choices, and so on. This focus should be distinguished from other non-discursive approaches to examining voice, which he implements later on in his research to dissect the concept of voice (e.g., Matsuda & Tardy, 2007).

Through this discourse-oriented point of view, Matsuda tries to prove a more panoramic message about the relationship between voice and culture. Taking Japanese students as a sample of non-Western writers, Matsuda investigates the concept of the universality of voice—the fact that it is equally shared by Western and non-Western writers. The goal of this paper was to examine how Japanese students can create their voice through an online diary. Problematizing the notion of voice, Matsuda believes that this notion is not necessarily tied to the ideology of Western discourse. As a response to Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999), he stated that voice is not foreign to students who belong to collectivist, high-context cultures. The voices of such students are constructed in written discourse through language-specific features and discursive practices, which are hard to transfer to English. For instance, Nanae (one of the participants in the study) was able to construct her Japanese written voice via independent choices and decisions related to Japanese orthographical systems. Hence, when Japanese or L2 students experience difficulties constructing their voice in English, it is not necessarily due to their language deficiency or their incompatible cultural orientation; rather, it could be because of their lack of familiarity with the strategies available in English (Yassin, & Razak, 2018).

Through writing examples from some Japanese students, Matsuda pointed at the more general picture: different rhetorical, as well as linguistic features used in the first language of L2 writers to express voice, can make the notion of voice look different from the mainstream American perspective. Therefore, voice is neither unique to a certain culture nor local to a particular speech community. Rather, it does exist in every language and is manifested through different discursive features. In a different article, "Coming to Voice: Publishing as a Graduate Student," Matsuda (2003) explicated his own experience as he has experienced difficulties bringing his voice into academia. For him, voice was a process to negotiate his socially and discursively constructed identity with the expectation of the readers of his writing. The universality of voice is also founded in Hirvela and Belcher's (2001) study. Hirvela and Belcher believed that plurality of voice exists in all cultures. But, these voice-related issues are influenced by students' L1 background practices. Thus, they might be problematic as voice often conflicts with the existing voice that the writers have in their L1.

Voice in Peer-Reviewed Academic Journals

As stated above, voice can be socially constructed in a sense, as readers can ascribe a certain identity to the writer (ethnicity, gender, profession, and the like). Matsuda and Tardy (2007) argued that different voices can be observed in high-stakes genres of writing too, such as research articles. The authors start by pointing out that voice and identity have been treated in some literature as irrelevant to academic writing. Although the authors used the terms identity and voice interchangeably in this article, they draw a line between the two terms. They believe that identity is only a part of voice; voice, on the other hand, is what we can more generally capture upon reading a text: it is the overarching essence of written discourse. Moreover, this article builds homogeneously on Matsuda's definition of voice: "the amalgamative effect of the use of discursive and non-discursive features that language users choose, deliberately or otherwise, from socially available yet ever-changing repertoires" (2001, p. 41).

The purpose of this study—Matsuda and Tardy ones—was to examine how readers can ascribe a certain identity to the writer. That is, the study seeks to disentangle how peer reviewers in a simulated blind manuscript review can create an image about the author's identity for an academic journal—a genre of high-stake writing—in the field of rhetoric and composition. The methods used in this study include the analysis of the written reviews as well as two interviews (post-task interviews and confirmatory interviews) with the reviewers (one of whom is an experienced reviewer, and the other is a novice one) at different times. The results of this analysis indicate that "the reviewers' constructions of the authors' voices are related to their stance and the socially constructed view toward the authors. The findings suggest that voice does play a role in academic writing and that there is a need for further research into the issue of identity construction from the perspectives of both writers and readers" (p. 235).

Both reviewers in the above study reported that repetitions and awkward phrasing were clear signs of inexperienced writers and newcomers to the discipline. They also agreed that they could identify extra-linguistic elements that indicate "progressive," "white," and "male" writers. Therefore, we can conclude that by mimicking these socially-constructed elements, a writer could put on an identity of their choice, one that helps them satisfy the demands of the market of academic journals, whether or not it truly represents them.

Languaging and Ideological Becoming: Re-conceptualizing L2 Voice

While the literature in composition, especially the field of L2 writing, has thoroughly studied the linguistic features of writer's voice (Hyland, 2002, 2012), Tardy (2012) called for an in-depth analysis of extra-textual components that shape the writer's voice and identity. She stated that "While scholarship has drawn attention to how voice (as self-representation) is constructed through text, we still know little about how aspects of a writer's identity beyond the text (e.g., sex, age, and race) may influence voice construction'' (p. 65). This critical review paper argues that current conceptualizations of voice should be explored not only from a textual perspective, but rather how macro factors such as (banking educational system, non-democratic societies and/ or collective society, and totalitarian community) such nuanced factors can seep deeply into writers psyche and affect how they voice and present themselves through the use and choice of language in the text. Bearing in mind that voice is an ever-changing construct as writers are exposed to an ever-changing, researchers in the field need to consider the journey of voice as a project.

Grounded in on the notion of 'ideological becoming' (Bakhtin, 1981), which rarely included in the discussion on L2 writing pedagogy, I use the term ideological becoming to refer to the process of "how [writers] develop [their] way of viewing the world, [their] system of ideas" (Freedman & Ball, 2004, p. 5) through writing. The idea that writers go through a journey of ideologically becoming a member of the prospective community emerges from individuals' ongoing engagement in understanding and analyzing tensions between dominant and alternative ideologies regarding what counts as legitimate discourse. Therefore, ideological becoming in constructing a voice does not occur in an isolated fashion; rather, it happens "through the medium of the surrounding ideological world" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 14). Moreover, In *Rewriting Student Voice*, Lensmire (1998) postulated that voice can be conceived of as a "project involving appropriation, social struggle, and [ideologically] becoming" (p. 262). Instead of assuming that voice is a fixed-end product that students showcase in their writing, Lensmire, from a feminist and poststructuralist lens, reassured that voice is enacted as a spectrum of development, which students go through both inside and outside of academia. According to Lensmire, some student writers may not be able to articulate a critical voice at first until they appropriate the dominant discourse and become a member of an academic community. This process, of course, can include many journeys of finding the right and proper voice, the voice that ideologically and academically aligns with students' values and beliefs. Interestingly, Lensmire's (1998) metaphoric conception of voice as a project is a critical aspect for L2 researcher to consider when studying voice, because voice is always "dynamic or in-process" (Lensmire, 1998, p. 278), as requiring development and crafting rather than being "already finished" or "frozen at the beginning" (Lensmire, 1998, p. 279).

To put this conceptualization of voice into practice, such an argument for looking at voice as a process of journey discovery, (Alharbi, 2019) in his critical qualitative case study explored the nuances of a varying range of voices represented in ESL Saudi final academic papers; in his research, he explored how voice is not only a vague construct but also a concept that develops over time through many means. Moving beyond the traditional way of investigating students' writings as correct or not correct forms of written English, he found out that other factors were worthy of attention when understanding ESL students such as the role of academic discourse, disciplinary-orientation, context, the ecology of community, critical awareness, and unequal power dynamics, which can directly or indirectly share and re-shape writer's voice. Alharbi also (2019), found that Saudi ESL writers can develop critical voices overtime when ESL writers accumulate the cultural as well as intellectual capital. For instance, three writers (in his study) have developed different worldviews towards certain social and political aspects and decided to write critically about them in their final projects in the course they are taking. That means, the process of ideological becoming active writers reflects that participants accumulated several discursive and non-discursive practices and habitus—social, educational, and intellectual—that enable writers to transform their values, views, and practices to voice themselves and advocate for marginalized voices such as women in their respective context. Voice for these writers is means of thinking out loud, 'languaging,' (Swain, 2006) feeling the right to use language to grow intellectually, thinking individually, and being assertive in and confident about their right to speak up. Astonishingly, two female Saudi participants, Reem and Sarah, explicitly stated that the concept of voice is critical to them and that through the educational and social experience in the United States, they gained increased confidence to express their voices in the academic setting and outside of academia. These proactive voices nurtured from exposure to a plethora of classroom discussions, literature, and reflective critical writing assignments—as a form of new literacy practices—that might be novice to them.

Additionally, these participants' experience of making connections between what they already knew and what they are learning and connecting to their local contexts manifests a form of actively constructing knowledge as they needed it, and, thus, they ideologically become different individuals with different options of ideologies and identities.

Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications

Undoubtedly, one’s writing is a portal to a treasury of one’s most complicated thoughts. Writing is an utterly invaluable tool, and it is essential for the understanding of human individual thoughts as well as social phenomena. The invention of writing reflects a transformation of human consciousness by addressing fictionalized or non-present audience and responding to social exigencies with non-ephemeral discourse. In this paper, we discuss the widespread and diverse use of voice (e.g., sometimes as synonymous with identity) and how voice can reflect the forceful expressions of individuals (Moore, 2002) or be the intangible rhetorical quality that conveys the author's uniqueness (Olinger, 2016). Through previewing several empirical studies, we layout different scenarios of looking at how writers construct and negotiate their writerly voices via language use. The results of the hallmark articles previewed here highlight the complexity of voice as it interacts with the dynamics of identity construction, performance, and negotiation. We then explained to readers that voice is not only a product or a concept that can merely be explored through a deep investigation of a student's text but rather a process that may vary over time and develop from one space/ era to another. Researchers in the field need to understand that individuals have many different and dynamic identities; visiting how the concept of voice and language use is constructed/negotiated suggests a need for more balanced, in-depth research in the area since the nature of voice changes constantly; voice can be dialogical, something that emerges between the writer and the reader and something some scholars argue is unique to the discourse of a discipline. Moreover, findings of the literature above suggest that students would shape, construct, and negotiate their voices without subversion if teachers and professors are cognizant of and sensitive to students' cultural backgrounds and can value and deal effectively with socio-cultural, rhetorical, and linguistic differences of their students (e.g., Olinger, 2016; Matsuda & Tardy, 2007).

Considering voice as a form of languaging and as a project, we think it is indispensable to perceive voice in writing as to how individuals write and why they write through awareness or even unawareness of who they are, want to be, and are perceived to be. Furthermore, this paper promotes a vision of pedagogy that reimagines, repositions, and reconceptualizes the concept of voice. Pavlenko (2003) asserted that language teachers should create a space for reimagination of identities and voices that is multicompetent. We also think that teachers must consider wider aspects of students' voices to get a deeper understanding of how L2 students express themselves concerning their histories, identities, and the ecologies of their educational practices. That said, L2 writing teachers can be transformative intellectuals (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993) who promote individual empowerment and social transformation (Weiler, 1988). Future researchers on voice in academic writing should also think about the other spectrum of voice. The encouragement of "*visibilization*" in the ESL context, especially in North America, in students' essays often overlook that voice can have a wide spectrum of pitches and that silence is one of them (Alharbi, 2019).

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Using Blackboard as a Tool of E-Assessment in Testing Writing Skill in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

The current study aims to explore the difficulties and opportunities of using Blackboard electronic tests in testing writing skills. The data of the study were collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was composed of three sections. The total number of participants was 660 EFL Saudi learners studying at the Preparatory Year Deanship at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University. The results of the study indicated that the majority of participants have a positive attitude towards using e-assessment in testing English language in general as well as writing skill. The findings confirm that using e-assessment for testing writing skill makes the test easy and effective. Students showed their interest in implementing Blackboard for testing writing. The respondents stated that writing essays and paragraph might not be suitable to be administered via Blackboard. In general, the participants did not face serious difficulties, regarding the availability of devices and internet access, but the finding indicated that they faced some technical problems.

Introduction

Learning is composed of many components. It starts with planning and ends with evaluation and assessment. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been integrated into education as a tool for teaching and learning for several decades. After many developments in the field of technology, ICT is used almost in every field of education (Yassin, Razak, & Maasum, 2019). It is used in pre-teaching stages, teaching stages and post-teaching stages (e.g. testing). Moreover, the institutions commenced implementing Blackboard and automatic scoring technology, which facilitated to make wide-scale testing cost-effective and convenient. Blackboard has enriched the measurement of students' productions and it enables these students to get instant and direct feedback (Gilbert, Whitelock, & Gale, 2011; Fageeh, 2015).

Despite the rapid development in the field of ICT, e-learning, e-test was not much studied and investigated especially in the Arab countries. The emergence of Covid-19 forced universities and institutions to deliver the entire process of education via utilizing e-learning and e-assessment. E-assessment provides direct feedback and direct results. It saves teacher's time and effort and improves students' performance (Gilbert, Whitelock & Gale, 2011; Alruwais, Wills & Wald, 2016).

The sudden emergence of Covid-19 caused a great shake to every aspect of human life. The educational field is heavily affected by this novel virus. Many universities, schools and institutions were closed. Only those who have good infrastructure proceeded to deliver their educational activities. Luckily, in Saudi Arabia, most of the universities are well-equipped with information technology. So they continued delivering educational activities. Regarding assessing students, university stakeholders, teachers, technicians and students may have experienced some difficulties. E-testing is newly introduced to them. They are not adequately qualified to handle it. There should be training courses for them to be familiar with such a new technique. Traditional methods were mostly used pre-Covid-19. This study is endeavoring to shed light on this aspect- e-tests and its difficulties and opportunities.

The study aims to:

1- Explore the attitudes of Saudi students towards E-assessment.
2- Investigate the effect of E-assessment (blackboard) on testing writing skill
3- Scrutinize the difficulties frustrate E-assessment implementations in Saudi Arabia.

Review of Literature

ICT and education

ICT is an abbreviation for information and communication technology. It refers to a type of technologies that arrange for access to information via telecommunication, (Ratheeswari, 2018; Gull,2020). It is similar to Information Technology (IT) but focuses primarily on communication technologies, (Ratheeswari, 2018). Communication technology includes the internet, wireless networks, cell phones and other communication means.

Opportunities are increased due to the utilization of ICT in teacher training programs. Employing ICT improves the quality of the teacher to teach effectively. In the era of the digital world and digital learning, using technological tools such as computers and the Internet gained great interest in how these technologies can be best implemented to improve the effectiveness and efficacy of education at all levels (Yassin, Abdul Razak, Qasem, & Saeed, 2020; Zemni & Alrefaee, 2020). New generation (digital generation) may find that using electronic devices is more preferable and useful. These tools suit their way of learning and doing their activities (Mahdy, Samad & Mahdi, 2020; Al-Shammari, 2020).

Assessment

Instructors can assess their students for several reasons. They use assessment to identify and assess the strengths and the weaknesses of the students. They, also, can easily grade student learning, observe and provide feedback on the progress of the students. In addition, they can assess students' competence and help predict future behaviour (Clements & Cord, 2013; Crisp, Guàrdia & Hillier, 2016). Assessment is very important for teachers; it can provide feedback on the efficiency of their teaching. It helps teachers to set a plan to better manage/teach students, (Broadfoot & Black 2004). Recently, new approaches recommend assessing the potential learning process of students rather than evaluating what they have learnt.

Assessing students by using traditional methods always isolate individuals and restrict their access to resources and other people, (Guàrdia, Crisp, & Alsina, 2017). E-assessment is in harmony with the new learning environments and trends in Saudi universities. E-assessment makes learning and testing open, collaborative and accessible to a wide range of students.

Recently the researches on e-assessment have been increasingly conducted to study e-assessment's effectiveness, applicability, etc. Universities and organizations funded many pieces of research and projects related to e-assessment. In Saudi Arabia, the focus region of this study, there has been a shortage of research studies that investigate e-assessment issues. Very limited studies dealt with E-assessment such as (Alruwais, Wills & Wald, 2016; Alruwais, Wills & Wald, 2018). These studies discussed the advantages and challenges of using e-assessment, the factors that might affect the general attitude towards the acceptance or rejection of e-assessment among academics in Saudi universities. But these studies dealt with the e-assessment from the angle of the teachers and academicians. On the contrary, this study will scrutinize the difficulties that Saudi students encounter when they take E-assessment, as well as it will explore the opportunities that the students may find from the implementation of E-assessment.

ICT and assessment

The development of ICT affords new opportunities for conducting assessments. E-assessment gained its importance due to the current changes in the globe. E-assessment played a major role in transforming education from being a mere traditional to a digital one. Any new product or invention needs to be tried and tested in regards to their applicability and usefulness. E-test (blackboard) is introduced to Saudi students recently. In this study, the researchers explore the potential opportunities and challenges in implementing E-test. Several studies dealt with e-learning but there is a very limited number of studies that dealt with E-test. Furthermore, most of the available e-assessment studies dealt with teachers' perceptions and attitudes, they did not consider the attitudes and perception of students in authentic assessment activities.

The review of recent of e-assessment literature (e.g. Huda, Kabir, & Siddiq, 2020; Farooq & Soomro, 2018) have focused on integrating technology to improve assessment. The causes for the growing interest in integrating e-assessment is due to the approval and realization of the educational authorities of the need for implementing friendly and modern tools to cope with needs of teachers, students and academicians.

Main e-assessment tests are similar to what was used in the traditional test such as multiple-choice items, short answer, re-ordering, and categorizing fill-in-the-blanks, true or false and matching. This similarity gives the student the chance to be familiar with the design of the tests. The students can gain skills which can provide long-term benefit to society and themselves (Huda, Kabir, & Siddiq, 2020; Ridgway McCusker& Pead., 2009).

Students typically select an answer or remember information to carry out the assessment (Marriott, 2009; Pachler, Daly, Mor & Mellar, 2010). Furthermore, current studies indicate that e-assessment help and save the educator’s time and efforts regarding automated computer/online marked questions.

Benefits of e-assessment

E-assessment is becoming widely used. It has many advantages when compared to traditional assessment (i.e. paper-based). The first advantage is that questions can be made clearer and more detailed through the utilizing text, video, and sound which can promote students to be motivated. Second, assessment can be disseminated to different areas and locations which provides an opportunity to those students who live in remote areas. This means assessment on-demand can become completely achievable. This allows learners to formally demonstrate their understanding at a time and place that is convenient for them. Third, results are automatically and instantly calculated for the completed tasks, as well as the learners can identify their status, which will help them to be vigilant of their marks and performance. Feedback, automated marking and on writing that affords great assistance on grammar, structure, and vocabulary usage, (Cowie & Sakui, 2015). On the other hand, there are also some disadvantages. One of these is the high price of E-assessment systems. E-assessment systems are, also, not suitable for all kinds of assessments. Technical issues, also, play a very critical factor that frustrates its utilization.

Characteristics of e-assessment

E-assessment has spread over the globe because of many characteristics. First, Multimedia items can be added to the test. Students can be given videos or colourful images in the test. Second, students can answer the tests independently at their own space and time. There is less stress and anxiety. Contrary to traditional assessment, e-assessment offers an opportunity to score and get feedback immediately. However, it is not an easy task to implement e-assessment. It is necessary to develop a system which permits the rapid production of a variety of question types. The system should be flexible enough for teachers to create question items and maintain question banks.

Factors affecting e-assessment

Arming students with expected knowledge is the main concern of the Saudi Universities. These universities face a big challenge regarding e-assessment implementation. Several factors determine the effectiveness of a computer and/or online-based testing system (i.e. E-assessment) such as standardization, security, examination conditions, cost and mode of administering the examination (Kuyoro, Maminor, Kanu & Akande, 2016; Huda, Kabir & Siddiq, 2020).

E-assessment challenges

Several difficulties stand in the way of implementing e-assessment at Saudi Universities. Many studies have scrutinized about these difficulties. Educational stakeholders across the Arab region face a new challenge of how to conduct exams to assess the students. Due to Covid-19, the rapid shift to utilizing e-learning and e-assessment caused great changes in the policies of education. Many teachers find it very difficult to cope with online exams in the same way they used to in the classroom, as they used to evaluate their students through paper-based tests whose final grades were considered a standard of success or failure. But teachers quickly discovered that there were problems with the implementation of e-assessment, the most important of which was the possibility of cheating.

Blackboard and language learning

Blackboard has been implemented by many institutions due to its ubiquity, easiness, and accessibility. The use of online technology in everyday life motivates learners to get involved in an online learning environment easily. On the other side, students' and teachers' knowledge of handling Blackboard in teaching English as a foreign language may play an important role in customizing the integration of this platform in language learning. Teachers' beliefs about Blackboard affect their decision to implement it in classrooms. In many of the previous studies, the results indicated that technology had not been adequately used to enhance effective learning and teaching because the major task of using technology by most teachers was still to search for the material, notify students to write assignments, and use drill and practice (Koc, 2013).

After the spread of COVID-19, the use of technology, particularly the Blackboard, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom, shifted from a communication only to the instructional tool. These platforms have been used to replace traditional face-to-face classrooms. They have been used to carry out all the tasks of teaching and assessment. E-assessment via Blackboard permits a large variety of question types that can either be static or dynamic. These include multiple-choice, yes/no, fill-in-the-blank questions. All tasks mentioned earlier are graded automatically, in addition, free response type questions, which may be graded using key phrases, are also available.

E-Assessment in Saudi Arabia

The Ministry of Education introduced technology into education in 2006 by establishing the National Centre for E-learning and Distance Learning (NCEDL) which offers E-learning courses all-over the Kingdom (Almegran, Al-Yafei, & Ahmad, 2007). This centre offered a great chance to Saudi students who might find some difficulties to enroll in universities due to remote area, being busy with private work or unable to move to university.

Deanships of E-Learning and Distance Education in Saudi Arabia considered that E-tests are one of the modern tools that evaluate the educational process outcomes using computers and smart portable devices. E-test is an effective alternative to the traditional paper-based tests, which is characterized by flexibility and efficiency in all stages of their application (E-test, 2020).

There are several centers that focus on the different aspects of E-learning. For example, there is a center that is responsible for research and development to facilitate E-learning in higher education, which includes the National Learning Management System (Jusur), and the National Repository (Maknaz) to save, manage, and share learning objects between Saudi universities (Alkhalifa, 2010; Al-fahad, 2009). Furthermore, NCEDL operates a project called Tajseer (in English: Bridging), that helps to improve the traditional methods of teaching and learning using technology (Alkhalifa 2010; Al-fahad, 2009).

Saudi Arabia authorities stress on utilization of authentic assessment. The authority tries to facilitate the portability of credentials across national borders; the report developed by the High-Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education (European Commission, 2014) recommends that the European Commission and national authorities encourage and incentivize the awarding and recognition of credits under the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) for all forms of online courses. Therefore, more research is needed to provide an understanding of how to use the full potential of e-assessment procedures to transform students' learning and teachers' work in this new personalized environment that promotes authentic learning and assessment (Whitelock, 2009).

The use of e-assessment in Saudi Arabia has been introduced on 24 October 2020. Several studies investigated the use of e-learning, blended learning, but as far as the researchers know, no study investigated the attitude of students towards e-assessment. Thus, this study is an attempt to fill in this gap. the study will address the following research questions:

1- *What is the general attitude of Saudi students towards E-assessment?*
2- *Does E-assessment have a negative effect on testing writing skill?*
3- *What are the difficulties that stand in front of E-assessment implementation?*

Methods

The study used a quantitative approach. An online version of a questionnaire was sent to the students of the Preparatory Year Deanship, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, in Saudi Arabia, during the academic year 2020-2021. It was composed of two parts. The first part of the questionnaire included demographic information of the respondents including gender, age, and frequency of using Blackboards in their assignment tests. The second part consisted of three sections. The first section consists of 7 statements using 5 Likert- scales related to the students' beliefs toward using Blackboard in testing writing. The second section consisted of 7 statements using 5 Likert- scale which related to the students' perception toward using Blackboard in testing writing skill. The third section consisted of 7 statements using 5Likert-scale which related difficulties of E-assessments.

The values of the means scored in this study were measured according to the following equation:

Highest value minus the minimum value of answer alternatives divided by the number of category, i.e.: $\frac{(5-1)}{5} = \frac{4}{5} = 0.8$

Thus the value is equal to the length of the category. It will be as follow:

1.00 to 1.8	Strongly disagree
1.8 to 2.6	Disagree
2.6 to 3.4	Neutral

3.4 to 4.8	agree
4.8 to 5	Strongly agree

The participants

The sample of the research (n= 660) is the first-semester undergraduate students from the English Department, the Preparatory Year Deanship at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. The questionnaire was based on the model developed by Venkatesh & Bala (2008) and from the study of Al Zumor, Al Refaai, Eddin & Al-Rahman (2013) but some items underwent some modifications. The validity and the reliability of the questionnaire are not much required as the items of the questionnaire were adapted from famous models.

The questionnaire initially surveyed basic respondents' characteristics. It was found that (97.9 %) were between 18 to 20 years old. 1.8% of the respondents' age was ranged from 21 to22 , and .3% of the respondents were above 22. Regarding the gender of the participants, 50.5 % of the respondents were female whereas 49.5 % were male.

Table 1: the respondents' demographic information

Gender	No	%
Male	327	49.5
Female	333	50.5
Total	660	100.0
Age	No	%
18-20	646	97.9
21-22	12	1.8
0ver22	2	.3
Total	660	100.0

The instrument

The questionnaire was evaluated by four university professors in order to test the clarity and relevance of the statements. Some statements were subsequently added and some modified according to their comments. Some jargon words are simplified. Furthermore, all statements were translated into the respondents' mother tongue (i.e. Arabic) to substantiate that the statements are upmost comprehended. The questionnaire was carefully designed to ascertain the validity of the instrument. The Alpha Cronbach was found reliable (p =.811). The data were exported from Google Forms, then analyzed by using the SPSS software package (Version 22).

Data Analysis

The research questions were tested by using the descriptive statistical technique. In this analysis, the data were analyzed and presented using the Frequency, Mean and Standard Deviation of the items.

Results

The questionnaire was distributed on week 13 during the first semester of 2020-2021. A total of 660 responses was received. The data analysis was divided into two parts. The first part dealt with demographic data, the second part dealt with participants' responses to the three parameters.

Students beliefs toward e-assessment

In general, the respondents were found to have positive beliefs to the utilization of e-assessment for testing the English language as shown in Table 2. The mean of this parameter was (3.60) which indicated that the respondents had a positive belief toward utilizing e-assessment to English language which is at "agree category". About 56.6% of the respondents fell under the categories of (agree or strongly agree), while on the opposite side only 14.64% of the responses of the respondents showed a negative attitude toward using e-assessment in the field of testing English language. The beliefs on which most respondents agreed include doing home assignments through blackboard is better than the classical ways, which scored the highest rank with mean at (4.37) which is considered as (strongly agree) according to the equation mentioned in the methodology section. The tests used in blackboard are clear to understand came in the second position with 4.001 which is also considered as – (strongly agree). Statements 1 and 3 fell under (agree category). The statement that stated that "Doing tests through Blackboard is time-consuming", scored the least scored with mean at (2.48), which means that the respondents disagree with this statement. It is worth mentioning that in this parameter the neutrality scored the highest degree (34.68%) among the three parameters.

Table 2. Responses to statements on Students beliefs toward e-assessment

No	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Standard Deviation	Ranking
1	Blackboard highly facilitates my Writing test-taking noticeably.	2.9	10.8	19.1	37.4	29.8	3.806	1.069	3
2	Blackboard improves my learning remarkably.	7.9	14.2	20.3	32.4	25.2	3.527	1.229	6
3	I believe that Blackboard will be necessary for checking my writing tasks in the future.	3.5	13.5	20.3	34.2	28.5	3.707	1.121	4
4	Doing home assignments through Blackboard is better than the classical ways. .	1.8	4.5	5.5	30.6	57.6	4.375	.9142	1
5	The tests used in Blackboard are clear to understand.	2.4	6.4	18.8	33.5	38.9	4.001	1.025	2
6	*Doing tests through Blackboard is time-consuming.	5.2	10.3	28.0	40.8	15.8	2.483	1.040	7
7	Using Blackboard increases my study productivity.	7.7	8.6	23.9	33.9	25.8	3.613	1.179	5
	Total	4.48	9.8	19.4	34.68	31.65	3.60	0.839	

Note: The Asterisk marker (*) indicates that the scores of the statement were reversed due to that this statement was in the opposite direction as explained in the section of the methodology. These abbrivations(SD, D, N, A, and SA) denote to (Strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree) respectively.

The effect of Blackboard on Testing writing skill

It was found that blackboard had a positive effect on the respondents. The overall mean of the all statements of this parameter was (3.60 - agree) amazingly this mean is the same as in the previous parameter, it did not mean that students' responses were arbitrary because two reversed statements were designed to make the questionnaire more accurate and elicit the respondents' seriousness, (see table 3). The respondents showed that e-assessment had a positive effect on the students in utilizing e-assessment to test their writing. The mean was 3.60 which indicate that the respondents fell under (agree category) with the effect of e-assessment utilization. 58.65% of the overall percentage of the respondents for all statements were agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statements, while on the opposite side only 10.9% of the responses of the respondents showed that e-assessment did not affect assessing writing skills. It is very promising that the statement, stating " I find it easy to use blackboard for my writing test", scored the highest rank as the mean of this statement is 3.874 which fell under (agree category). Students' responses show that easiness, effectiveness, and importance of using e-assessment for testing writing skills are at high levels at the statements 3,1, and 4 scored fell under (agree category),(see table 3). The statement that stated that "Using the keyboard to write my paragraph/essay question affects negatively on my performance in writing", came with the least scores with a mean at (3.157), which means the responses of the respondent fell under (neutral category). It is worth mentioning that the absence of (strongly agree) category for overall statistics weakens the positive attitude of this parameter.

Table 3. Responses about the effect of blackboard on testing writing skill

No	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	St. D.	Ranking
1	Testing writing through Blackboard is more effective than using the traditional way	5.6	10.5	21.2	33.8	28.9	3.700	1.15	3
2	My scores in writing improved after using Blackboard	4.7	12.0	28.8	31.7	22.9	3.560	1.107	5
3	Using Blackboard is suitable for the testing of Writing.	5.5	10.3	15.5	37.0	31.8	3.793	1.155	2
4	Using Blackboard is important for testing Writing.	5.2	11.7	22.3	34.7	26.2	3.651	1.138	4
5	I find it easy to use Blackboard for my Writing test.	4.7	7.0	18.6	35.6	34.1	3.874	1.102	1
6	*Using keyboard to write my paragraph/essay question affects	13.5	18.2	23.0	29.7	15.6	3.157	1.272	7

	negatively on my performance in writing.								
7	Writing in Blackboard, for example using Blackboard discussion board, reflects positively on my writing achievement.	3.2	7.7	41.1	34.4	13.6	3.475	.9321	6
	Total	6.05	11.05	24.35	33.84	24.81	3.60	0.89	

Difficulties of usage e-assessments

Introducing any technological tool to new users might be associated with some difficulties. This part detects some difficulties that Saudi students might encounter while applying e-assessment tools (blackboard) to carry out their writing tests, tasks and assignments. It was found that the participants in this study do not face serious difficulties, despite that this parameter's overall mean is 3.50 which is the lowest mean of the three parameters. This indicates that students face some problems. This parameter is the core measurement of the study. The study focuses on scrutinizing the difficulties that Saudi students face. The respondents showed that using e-assessment to do their tests and tasks promote their productivity. 54.83% of the overall percentage of the responses of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed on the statements, while on the opposite side only 22.03% of the responses of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed on the statements. This parameter scored the highest negative scores (disagreeing). Despite that, four reversed statements would play to some extent to make some respondents answer for agree or strongly agree, but the current percentage proves that the respondents were so much accurate, and the data obtained was also meaningful.

Regarding ranking the most problematic issue that the respondents encountered, statement (No: 7), in which the respondents were asked whether they had computers or not, it is worth noting that this statement is reversed, even though 72.9% of the responses of the respondents indicated that the respondents had computers and they did not have any difficulties regarding using e-assessment via the computers, this statement is placed at the first rank. The mean of this statement is 3.95, which indicates that the responses were at "agree category". The respondents reported that e-assessment does not facilitate cheating and plagiarism. This statement came in

the second rank, and its mean is 3.75. Regarding the statements that scored the least rank, the statement stating that "If the test is not clear, I do not have a chance to ask for clarification". The mean of this statement is 3.20, which means that the responses at "neutral category".
The statement stating that "I face technical problems when using blackboard, such as difficulty in connecting to the Blackboard system, audio problems, etc." came at 6 rank with a mean at 3.21 which means that the responses at "neutral category". Despite that the overall mean of this section (parameter) is at "agree category, but these results are not very encouraging.

Table 4. Responses about Difficulties of usage e-assessments

No	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Standard Deviation	Ranking
1	*E-assessment is difficult to handle and therefore frustrating to use	5.6	18.5	32.4	29.7	13.8	3.2758	1.08	5
2	Slow internet connectivity is a major problem I face in dealing with E-assessment	9.2	18.2	16.8	30.3	25.5	3.4455	1.29	4
3	I face technical problems when using Blackboard, such as difficulty in connecting to the Blackboard system, audio problems, etc.	12.3	18.8	24.2	24.2	20.5	3.2182	1.30	6
4	*E-assessment facilitates cheating and plagiarism.	7.6	9.5	18.3	29.4	35.2	3.7500	1.24	2
5	If the test is not clear, I do not have a chance to ask for clarification	10.5	18.9	27.9	24.8	17.9	3.2076	1.23	7
6	*The instructions provided on Blackboard are difficult to follow.	3.8	9.2	27.4	36.1	23.5	3.6621	1.05	3

7	*I do have a computer and therefore I find it easy to work on my E-assessment	4.8	7.4	14.8	32.7	40.2	3.959	1.131	1
	Total	7.68	14.35	23.11	29.6	25.23	3.50	.380	

It is worth noting that the researchers also investigated whether gender plays such a role in the utilization of e-assessment. The means and standard deviations for the gender of students were calculated for probing the presence of any significant difference among the students' attitudes towards the belief, effect and difficulties of E-assessment. Moreover, an Independent Samples t-test has been administered to determine if there were statistically significant differences among the mean values. According to Table 4, the result revealed that there were statistically significant differences (p-value < 0.05) among the students' attitudes regarding the two parameters(belief and effect), and (p value=0.222) for difficulties parameter, therefore there are no significant differences between male and female.

Table 5 Gender attitude towards e-assessment

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	sig	t
Belief	Male	327	3.5068	.88287	.015	-2.904
	Female	333	3.6954	.78396		
Effect	Male	327	3.5068	.88287	.015	-2.904
	Female	333	3.6954	.78396		
Difficulties	Male	327	3.4779	.36601	.222	-1.653
	Female	333	3.5268	.39292		

Discussion

In addition to the descriptive statistics in the previous section, the results of this study indicated that 59.93% of the participants have positive attitudes towards the three parameters of e-assessment investigated in this study. The results of this study are not consistent with recent studies, due to the low positive attitude of the respondents. Furthermore, as the researchers know, no known study was conducted in Saudi Arabia discussing e-assessment from the angle of the students.

What is the general attitude of Saudi students towards E-assessment?

From the discussion section, contrary to the expectation the result of this question was not much promising as the overall mean value of the statements of this question was 3.60 which indicates that the respondents only agree regarding their attitude towards e-assessment. Students believe doing home assignments through blackboard is better than the classical ways; it is obvious that the students prefer using technological tools to do their activities; they also reported that the tests used in blackboard are clear to understand. But they indicated that doing tests through blackboard does not save their time to a great extent.

Does E-assessment have a negative effect on testing writing skill?

It was found that blackboard has a positive effect on the respondents, but in the same vein not to an expected extent. The overall mean value of the statements of this question was 3.60 which indicate that the respondents only agree with the statements regarding effect e-assessment on testing writing skill. Students' responses confirmed that using e-assessment for testing writing skills makes the test easy and effective. They also stressed on the importance of implementing blackboard for testing writing. The respondents stated that writing essays and paragraph might not be suitable to be administered via Blackboard.

What are the difficulties that stand in front of E-assessment implantation?

It was found that Saudi students do not face serious difficulties, despite that this parameter's overall mean is 3.50 which fell under agree category. It scored the lowest means of the three parameters. The result indicated that students face some problems. Almost all the participants indicated that they have a computer. The respondents reported that e-assessment does not facilitate cheating and plagiarism. In this regard, the teacher might use some apps that detect the cheating and plagiarism so this voided students to plagiarize or cheat. The students complained of that if the test is not clear, they do not have a chance to ask for clarification. Furthermore, the technical problems play a very critical role in this respect, as it was found that the students suffer from difficulty in connecting to the Blackboard system, audio problems, etc. students must be trained to use these instruments to overcome these difficulties.

One anticipated finding was that gender plays a significant effect on the attitude and effect of using e-assessment. This finding showed that male students have a more positive attitude towards the belief and effect than female. But this result also in itself is odd as in most studies especially regarding technological implementation the female participants dominate the male participants.

Generally speaking, the results are not very encouraging, for that despite the Ministry of Higher Education afforded all facilities to educational stakeholders. Despite that, the percentage of the students' attitude was not promising.

Conclusion

E-assessment is one of the leading technologies that teachers recently apply. The motive of conducting this study is the lack of enough investigation of students' attitudes towards the utilization of e-assessment in Saudi Arabia. Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University provides reliable technologies to its teachers, academicians and students. E-assessment is introduced to the stakeholder in the university. Subsequently, it is vitally important to investigate the students' attitudes towards the utilization of e-assessment regarding the belief of the students, the effect of e-assessment and the difficulties. The data was collected through the use of a questionnaire from the students enrolled in the Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University. The total number of participants is 660 students.

Findings indicated that the students have a positive attitude towards using e-assessment in testing the English language in general as well as writing skill. Students believe doing tests through blackboard is better than the classical ways; it is obvious that the students prefer using technological tools to do their activities; they also reported that the tests used in blackboard are clear to understand. The finding confirms that using e-assessment for testing writing skill makes the test easy and effective. Students showed their interest in implementing blackboard for testing writing. The respondents stated that writing essays and paragraph might not be suitable to be administered via Blackboard. In general term, Saudi students do not face serious difficulties, regarding the availability of devices and internet access, but the finding indicated that Saudi students face some problems regarding the software and the way of handling these applications. Cheating and plagiarism seem to be very limited due to the tools used associated with e-assessment. Gender plays a significant role regarding the attitude and effect of using e-assessment as male students have a more positive attitude towards the belief and effect than female students. The results are not very promising, it is very important to check the potential difficulties that make the result of this study at very low scores.

This study is limited to only three parameters; namely the beliefs of the students regarding e-assessment, the effect of the blackboard on testing writing skill and difficulties of using e-assessment. As future work, the researchers recommend doing similar studies to investigate whether the level of students (level 1, level 2, etc), computer skill and the location (urban and rural) play such role in the attitude of the students regarding the usage of e-assessment.

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