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Learning to Unlearn Faulty Beliefs and Practices in English Language Teaching

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Abstract

Our actions arise from our beliefs about life: what we need and how best to achieve it. This article asks English language teachers to undertake an open-minded examination of some long-held beliefs in our profession and of the teaching practices that derive from those beliefs. Perhaps, based on this examination, teachers may wish to modify some beliefs and, correspondingly, change some practices. The particular beliefs examined in the article are as follows: people who begin second language learning at a younger age will be more successful than those who start at an older age; native speaker varieties of English (e.g., those spoken native-English speaking countries) should be valued over non-native varieties (e.g., those spoken in outer and expanding circle countries); the best outcome is for second language learners to use English only and stop using their mother tongue in and out of the classroom; in second language instruction, systematic, explicit and detailed instruction of grammar deserves top priority; vocabulary is considered less important than grammar; pragmatic competence need not be taught as students can acquire it on their own; learning depends on suffering, thus the famous saying “no pain, no gain”; teaching learning strategies deserves a great deal of attention;

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teaching materials should be difficult in order to move learning forward, and only lazy and uninformed teachers use cooperative learning.

Keywords: ELT beliefs and practices, native-speakerism, grammar and vocabulary teaching.

1. INTRODUCTION

Life-long learning is usually associated with learning new knowledge and skills throughout one's life. Learning new things, however, is not the only thing that enables us to grow. An important part of the life-long learning process is for us to unlearn our previously held beliefs, assumptions, and practices that are no longer tenable. Holding on to dated and unsupported beliefs may not do justice to our students and cause embarrassment to our profession.

Indeed, some of our beliefs and practices in ELT may need to be unlearned as they tend to hinder rather than facilitate language learning. Some scholars (e.g., [Kubota, 2015](#)) have gone so far as to suggest that some of our pedagogical practices may, in fact, be counter-productive or even harmful. [Truscott \(1996\)](#), for example, wrote that grammar correction can be a harmful practice, as there is little evidence that shows its effectiveness. While he may not be completely correct in saying that grammar correction in writing does not lead to lasting improvement of students' writing ability, his view has led to a flurry of research studies that re-examined our grammar correction practices in regard to students' writing. We now understand better what kinds of grammar correction work well, what does not work well, and what factors can influence the efficacy of our grammar correction practices (see, for example, a recent meta-analysis by [Lim & Renandya, 2020](#)).

2. FAULTY BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

In the following sections, we discuss a number of faulty beliefs and practices that the profession might need to examine in order to determine if they are well aligned with current thinking and evidence and best practices in ELT.

2.1 The Younger, the Better

The origin of the belief that younger children learn second languages better than older people and that at or after a certain age (perhaps the onset of adolescence), people's ability to acquire new languages is severely limited can be traced to the critical period hypothesis ([Lenneberg, 1967](#)). Lenneberg claimed that second language acquisition happened optimally before children reached puberty. Given the right language learning environment, these children would flourish and attain native-like competence in the target language. After puberty, according to the hypothesis, children would lose their natural ability to develop full competence in second languages. They would still be able to acquire enough language to meet their communicative purposes. However, their speech would be heavily accented, and their overall language competence would fall way below that of a typical native speaker.

The idea that children are natural language learners is very appealing to both ELT experts and practitioners, so much so that the idea quickly became entrenched in their collective beliefs about second or foreign language learning. Policymakers, too, embraced the idea and began introducing policies that required schools to teach English to young children. Today, it is not uncommon to find schools that offer English lessons to primary school pupils or even to kindergarten children.

However, decades of research by SLA researchers (Ellis, 2015; Singleton & Muñoz, 2011) show that the critical period hypothesis is only partially supported, and its wide adoption in EFL contexts may not be warranted. While it is true that children are amazing learners, and they are motivated to learn almost anything, the age advantage has been mostly seen in their ability to develop native-like accents and to use the acquired language fluently and effortlessly. Their older counterparts may not sound native-like and may not be as fluent, but they are no less competent when it comes to using language for a wide variety of purposes (e.g., academic or business purposes).

Indeed, if we take away the ‘nativeness’ criterion from our discussion, the age advantage may begin to disappear. This is particularly true today since English has de facto become a global language where native-like competence is no longer seen as a prized learning goal as it once was (Kubota, 2015). People now learn English for more utilitarian purposes, e.g., to interact with other English speakers from different parts of the world for a wide range of purposes. Many now feel that it may be socially and culturally unacceptable to sound like a native speaker as they do not want to lose their identity as bilingual or multilingual speakers (Sung, 2016).

The concept behind native-speakerism has been seriously questioned in professional literature. A growing number of practitioners, too, have begun to question its relevance in ELT. The next section discusses some of the key objections to the ideology behind native-speakerism.

2.2 Native-Speakerism

Robert Phillipson (1992) in his book *Linguistic Imperialism*, was among the first scholars who strongly criticized one of the most enduring and central tenets of ELT, i.e., native-speakerism. Native-speakerism is founded on the belief that the native speaker is the ideal teacher, that monolingualism should be one of the key goals of second language learning (which gets translated into an English-only classroom), and that language learning should begin as early as possible. By extension, the ideal teaching materials should be written by native speakers, and the best language teaching methodology should originate from native English-speaking countries as well (e.g., UK and USA). Well-known language teaching methods such as the Oral Approach, Audiolingual Method, Communicative Language Teaching, and Task-based Language Teaching method were developed by native English-speaking ELT scholars.

Although Phillipson and others (e.g., McKay, 2018) have called for a paradigm shift in ELT, native-speakerism continues to be alive in many places in the world. For example, many language institutions prefer to hire native-speaker teachers of English rather than non-native, bilingual teachers (Yeo et al., 2017). In many language classrooms, teachers continue to insist on teaching British Standard English or American Standard English, arguing that this variety has the most prestige in the world and that students should aspire to learn the standard UK or standard American accents.

Many seem to be oblivious to the fact that English has now become a global language, and having native-speaker accents may not be the most desirable. One of the reasons is that native accents may not be easily comprehensible for the millions of English speakers today who learn English from their bilingual or multilingual teachers who speak English with their unique but easily comprehensible accents.

Should we then completely abandon native-speakerism in favour of non-native-speakerism? Probably not. What we need to do is to critically examine our deep-seated beliefs and assumptions about ELT and be more willing to abandon those that are no longer tenable and adopt new beliefs that are more in line with current thinking about the nature of ELT and how best we can help our students acquire the language. Professionally trained native-speaker teachers can be excellent teachers in the same way that professionally trained non-native bilingual teachers can be outstanding teachers. Instead of putting them on the opposite ends of a continuum, we should perhaps start thinking about how we can work harmoniously together to benefit our students.

2.3 Monolingual Fallacy

According to this belief, the best way to learn English is to enforce an English-only policy in the classroom. No other languages should be allowed as these languages will only interfere with, or even harm, the natural process of language acquisition (Phillipson, 1992). In order to achieve native-like fluency in English, so the argument goes, students should be fully exposed to English and should not turn to their mother tongues when encountering difficulties in learning the target language. When they do not understand the meaning of a word, they should consult a monolingual dictionary rather than a bilingual or multilingual one. When they have difficulty expressing themselves in English, at no time should they be allowed to make use of their prior linguistic resources to make themselves understood.

Many ELT scholars today believe that monolingualism brings more harm than good to our bilingual and multilingual learners of English (Tupas & Renandya, 2021). Our job as teachers is not to promote monolingualism but to enrich and widen students' linguistic repertoire by helping them acquire an additional language. It is ethically problematic to turn our bilingual learners into monolingual speakers of English. From a psycholinguistic perspective, it is also not possible to produce monolingual speakers in an educational setting that is very different from that of a native speaker who is surrounded by the language every day and has the opportunity to use the language to meet their diverse linguistic and social needs. The majority of our second or foreign language learners do not have the luxury of being fully immersed in the language, nor do they have ample opportunities to use the language outside the classroom.

Yet, despite all of these constraints, many second language learners are able to achieve a respectable level of proficiency that meets their social or professional needs while keeping and/or preserving their first or second languages (see Renandya et al., 2019). They can switch back and forth between their first, second, and perhaps third languages conveniently in places where multilingualism is the norm rather than the exception. Singapore is an example where people code-switch and/or code-mix when interacting with other multilingual speakers.

A final point to make about the advantage of additive bilingualism is that bilinguals or multilingual individuals can enjoy numerous cognitive benefits. Research

by Bialystok (2018), a cognitive neuroscientist who champions bilingualism, suggests that children who speak two or three languages regularly can enjoy more sophisticated cognitive abilities. They have more advanced levels of metalinguistic and metacognitive knowledge compared to monolingual children.

2.4 Teach More Grammar

Learning a language is often associated with learning the grammar of the language. The underlying belief of this association is that one has to *master* the grammar of the language in order to speak it. Not surprisingly, grammar has always had a special place in ELT. One of the oldest teaching methods, the Grammar Translation method (Richards & Rodgers, 2014), for example, is still alive and kicking in many parts of the world despite repeated calls by ELT scholars and experienced practitioners for grammar to be but one of the many areas that students need to learn as they gain proficiency in languages.

If you walk into a second language classroom, you will find that the lesson is often organized around a grammar point. The teacher would use a PPP (Presentation, Practice, and Production) approach, which typically begins by providing students with a detailed explanation of the target grammar point (e.g., the present perfect tense), and then moving on by giving students worksheet exercises on that grammatical point before finally giving students opportunities to engage in meaningful or communicative practice with that tense. It is worth noting that the first two steps often take up a larger portion of class time, while the last step is given a much smaller amount of time. Sometimes, students are simply told to do their communicative practice outside the classroom.

Interestingly, despite the amount of time spent on grammar teaching, students seem to continue to have difficulty using the language for real communication. Does this mean that grammar teaching has little effect on students' ability to comprehend and produce language, or should teachers teach more grammar?

The answer to these questions depends on what types of grammar teaching we are referring to. Do we, for example, teach grammar as *knowledge* or as *ability*? Richards and Reppen (2014) offer an in-depth discussion of these two types of grammar teaching. They point out that teaching grammar as knowledge is not without value, but it plays a minimal role in helping students use the language for communication. The kind of grammar knowledge we teach (e.g., rules for producing grammatically correct sentences) is most useful for students to ace a grammar-focused language test, but it may be of little use when they try to use the language for speaking and writing.

Richards and Reppen (2014) suggested that when we teach grammar as an ability, "the focus is on how grammar is used as a resource in the creation of spoken and written texts" (p. 5). Viewed in this way, grammar is always presented in meaningful texts and contexts, not in isolated sentences. The teaching of this type of grammar involves the teacher explaining the correct form of the language, but more importantly, how that form is used in relation to the purpose, audience, and context of the communicative event. When students learn grammar this way, there is a greater chance that they may be able to use the language for real communication.

If this is true, and we believe this to be so, we should re-think our grammar teaching methods and give more attention to how we can teach grammar as an ability rather than as knowledge.

2.5 Vocabulary is Less Important than Grammar

As discussed in the previous section, grammar tends to receive a lot of attention and instructional time. When students do not do well, the response has typically been ‘teach them more grammar’. This is despite the fact that many ELT experts have for many years suggested that we should give vocabulary a more prominent place in our language programme. [Wilkins \(1972\)](#) was among the first to say that vocabulary is more important than grammar. In his words, “while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (pp. 111-112). This point is easy to confirm as it reflects the experience of L2 students. They either do not have the words (lack of vocabulary problem) or cannot think/find the right words (slow retrieval problem) when they try to communicate in the language.

It is not difficult to find empirical support for Wilkins’ claim that vocabulary plays a key role in the development of language skills. Study after study shows that vocabulary is the best predictor of students’ language ability. Two recent studies on L2 listening by [Du and Man \(2022\)](#) and [Wallace \(2022\)](#) showed clearly that students’ vocabulary knowledge is the most crucial factor in EFL students’ listening comprehension performance. The findings of their research echo an earlier study by [Alderson \(2005\)](#) which showed a strong and reliable relationship between vocabulary size and language skills (e.g., listening, reading, and writing). Given the strong correlations, [Alderson \(2005\)](#) concluded by saying that “the size of one’s vocabulary is relevant to one’s performance on any language test, in other words, that language ability is to quite a large extent a function of vocabulary size” (p. 88).

Vocabulary researchers (e.g., [Folse, 2011](#); [Webb & Nation, 2017](#)) have for a long time called for giving vocabulary more attention in the language classroom. The reason is quite clear i.e., without sufficient vocabulary, students will have great difficulty understanding written texts and expressing themselves in the target language. L2 students need to have around 2,000 words to engage in meaningful communication, about 5,000 to read unabridged non-technical texts, and perhaps up to 10,000 words to comprehend more complex academic texts ([Folse, 2011](#)). [Folse \(2011\)](#), however, laments that “English language learners face a debilitating lexical gap between words they know and the words they need to know” (p. 362).

2.6 All You Need is Grammar and Vocabulary

There is no doubt that grammar and vocabulary play an essential role in language learning and use. But communication requires more than just knowledge of words and rules for constructing sentences. It also requires the ability to appropriately convey our messages, thoughts, and feelings according to participants, situations, and goals, as well as the ability to accurately interpret those conveyed by other participants in interactions. That is pragmatic competence or knowledge of language use in social contexts.

Studies have shown that when learners are not aware of the social aspect of language use, serious miscommunication may happen, and this can have interactional

consequences. For example, in a study of compliments and compliment responses, [Wolfson \(1989\)](#) showed that status-equal American speakers of English tend to use compliments as a strategy for initiating interaction. That is, very often, an opening compliment, such as “I like your sweater,” may lead to a longer conversational exchange. Without awareness of the function of compliments as conversation openers, an L2 English speaker may inadvertently resist such attempts at interaction by briefly responding with a modest “Oh no, it is nothing special”, hence closing the conversational sequence instead of sustaining it.

In another example, [Economidou-Kogetsidis \(2016\)](#) demonstrated that due to unfamiliarity with email conventions in the target language, L2 English students may inadvertently offend their lecturers by writing emails that are judged by the lecturers to be too direct and status-incongruent. These findings show that not only do learners need to be able to put words into meaningful sentences by using correct grammatical structures, but they also need to learn how to use language appropriately for the social situations in which they communicate.

Nevertheless, despite its importance, pragmatic competence has received little attention in the traditional second-language classroom. An explanation for this situation is that during their teacher education programmes, teachers are not well equipped to teach pragmatics ([Vásquez & Sharpless, 2009](#)). Textbooks also often neglect pragmatics, and even if they teach pragmatic acts, such as making requests and expressing disagreements, they may not adequately explain the social conventions (e.g. cultural norms, politeness, taboos) behind the choice of language forms for carrying out these acts and the contexts in which they can be used ([Nguyen, 2011](#)).

Contrary to many teachers’ beliefs, pragmatic knowledge is learned quite slowly when not formally taught. Studies have shown that despite months of being immersed in the target language environment, study abroad students may still find it difficult to interpret implied meaning (e.g., expressing a negative opinion of someone’s essay by asking how much time the writer has put into it) ([Taguchi, 2008](#)) or express their intended meaning and nuances (e.g., politeness) ([Barron, 2006](#)). This is because, unlike grammar and vocabulary, pragmatic ‘rules’ are immensely fluid and may vary greatly not only across languages and cultures but also within the same language and culture, depending on the speakers’ individual identity, age, gender, the dynamics of their relationship with one another, and the specificity of the context of interaction. Many of these rules may also be opaque and subtle, hence difficult for learners to notice by themselves.

The good news is that pragmatics is teachable. Effective instruction provides opportunities for learners to notice and develop an understanding of the pragmatic functions of language forms and their applicable contexts of use. For example, learners need to be aware that although in English, both an imperative form and an interrogative form can function as requests for someone to perform an action, which form may be selected by a speaker depends largely on the co-participant, the speaker’s goal, and the situation involved. Learners need to notice, for example, that while signing off an email to a friend with “Write back soon” may be appropriate, saying “Give me a coffee to go” to a barista at a café is certainly not. Pragmatic instruction should also provide learners with plenty of opportunities to try out different pragmatic acts in a range of social scenarios and reflect on how their language use may be interpreted by listeners. There is another misconception that in teaching pragmatics, we should aim to help learners develop toward native speaker norms. However, recent research has

demonstrated that while learners may emulate certain native speaker norms, they may less readily embrace those norms that clash with their cultural beliefs and ideologies (Ishihara, 2019). For example, many L2 English students from Asian backgrounds may feel uncomfortable addressing their professors by their first name when this form of address is endorsed by the professors, simply because this communicative style may violate the social norms of their cultures where higher power speakers are typically addressed respectfully and formally. In this regard, the learning of pragmatics is different from that of grammar and vocabulary. While grammatical errors or wrong choice of words may reflect a lack of knowledge in most situations, pragmatic variation may result from the learner's exercising of agency and expression of cultural identity.

Hence, it is now widely accepted that pragmatic instruction should provide learners with a range of options to act on and help them evaluate the interactional consequences of their pragmatic choices rather than insisting on native speaker norms (Taguchi, 2011). This makes sense if we consider the context of English as a global language where successful communication appears to be contingent on the speaker's ability to negotiate and co-construct meaning with participants from diverse linguacultural backgrounds rather than on conformity to native speaker communicative styles (Taguchi & Ishihara, 2018).

2.7 No Pain, No Gain

This belief is quite widespread among language educators. Language learning, it is believed, is a long, drawn-out process that requires a lot of hard work. Only the most hard-working students who are willing to endure hardship over a long period of time will achieve success in mastering the language. Very often, language learning is equated with the learning of other subject areas in school, such as mathematics and physics, where students need to learn and remember a lot of rules and formulas.

That language learning takes time is true. While there is no hard empirical evidence in terms of how much time it takes to acquire a language, our collective experiences tell us that students learning in an intensive context need about 12 months to develop a working level of proficiency (roughly in the A2-B1 range). To develop a higher level of proficiency so that students can use the language more fluently and accurately for wider communicative purposes (roughly in the B2 range), students will probably need to spend another year or two. So, all in all, one would need about three years or so to achieve a good command of English.

However, does this mean that second language acquisition needs to be a painful and laborious process? There is little reason for us to think so. We have met and interviewed numerous successful learners of English (those who reach a B2 level and above) who recounted their pleasant and enjoyable language learning experiences. Not surprisingly, most, if not all of them, would say that they do not enjoy listening to long explanations about grammar and discourse rules, nor do they find completing language practice exercises engaging. And yet, they seem to have no difficulty comprehending and producing the language.

Do these successful learners of English have a special talent for learning a new language? Were they born with the ability to acquire any language with little effort? Unfortunately, there are a number of people who believe that talent plays a key role in

language learning. Without this inborn ability, language learning becomes unbearably difficult.

The belief that talent plays an important role, however, is not supported by research. A more plausible explanation for why successful learners are successful is that they are acquiring (not studying) the language in ways that are consistent with what ELT experts (e.g., Krashen et al., 2017) believe to be key ingredients for successful language acquisition. These students immerse themselves in the language by reading, listening, and viewing highly engaging and comprehensible materials. While having an enjoyable time doing this, they subconsciously pick up a lot of useful and meaningful language (e.g., formulaic expressions or lexical bundles, pragmatically rich language structures, and discourse rules). When the opportunities arise, they will be able to use the language structures that they have incidentally acquired through reading, listening, and viewing for real-life communication. They may struggle a bit when trying to produce the language, but this process is far from being laboriously painful.

Park (2020), for example, recounted the pleasurable experience of a famous musical band leader from Korea who became a fluent user of English as a result of watching 'Friends' (an American sitcom) during his teenage years. He would first watch an episode with the aid of Korean subtitles. He would then watch the same episode using English subtitles. He would watch it again without any subtitles. This went on for a couple of years, by the end of which time he must have watched the whole ten seasons comprising more than 236 episodes. His success in learning English could be explained using the comprehensible input theory and skill learning theory. The input theory, as mentioned earlier, states that language learning happens optimally when students are immersed in meaningful and comprehensible language. The skill learning theory states that the acquisition of a skill requires repeated practice in order to help learners develop a high degree of fluency, automaticity, and greater control in performing a skill.

2.8 'Easy' Teaching Materials Have No Place in the Classroom

Teaching materials come in many different forms these days, e.g., coursebooks, teacher-made videos, YouTube learning channels, podcasts, and web-based materials. When choosing materials for teaching purposes, teachers are often guided by some selection criteria, i.e., whether the contents are interesting and relevant, whether the length is about right, and also the level of linguistic difficulty of the text. Many teachers usually go for instructional-level texts, i.e., texts that contain some, but not too many unknown vocabulary words and/or grammatical points.

These are texts that students might not be able to understand without the help of the teacher or other learning resources (e.g., a dictionary). The presence of unfamiliar language features often serves as the new learning point of the lesson and provides the teacher with the opportunity to explain and illustrate these to help students move to the next level of their language development.

There are times when teachers use texts that are way beyond students' zone of proximal development (Antonacci, 2000). These texts are often referred to as frustration level texts, which, we all know, serve little or no purpose in language learning except to give a sense to the students that these are the kinds of texts that they will need to handle at a later stage of their learning.

At the other end of the text, the difficulty continuum is those texts that are either at or below students' current level. These texts are considered 'easy' or 'too easy'. Easy materials, many believe, have little or no role in language learning as students will not learn anything 'new'. In other words, the texts do not contain new vocabulary or grammatical items and therefore are believed to serve no pedagogical purpose. Research, however, tells us that repeated exposure to known words and familiar grammatical structures plays a critical role in supporting student learning. Frequent encounters with familiar language allow students to consolidate and strengthen their previously learned language features and, in time, help them improve their ability to use the language more fluently and accurately (Nation & Waring, 2019).

The idea that easy, highly comprehensible texts play a critically important role is supported by research that investigates the effect of input-based approaches on language development. Input-based approaches (e.g., extensive reading, listening, and viewing) are founded on the belief that language learning happens optimally when students are exposed to a large amount of comprehensible and compelling language learning materials through daily reading, listening and viewing of the target language. Empirical data to date provide compelling evidence that extensive reading, listening, and viewing should be made an indispensable part of students' language learning experience (Krashen et al., 2017; Robb, 2022; Waring, 2009).

2.9 Teach More Strategies

Joan Rubin's (1975) seminal article 'What the good language learner can teach us' provided the impetus to subsequent discussions and debates about the role of individual learner differences in language learning. Research on individual differences covering such a wide range as aptitude, motivation, and learning strategies began to appear in the ELT professional literature in the late 1970s. Of these, learning strategies received the most research attention, spearheaded perhaps by Rebecca Oxford and her research team (see Oxford, 1990, 2016), who developed a theoretical framework for investigating learning strategies from cognitive, affective, and social perspectives. Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) questionnaire has been widely used by researchers from around the world to investigate the relationship between learning strategies and learner proficiency.

One of the reasons for the popularity of learning strategies is the belief that good language learners use effective strategies to aid their learning, while poor language learners do not. If we know the strategies that good language learners employ, so the argument goes, we can teach these to our less successful students. For roughly about 20 years or so (from the late 1970s to the 1990s), the field witnessed a proliferation of research on various aspects of learner strategies and their relationships with various aspects of language proficiency.

The majority of these studies are correlational in nature, with the results showing a positive association between strategy use and proficiency. Green and Oxford (1995), for example, reported that more proficient learners tended to possess a larger number of strategies and use these more frequently compared to the less proficient learners. The positive results have led strategy researchers to make a strong claim about the role of learning strategies in language learning, as demonstrated by the following quote:

... strategies are the L2 learner's tool kit for active, conscious, purposeful, and attentive learning, and they pave the way toward greater proficiency, learner autonomy, and self-regulation (Hsiao & Oxford, 2002, p. 372)

However, a number of researchers have expressed concerns about such a strong claim. Correlational data are interesting but need to be interpreted with care. It is not very clear, for example, whether increased strategy use leads to higher proficiency. It may well be that it is the latter, namely higher proficiency, that enables students to use a greater number of strategies. Skehan (1989), for example, pointed out that "... learner strategies do not determine proficiency, but are permitted by it" (p. 97). His point was shared by a number of other scholars (e.g., Bremner, 1999; Rees-Miller, 1993; Renandya, 2012). Indeed, more recent studies in L2 listening showed that strategies played a minor role in predicting L2 listening comprehension of EFL learners (Du & Man, 2022; Wallace, 2022).

We feel it is about time that we relook at our beliefs about learning strategies. Brief training in learning strategies is probably fine, but giving strategy training too much attention is probably not the most productive way of utilizing our instructional resources (Swan & Walter, 2017; Willingham, 2006). Swan (2008) offered a sensible piece of advice with regard to strategy instruction: "while training in strategy use can contribute usefully to learner independence, this can be taken to unconstructive extremes; and such training is no substitute for basic language teaching" (p. 262).

2.10 Cooperative Learning is for 'Lazy' Teachers

Although cooperative learning (CL) has been around for years now and its efficacy has been reported in professional books and academic journals, there are still people, including administrators, students, and students' families, who believe that teachers' main job is to transmit knowledge to the students and that the best way to do this is to use a teacher-fronted, lecture-style teaching method. The students are expected to listen attentively, taking copious notes and absorbing the information imparted by the teacher. The sage on the stage teaching philosophy is still well and alive.

Hattie (2012), summarizing numerous studies on classroom talk, estimated that teacher talk accounts for 70 to 80% of class time on average. His own research showed an alarmingly higher average, at 89%. It is perhaps not surprising that these teachers feel strongly that CL, which involves teachers, sometimes plays a facilitative role. At the same time, the students work in groups learning together and supporting each other, which has little place in the classroom. CL, they would say, is used only for teachers whose teaching skills are not up to scratch and for those who are too lazy to impart knowledge during class time.

Current thinking in education and ELT, however, suggests otherwise. CL is hard, maybe even harder, work for teachers. The work begins at the planning stage, where teachers decide on the contents and structure of the lesson. In a reading lesson, for example, teachers think about the kind and amount of texts that would spark students' interest and increase their engagement level; about the amount of support that teachers and materials need to provide before or while students read the texts, about whether students should work in pairs, or slightly larger small groups, in same-gender/same proficiency level groupings or random groupings. More importantly, in order to give

students optimal learning opportunities, teachers need to consider how the key principles of CL (e.g., positive interdependence, equal participation, and individual accountability, see Jacobs & Renandya, 2019, for detailed discussions of these principles) should be operationalized.

During class time, teachers provide brief instruction and explanations for a few minutes before students begin working in their CL groups. While students are interacting and exchanging ideas, teachers walk around the class, providing support and encouragement, and making sure that students are not only on task but also fully engaged throughout the lesson. Although teachers may not talk much during class time, this does not mean they are lazy or that students do not learn much. In fact, research shows that in the hands of capable teachers, CL can result in students becoming more active and motivated and learning much more and also at a deeper level compared to a non-CL lesson (Johnson et al., 2008; Slavin, 2014). After all, the students, not their teachers, are the ones who need the most practice in using the language.

3. CONCLUSION

In this article, we have discussed a number of misconceptions, unsound beliefs, and practices in ELT that we feel deserve our urgent attention. We need to work together with other practitioners and with key stakeholders (language teacher education institutions, language teacher educators, curriculum and materials developers, and community members) to critically examine our existing beliefs and practices, unlearn some of the unsound beliefs and practices and replace them with new ones that reflect current thinking and scholarship in ELT. Of course, sound teaching is context-dependent. Thus, teachers and students will need to collaborate on an evolving understanding of what works best for particular students in particular contexts. Nonetheless, we hope that the concepts explained in this article provide a useful foundation for teachers and students as they chart their own paths toward greater success and enjoyment in their lifelong journey of language learning.

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Collective Scaffolding in Virtual Collaborative Writing: A Study during Emergency Remote Teaching in Indonesia

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Abstract

Along with online education and emergency remote teaching trends during the COVID-19 pandemic, collective scaffolding within virtual collaboration in an academic writing course is still under investigation. To fill the gap, this present study explored to what extent the collective scaffolding provided in virtual collaborative writing helped learners complete writing tasks and examined EFL university students' responses to this learning activity. Guided by a qualitative case study design framework, 43 EFL university students, who attended an academic writing course, voluntarily participated in the study. The data were collected through multiple sources during the virtual writing course, such as students' work artifacts (photographs and descriptions), an online questionnaire, and teacher's written reflective journals of Zoom class video recordings as the research instruments. A thematic analysis with a category system was applied to answer the formulated research questions. The findings reveal that collective scaffolding occurred during collaborative writing in the text co-construction during the writing process. Further, collaborative writing allowed L2 improvements, mutual support, and contribution. Additionally, the activity of assisting and monitoring by the teacher was still significant during group deliberation and text development. Although technology-assisted collaborative writing sounds possible and affordable, a few students felt disappointed as they

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experienced some technological constraints and unexpected group dynamics. Some groups successfully achieved the tasks and social dimensions easily; while others needed a longer time to reach the group development and text productivity.

Keywords: collaborative writing, collective scaffolding, EFL university students, EFL writing, scaffolding.

1. INTRODUCTION

In educational and pedagogical contexts, the elucidation of scaffolding refers to a process that enables a novice learner to achieve a goal beyond his unassisted efforts (Rodgers, 2004). A scaffold, by definition, is a temporary support system given to the learners when assistance is needed, and it is removed when they reach the goal (Lajoie, 2005). With a scaffold, a learner can successfully achieve the targeted task. Further, in collective scaffolding, learners provide mutual scaffolding in a collaborative learning setting to facilitate each other's progress and to connect their present level with the targeted level with the support of others (Hsieh, 2017). Without a doubt, therefore, collective scaffolding, a term coined by Donato (1994), refers to scaffolding among peers when working collaboratively via group work (Li & Zhu, 2013) with the collective orientation to jointly co-construct activities (Donato, 1994). Specifically, in collaborative writing, learners experienced collaborative discourse and scaffolding mechanisms among peers, such as mutual engagement, discussion on different opinions, explanations, and models that support joint writing tasks in a group work activity (Hsieh, 2017). Based on the researcher's first experience with EFL learners in writing courses, joint construction of a text in collaborative writing tasks might create a supportive learning environment that allows the learners to generate ideas, pool knowledge together, achieve shared understanding, and build writing as a social activity process. Nonetheless, with this initial knowledge in mind, little is known about how collaborative writing in a virtual learning context may facilitate collective scaffolding among peers in the group to complete a writing task.

Collaborative learning in university/college has started to gain much attention as Bruffee (1987) argued that it offers a social process of learning judgment and empowers students to work more successfully and interdependently. Meanwhile, writing requires a continuing process of making judgments and decisions—what to write, how to start, and how to say it. In collaborative writing, students in groups learn to discuss and decide on completing writing tasks (Henschen & Sidlow, 1990). A collaborative writing task is considered a coordinated, synchronous activity in which the collaborative learners attempt to construct a cohesive writing product using the shared skills and knowledge in groups (Thomas, 2014). During the collaboration, students assist each other reciprocally in order to achieve the writing task objectives. When students in a group display collaborative discourse, construct texts, and provide self-corrections and other corrections (Hsieh, 2017), collective scaffolding occurs. In collective scaffolding, the element of collaboration between students during pair or group activity is situated in symmetrical dyads (Gonulal & Loewen, 2018) in which all group members expectedly have similar, equal roles and contributions, such as pair of students working on joint-construction of a text.

A number of investigations on group/pair work or collaboration in the language classroom have significantly been conducted in various contexts. A study by [Storch \(2005\)](#) found that the pair writing activity helped students discover ideas and explore different views together. The texts produced by the pairs, when compared to individual texts, had more concise and better grammatical accuracy and linguistic complexity. [Mulligan and Garofalo \(2011\)](#) reported that collaborative writing at the university level could be a non-threatening approach for students, resulting in purposeful usage of the target language across skills and demonstrable improvements in writing. An experimental study conducted by [Alwaleedi et al. \(2019\)](#) revealed that collaborative writing gave students the opportunities to generate ideas while drafting text jointly, discussing language, gaining L2 knowledge, and engaging in meaningful interaction. Through a mixed-method study, [Mirzaei and Eslami \(2015\)](#) confirmed that collaborative dialogic activity (languaging) in writing helped students to overcome negative feelings, improve their L2 writing skills, and enhance their meta-discourse, grammar, and vocabulary ability. Furthermore, with the advancement of technology in ELT particularly in writing instruction, numerous research studies related to the use of applications and platforms of technology-assisted-collaborative writing activity (i.e., wikis, blogs, web-based collaboration, Google Docs, EtherPad) have been extensive. For instance, a study by [Manegre and Gutiérrez-Colón \(2020\)](#) found that collaborative writing activity through computer-mediated communication (online forums) has increased foreign language writing skills, including grammar, syntactic structure, and accuracy in the foreign language, and improved the students' comprehension of the writing material.

To be precise on collective scaffolding, the patterns of scaffolding, either face-to-face or online peer collaboration, reinforce peer assistance, help co-construction of shared understanding, enhance language accuracy, promote autonomous learning, and reach high-quality collaboration ([Hsieh, 2017](#)). Concerning the student perception of the scaffolding pattern, the group interaction patterns among EFL students may influence their perception of the learning experience. For example, in a computer-mediated interaction of small collaborative writing groups using Wikis, [Li and Zhu \(2013\)](#) reported that not all students worked collaboratively on the assigned writing task, nor did they perceive positivity toward this learning experience. Interactional scaffolding patterns among group members may, in fact, implicate the students' perception of learning experiences, writing development, and second language learning in general.

Admittedly, there has been much research on the enactment and effectiveness of online collaborative writing at higher education levels and on interactional patterns of collective scaffolding in collaborative writing ([Hsieh, 2017](#); [Li & Zhu, 2013](#)). However, the students' attitudes and perceptions of collaborative writing are diverse and inconclusive ([Storch, 2005](#)). Moreover, since the trend of education has begun to move toward online instruction, more research needs to be conducted on the effect of such a trend on L2 learners ([Such, 2019](#)), and further research might also investigate how students can collaborate effectively online ([Thomas, 2014](#)). However, little is known about online collaborative writing which provides collective scaffolding based on learners' perspectives. Additionally, very few studies dealt with the collective scaffolding of university students during virtual collaborative writing. More studies investigating the impact of collaborative writing are needed ([Storch, 2018a](#)). Therefore, the current work of investigating collective scaffolding during collaborative

writing in a virtual learning environment is relevant and significant, particularly to explore how scaffolding in text co-construction among peers occurs, and how it benefits each learner's writing skill. These research findings may contribute to EFL learners and teachers in selecting the most appropriate peers or members in group formation and in designing the best writing task for a virtual writing course. This current research was, thus, carried out to answer the following research questions:

- To what extent did the collective scaffolding provided in virtual collaborative writing help learners complete writing tasks?
- How did EFL university students respond to collaborative writing as they engaged in a virtual writing course?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Scaffolding in the Learning and Teaching Process

The original idea of the term 'scaffolding' was first introduced by Jerome Bruner, a cognitive psychologist, to describe how a mother's intuitive structures help a child acquire language (Lajoie, 2005; Wang, 2011). This concept is parallel with Vygotsky's work and conception of zone proximal development (ZPD), which is the distance between the actual developmental level and the potential developmental level under adult assistance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978). The likely state could be achieved through scaffolding with parents, teachers, and peers (Lajoie, 2005). To have this in mind, scaffolding can be described as temporary adaptive support provided until one can solve the task by themselves (Shvarts & Bakker, 2019). Such scaffolding was initially situated by the idea of a teacher-student or adult-child functional system in accomplishing some tasks; hence, to bridge one's current state of capability into an anticipated targeted state in the future. In short, Gonulal and Loewen (2018) concluded that scaffolding is a dynamic fluid support tuned to a child's progress to help the child become self-regulated.

Wood and Middleton (1975, as cited in Rodgers, 2004) illustrated the level of assistance given when a mother provided scaffolding to her children to construct a wooden toy. The mother scaffolded by: 1) giving general verbal instructions; 2) giving specific verbal instructions on what was needed next; 3) providing materials and preparing them; and finally, 4) giving a demonstration on how it needed to be done. The variety and level of scaffolding may contribute to the child's learning development and independence. Besides, in order to help the child achieve the targeted tasks or the expected results, the parents could vary the mode of scaffolding which can be in many forms, including interactive dialogues, inscriptional text materials, and indexical signs (Michell & Sharpe, 2005).

In the context of teaching and learning, scaffolding is described as "a system of temporary guidance offered to the learner by the teacher, jointly co-constructed, and then removed when the learner no longer needs it" (Boblett, 2012, p. 1). According to Wood et al. (1976, as cited in Rodgers, 2004) and Shvarts and Bakker (2019), scaffolding has six dimensions: recruitment, reduction in degrees of freedom, direction maintenance, marking of critical features, frustration control, and demonstration (see Table 1 for further detail). In simple words, the function of scaffolding is to connect

the present learner's ability with the target task so that the learner can complete the task by themselves. The functions of scaffolding can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Scaffolding functions by Wood et al., (1976, as cited in [Rodgers, 2004](#)) and [Shvarts and Bakker \(2019\)](#).

Functions	Descriptions
Recruitment	Introducing the target task
Reduction in degrees of freedom	Simplifying the task by reducing the constituent acts to reach the solution and concentrating on the difficult skills of the task
Direction maintenance	Keeping the learners focus on the target task and maintenance of practicing a particular skill without distraction
Marking critical features	Providing information about the discrepancy between what the learner has produced and what the teacher would recognize as a correct production
Frustration control	Keeping the responsibility of the leading level of activity in the process of self-regulation and controlling frustration in problem-solving
Demonstration	Modeling the task solution for the learner, who is supposed to imitate it

Not as simple as the word 'help', scaffolding, as argued by [Wang \(2011\)](#), is a future-oriented, dynamic, fluid, and temporary activity given to children or learners. This scaffolding is gradually faded when they can accomplish the task independently. Scaffolding is considered a task-enabling support that facilitates the accomplishment of new or onerous tasks so that the learners have task control in facing the task complexity ([Michell & Sharpe, 2005](#)). In education, scaffolding can be seen as three levels of pedagogical scales from macro to micro ([Walqui, 2006](#)), such as providing support for specific activities and skills, carrying out a particular activity in the class, and assisting moment-to-moment interaction. These three scales of pedagogical scaffolding contain six central features that characterize scaffolding as contingent, collaborative, and interactive (see Table 2).

Table 2. The features of pedagogical scaffolding by van Lier (2004, as cited in [Walqui, 2006](#)).

Central features	Descriptions
Continuity	Repeated tasks with variety, which have a connection to one another
Contextual support	A safe, supportive environment applied in a variety of ways
Intersubjectivity	Mutual engagement and rapport; encouragement and non-threatening participation
Contingency	Adjustable procedures of the task depending on the actions of learners
Handover/takeover	As skill and confidence increase, the role of the learner increases
Flow	Balance in skills and challenges; focus on the task and tuned in with each other

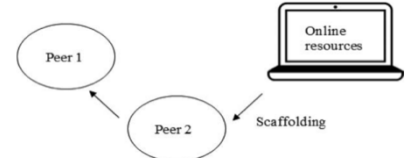
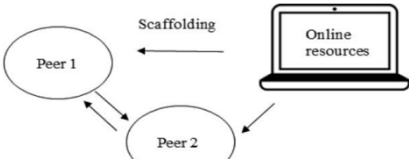

In the classroom context, teachers support the learners through interactive scaffolding in four categories of classroom discourse ([Rodgers, 2004](#)). The first is giving instruction, where the teacher tells the learners about what to do, such as "you skip the page". The second is demonstrating, in which the teacher takes the learners' role and demonstrates the action. Then, directing the activity as the teacher leads the learners to take a particular activity, such as "check it to make sure you're right". And the last is asking questions, for example, "does it say leopard or lady?" ([Rodgers, 2004, p. 511](#)). In summary, the deployment of scaffolding acted as temporary support within

ZPD to bridge one’s current capability to an anticipated future state by contingent interaction between a leading level and background levels (Shvarts & Bakker, 2019).

2.2 Collective Scaffolding in Collaborative Writing

Not only situated in asymmetrical dyads, such as parent-child and teacher-learner, scaffolding can also occur in symmetrical equal-level dyads, such as a pair of students in the problem-solving task (Gonulal & Loewen, 2018). Donato (1994) introduced the term ‘collective scaffolding’ to describe assistance given among peers or by a more knowledgeable person to enable the less knowledgeable person in collaborative work to reach a higher level of performance. Boblett (2012, p. 6) simplified the concept of collective scaffolding by “adding the element of collaboration between learners”. Furthermore, Gonulal and Loewen (2018, p. 3) wrote the advantages of collective scaffolding as “learners can create ZPDs for each other and can produce better results together than they would have been able to do alone”. From previous research, Hsieh (2017) concluded that an interactive discourse among collaborative learners could facilitate their work within ZPD and create shared understanding, including the following: making collective co-construction of the text, telling explicit requests for assistance, questioning competing forms, jointly managing components of the problem, giving self-correction or peer correction, and conducting interactional conversation among peers in groups. Through the process of collective scaffolding, collaborative learners can pool their linguistic knowledge and sources when encountering problems (Storch, 2018a). The patterns of collective scaffolding can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Collective scaffolding patterns in collaborative learning setting (Hsieh, 2017).

Scaffolding patterns	Descriptions
Peer-to-peer scaffolding	 <p>One peer obtained scaffolding from online resources and used it to help the other peer</p>
Multidirectional scaffolding	 <p>Both learners obtained scaffolding from the online resources to support their mutual assistance and interaction</p>
Individual scaffolding	 <p>Individual scaffolding occurs between an individual learner and the online resources</p>

Face-to-face collaborative writing may offer the best way to express ideas and deliberate about language choices during discussion and interaction, as well as elicit immediate feedback from peers (Storch, 2011, 2018a). However, when technology and

collaboration are combined, the role of online sources can be undeniable in scaffolding. A study by Hsieh (2017) was conducted to figure out an in-depth analysis of learners' interaction in a collaborative learning environment with online sources/internet support. The study found three distinctive patterns of dynamic interaction and scaffolding between peers and online sources: peer-to-peer, multidirectional, and individual (see Table 3). These types of scaffolding support peer assistance, mediate co-construction of shared understanding, enhance language accuracy, and promote autonomous learning among group members (Hsieh, 2017). Table 4 presents the patterns of computer-mediation interaction in collaboration.

Table 4. Patterns of computer-mediation interaction in collaboration (Storch, 2002, as cited in Li & Zhu, 2013).

	Collectively contributing/ mutually supportive	Authoritative/ responsive	Dominant/ withdrawn
Equality	Group members make equal contributions to the group discussion.	Group members have unequal contributions and degrees of control. One member takes the most control.	Group members have unequal contributions and degrees of control. Two members control the task; the third member gives minimal contribution, and the other member even withdraws from the writing task.
Mutuality	Group members are willing to offer and engage with each other's ideas through discussion and text construction.	The two members acknowledge the leading role and are responsive to the leader's behavior; group members fully engage with one another's ideas.	Group members are unwilling or unable to engage; there is no reciprocal interaction and little mutual scaffolding.

Given the fact that collective scaffolding within collaborative writing leads to positive effects and advantages to language learning and writing skills, some studies found that not all collaborative learners work collaboratively in groups. It did not always show notable writing improvement (Li & Zhu, 2013). To be more specific on collaboration patterns, Storch (2002, as cited in Li & Zhu, 2013) examined peer interaction and proposed dyadic interaction patterns of collaboration into two: equality (degree of control/authority) and mutuality (level of engagement/contribution), see Table 4 for further details. In addition to interactive collaboration patterns among group members, L2 learners' proficiency may also get more attention in collaborative writing. Storch (2011) suggested that some writing tasks (i.e., text reconstruction) may not suit low-proficiency L2 learners for collaboration. Moreover, a study by Zhang (2019) reported that intermediate EFL learners may not always collaborate in collaborative writing tasks with selected partners. Zhang (2019) further indicated that collaboration type does not affect the text quality and the linguistic accuracy of students' collaborative texts. However, the nature of the relationship and interaction among members, the nature of the task, learners' goals, and L2 proficiency may become factors affecting the success of collaboration and writing improvement (Boblett, 2012). Therefore, learners' interaction and collective scaffolding dynamics during collaborative writing particularly in a virtual learning environment need further exploration.

Writing in group activity seems more complex than it is known as it covers not only the task dimension but also the social dimension (Nelson & Murphy, 1992) during group formation and group development. This indicates that writing activity in small groups not only dealt with linguistic accuracy, text organization, and writing development, but more than those aspects. Dornyei and Murphey (2009) illustrated how social dimension matters in a process of group formation at the early stage:

Students must deal with others whom they hardly know, and they are uncertain about whether they will like them or, more importantly, whether they will be liked by them. They observe each other suspiciously, sizing up one another and trying to find a place in an unestablished and unstable hierarchy... Those who lack sufficient social skills often find this process very demanding and frustrating (Dornyei & Murphey, 2009, p. 14).

Within a small group activity, the group members experience group developmental stages. This is as suggested by Ehrman and Dornyei's system of group development (Dornyei & Murphey, 2009), in which the stages consist of the formation stage, the transition stage, the performing stage, and the dissolution stage. A teacher plays important roles at all stages. Dornyei and Murphey (2009) suggested some roles of a teacher during group developmental stages, such as a goal setter and a manager at the early stage of group formation; a mediator and a negotiator during the transition stage; a supervisor of group cohesiveness at performing stage; and an evaluator of group accomplishment and a supporter for continuity at dissolution stage.

3. METHODS

Informed by a qualitative research framework that represents the perspectives of the people under real-world contextual conditions to explain human social behaviour (Yin, 2011), this study adopted a case study research design that favors intensity and depth, exploring the interaction between matter and context for defining a unit of analysis (i.e., an individual, a small group, an intervention) (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). As a case study offers to illustrate a phenomenon in a very vivid, detailed, and highly contextualized way from different perspectives (Duff, 2020), this current research explored to what extent the collective scaffolding provided in virtual collaborative writing helped learners complete writing tasks and examined EFL university students' responses to this learning activity. Furthermore, guided by a case study framework for looking at the holistic and detailed behavior, performance, knowledge, or perspective of a few or many subjects (Duff, 2012), this study examined the enactment of collaborative writing, collective scaffolding, and the student perceptions of this learning activity toward their L2 writing development by observing their real-life-experiences and voices in virtual group work of writing activities through audio-visual means.

3.1 The Participants and the Course

The participants were those who attended an academic writing course and filled in their online consent forms (via a Google form link) to participate in this study. The

total participants were 43 university students and one writing instructor/teacher (female, 38 years old) who was responsible for teaching and managing the course in the English Education department at a private university in Jakarta, Indonesia. The demographical information of the participants can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Demographic information of participants.

Participants	43		
Age	< 25 years old	9	20.9%
	25 – 35 years old	24	55.8%
	> 35 years old	10	23.3%
Gender/sex identity	Female	27	62.8%
	Male	16	37.2%

The academic writing course was initially designed for a face-to-face instruction with three credits and with two and a half hours for each meeting. Due to the Corona virus outbreaks/COVID-19 pandemic, the course sessions were immediately shifted to fully online instruction for temporary circumstances, called an emergency remote teaching (ERT) system (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020; Hodges et al., 2020). Most Indonesian ERTs were applied through learning management systems (LMS), video conferencing, and messenger applications (Amin & Sundari, 2020; Rahiem, 2020). During the virtual academic writing course, the sessions were facilitated by three digital platforms divided into two modes: synchronous sessions (Zoom video conferencing) and asynchronous sessions (Google Classroom LMS and WhatsApp messenger application).

Prior to taking part in a collaborative writing project, all participants were asked to complete one individual essay as a writing task submitted via Google Classroom. Then the writing instructor organized the scores into writing proficiency-level categories. The categories were based on the overall writing scores, including organization, sentence structure, writing mechanics, and content (Oshima & Hogue, 2007), with a maximum score of 100 points. The results of scoring and classifying the students' writing proficiency levels showed that the scores ranged from 65.0 to 88.0, with a mean of 80.6 (SD= 6.29). Eleven students (27%) whose scores were from 86.00 to 88.00 were labeled as high level; 17 of them (39%) who got scores ranging from 79.00 to 86.00 were labeled as intermediate level; meanwhile, the rest of the 15 students (34%) were categorized as low level with scores ranging from 65.00 to 78.00. The information about these writing proficiency levels was then used for group formation of three to four members. Each group contained members from each writing proficiency level, or at least from two writing proficiency levels. Having 16 meetings throughout the course, six meetings were served for the writing project collaborative writing, which was to compose a short article from mini research.

3.2 Instruments

Guided by a case study framework to contextualize and particularize the phenomenon from different perspectives (Duff, 2012, 2020), the empirical data was gathered through multiple sources: students' work artifacts (photographs and descriptions), an online questionnaire, and teacher's written reflective journals of Zoom class video recordings. During the Zoom breakout room sessions, the participants were asked to photograph what they believed essential to show in their

writing activities and to portray their views of online/virtual collaborative writing they have applied from their real-life experiences in virtual collaborative writing activities. This photovoice technique of data collection was conducted in two periods: the pre-writing stage and the whilst-writing stage. Photovoice is a specific photographic technique that is used to visually document and record the knowledge, voices, and experiences of a community member (Call-Cummings et al., 2018; Wang & Burris, 1997). The images may include experience when analyzing sample text, brainstorming ideas, selecting topics, drafting a rough draft, and revising the draft. They then wrote narratives describing what happened in the image that may cover the people, the feeling/preferences, the activity, the experiences, and in what ways it meant to them. The narrative was guided by a set of questions modified from SHOWED (See, Happening, Our lives, Why, Educate, Do) analysis method (Strack, 2017; Wang & Burris, 1997), as follows:

- What do you see here (in the picture)?
- What is happening here (in the picture)?
- How are your feelings when you are involved in the activity (in the picture)?
- Do you think the activity (in the picture) benefits your writing skill development?
- If yes, in what ways does the activity improve your writing skills?
- If not, what difficulties/challenges do you find when involved in the activity?
- What can you learn from the activity in the picture?

Together with a photovoice technique, an online questionnaire (closed and opened-ended questions) was distributed at the end in order to gauge students' perceptions and opinions on virtual collaborative writing they have experienced when completing the writing tasks and to find out in what ways their collaborative partners and activity scaffolded their writing improvement. The questionnaire consisted of two items of questions. In a closed-ended question, the students responded to the question 'do you think collaborative writing (writing in a group activity) is effective in developing your writing skills?' with 3 options of responses: yes, no, maybe. This question was followed by an open-ended question (If yes/no/maybe, please explain in what ways writing group activities are effective/not for developing your writing skills!) to elaborate on their responses.

To check the consistency of the data collection from the photovoice and the questionnaire, the data from class video recordings followed by the teacher's written reflective journals were also collected. One of the researchers acted as a teacher who captured how each participant in collaborative writing scaffolded one another as well as in what ways collective scaffolding occurred, and how group dynamics happened during the synchronous virtual sessions. The teacher's written reflective journals were guided by Smyth's DICR framework (1989, as cited in Williams & Grudnoff, 2011), which has four steps as a set of guided questions: describing (what did I do?), informing (what does this mean?), confronting (how did I come to be this way?), and reconstructing (how might I do things differently?).

3.3 Data Analysis

In data analysis of 78 photographs from photovoice, a four-part layer approach in evaluating photovoice offered by Oliffe et al. (2008) was selected to analyze the photographs and the narratives systematically. The steps covered preview, review, cross-photo comparison, and theorizing to generate themes and patterns from the

narratives (Behrendt & Machtmes, 2016). The photographs were previewed and reviewed. However, only photos that portrayed virtual learning activity during collaborative writing were used for further analysis, and the narratives that were not responded to all of the provided questions were excluded. As there was twice data collection of photographs and narrative, they reached and divided into 2 data sets: dataset 1 (1-38) and dataset 2 (2-40). The data from the narratives were then treated as textual data for qualitative thematic analysis.

The textual data from the narratives, named dataset 1(1-38) and dataset 2 (2-40) as well as the open-ended questionnaire's responses (Q1-Q43) were further subject to analysis. We repeatedly read and tabulated the data grounded by a theoretical foundation (scaffolding and collective scaffolding) to serve the proposed research questions. The tabulated data from narratives and open-ended questions were analyzed and coded using a qualitative analysis technique (Flick, 2009; Saldana, 2009). The tabulated data were coded into a thematic category system through multiple reading circles. Meanwhile, the result from the close-ended question was descriptively presented in percentages. To warrant the trustworthiness of the gathered data, teachers' written reflective journals were analyzed to check the consistency of the data.

4. RESULTS

Guided by a qualitative case study design, the purposes of this current research are twofold: examining to what extent the collective scaffolding provided in virtual collaborative writing helped learners complete writing tasks and exploring the EFL university students' responses as the research participants to this learning activity. The themes that emerged from the data analysis process are presented in the following to answer the formulated research questions.

4.1 Collective Scaffolding in Virtual Collaborative Writing

4.1.1 *Co-construction of the text*

During virtual collaborative writing in small groups, students narrated that they jointly constructed the assigned academic article over three stages of the writing process. In the pre-writing stage, they collaboratively chose the topic (dataset1-18), brainstormed, and exchanged ideas among group members (dataset1-5, dataset1-6, dataset1-21). Then, in the whilst-writing stage, each student in the group contributed to drafting the first version of the article (dataset2-12).

Further, at the post-writing stage, they reported that they rechecked the outline (dataset2-25), examined the result of the first draft (dataset2-27), reviewed the sentences (dataset2-13), and did corrections over the article together (dataset2-3, dataset2-6). They admitted that they had the same purpose during this virtual writing task, that is to make a good composition (dataset2-8) and to achieve a coherent, cohesive paragraph (dataset1-37). For example, Students 2-13 recounted how the members of the group co-constructed the draft by selecting words and structuring sentences during the Zoom meeting session (see Figure 1).

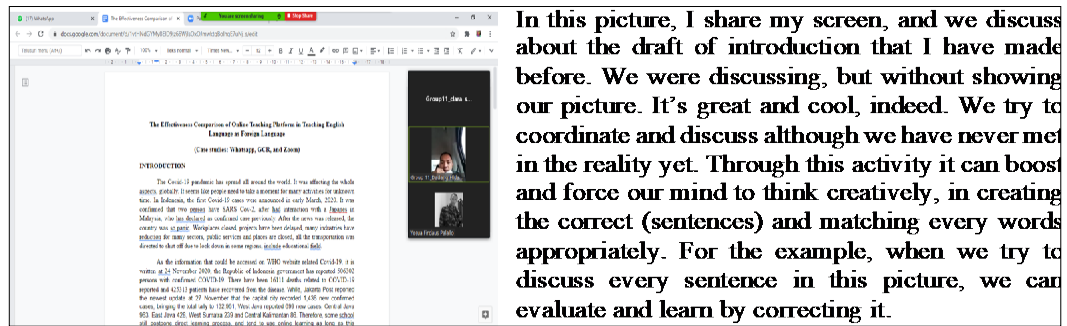


Figure 1. Photovoice 2-13: Co-construction of the text (photo taken by respondent CSS (Group 11) in Dec 2020 with consent from the respondents).

4.1.2 L2 Writing development

After having the experience to produce the article in a virtual small group collaboration, most of the students perceived that their L2 writing cognition and skills have immensely increased. Through real experience, students expressed that they understood how to start and manage the process of writing to produce a qualified written text in L2, such as collecting and taking notes of references (dataset1-9, dataset1-20), choosing a unique theme/topic (dataset1-33), making an outline (dataset1-37), and writing and re-writing (dataset2-3). The excerpts from open-ended questions illustrated what the students perceived about their L2 writing development as they engaged in virtual collaborative writing.

- (1) It develops my writing skills to structure good sentences (Q19).
- (2) Reviewing journal (articles) can develop my writing skills and make me understand the journal content better (Q9).
- (3) Yes, I extensively developed my writing skills with the assignment...I become a more creative individual... (Q29).

Besides, students also felt more aware of the cognitive processes that occurred during writing in L2. They reported that they carried out several cognitive and high-thinking processes, such as learning new topics (dataset1-16), understanding text types (dataset1-28), reading and reviewing selected L2 references (dataset1-24, dataset2-4), combining various ideas (dataset1-3), and thinking critically (dataset1-24). As in Figure 2, student-participants 2-6 narrated how writing skills improved the quality of their writing product and writing skills.

4.1.3 Mutual support and contribution within discussion and teamwork

During virtual collaborative writing, students expressed that they contributed to the group in completing the writing task and that they received support from other members. Led by the group leader (dataset1-14) in virtual discussions, student participants as group members tried to give contributions (dataset1-23, dataset1-32) by sharing opinions/ideas/thoughts (dataset1-9, dataset1-12, dataset1-25 to dataset1-28) and sharing experience and knowledge (dataset1-16, dataset1-31).

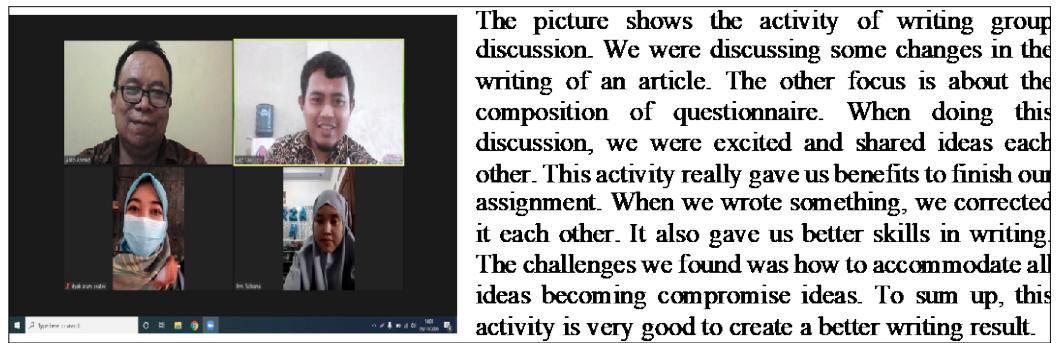


Figure 2. Photovoice 2-6: L2 writing development (photo taken by respondent AS (Group 1) in Dec 2020 with consent from the respondents).

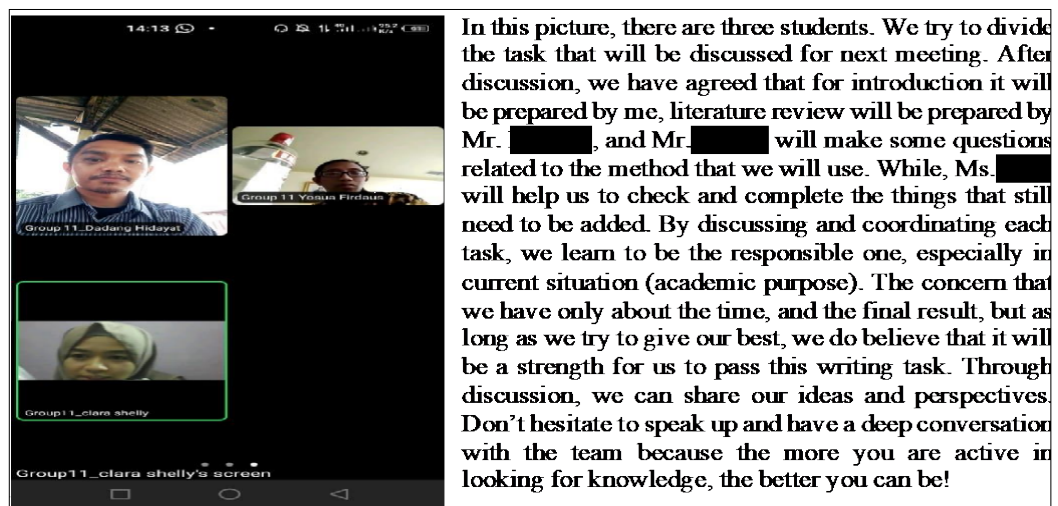


Figure 3. Photovoice 2-19: Mutual support, job distribution, and contribution (photo taken by respondent DA (Group 1) in Dec 2020 with consent from the respondents).

Based on Photovoice 2-19, one student described the activities that the group members undertook during virtual collaborative writing (see Figure 3). In virtual group discussions (dataset1-16, dataset1-7, dataset1-8, dataset1-18), group members distributed writing jobs among the members (dataset1-1, dataset1-15, dataset1-20, dataset1-22). Further, they also discussed the topic, the content, the timelines (dataset1-14), the best title (dataset1-27), the changes on the text article (dataset2-6), the next step/strategy/solution (dataset1-33, dataset2-7) in order to achieve the final decisions (dataset1-30, dataset1-23, dataset2-8). Moreover, students also expressed that each member in the group supported one another (dataset1-1, data1-15, dataset2-8), helped one another (dataset1-3), received feedback from the others, and gave contributions (dataset2-5) through sharing ideas (dataset1-9, dataset1-28) and doing the job descriptions (dataset1-2, dataset1-10). They also admitted that they reached a mutual understanding (dataset1-2) and mutual trust (dataset1-14) to reach the goal (dataset1-34) collaboratively. The students' responses to open-ended questions brought almost a similar fashion of mutuality and contribution among group members, as in the following excerpts:

- (4) We could learn language, knowledge, and experience from our friends. (Q8)
- (5) Among members, we shared ideas with one another. (Q15)

- (6) Because we worked together, we gave feedback to each member. (Q25)
- (7) We could assist one another to finish the task, such as by sharing ideas and giving solutions. (Q27)

4.1.4 Social and communication skills

Having carried out virtual collaborative writing during interaction and discussion, students felt that their collaborative writing, or generally group working, required social and communication skills. In virtual conversation, they mentioned that they should listen to other members' opinions (dataset1-4, dataset1-9), accept and appreciate others' views (dataset1-34), stop talking when the other was talking, and lower their voice tune (dataset1-9) to reach a deep conversation (dataset1-19). In short, they were trained to be good listeners (dataset2-19, dataset2-23). Additionally, as illustrated by Students 1-26, virtual discussion and conversation during collaborative writing encouraged the group members to have good intentions as well as to be good collaborators and communicators at the same time regardless the background and personality diversity.

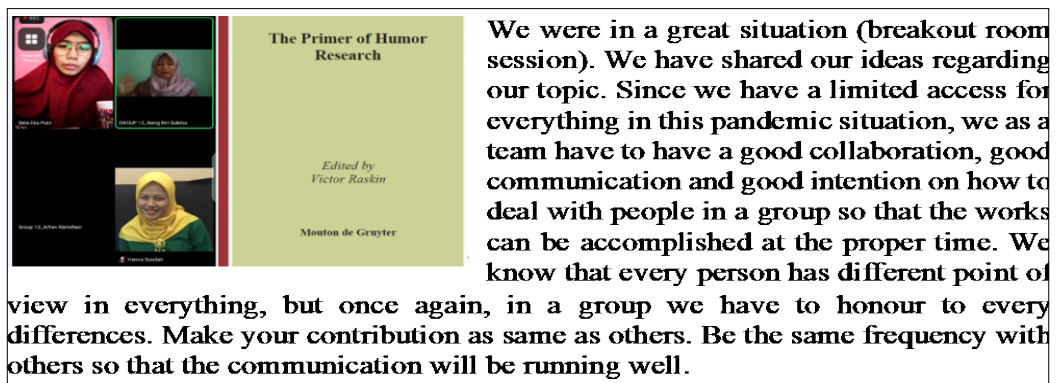


Figure 4. Photovoice 1-26: Social and communication skills (photo taken by respondent AHR (Group 13) in Nov 2020 with consent from the respondents).

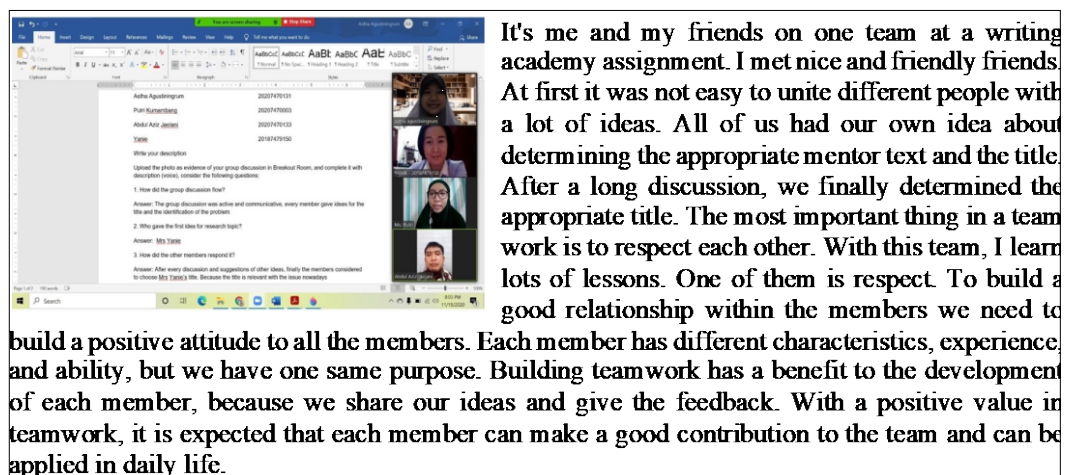


Figure 5. Photovoice 1-23: Social and communication skills (photo taken by respondent AA (Group 7) in Nov 2020 with consent from the respondents).

Furthermore, the students also narrated that, since this collaborative writing project needed interaction among members, they should show respect and honor to

other members (dataset1-12, dataset1-36, dataset1-23); they needed to understand, adapt to, and accept other members (dataset1-22), as well as filled the gaps in other's weakness points (dataset1-9). In addition, they should be responsible for the distributed job (dataset1-19), be open-minded (dataset1-22, dataset1-38), and not be judgmental of others' opinions (dataset1-12, dataset1-26). Students 1-23 described that respecting others in a group collaboration was crucial so that group members positively build a good relationship and successfully achieve the goal (see Figure 5).

4.1.5 Teacher assistance and monitoring

This collaborative writing activity was expected to enable group members to construct a short article jointly during the virtual writing course. Students admitted that the writing instructor/teacher had played the role of a mentor and supervisor over the entire text development and project collaboration. Students 2-7 narrated that the writing teacher joined in Zoom breakout room sessions, monitored the virtual discussion, and provided feedback to the group.

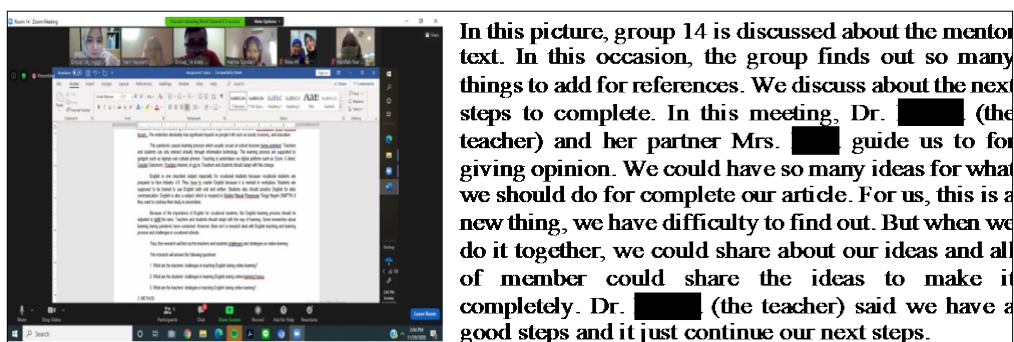


Figure 6. Photovoice 2-7: Teacher assistance and monitoring (photo taken by respondent AH (Group 14) in Dec 2020 with consent from the respondents).

In addition, some students stated that the writing teacher assisted them by checking and monitoring group discussion (dataset1-26, dataset1-34) and giving the sample text as a mentor (dataset2-7, dataset2-30). They also reported that the writing teacher provided feedback, directions, and guides (dataset2-5, dataset2-7).

4.2 EFL University Students' Responses to Virtual Collaborative Writing during ERT

4.2.1 Student's responses toward collaborative writing

Concerning the students' responses to collaborative writing in completing the writing tasks, based on the questionnaire, more than half of the student participants (62.8%) stated their agreement that collaborative writing was effective in developing writing skills. Conversely, the rest revealed their uncertainty and disagreement with 25.6% and 11.6%, respectively.

Students, who perceived a positive response toward collaborative writing activity, said that during writing in a small group, they experienced fun work (dataset1-2, dataset1-15), high willingness and motivation (dataset2-2), good and fantastic feelings (dataset2-5, dataset2-7), hard but happy work (dataset2-11), happy feeling

(dataset2-20, dataset2-27, dataset2-30, dataset2-37), as well as excitement and enthusiasm feeling (dataset2-32, dataset2-36, dataset2-24, dataset2-25). As Students 2-3 recounted on Photovoice 2-3 (see Figure 7), excitement and enthusiasm were dominantly expressed since the collaborative writing activity allowed the members to share ideas/opinions without fear of making mistakes.

On the other hand, some students also perceived that the collaborative writing they experienced during the virtual course was seemingly ineffective in improving their writing skills. Students' responses on open-ended questionnaires revealed unexpected situations during the writing task in virtual collaborative activity, as in the following excerpts.

- (8) I've done my part, but I needed to wait for other members to accomplish their parts. It seemed no one took this seriously, and even they said: I'll do it; Maybe I've to finish this by myself (Q5).
- (9) Writing in a group was less effective because there were many people and many thoughts, so it was challenging to come to a consensus (Q12).

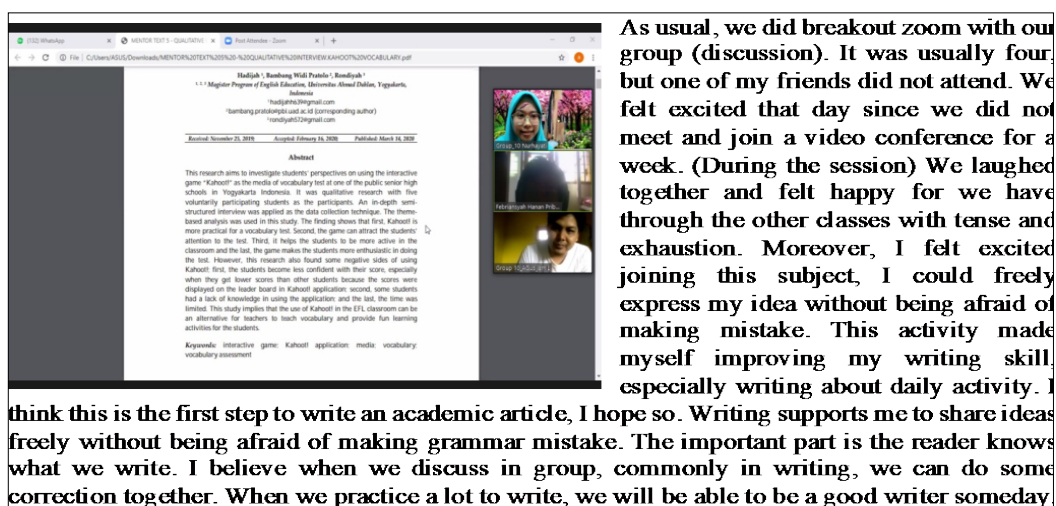


Figure 7. Photovoice 2-3: Students' responses to collaborative writing (photo taken by respondent AJ (Group 10) in Dec 2020 with consent from the respondents).

4.2.2 Merits and pitfalls of virtual collaborative writing

Concerning writing tasks in virtual collaborative writing, students revealed that this type of writing activity could be possible to implement as it provided flexibility in terms of place and time. As it was in the Covid-19/pandemic situation (dataset1-35), switching to online learning (dataset1-28), and finding a new method for teaching and learning (dataset1-31) was necessary. Group projects (dataset1-28) through virtual sessions (dataset1-35) would be a new teaching practice (dataset1-15). In addition, Students 1-15 described how collaborative work could be conducted through a distance learning between the group members.

Furthermore, in applying a collaborative work to complete an article, students mentioned that technology helped facilitate communication, interaction, and writing management. As narrated by Students 1-37, this group used several technological devices and tools to assist them during the entire text completion with various functions, such as a video conference application, search engine, digital document reader, and messenger application (see Figure 8).

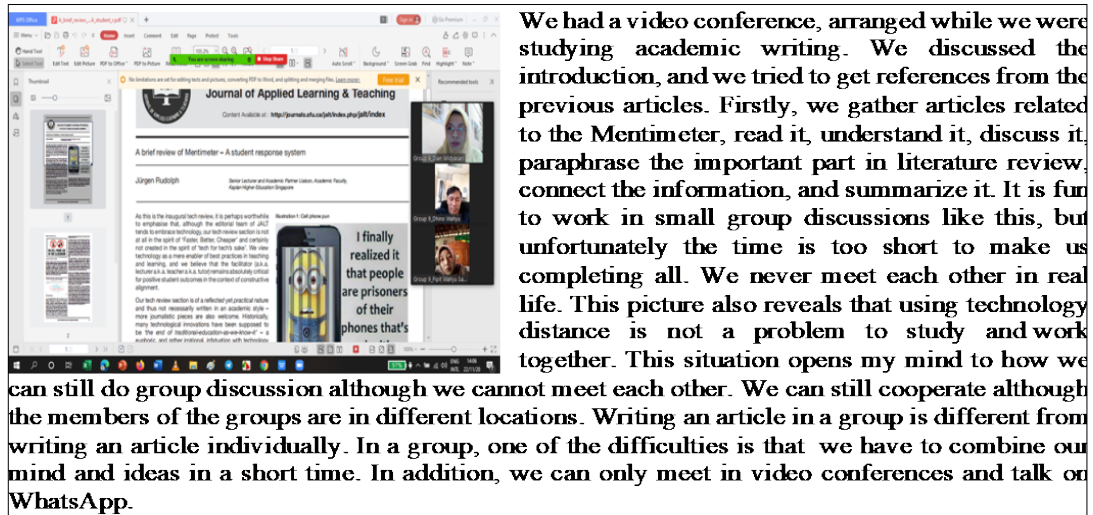


Figure 8. Photovoice 1-15: Flexibility of virtual collaborative writing (photo taken by respondent DW (Group 9) in Nov 2020 with consent from the respondents).

Even though most of the students admitted that technology-assisted collaborative writing was advantageous and possible, a few of them brought a different story of the virtual collaborative work. From the questionnaire, one student-participant (Q13) narrated the constraints of managing an online group project in which all members were in different places. Additionally, as in the excerpt below, they struggled with the time constraint and internet connection.

- (10) In my case, although they are single, the other members were always busy, and when they were not busy, they had internet connection problems. D lives in Cikarang, P lives in Solo, and K lives in Cirebon. The only way to contact communicate was through WhatsApp, but sometimes there was no response, only P responded, but lately, she had a problem at home so she couldn't complete the task. I tried so many times to discuss this by video conference, but only I and P attended. I wasted so much time asking them to work on the task together, but they just helped with the literature review. I think writing group activity was ineffective in an online class because the members could not meet and complete the task together (Q13).

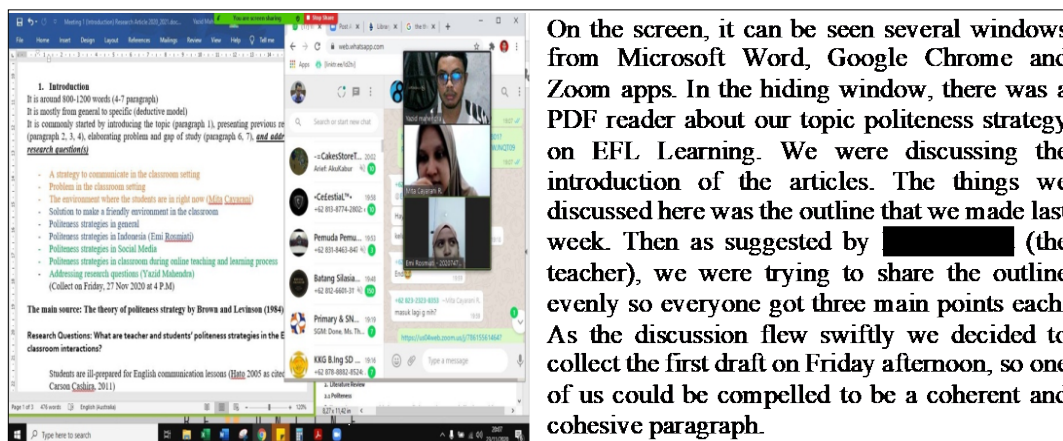


Figure 9. Photovoice 1-37: Technology-assisted collaborative writing (photo taken by respondent YM (Group 8) in Nov 2020 with consent from the respondents).

4.2.3 Group dynamics

In this research, the collaborative writing on completing a short article was conducted within six weeks. Throughout the weeks, some groups successfully completed the writing task as they planned, and they maintained their social relationships. However, it was revealed that not all groups successfully worked as expected. Students 1-11 expressed happiness and enthusiasm over this collaborative writing at the early stage of the project. As seen in Figure 10, the narrative and facial expressions at the first photovoice collection brought an impression of positive vibes among the members.

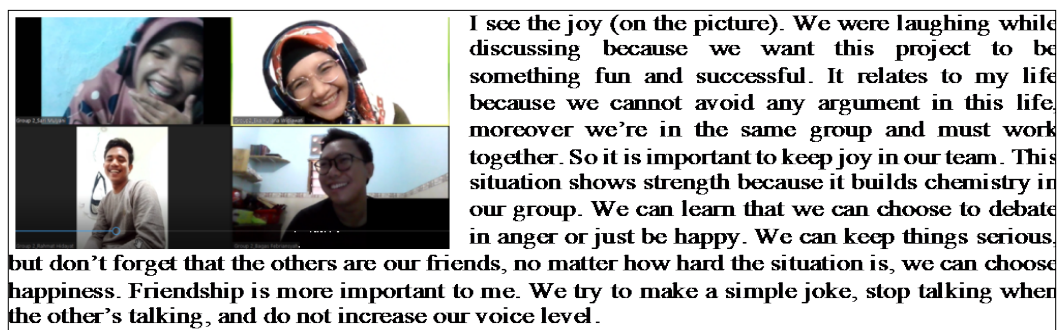


Figure 10. Photovoice 1-11: Group dynamics (photo taken by respondent EYW (Group 2) in Nov 2020 with consent from the respondents).

However, in the second data collection of photovoice, the same student revealed expressions of disappointment to one of the members (see Figure 11). Then at the general level, the student-participant felt uncertain if this could be maintained until the end, and if collaborative writing would benefit the members in producing high-quality text and in improving their writing skills.

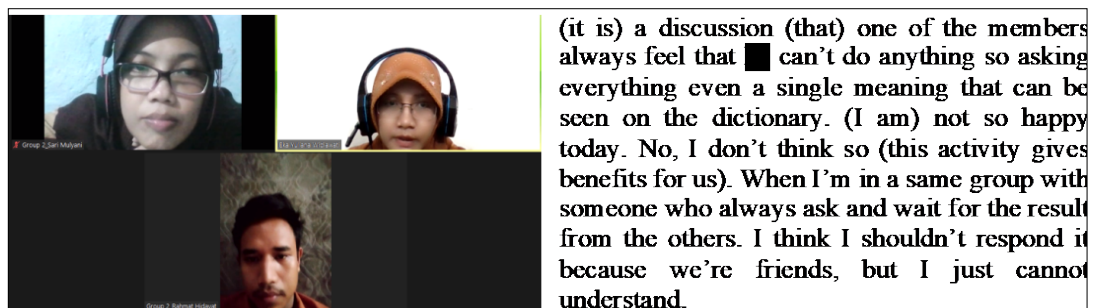


Figure 11. Photovoice 2-21: Group dynamic (photo taken by respondent EYW (Group 2) in Dec 2020 with consent from the respondents).

5. DISCUSSION

This present research has found that during virtual collaborative writing, the students collectively scaffolded each other in the joint construction of the academic article in three stages of the writing process. During the pre-writing stage, they collaboratively brainstormed, exchanged ideas, selected the topic for the paper, and deliberated the best language choices. After that, each group member contributed to

outlining and writing the first draft of the paper in the whilst-writing stage. Then, they reviewed and corrected the entire article collaboratively during the post-writing stage. The stages in collaborative writing on producing the article, performed by the students in the group, were consistent with the process-based approach to text development, which requires planning and drafting (Badger and White, 2000) and with the five underlying principles: planning, writing, reflecting, collaborative writing, and personalized writing instruction (Li & Razali, 2019). The recursive procedure of the writing process allowed learners to develop their awareness of the text type and text development (Ghufron, 2016). This leads the collaborative learners to possibly acquire knowledge of the text genre and to be active co-constructors of the text as the students in this research admitted that they had the same purpose in writing, which was to make a good composition and to achieve coherence and cohesion in the text. This purpose of writing was achieved collaboratively by the group members through co-constructing the draft, selecting words, and structuring sentences during synchronous and asynchronous sessions.

After jointly producing an article in the virtual small group collaborations, most of the students perceived that their L2 writing cognitions and skills have immensely increased. They revealed that they understood how to start and manage the procedure of L2 written text, such as collecting and using references, choosing the topic, making an outline, writing, and re-writing. In this case, collaborative writing facilitates students in learning to write in L2 (Storch, 2018a), in terms of a 'learning-to-write' activity in which writing activities aim to improve writing abilities; in this context, the students build awareness of text knowledge and the process of text development. A similar result was also reported by Mulligan and Garofalo (2011), who highlighted that students in collaborative writing demonstrate improvement in writing; thus, it can be a non-threatening approach for university students.

It was found that the students in this study became more aware of the cognitive processes during L2 writing which include learning a new topic, understanding text types, reading, reviewing selected L2 references, combining various ideas, and thinking critically. They contributed by sharing opinions/ideas/thoughts and by sharing experiences and knowledge. Further, they also revealed that they discussed the topic, the content, the timelines, the best title, and the changes to the article draft. They decided/concluded what was best for the task. This finding is consistent with what was found by Storch (2005), who claimed that a pair writing activity helps students discover ideas together and explore different views. Moreover, the findings of this research support the result of the study by Alwaleedi et al. (2019) who discovered various students' writing activities during collaborative writing, including generating ideas, joint drafting, discussing language and L2 knowledge, and engaging in meaningful interaction. Moreover, interactive, meaningful dialogue and language during deliberations among group members may allow L2 writing skill improvement (Mirzaei & Eslami, 2015). During this process, collective scaffolding may occur as the learners consolidate linguistic knowledge and receive immediate feedback from peers (Storch, 2018a).

Furthermore, the students in this research expressed that they received support, help, and feedback from others which at the same time contributed to the co-construction of the text although they have never met in person. A similar finding is also found in the study by Hsieh (2017) that investigated peer collaboration in face-to-face activity with an online source. This pattern of collective scaffolding may reinforce

the co-construction of shared understanding, increase language accuracy, and foster autonomous learning. Taking-giving interaction and collaborative conversation among group members facilitate the students to work within ZPD – moving from the current state to the targeted state (Mirzaei & Eslami, 2015; Nassaji & Swain, 2000; Storch, 2018b).

During the virtual interaction, the students in this study admitted that they reached mutual understanding and mutual trust to accomplish the goal of the writing task collaboratively. Furthermore, they mentioned that working in a group required social and communication skills, such as listening to others, accepting, and appreciating different opinions, not interrupting when others are talking, and lowering their voice tones. Showing respect becomes the most prominent social skill in maintaining relationships and teamwork. This can be seen as collaboration in collective contribution and mutual support. Each group member desires to engage with each other's ideas through deliberations and text construction (Li & Zhu, 2013). Concerning the feedback from the teacher, Storch (2018a, 2018b) stated that, in collaborative writing, feedback from peers is available throughout the writing process. Meanwhile, in solitary/individual writing, the feedback from the teacher or peers (in peer feedback activities) is delayed as it is given once the writing activity has been completed. However, the current research found that the writing instructor acted as a mentor and a supervisor over the entire text development and project collaboration by providing feedback to the group during students' deliberations, monitoring group discussion, giving sample texts, and providing necessary feedback. It indicates that, although collaborative learners are intentionally set in the environment to scaffold each other, the teacher/instructor still plays a pivotal role in text development in collaborative writing. The teacher had an important role in all stages of collaborative writing, from the early stage of group formation, the performing stage, until the dissolution stage (Dornyei & Murphey, 2009). The teacher might not expectedly give the entire control and responsibility to the group members. Conversely, the writing teacher monitored and assessed each stage of the writing process to make sure it worked well.

With the expansion of technology into writing classrooms, technological devices have helped the application of collaborative writing, such as the use of Wikis (Zheng et al., 2015), web-based collaboration (Wang, 2019), and other online collaborative writing activities (Such, 2019). Then these technology-assisted collaborative writing activities have been proven to improve the students' writing skills, particularly in grammar accuracy, syntactic structure, and material comprehension (Manegre & Gutiérrez-Colón, 2020). As revealed in this current research, students stated that technology brought flexibility and broad access. The technology-assisted collaborative writing project is possible and affordable for some of them. Helped by several technological tools, such as video conference applications, search engines, digital document readers, and messenger applications, various scaffolding patterns (i.e., peer, individual, and multidirectional) may occur between students and the tools during virtual writing activity and text development. Different from Hsieh (2017) who noted that using online resources as technological tools plays a role of scaffolding to support the group members' mutual assistance and interaction, in this current research, the technological tools can be both scaffolding and mediation of scaffolding that allow collective scaffolding among members to occur during the virtual discussion. On the other hand, a few students stated that they faced constraints related to the time

management and internet connection. Unsurprisingly, the similar finding of online learning restrictions has also been widely found in numerous ELT studies in Indonesia during the COVID19 pandemic, such as challenging during ERT and technology preferences of university students (Amin & Sundari 2020; Rahiem 2020; Sujarwo et al., 2020), ERT problems from students, teachers, and parents (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020), and education readiness (Churiyah et al., 2020).

Concerning the students' responses to the collaborative writing activity, more than half of the students in this present study perceived favoritism toward collaborative writing since they experienced excitement and enthusiasm in the writing activity. They were also aware of the improvement of their L2, as also found in the study by Mulligan and Garofalo (2011), Mirzaei and Eslami (2015), Alwaleedi et al. (2019), and Manegre and Gutiérrez-Colón (2020). However, the students who expressed disagreement on the advantages of virtual collaborative writing were noteworthy since the number was seemingly significant. They revealed unexpected situations in the virtual collaborative writing activity that led to ineffective teamwork. Furthermore, one of the groups demonstrated the group dynamics at the initial writing stage in which they had high motivation and excitement to collaboratively involve in the text development. However, the situation turned into disappointment and decreased motivation in the following stages. This writing group activity may not benefit their writing motivation and L2 writing improvement. Additionally, the main features of collective scaffolding, including mutual support and equal contribution, may not occur in this group. A similar view is also suggested by Li and Zhu (2013). In virtual collaborative groups, not all students worked collaboratively on the assigned writing tasks, nor did they feel positive attitudes toward this learning experience. The diversity of group members' backgrounds and English proficiency may lead to tension, conflict, and disappointment. Compared to other writing groups in this present research, this type of group may take a longer time in group development to step forward from the early forming group to the transition stage and performing stage. At the stages of group formation and transition, it requires a sufficient foundation of trust and good communication skills among group members to avoid conflicts (Dornyei & Murphey, 2009). In summary, the overall experiences and interactions among group members in the text development activity might influence the students' perception of learning experiences, writing development, and second language learning in general. As a final remark, Such (2019, p. 8) reported that "collaboration was difficult, even impossible if one to two participants in the group did not participate".

6. CONCLUSION

This present research explored the extent to which the collective scaffolding provided in virtual collaborative writing activities helped EFL students complete a writing task and how they responded to this learning activity. The EFL students responded positively to collaborative writing as they engaged in the virtual writing course. The findings revealed that collaborative writing provided collective scaffolding as it allowed the joint construction of the text among group members, L2 improvement, mutual support, and equal contribution through deliberations and teamwork. Despite its collaborative support within collaborative writing, teacher assistance and monitoring cannot be neglected, particularly to maintain the writing

process that works well. Additionally, collaborative writing also developed social and communication skills by respecting other members. Furthermore, many EFL students found collaborative writing an engaging activity, and technology-assisted collaborative writing seems possible and affordable. Meanwhile, a few of them considered collaborative writing ineffective as they experienced constraints, such as time management, internet connection, and unexpected group dynamics. Several groups succeeded in achieving the task and social dimensions; meanwhile, others took more time in group development and text productivity.

These findings may suggest the EFL virtual writing instruction with a collaborative writing project. Writing teachers need to take some consideration in forming a group and in designing a targeted writing task. Although students are assigned to complete the task together and scaffold one another, the presence of the teacher is highly crucial at any stage of writing development, especially to provide feedback and direction. Moreover, the current research has limitations in terms of the teaching context and the number of participants as the investigation was conducted in one classroom during an emergency online/virtual writing course. To generalize the findings, further research should be conducted, particularly research in other EFL writing contexts with specific technological tools/devices. Furthermore, as the writing product of L2 articles was not explored, it is recommended that future researchers examine the articles, particularly in terms of L2 writing development across levels.

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Students' Perspectives on the 4/3/2 Technique and Self-Assessment to Improve English Speaking Fluency

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Abstract

Understanding students' perspectives and differentiating classroom practices based on student needs are considered effective educators' primary purposes in improving the foreign language learning process. How teachers conduct and teach their classes significantly affects how students cope with their learning. For this reason, this phenomenological study aimed to identify the perspectives among 12 Ecuadorian ninth graders on the 4/3/2 technique and self-assessment used to improve their English-speaking fluency during a five-week class. The data were collected through interviews and visual narratives and analyzed using grounded theory. The results of the study show that the 4/3/2 technique presented three categories (I learned because I repeated; I increased my speaking speed and decreased word repetitions; I got nervous when I had to speak faster). Self-assessment presented two categories (I learned from my mistakes; We were aware of our progress, which motivated us). Thus, this study has shown the importance of identifying students' perspectives on the two learning strategies used in class. By doing this, teachers can select the appropriate technique for that specific learning context based on the students' perceptions and foreign language theories. Further research is still necessary for the Ecuadorian context to explore how students' perspective on the teachers' learning methodologies affect them, especially their emotions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Understanding students' perspectives and differentiating classroom practices based on student needs are considered effective educators' primary purposes in improving foreign language learning (Fisette, 2010). How teachers conduct and teach their classes significantly affects how students cope with their learning (Thijssen et al., 2022; Trigwell et al., 1999). Therefore, teachers should be aware of identifying their students' perspectives regarding the methodologies used in class to provide satisfactory results. By doing so, teachers can improve and (re)adapt the learning context in favor of the learners (Cook-Sather, 2003). However, it is essential to highlight that students need to be qualified to evaluate teaching methodology. Therefore, teachers must filter this information and do what is better for their students based on the second language teaching literature and theories.

Multiple scholars have concluded that learning is continuous (Chanani & Wibowo, 2019), and learning is acquired through practice and experiences (Alarcão, 2002). This constant process depends on teachers searching for methodologies to improve students' learning by implementing new classroom strategies. However, one of the main challenges for educators is finding suitable techniques to help students progress in their learning and feel comfortable in class. Sometimes, what works well for one student may not work for others; consequently, the techniques can influence, for instance, students' emotions (Méndez-López & Bautista-Tun, 2017).

Researching students' perspectives is essential because their attitudes toward the environment and interpretations based on their conceptions can influence their learning and behavior in class (Gardner & Lalonde, 1985; Sjöblom & Svens, 2019). A wealth of research has examined student perspectives in the different contexts of education (Beusaert et al., 2013; Elen & Lowyck, 1999; Reece, 2013; Spencer & Schmelkin, 2002). However, while the previous studies focus on a more generalized idea of the education process, we wanted to delve into a group of twelve Ecuadorian students' perceptions regarding using the 4/3/2 technique and self-assessment to improve their speaking fluency.

For this reason, this current study aims to identify the students' perspectives on two learning strategies (the 4/3/2 technique and self-assessment) used in a unit to improve their speaking fluency, exclusively to give insight into the perceptions between (dis)satisfaction and learning. The research question that guided this study was: What are students' perspectives about the 4/3/2 technique and self-assessment to improve English speaking fluency based on their experience? This current study differs from previous studies in two aspects: First, this study extends previous research, which only examined the 4/3/2 technique and self-assessment in English-speaking contexts, not those in the global south; second, this research applies visual narratives as a data collection instrument, which is still not commonly used in this type of research. Semiotic resources may help participants portray their feelings, emotions, and beliefs (Kalaja et al., 2008).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, we first examine foreign language speaking fluency. Then, the two strategies (4/3/2 technique and self-assessment) are presented and defined, followed by a brief discussion of the students' perspectives on learning English as a foreign language.

2.1 Foreign Language Speaking Fluency

Second language researchers have long maintained that speaking is one of the most important skills (Juhana, 2012; Santos et al., 2020). For example, according to Ur (1991) and Santos et al. (2020), learners measure their success when they can keep a fluent dialog in the target language. Nazara (2011) and Desmaliza and Septiani (2017) uncovered that students believe that speaking is the most significant skill and the one that needs to be developed first. This happens because students misunderstand language acquisition and learning (Krashen, 2013). According to the comprehensive hypothesis, to acquire a language, be it a first or second/foreign language, we need input, so the first skill to be developed is listening (Krashen, 2013). Consequently, it can be considered the most important.

Speaking is “the process of building and sharing meaning through verbal and nonverbal symbols, in various contexts” (Chaney & Burk, 1998, p. 13). Tuğrul (2012, p. 1), on the other hand, described speaking as “being capable of speech, expressing or exchanging thoughts through using language.” Thus, a speaker must try to be as concise and explicit as possible when having a conversation. However, an excellent speaking fluency level in the target language takes time and practice, and sometimes, it is influenced by emotions (Santos et al., 2020), lack of motivation (Kowalski et al., 2022; Reece & Walker, 1997), and excessive use of the mother tongue (Carrió-Pastor & Vallés, 2015; Kansakar, 1998).

Improving this skill involves several factors, including cognitive, discursive, and pragmatic (Arcara & Bambini, 2016; Burns, 1998; Widdowson, 1998). Speaking in its dialogical form is interactive, which involves knowing how to take turns (McDonough & Mackey, 2000). It happens in real-time, usually with no space for planning, resulting in unplanned and spontaneous responses (Foster et al., 2000). Nevertheless, emotional factors such as fear and shyness hinder learners from improving this fluency (Santos & Barcelos, 2018; Santos et al., 2020). Brown (2001) classified spoken language into two types: (a) monologue, when the speaker is giving a lecture and is not interrupted, and (b) dialogue, when there is an exchange of information among people, and they use the take-turning process.

Fluency is a feature that comes from speaking. It is related to speech rate, number of filled and unfilled pauses, number of errors, number of repetitions, and formulaic language use (Bøhn, 2015; Gut, 2009). Hedge (2000, p. 54) said that “the term fluency relates to the production, and it is normally reserved for speech. It is the ability to link units of speech together with facility and without strain, inappropriate slowness, or undue hesitation.”

2.2 The 4/3/2 Technique

Maurice (1983) created the 4/3/2 technique to help students improve their foreign language speaking fluency. This technique asks students to say three times the same speech without interruptions at different lengths. The first time in four minutes, the second in three minutes, and the third in two minutes. Therefore, the time can be adapted for each learning context according to English proficiency. Since its establishment, this technique has helped many students to improve their EFL speaking skills.

According to Zhou (2006), students who used the 4/3/2 technique regularly produced 20% more concrete utterances than those who did not. de Jong and Perfetti (2011) and Boers (2014) extended this work and observed that repeating the same information on different occasions makes vocabulary easily recoverable for future use. Consequently, to help learners improve their English-speaking fluency, they are encouraged not to worry about making mistakes. Some studies (Asri & Muhtar, 2013; Molina & Briesmaster, 2017; Yufrizal, 2018) applied this technique to improve students speaking fluency and help students with their speaking learning problems.

For example, Molina and Briesmaster (2017) worked for ten weeks with Chilean students. In the end, they concluded that their students improved their speaking fluency. In the same vein of positive results, Yufrizal (2018), who worked with Indonesian students, confirmed the improvement in students' fluency. Santos and Ramírez-Ávila (2022) also demonstrated that this technique helped 12 students in improving their speaking fluency. All of them have found important learning features in the second language field.

2.3 Self-Assessment

Assessment is a vital element of the teaching and learning process (Angelo & Cross, 1993; Wu et al., 2021). It can improve the teachers' practices and students' learning (Moqbel, 2018) and provide teachers and students with feedback. Several practitioners have instituted multiple types of assessment, including self-assessment, which Andrade and Du (2007) define as a process of formative assessment during which students reflect on and evaluate the quality of their work and their learning, judge the degree to which they reflect explicitly stated goals or criteria, identify strengths and weaknesses in their work, and revise accordingly.

Working with self-assessment in class provides students with responsibility and makes them active learners (Boud, 1995; Yang et al., 2022) since they have to reflect on their learning process and improve when necessary. Some studies have explored speaking self-assessment and fluency (Moqbel, 2018; Phan & Phuong, 2017). For example, Alibakhshi and Sarani (2014) worked with 60 Iranian students of English as a foreign language (EFL) in a language institute. They used self-assessment to improve their speaking fluency and accuracy. They found positive results and realized that students became more critical in their learning by the end of the study. So, using the self-assessment benefits the student in acquiring a foreign language.

2.4 Students' Perspectives on Learning

Knowledge is constructed through active learning experiences (Anthony, 1996; Lombardi et al., 2021). Therefore, the instructor's techniques play an essential role in students' learning (Konopka et al., 2015). Furthermore, teachers' techniques in class can positively or negatively affect students' learning (Beausaert et al., 2013). Along these lines, "exploring students' perspectives on the learning environment could offer insight and feedback about what is really going on in the environment" (Könings, 2007, p. 82).

In the last two decades, understanding students' perception of the techniques used in class has been a growing concern (Brown, 2009; Finefter-Rosenbluh et al., 2021), mainly for two reasons. First, understanding what is happening in class regarding the learning process is not predictable (Pointon & Kershner, 2000). Teachers need to ask and research what happens in this context bearing in mind that classrooms are diverse, that teaching should be student-centered, and that students' learning needs should be covered. All this requires a personalized approach based on students' learning behaviors. Second, understanding what happens benefits the learner and is valuable for teachers and other stakeholders. Cook-Sather (2003, p. 23) mentioned that "listening to students and sharing their perspectives could help teachers and designers to rethink learning processes and the design of learning environments" and will improve "the effectiveness of the learning" (Könings, 2007, p. 11).

Although a careful literature review would reveal several studies on the topic of students' perspectives on the learning process, for this study, we focused on representative research to help us gain an overview of the main approaches in different contexts, particularly in the EFL area. Table 1 presents a summary of these studies.

Table 1. Studies landscape on students' foreign language learning perspectives.

Author(s)	Year	Participants	Perspectives on	Data collection	Context
Spencer & Schmelkin	2002	University students	University students	Questionnaire	USA
Vodopija-Krstanoviæ & Brala-Vukanoviæ	2012	University students	University students	Questionnaire	Croatia
Bloemert et al.	2017	Secondary school students	Secondary school students	Questionnaire	The Netherlands
Ramírez-Lizcano & Cabrera-Tovar	2020	Secondary school students	Secondary school students	Questionnaire and focus group	Colombia

Table 1 shows that most studies implemented questionnaires to collect data and a few interviews. They were conducted in some parts of the world, but no studies have been conducted in South America, specifically in Ecuador. Regarding the two techniques, we did not find studies in Ecuador about students' perspectives using the two strategies: 4/3/2 and self-assessment. For this reason, the significance of this study is justified due to the lack of literature in the Ecuadorian context and the benefits of understanding students' perspectives regarding the techniques used in class to select the appropriate one according to the context.

3. METHODS

This phenomenological study applied a qualitative method to illustrate and identify the students' perspectives on the two strategies used in a unit to improve their speaking fluency. [Creswell \(2007\)](#) suggested that this type of study aligned with qualitative methods is best indicated when the research seeks to comprehend participants' perspectives on their natural background based on their experiences.

3.1 Unit

This unit aimed to teach twelve students with A2 level, according to the Common European Framework of Reference, how to express their opinions about movies or TV series through movie reviews. The lesson plan for each class was done in light of the principles of communicative language teaching because its primary goal was to improve speaking fluency. It followed the backward design template proposed by [Wiggins and McTighe \(2005\)](#). All the topics were focused on real-time situations, and the students were the principal agent of the learning. This unit lasted five weeks, a total of 30 hours of class.

Students learned in each class the aspects that compose the movie review genre. This content was taught through games, role plays, group activities, and discussions in class. On the first day of the unit, the teacher explained to students the whole process, such as the goal, the activities that would be done during the 30 classes, and, most important, explained through videos and practices about the 4/3/2 and self-assessment. Each student performed in each class both strategies during the 30 days. Sometimes they did it alone, in pairs, or in groups. The teacher gave feedback to everyone. In order to increase the reliability of the self-assessment, students used a speaking rubric, and, in the end, the learners shared their responses with the whole class.

Students were required to record one video at the beginning and one at the end of the pedagogical innovation, which was used as a pre and post-test, to check if both techniques helped improve their speaking fluency. The results, which were found through statistical tests, demonstrated that the participants had a significant difference between the pre-and post-test, which means that they improved their speaking fluency.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

This section elaborates on the instruments implemented to carry out this research. The first part includes information related to the interview. The second part reports information about the visual narrative.

3.2.1 Interview

According to [Galletta \(2013\)](#), semi-structured interviews are a series of open-ended questions that allow the researcher to enrich the data. This study used this type of data collection because semi-structured interviews are appropriate for identifying students' perceptions and experiences.

The semi-structured interview used in this study was planned according to this research's goals and research question. Each session of 10-15 minutes was conducted with each participant. They were video recorded using the Zoom platform under the

parents' authorization. This interview was conducted in Spanish because of the participants' low level of English. Later it was transcribed and analyzed. Analyzing the interview was based on Holliday (2005) and grounded theory (Glaser, 1998, 2005). First, the interviews were read to get a general idea of the participants' answers. Later, the researchers sought the students' perspectives regarding the two strategies, and these perspectives were grouped according to their similarities. Intending to create reliability in the analysis, a Ph.D. student did the same process of coding the data. Afterward, the researcher and the Ph.D. student shared the results found.

3.2.2 Visual narrative

The visual narrative is an instrument of data collection that includes drawings, photographs, or collages. This instrument has been used in the applied linguistics field due to its advantages in adding a personal dimension to the data (Kalaja et al., 2008; Menezes, 2008). According to Kalaja et al. (2008), this tool allows the participants to express themselves using different modes. For example, Santos et al. (2020) used a visual narrative to check students' emotions while speaking English in an Ecuadorian context. They concluded that this instrument helped students portray their emotions during class.

For this study, the participants were required to draw themselves using the 4/3/2 technique and self-assessment. Each visual narrative comes with a short description written by the participants. The analyses were carried out according to Pitkänen-Huhta and Pietikäinen's (2016) perspectives. First, the visual narratives were analyzed to describe their visual products; everything was analyzed as a complete whole. Then, some attention was put to the key elements, and connections were brought from the interviews to complement the analysis. Afterward, it was possible to identify similarities and divergences across the data sets. Finally, the authors tried to connect the verbal and nonverbal elements.

3.3 Setting and Participants

The participants were 12 ninth graders (junior secondary) chosen through convenience sampling since it is where the first researcher used to work. The eight girls and four boys belong to a private school in Ecuador. Their ages range from 12 to 13 years old. They have an A2 level of English, according to the CEFR. All participants had their first contact with English in primary school and started learning in this context. They all considered it essential to have good speaking fluency and pursue diverse opinions about the importance of learning English, such as a love for the language and life opportunities. However, they admitted some difficulties in learning English, mainly related to speaking skills. Table 2 presents a summary of the participants' social-demographic information. Each participant chose a pseudonym according to the ethical procedures to keep their anonymity.

This study was carried out under the procedures of ethical considerations (Munhall, 1988; Tolich & Iphofen, 2019). Permission was asked of the school's principal; consent letters were sent to the parents, and they all signed a consent letter. As the classes were conducted in the afternoon, out of class time, the authors made sure to have only voluntary participation (Hogan, 2008). Finally, the participants' privacy and anonymity were protected through pseudonyms.

The participants' profile of this study is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Participants' profile.

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Perceived importance of English	Difficulties in English	The importance of having good speaking skills
VT	F	13	Life opportunities	Pronunciation	Very important
DM	F	13	To help in future jobs	Speaking	Very important
AR	F	12	Love for the language	Pronunciation	Very Important
FI	F	13	Travel and meet new people	Speaking	Very important
MO	F	13	Job and opportunities in life	Speaking	Very important
PA	F	13	Love for the language	Speaking	Very important
GL	F	12	Love for the language	Speaking	Very important
AL	F	13	Love for the language	Speaking	Very important
KE	M	12	Importance of the language	Pronunciation	Important
NA	M	13	Opportunities in life	Speaking	Very important
SM	M	12	Travel and meet new people	Pronunciation	Important
AW	M	13	Opportunities in life	Speaking	Very important

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study sought to explore students' perspectives regarding the two strategies used to improve their speaking fluency. The outcomes demonstrated that the participants perceived the 4/3/2 technique and self-assessment as favorable to their learning. The results found in the data collection instruments (interview and visual narrative) were grouped into thematic categories.

After the analysis of the 4/3/2 technique, three themes were uncovered: (a) I learned because I repeated, (b) I was able to increase speaking speed and decrease word repetitions, and (c) I got nervous when I had to speak faster. On the other hand, two themes were uncovered in self-assessment: (a) I was learning from my mistakes, and (b) we saw our learning, which motivates us.

4.1 Students' Perception of the 4/3/2 Technique

Students reported in the interview that using the 4/3/2 technique helped them improve their learning differently. They said repeating the same speech at different times helped them to practice and raised their confidence about what to say. Two students stated that they increased their speaking speed and one said she decreased her word repetitions. However, one student presented a different perspective on using this technique. She revealed that when she had to speak faster, she became more nervous. Next, we present the three categories found in the data collection.

4.1.1 'I learned because I repeated'

In the interview, the participants reported the significance of repetitions for learning. They pointed out many advantages to students of using the 4/3/2 technique. For example, PA said:

- (1) "When it was my turn to do 4/3/2 and repeat my speech, I learned more because I memorized some words each time I repeated". (PA)

Delivering the same speech at different times helped her get to know the words and do it better next time (Zhou, 2006).

Another aspect was the importance of repetition to improve speed. Students started to be comfortable with what they would say, which helped them increase their speaking speed. AL declared:

- (2) "I am practicing more so that when I have to speak in English again, I can do it faster because I have already practiced it". (AL)

This thought can also be confirmed in her visual narrative (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. AL's visual narrative.

AL portrayed herself on a typical day of class, with her computer in front of her and some notes she likes to take during classes. In her description, she said:

- (3) "I drew myself after the moment I said the three times of practice correctly. I remembered that I made some pronunciation and grammar mistakes the first time, but I could say it correctly and faster the second and third times. This made me feel thrilled". (AL, visual narrative)

Besides showing that she was happy with her results, this also demonstrates that she was critical about her learning. PA and AL discussed the importance of students practicing and repeating to deliver a good speech. The same opinion was found by Yufrizal (2018) when he used the same technique with his students.

4.1.2 'I was able to increase speaking speed and decrease word repetitions'

All the participants agreed that the 4/3/2 technique is excellent for students who want to improve their speaking fluency. KE said:

- (4) I would rate the 4/3/2 as a 10 out of 10 because it helped me immensely. I increased my speaking speed and decreased word repetitions; for that reason, I recommend it to everyone who wants to improve their speaking fluency. (KE, Interview)

KE and the other participants mentioned that they progressed in some aspects of fluency, like speed and word repetitions. PA, for instance, informed that this technique could decrease the number of repetitions of words: "I have learned not to repeat the same words when I am speaking and to speak fluently" (Interview). AR, on the other hand, stated that she decreased the number of pauses during her speech and that "repeating many times makes you speak faster without many pauses" (Interview)." Both aspects mentioned by the two students—decreasing the number of pauses and repetitions—are related to the definition of fluency given by Gut (2009) and Bøhn (2015).

VT endorsed the idea that she decreased the number of repetitions and the number of pauses. She drew herself while practicing the technique (see Figure 2).

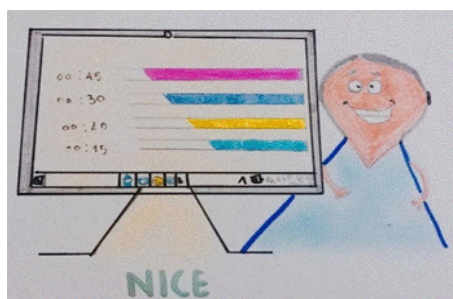


Figure 2. VT's visual narrative.

In Figure 2, VT's face demonstrates happiness. She wrote the word "nice." When asked what the word "nice" represents, she articulated that a feeling of improvement in learning prompted her to use this word. Her drawing description was:

- (5) "This is me when I realized I decreased the number of repetitions and the number of pauses while speaking English after a long-time practicing". (VT, Visual Narrative)

She added that this sensation of doing the right thing made her feel happy and confident about speaking English.

4.1.3 'I got nervous when I had to speak faster'

One participant presented a different perspective regarding the use of this technique. She revealed that she became more nervous when she had to speak faster and consequently became anxious to speak. She said:

- (6) It helped me speak faster. However, on the other hand, it was more complicated because I got nervous when I had to speak faster. I was worse than Eminem, the singer. I tried to speak fast and

without making many pauses because my time was running out. Furthermore, making pauses is something that I always do when I speak in English. (MO, Interview)

MO compared herself to a rapper, which means she spoke faster than usual. She also added that she does not recommend this technique to low-level students:

- (7) “It is useful, but it would not be like a technique that I recommend with such a short time to start”. (MO, Interview)

She confirmed her thoughts in the visual narrative (see Figure 3).



Figure 3. MO's visual narrative.

MO made a sequence of drawings, each representing the time she used the technique. First, in the two-minute time, she portrayed herself as happy, and her smile demonstrates that. Second, her face changed to confusion, and she no longer had the same smile. Finally, with one minute to repeat, she appears with a frustrated and more nervous face. [Asri and Muhtar \(2013\)](#) said their students reported a similar perspective when using this technique. However, their students articulated that they felt bored, and the authors also reported that their students felt this way because this technique did not allow them to interact with anyone. To solve this problem, maybe they could have paired students and asked them to tell the same story three times, and in each part, the listener had to comment on what he/she heard. In the next part, we discuss the students' perspectives concerning self-assessment.

4.2 Students' Perception of Self-Assessment

The participants presented two perspectives regarding doing self-assessment. They demonstrated a high level of criticism of their learning, which shows the importance of this strategy for educational purposes, as maintained by [Boud \(1995\)](#) and [Andrade and Du \(2007\)](#). In the next section, we present the categories encountered in the interviews and supported by the visual narratives.

4.2.1 'I learned from my mistakes'

Making mistakes in language learning sometimes is seen as unfavorable by students. They believe their classmates will mock them. Consequently, this situation generates fear during speaking ([Candido-Ribeiro, 2013](#); [Santos & Barcelos, 2018](#); [Sheokarah & Pillay, 2021](#)). However, when teachers show students the importance of making learning mistakes, they may change their perspectives and see errors as

positive. This process of comprehending the mistakes as part of the learning process happened with AR, who said:

- (8) “I learned from my mistakes”. (AR, Interview)

Two participants stated the significance of self-assessment as a practice that may help students reflect on their mistakes and improve their skills. The first was GL, who said:

- (9) “I always repeated the word ‘AND’ when I was saying, and doing the self-assessment helped identify this situation. So, now, when I speak, I try to search for new words not to say the same ones”. (GL, Interview)

The second was DM, and she said:

- (10) The self-assessment helped me identify what I was and was not good at. I could not fool myself because I knew how I was doing”. (DM, Interview)

This idea was corroborated in the drawing made by PA. She represented herself with a self-assessment checklist by her side (see Figure 4). Each part of the checklist shows a topic she is sure she has learned. Her description was:

- (11) “This is me making the checklist of my learning during the self-assessment.” (PA, Visual Narrative)

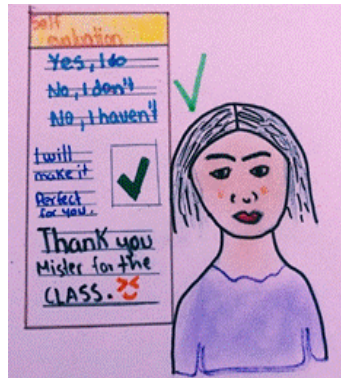


Figure 4. PA's visual narrative.

PA used verbal and non-verbal information to express her felicity in self-assessing. The ticks show that she went through the process correctly step-by-step. Muñoz and Alvarez (2007) emphasized that teachers should make self-assessment a habit to get practical results. Learners who use a pattern to self-assess are likely to have outstanding results.

4.2.2 *'We were aware of our progress, and that motivated us'*

Self-assessment motivated students to keep learning. SM said:

- (12) “The fact that I was able to see that I was improving my fluency motivated me to move on” (SM, Interview).

As happened to SM, the other students saw their improvement at each practice and became happy to visualize that they were actively learning. According to [Paris and Ayres \(1994\)](#), this self-assessing process helps students become more critical about their learning process because they understand their failures and see this as part of a whole process.

AW, in his interview, corroborated the same idea:

- (13) Because we see in what we were wrong, what we have to improve, and what we did well, which motivates us to improve it. (AW, Interview)

During the visual narrative, he portrayed his desire for improvement (see Figure 5).



Figure 5. AW's visual narrative.

AW's drawing shows him at different points in the self-assessment process. In each step, he judged himself and pushed himself to the best until he got the desirable results. This drawing demonstrated that this technique worked positively with students' emotions. Moreover, self-assessment motivated the participants to speak and helped them deal with their negative emotions during the English class. For example, NA stated he is a shy student because he is afraid of making mistakes. When this participant started to analyze his learning progress, saw that he was improving, and realized that his classmates made mistakes, he became more confident and comfortable interacting with his classmates. For example, when prompted to speak in the interview, NA responded:

- (14) "I am one of those who were sometimes ashamed to speak in public. So, it has helped me to talk with my classmates and express myself better." (NA, Interview)

NA felt that way because he was afraid of making mistakes in front of his classmates. This strategy helped him build up his self-esteem. One more time, it has been demonstrated that motivation plays an essential role in students' lives ([Gardner et al., 2004](#)). [Baber \(2020, p. 287\)](#) declared that "the learning environment also influences human motivation." Thus, the importance of searching techniques is that it supports students in developing this intrinsic motivation because when students are motivated to learn, they tend to feel comfortable and enjoy the learning process, which positively influences how they learn.

5. CONCLUSION

This study shows the importance of identifying students' perspectives on the two learning strategies used in class. By doing this, teachers can select the appropriate technique for a specific learning context based on the students' perceptions and the foreign language theories. If students do not feel comfortable using the teachers' techniques, they might feel demotivated to learn. For this reason, it is crucial that learners' and teachers' learning and teaching styles be converged. All participants improved their speaking fluency. However, one student pointed out that she felt uncomfortable using the 4/3/2 technique because she felt pressured to speak faster. Even though she demonstrated positive results in her learning, her perspective on the 4/3/2 technique differed from the others. The teacher could only know this point of view by giving voice to his students in the learning process.

Students' perspectives on self-assessment showed the importance of this technique for them. They were aware of their learning mistakes, and when the participants realized they were improving, they became more motivated to learn. Identifying these students' points of view would make it possible to get this valuable information.

The findings of this study show EFL teachers that giving students a more active role in the (re)design process of a learning environment is crucial because it makes the classroom a powerful place to learn. Teachers can conduct interviews or different data collection methods to reach this goal. The results showed that the interview aligned with the visual narrative and complemented each other well to uncover the students' perspectives. The visual narrative helped give students a voice and help them understand what they could not say in words.

This study addresses EFL teachers who want to improve their student's speaking fluency in any language learning context. Two limitations were found during this research: (a) The lack of previous practice of the students in giving their perspectives about the strategies used in the classroom; some students could not construct solid opinions, and maybe some critical information was missed; and (b) the small number of participants in this research: A more significant number of students would provide a broader perspective of experiences. However, it may not be possible to have this richer information if the class was more prominent because the teacher could not give attention to all the students or make each share their points of view. So, to avoid bias in future research regarding the lack of practice, we recommend having a more significant number of classes to give students more time to practice. Finally, further research is still necessary for the Ecuadorian context to explore how students' perspectives on the teachers' learning methodologies affect them, especially their emotions.

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How is HOTS Integrated into the Indonesian High School English Textbook?

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Abstract

This study aims at analyzing the integration of higher-order thinking skills, specifically the level of analysis (C4), the level of evaluation (C5), and the level of creation (C6), in reading comprehension questions found in senior high school textbook 'Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK for Grade 12'. This study employed critical content analysis to analyze and interpret textual material to draw valid inferences. The researchers examined the reading comprehension questions to find out how the integration of HOTS in the questions. Using a checklist table, the researchers collected, listed, and analyzed the questions according to the cognitive domain of the revised Bloom's taxonomy. After examining and determining the cognitive level of each question, the researchers categorized them into two groups, namely higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) and lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) questions. The result showed that the distribution of HOTS-level questions was lower than that of LOTS questions. The data show that the number of HOTS questions got 13 out of 67 questions or 19.4%, while LOTS questions reached 54 out of 67 questions or 80.6%. These results imply that this textbook needed to provide an adequate number of higher-level thinking questions that could enhance students' HOTS. To sum up, HOTS questions were not sufficiently integrated into the reading comprehension questions of the textbook. Thus, it is expected that the findings of this study motivate education stakeholders, including teachers, textbook authors, and publishing houses to make more effort to foster and develop HOTS in textbooks.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Various learning resources can now be used by teachers and students, such as textbooks, e-books, journals, newspapers, websites, YouTube, and magazines. However, a textbook is one of many resources most frequently used in the classroom to support the teaching and learning process (Rahmawati, 2018). It provides features, such as texts, assignments, exercises, and activities to meet the student's needs (Abidasari et al., 2021). As a result, since a textbook is an essential teaching instrument, teachers tend to rely on a textbook for classroom instruction (Poedjiastutie et al., 2018).

According to Richard (2001), most language programs rely heavily on textbooks. They significantly affect education because they give teachers a clear, organized framework when creating lesson plans. Moreover, for teachers and students, a textbook can provide direction during the instructional process (Febrina et al., 2019). Therefore, a textbook is helpful for both teachers and students. For teachers, it can be used for delivering materials and assessing students' understanding through exercises, while for students, it is helpful as a resource to access knowledge.

Furthermore, in the current curriculum implemented in Indonesia, i.e. Curriculum 2013 or K13, textbooks are designed to encourage students to be creative and communicative, to have collaboration skills, and to think clearly and critically (Ministry of National Education and Culture, 2014). A good textbook must provide materials and exercises to help students improve their higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). Since we live in the era of globalization where information in any form can be accessed quickly, HOTS is significant and should be developed by students, so they can critically evaluate the information they encounter daily. As Erdogan (2019, p. 116) stated, "critical thinking empowers students to assess the accuracy or value of the information, analyze and evaluate it critically, make rational decisions, and take purposeful action".

Nonetheless, there are many critics of the use of textbooks in the teaching and learning process. Some critics claim that many textbooks contain too few materials and are not challenging for either teachers or students (Penny, 2009, as cited in Pratiwi, 2014). Consequently, teachers must evaluate the content of textbooks before using them to make sure the materials in the books are appropriate to fulfil the students' needs and achieve the learning objectives set in the curriculum. The learning objectives, as stated by the Ministry of National Education and Culture (2014), are to produce Indonesian citizens who are creative, critical, communicative, collaborative, and innovative through strengthening characters, skills, and cognition.

Some characteristics of a textbook can be analyzed, including its layout, exercises, materials, instructions, and teaching resources (Pratiwi, 2014). One of the exercises that is essential to be investigated is the reading comprehension exercise. Huzairin et al. (2015) argue that students' critical thinking skill has a significant positive correlation with reading comprehension. This argument is inferred in their statement, 'the higher students' critical thinking, the higher they get reading

comprehension ability'. Good English textbooks can help students develop their critical thinking skills through reading comprehension exercises that include HOTS questions. [Febrina et al. \(2019\)](#) state that the development of student's critical thinking skills depends on using an appropriate textbook with HOTS problems.

The higher the cognitive level of questions in a textbook, the more students can improve their HOTS. The findings of some prior studies provide evidence that textbooks are crucial to the advancement of HOTS. Therefore, for this reason, reading comprehension questions should ideally implement HOTS. There are still English textbooks that provide lower-order thinking skill (LOTS) questions, such as Bahasa Inggris for SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Grade 10th. Therefore, the present research was conducted to analyze how HOTS are incorporated into the reading comprehension questions found in an English textbook entitled 'Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Grade 12' using the cognitive level of Bloom's revised taxonomy.

There have been some earlier investigations related to this research. [Fajri \(2015\)](#) has conducted a study analyzing the levels of the reading comprehension questions in the textbook 'Bahasa Inggris: English for Senior High School Grade X'. In addition, [Fitrawati et al. \(2019\)](#) have also investigated the reading comprehension questions of HOTS in English textbooks for a senior high school in Padang. However, both studies investigated previous editions of the textbooks. In the present study, the researchers analyzed the latest edition published in 2018. The researchers believe that this investigation was necessary as a form of constructive criticism even though the topic under investigation was not sufficiently current because the book is included in a required reading list for senior high school students in Indonesia and was published by the Ministry of Education and Culture with government approval to meet the objectives of the Curriculum 2013.

Referring to the problem above, the research question of this study is: How is the integration of higher order thinking skill (HOTS) of revised Bloom's taxonomy integrated into the reading comprehension questions of the textbook entitled 'Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK for Grade 12'? The findings of the present study on the latest version of the book can be used to improve the next version of the textbook. The present study would also enrich the current body of literature on HOTS, and further action in engaging with the issue of the development of HOTS is expected to be initiated.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Higher-Order Thinking Skills

Higher Order Thinking Skill (HOTS) is a high-level thinking process in which students can investigate and seek information utilizing the facts at their disposal efficiently and appropriately to identify the structure and its links to solve problems. [Yeung \(2016\)](#) claims that HOTS is a confusing concept that can be defined as using critical and creative thinking to help a person handle challenging problems. Likewise, according to [Thomas and Thorne \(2009\)](#), HOTS are abilities that require students to be able to analyze, classify, manipulate, and come up with novel solutions to issues rather than memorize information and apply it.

[Brookhart \(2010\)](#) defined HOTS in three different categories as follows:

- The definition of HOTS in terms of ‘transfer’ is the students’ thinking ability to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned to new contexts. Teachers train students in a meaningful learning process to think on their own in a real-world situation without depending on the teachers to give them instructions.
- The definition of HOTS in terms of ‘critical thinking’ is the students’ thinking skills in applying wise conclusions or constructing reasoned critique. The role of teachers is to equip students to reason, reflect, and make decisions independently without prodding from teachers or assignments.
- The definition of HOTS in terms of ‘problem solving’ is the students’ thinking skills to find out or come up with solutions when they encounter problems. The teaching goal is to facilitate students to have the skills to identify and solve problems both in their academic fields and daily life.

Based on the definitions, HOTS help to train students’ thinking skills and develop the higher-level ability to analyze facts and opinion, evaluate them, and find a solution to a problem.

2.2 Textbook

A textbook is a valuable source of instructional materials for teaching and learning. [Richard \(2001, p. 1\)](#) mentioned that ‘textbook provides the basic content of the lessons, the balance of skill taught, and kinds of language practice that students take part in’. According to [Tomlinson \(2012\)](#), a textbook is a resource that includes both exercises and resources for teaching and learning. Furthermore, it helps teachers provide teaching materials that motivate students and can be a basis for developing a teaching method when used in the long term.

The Indonesian government should create a clear policy governing the publication of textbooks for students due to its essential role in teaching and learning. A good and well-organized textbook can give balanced materials which are helpful in improving students’ knowledge and understanding. Ministry of National Education Regulation No. 2 of 2008 defines textbook in the following statement.

Buku teks pelajaran pendidikan dasar, menengah, dan perguruan tinggi yang selanjutnya disebut buku teks adalah buku acuan wajib untuk digunakan di satuan pendidikan dasar dan menengah atau perguruan tinggi yang memuat materi pembelajaran dalam rangka peningkatan keimanan, ketakwaan, akhlak mulia, dan kepribadian, penguasaan ilmu pengetahuan dan teknologi, peningkatan kepekaan dan kemampuan estetis, peningkatan kemampuan kinestetis dan kesehatan yang disusun berdasarkan standar nasional pendidikan (Permendiknas No. 2 Tahun 2008). [The textbook of primary, secondary, and university education, which would later be called as textbook is a compulsory reference book to use in primary, secondary, and university courses. It contains the learning materials to improve faith, education, noble character and personality, scientific and technological mastery, aesthetic sensitivity and ability, kinaesthetic and health skills, and it must meet national education standards.] (Ministry of National Education Regulation Number 2 of 2008)

According to [Richards \(2001\)](#), textbooks in language learning have eight advantages, as follows: (1) textbooks contain a systematically-planned and developed

syllabus which helps a teacher prepare materials, (2) textbooks have a standardized instruction which can be used by students in different classes; hence, their understanding of the lessons taught can be tested in the same way, (3) a well-developed textbook maintains quality; hence, the learning goals set by the curriculum can be achieved, (4) textbooks are additional sources of information, workbooks and Audio CDs are frequently included with textbooks, which means that they offer a variety of learning options, (5) textbooks are influential because they free up teachers' time to focus more on instructing students and less on creating materials, exercises, and assessments, (6) textbooks can offer precise language input and applicable language models, supporting instructors whose first language is not English, (7) textbooks contain clear instructions that enable teachers who have limited teaching experience to explain material to students well and make varied classroom activities, and (8) commercial textbooks typically adhere to strict production and design standards; therefore, both students and teachers find them appealing. Hence, from the explanation above, textbooks are essential resources for teachers as they facilitate the preparation of learning materials and for students as they offer organized materials and exercises that improve their knowledge.

2.3 Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (RBT)

Bloom's Taxonomy was developed in 1956 by American educational psychologist Dr. Benjamin Samuel Bloom. The taxonomy is a graded system for classifying thinking abilities from a lower to a higher degree of thinking (Duc, 2010). It is a hierarchical classification that differentiates the levels of human cognition. The taxonomy was revised by Bloom's former students, Lorin Anderson and David Krathwohl in 2001. Table 1 presents the structure of the knowledge dimension of the revised Bloom's taxonomy.

Table 1. Knowledge dimension of revised Bloom's taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001, p. 44).

No	Knowledge dimension	Explanation
1	Factual knowledge	It is the fundamental skill that students need to understand or use to solve problems. It includes knowledge of language and expertise in specific components, such as vocabulary.
2	Conceptual knowledge	Conceptual knowledge is the relationship between the fundamental components of a more significant structure that allows them to work as a unit. It contains informational classification and categorization systems.
3	Procedural knowledge	It is the knowledge of the thought process, including criteria for applying skills, procedures, and methods of inquiry.
4	Metacognitive knowledge	It is the general knowledge about one's cognition, including cognitive tasks that are contextual and conditional knowledge.

The dimension of the thought process is where Bloom's taxonomy original and revised versions diverge most significantly. The original taxonomy only has one dimension, which is divided into six categories: 'knowledge', 'comprehension', 'application', 'analysis', 'synthesis', and 'evaluation'. On the other hand, the updated Bloom's taxonomy contains two dimensions: the knowledge dimension and the cognitive process dimension. Factual, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive knowledge make up the knowledge dimension. The cognitive process dimension

consists of six cognitive levels, namely ‘remember’, ‘understand’, ‘apply’, ‘analyze’, ‘evaluate’, and ‘create’.

The six categories of the revised Bloom’s taxonomy cognitive domain are divided into lower and higher levels of thinking by [Anderson and Krathwohl \(2001\)](#). The lower level of the thinking process is called low-order thinking skills (LOTS). LOTS level consists of three cognitive levels, namely ‘remember’ (C1), ‘understand’ (C2), and ‘apply’ (C3). The higher level is called higher order thinking skill (HOTS) which consists of three higher cognitive levels, namely ‘analyze’ (C4), ‘evaluate’ (C5), and ‘create’ (C6). At the HOTS level, the thinking process involves critical, logical, reflective, metacognitive, and creative thinking. The order of the six categories of cognitive process in the original version changes, as shown in Figure 1.

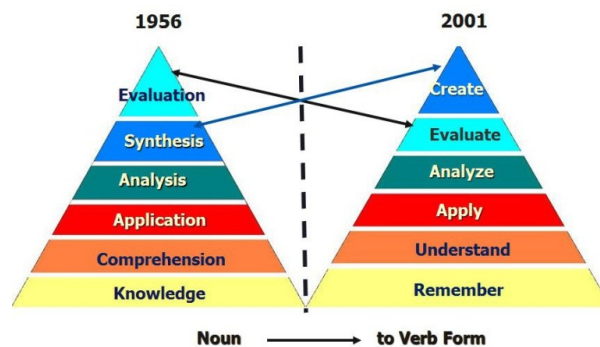


Figure 1. The cognitive domain of Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy ([Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001, p. 268](#))

The six cognitive process dimensions of the revised Bloom’s taxonomy are explained below.

- Remember: ‘Remember’ is the lowest cognitive domain of the revised Bloom’s taxonomy that refers to retrieving relevant knowledge from long-term memory. In other words, it is the ability to recall definitions, facts, or lists, or to recite previously learned information. According to [Anderson and Krathwohl \(2001\)](#), the thinking process of remembering is divided into two categories, namely recognizing and recalling. Recognizing is the process of identifying the information in the long-term memory consistent with the presented material while recalling is the process of retrieving relevant information from the long-term memory.
- Understand: ‘Understand’ refers to creating meanings from various functions, including interpreting, exemplifying, categorizing, summarizing, inferring, contrasting, and explaining. These tasks can be performed with textual or graphic information.
- Apply: Applying something is carrying out, employing, performing, or implementing a procedure. It is a situation where knowledge is used through products like models, presentations, interviews, or simulations.
- Analyze: ‘Analyze’ is to divide something into its components and ascertain how those parts connect to a larger framework or goal. Differentiating, arranging, assigning, and being able to discriminate between the components or parts are mental processes that are a part of this function.
- Evaluate: ‘Evaluate’ refers to the capacity to form opinions based on predetermined standards and criteria through assessment and checking. Students must be able to

assess the reliability of the information they receive and avoid bias to make sensible decisions.

- **Create:** To ‘create,’ a person must have the mental capacity to arrange various components into a new pattern or structure through generating, planning, and producing. Students are expected to be able to come up with answers to problems and invent new things at this level.

Furthermore, each cognitive level has action verbs as keywords, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. A guide for the levels of cognitive based on revised Bloom’s taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001, pp. 66-68).

Cognitive domain	Definition	Keywords
Remember	To exhibit memory of the previously-learned materials by recalling facts, terms, basic concepts, and answers.	Choose, define, find, how, label, list, match, name, omit, recall, relate, select, show, spell, tell, what, when, where, which, who, why.
Understand	To demonstrate understanding of facts and ideas by organizing, comparing, translating, interpreting, describing, and stating main ideas.	Classify, compare, contrast, demonstrate, explain, extend, illustrate, infer, interpret, outline, relate, rephrase, show, summarize, and translate.
Apply	To solve problems in a new situation by applying the acquired knowledge, facts, techniques, and rules differently.	Apply, build, choose, construct, develop, experiment with, identify, interview, make use of, model, organize, plan, select, solve, utilize.
Analyze	To examine and break down information into parts by identifying motives or causes to make inferences and find evidence to support generalization.	Analyze, assume, categorize, classify, compare, conclusion, construct, discover, dissect, distinguish, divide, examine, function, inference, inspect, list, motive, relationships, simplify, survey, take part in, test for, theme.
Evaluate	To present and defend opinions by making judgments about information, the validity of ideas, or the quality of work based on a set of criteria.	Agree, appraise, assess, award, choose, compare, conclude, criteria, criticize, decide, deduct, defend, determine, disprove, estimate, evaluate, explain, importance, influence, interpret, judge, justify, mark, measure, opinion, perceive, prioritize, prove, rate, recommend, rule on, select, support, value.
Create	To compile information differently by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions.	Adapt, build, change, choose, combine, compile, compose, construct, create, delete, design, develop, discuss, elaborate, estimate, formulate, happen, imagine, improve, invent, make up, maximize, minimize, modify, original, originate, plan, predict, propose, solution, solve, suppose, test, theory.

2.4 Reading Comprehension

Reading is an activity of acquiring knowledge and information by involving a cognitive process in understanding texts from printed or non-printed media. According to [Urquhart and Weir \(2013\)](#), reading is acquiring and decoding written information in a language. It is one type of communication between a reader and writer, and in this

case the reader attempts to comprehend the idea conveyed by the writer in a text. The readers attempt to relate what they read to what they already know as they acquire information and knowledge (prior knowledge) (Spratt et al., 2005). Additionally, Grabe (2001) stated that reading is the process of understanding what a writer intends to convey in writing. The readers' cognitive processes are involved while reading because they attempt to understand and learn from what they read.

On the other hand, comprehension is the capacity to break down words into their broad main ideas and then combine them to create a new understanding. It is accomplished when a reader successfully draws out relevant information from a text and puts it together into their own understanding (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). Therefore, Mayer (2003) concluded that reading comprehension is a strategy to help learners be more successful in extracting knowledge from texts. By connecting what individuals read and their prior knowledge, meaning interpretation and text comprehension can be accomplished. In addition, Febrina et al. (2019) stated that reading comprehension is the process of fully understanding the meaning of a text. Reading comprehension is also an active process in which a reader uses prior knowledge to comprehend the text and create meaning.

2.5 Reading Comprehension Questions

Comprehension questions are used to measure how much a text is understood. Also, students can develop comprehension and infer meanings from a text by answering reading comprehension questions, which raises their cognitive level. According to Muayanah (2014), reading comprehension exercises can help students' cognitive levels improve during the reading comprehension process.

Moreover, according to Day and Park (2005), there are five categories of reading comprehension questions: yes-or-no questions, alternative questions, true-or-false questions, WH-questions, and multiple-choice questions. First, a yes/no question is a common form of comprehension question that can be answered by either yes or no, such as the question 'Is Mario a reporter?'. Alternative questions are two or more questions connected by the connecting conjunction 'or'. An example of this question is 'Does the teacher give his students a chance to ask a question or does he simply continue to the next lesson?' Then, a true or false question asks students to choose between true or false options, as in 'The farmer in the text is a diligent and hard-worker person. Is this statement true or false?' After that, WH-questions are questions beginning with 'what, where, who, when, why, and how'. This type of question can improve students' understanding of a text. Finally, multiple choices are comprehension questions that provide three or more choices, but there is only one correct answer. Multiple choices can be based on other types of questions, such as WH questions.

2.6 How Critical Thinking is Designed in Learning Material

The presentation of learning materials in the twenty-first century should be enhanced and integrated with the four Cs: communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. Of the four skills, critical thinking should be given the most emphasis in the classroom, and as a result, it should be effectively included in students' textbooks to develop students' critical thinking. Critical thinking skill is a person's ability to use self-reflective, logical, and reasonable reasoning to collect, interpret, and

evaluate facts to draw a conclusion (University of Sydney, 2014). Additionally, the ability to apply a number of broad cognitive processing skills that fall under high-order thinking levels of analyzing, evaluating, and developing new ideas or things is what Kivunja (2015) characterized as critical thinking. This capacity allows students to think deeply to approach problems that are unfamiliar to them in novel ways.

Therefore, it is crucial to integrate HOTS into educational materials since this will help students in developing their critical thinking skills. Klynhout (2018), as cited in Alghamdi (2022), suggested avoiding using questions with a clear Yes or No response in order to encourage students to use their critical thinking skills, but we can ask 'How do you know..., What tells you..., and Why...' instead. Instead of just giving a one-word response that can be found in a dialogue or book, these questions allow students to show that they have understood the material. Such inquiries, as opposed to those that only encourage simple recollection and reporting, can encourage higher-order thinking skills of analysis and interpretation.

3. METHODS

Using a content analysis approach, the researchers analyzed reading comprehension exercises in the textbook 'Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK for Grade 12' based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy. Content analysis can be used in a descriptive study to make valid inferences from texts (Krippendorff, 2004). It uses a systematic set of procedures to assess the quality of documents, discourses, and books (Wahyuni, 2011).

As a tool for data collection, the researchers used a checklist table proposed by Pratiwi (2014), which is based on the revised Bloom's taxonomy. Then, the researchers gathered and listed all reading comprehension questions preceded by WH-question words from the predetermined textbook. The next step was sorting the questions based on each chapter of the textbook in the columns of the checklist table, followed by examining all the questions collected in the checklist table and categorizing them into HOTS or LOTS questions. Finally, the researchers interpreted the data qualitatively. The percentage distribution of data was calculated using a straightforward procedure suggested by Sudjiono (2005) to determine the percentage of the six cognitive levels of the revised Bloom's taxonomy.

The researchers used an analysis card as a guide while analyzing the reading comprehension questions in the checklist table. After that, the researchers looked at the reading comprehension questions and identified the cognitive level of each question. The researchers then marked the (√) in the checklist table by the cognitive level of the question. After that, all the questions were divided into two groups: HOTS and LOTS. In order to determine if HOTS had been distributed correctly in the reading comprehension question of the textbook, the total number of the distribution of LOTS and HOTS questions were compared.

The main focus of this study was on the distribution of the top three levels of higher-order thinking skills, the cognitive domain covered by the revised Bloom's taxonomy. The C4 level was for analysis, the C5 level was for evaluation, and the C6 level was for creation (C6). The results of the data analysis were then qualitatively analyzed by the researchers to answer the research question.

4. RESULTS

Out of 150 exercises in the textbook ‘Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK for Grade 12’, nine of them were reading comprehension exercises. These exercises included 67 reading comprehension questions that could be found in the first six chapters, i.e. chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10. However, none appears in chapters 1, 2, 3, 8, or 11. This shows that reading comprehension exercises were distributed sparingly in each textbook chapter. The distribution is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Cognitive domain distribution table of reading comprehension questions.

No.	Chapter	Reading comprehension questions	Cognitive domain of Bloom’s Taxonomy						
			Low Order Thinking (LOT)			Higher Order Thinking (HOT)			
			C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	
	4	Task 1							
1		What is the type of the following text?		✓					
2		Why do people write this kind of text?					✓		
3		What is the meaning of the words in italics in the text?		✓					
	4	Task 2							
4		Who wrote the application letter?	✓						
5		What is the purpose of writing the letter?		✓					
6		What position is being advertised?	✓						
7		How did Lilis Handayani know about the vacancy?	✓						
8		What is Lilis’ current position?	✓						
9		What has her current position been provided with?	✓						
10		What other responsibilities does she have at the moment?	✓						
11		How do you know that Lilis is confident about her competence?					✓		
	5	Task 1							
12		What is the source of the text?	✓						
13		What is the text about?		✓					
14		What is the social function of the text?		✓					
15		Why do you think living in an apartment is getting popular?						✓	
16		What are some regulations for living in an apartment?	✓						
17		Who set the regulations?	✓						
	5	Task 2							
18		What is the news about?		✓					
19		Who wrote the news?	✓						
20		When was the news published?	✓						
21		Who was Trisha Prabhu?	✓						
22		Why was she called a ‘tech whiz’?	✓						
23		What did she create?	✓						
24		How does Rethink work?					✓		
25		What prompt appears as a warning?	✓						

Table 3 continued...

26		Did Trisha conduct trials to prove how the software works? What did the result show?	✓						
27		What has inspired Trisha to develop the software?	✓						
28		How does the 'stop, block, and tell' method work?				✓			
29		What did Trisha think about technology and responsibility among teens?	✓						
30	6	What is the main problem faced by the parents?		✓					
31		Why did the parents feel disappointed with the online system?		✓					
32		Who was rejected from school due to his/her height?	✓						
33		What happened to Nuraisyah Paransa's son?	✓						
34		What makes the online system problematic this year?	✓						
35		Why do people prefer public schools to private schools?		✓					
36		What will you do to deal with the problems in the online system if you were one of the parents?							✓
37		What do you think about the acting governor's response to parents' protest?						✓	
38		How would you respond to the parents' concerns if you were the acting governor?							✓
39	7	What was the main agenda of the conference?	✓						
40		What was probably the main reason for holding the conference?		✓					
41		Why was Surabaya selected to be the conference venue?		✓					
42		How important was the conference for Indonesia?						✓	
43		What did Rismaharini believe to be the best municipal management?	✓						
44		What made the mayor very convinced about her waste management?	✓						
45		How did the mayor educate students to live a zero-waste lifestyle?		✓					
46		What do you think about the mayor's concept of municipal management?							✓
	9	Task 1							
47		What is the text talking about?		✓					
48		What is the purpose of the text?		✓					
49		What parts does the text have?	✓						
50		How many materials are needed to make it?	✓						
51		How many steps are there?	✓						
52		What are they?	✓						

Table 3 continued...

53		Why do you think the steps have to be put in order?					✓	
54		What should we do if we want to have male or female leopard geckos?	✓					
	9	Task 2						
55		What is the text discussing about?		✓				
56		What is the purpose of the text?		✓				
57		How many parts does the text have?	✓					
58		How many steps are there? What are they?	✓					
59		Why do you think the steps have to be put in order?					✓	
60	10	How many Photoshop tools are introduced in the text above?	✓					
61		What is the most important element in Photoshop?	✓					
62		Why should you always label your layer?		✓				
63		What can you do with layers?	✓					
64		How can you customize your own color in Photoshop?	✓					
65		What should you do to add text to your photo?	✓					
66		What tool will you use if you want to show only part of your picture?	✓					
67		What further information do you need so that you can really operate Photoshop?					✓	
		Total	37	17	0	4	7	2
			54			13		
		Score	54/67 X 100%= 80.6 %			13/67 X 100%= 19.4%		

Based on Table 3, we can see that only 13 out of 67 questions belong to the HOTS category. The HOTS cognitive level of each question is explained as follows:

- Question 2: Why do you think people write this kind of text?

This question falls into ‘evaluate’ level (C5) because students are asked to give an opinion about why people write that type of reading text. In other words, the question asks students to justify, criticize, or give their own opinion about why they think people write the text. Therefore, the question belongs to the evaluation level (C5). This level is one of the three cognitive levels of thinking included in the HOTS. At this level, students are required to decide the quality of material or ideas based on specific criteria and standards by checking, criticizing, and justifying.

- Question 11: How do you know that Lilis is confident about her competence?

This question refers to the ‘analyze’ level (C4) because students need to analyze Lilis’ characters to know if Lilis is confident about her competence. To rephrase it, the question asks students to identify and differentiate Lilis’ certain characters that show she is confident in her competence.

- Question 15: Why do you think living in an apartment is getting popular?

This question refers to the ‘evaluate’ level (C5) because students are required to give an opinion by criticizing and checking information based on criteria and

standards. The question requires students to consider why living in an apartment is popular.

- Question 24: How does Rethink work?

This question belongs to the ‘analyze’ level (C4) because students are requested to examine specific information from the given text and separate it into parts to make inferences about how Rethink works. In other words, students need to be able to analyze how Rethink works and explain it in their own words.

- Question 28: How does the ‘stop, block, and tell’ method work?

This question is included in the ‘analyze’ level (C4) because students are asked to analyze, identify, and explain the information from the text about how the ‘stop, block, and tell’ method works. They must break down the concept of how the method works into pieces of information to understand its organizational structure.

- Question 36: What will you do to deal with the problems in the online system if you were one of the parents?

This question falls into the ‘create’ level (C6) because it requires students to solve problems in the given text. The question asks students to write down their solutions of how to deal with the problem in the online system if they were one of the parents. The ‘create’ level is the highest level of the thinking process of the six cognitive levels in the revised Bloom’s taxonomy.

- Question 37: What do you think about the acting governor’s response to parents’ protest?

This question is in the ‘evaluate’ level (C5) because students are asked to give their opinion about the quality of ideas based on specific standards. The question requires students to justify and criticize how the governor responds to the parents’ protest.

- Question 38: How would you respond to the parents’ concerns if you were the acting governor?

This question belongs to the ‘create’ level (C6) because it asks students to create or produce an alternative solution to solve the problem being discussed in the given text. The question asks students to determine how they would respond to the parents if they were the acting governor.

- Question 42: How important was the conference for Indonesia?

This question falls into the ‘evaluate’ level (C5) because students are asked to consider a particular problem in the given text through checking and criticizing. The question requires students to justify how important the conference is for Indonesia.

- Question 46: What do you think about the mayor’s concept of municipal management?

This question is at the ‘evaluate’ level (C5) because students are required to give their opinion about a particular problem in the text. They must give their own opinion about how the mayor’ concept of municipal management.

- Question 53: Why do you think the steps have to be put in order?

This question refers to ‘evaluate’ level (C5) because students need to give their opinion about the question related to the given text. They should write their opinion about why the steps must be put in order.

- Question 59: Why do you think the steps have to be put in order?

This question is similar to question 53, which can be categorized into the ‘evaluate’ level (C5) because students are requested to give their opinion. They are required to write their own opinion about why the steps must be put in sequence.

- Question 67: What further information you need so that you can really operate Photoshop?

This question belongs to the ‘analyze’ level (C4) because students have to analyze what further information they have to know if they want to be able to work with Photoshop. The question asks students to divide information into some pieces so that the relationship between one part and another can be understood. They must search for additional information from any sources on how to use Photoshop.

The percentages and frequencies of LOTS and HOTS questions are described in Table 4.

Table 4. Frequencies and percentages of reading comprehension questions.

No.	Cognitive dimension level		Frequencies	Percentage	
1	LOTS	Remember (C1)	37	55.3%	54 (80.6%)
2		Understand (C2)	17	25.4%	
3		Apply (C3)	0	0%	
4	HOTS	Analyze (C4)	4	5.9 %	13 (19.4%)
5		Evaluate (C5)	7	10.5 %	
6		Create (C6)	2	2.9 %	
		Total	67	100%	100%

Table 4 shows that the percentage of questions which fall into the higher-order thinking skill (HOTS) level is lower than the percentage of the questions which belong to the lower-order thinking skill (LOTS) level. The HOTS category only consists of 13 out of 67 questions (19.4%), while the LOTS category has 54 out of 67 questions (80.6%). This result suggests that this textbook contains a low frequency of HOTS questions. There are only four questions (5.9%) at the ‘analyze’ level (C4), seven questions (10.5%) at the ‘evaluate’ level (C5), and two questions (2.9%) at the ‘create’ level (C6).

5. DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of HOTS in the reading comprehension questions in the textbook entitled ‘Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK for Grade 12’, the researchers found that HOTS levels, namely ‘analyze’ level (C4), ‘evaluate’ level (C5), and ‘create’ level (C6), were not sufficiently integrated into the textbook. In other words, LOTS questions were distributed more dominantly than HOTS questions. Unfortunately, the ‘remember’ level (C1), which is the lowest level in LOTS, is the most frequently found in the textbook (37 out of 67 questions or 55.3%). This result indicates that the textbook authors emphasize the student’s ability to recognize and recall information from their long-term memory rather than train them to be critical thinkers. This result contradicted the statement of [Wu and Pei \(2018\)](#) that HOTS-based questions should be ideally used more frequently, especially for developing critical thinking as one of the essential 21st-century skills.

However, this present study was in line with the result of [Fahmi \(2020\)](#) whose research focused on the use of HOTS in reading comprehension questions from the English textbook ‘When English Rings A Bell’ for the 8th grade of junior high school students. He also focused on the distribution of the top three cognitive levels of the revised Bloom’s taxonomy, namely C4, C5, and C6. Using content analysis and

descriptive qualitative methods, he investigated the reading comprehension questions in the textbook. The result of his research showed that there were 69 HOTS questions found in the reading comprehension questions of the textbook. The most dominant HOTS questions belong to C4 level (48 questions), followed by the C5 level (13 questions) and C6 level (8 questions).

Another similar research was conducted by [Damanik and Zainil \(2019\)](#), who found only 9.7% of HOTS questions in the reading comprehension questions in the textbook. The most frequently tested HOTS questions were the ‘analyze’ level (C4). The knowledge found in the questions was factual, conceptual knowledge, procedural knowledge, and metacognitive knowledge. This was similar to the result of the study conducted by [Janah \(2020\)](#), who showed that LOTS dominated the exercises with a percentage of 55.6%, and the ‘remember’ level (C1) had the highest percentage (37.7%).

The findings were also in line with the findings of [Fajri \(2015\)](#). In his study, Fajri investigated the levels of reading comprehension questions in the textbook and focused on analyzing the distribution of each level of the questions using the revised Bloom’s taxonomy. He found that there were only four out of six levels of questions, namely ‘remember’ (C1), ‘understand’ (C2), ‘analyze’ (C4), and ‘evaluate’ (C5). Meanwhile, the textbook did not use two other levels, namely ‘apply’ (C3) and ‘create’ (C6). In fact, the questions that most frequently appeared in the book were categorized as low-order thinking skills (LOTS). Similarly, another study conducted by [Fitrawati et al. \(2019\)](#) found that the textbooks were more inclined toward LOTS questions.

The twelfth-grade students should have been working on improving their HOTS hence they could compete in this 21st century workplace. The globalization era is full of challenges and competition; therefore, students are required to have critical thinking skills and be creative in solving problems. As [Williams \(2015\)](#) stated, HOTS must be taught and included at various points of students’ lessons to encourage them to think broadly and face new challenges.

Furthermore, it is essential to analyze how well higher-order thinking skill (HOTS) questions are integrated into the reading comprehension tasks of senior high school textbooks. As [Pratiwi \(2014\)](#) stated, essay questions could give a broader insight into students’ thinking; hence, they could train their HOTS properly. Additionally, according to [Day and Park \(2005\)](#), WH-questions are more suitable for assisting students in developing a literal grasp of the text, rearranging material in the text, creating an evaluation, and providing a personal response. In addition, WH-questions can promote higher-order thinking skills because these questions will encourage students to think critically about the information they read in the text, gain a deep understanding, find detailed information, and make inferences. Furthermore, according to [Muayanah \(2014\)](#), reading comprehension exercises can facilitate students’ cognitive development. In addition, [Ariyana et al. \(2018\)](#) stated that ensuring students can analyze, evaluate, and create solutions is one of the learning goals of enhancing students’ HOTS.

6. CONCLUSION

It may be inferred from the results of this study that the reading comprehension questions in the textbook ‘Bahasa Inggris SMA/MA/SMK/MAK for Grade 12’ did not

sufficiently integrate higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). Meanwhile, lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) questions are more prevalent than HOTS questions in the reading comprehension questions in the textbook. It means there are not enough HOTS-level questions in the reading comprehension exercises in the textbook. The distribution of HOTS and LOTS questions in the reading comprehension tests differs significantly. The reading comprehension exercises in this textbook continue to favor LOTS questions over HOTS questions. Only 13 out of 67 questions, or 19.4%, were assigned to the HOTS categories, while 54 out of 67 questions, or 80.6%, were assigned to the LOTS categories. The 'create' level (C6) had the lowest distribution of the three HOTS levels, indicating that HOTS were not appropriately integrated into the reading comprehension questions of the textbook.

The researchers would like to present some suggestions related to the topic discussed in this study. First of all, English teachers need to evaluate the materials and tasks of a textbook before using them to teach their students. It is better to check whether the tasks in the textbook have met students' needs in improving their HOTS. Teachers must be more considerate in selecting the appropriate textbook hence students can improve their HOTS. Moreover, the publishers that develop English textbooks to fulfil the goals of the Curriculum 2013 must design a textbook that can improve the ability of senior high school students to a higher level of thinking skills. In order to train students' reading skills, textbook publishers must provide various HOTS questions in reading comprehension exercises; as a result, students will not only comprehend the text they read but also learn to analyze, evaluate information, ideas and values of the reading text, and create a solution.

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The Use of i-THINK Mapping in Teaching Reading Comprehension among ESL Teachers

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Abstract

This study investigated the use of i-THINK Mapping in teaching reading comprehension by ESL teachers to a group of Form Five students, and the factors and challenges the ESL teachers faced in teaching reading comprehension using i-THINK Mapping. A qualitative approach, specifically a case study design, was employed in this study. Classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis of their lesson plans were used to collect the data. Four ESL teachers with a minimum of 5-year teaching experience in a rural secondary school in Hulu Selangor, Malaysia, were selected using a purposive sampling technique to participate in this study. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data obtained from classroom observations and interviews. The findings show that the teachers had applied five i-THINK maps, including a Circle Map to define in context, a Bubble Map to describe, a Double Bubble Map to compare and contrast, a Flow Map to show the sequence of an event, and a Tree Map to classify different ideas. The i-THINK Mapping motivated the students to discuss, brainstorm, and cooperate with their peers to detect the details from the given reading texts. The teachers' challenges include the time constraints in preparing the lesson with i-THINK Mapping and a low level of student English proficiency. One implication of this study is that teachers' use of i-THINK Mapping to teach reading comprehension could assist students in generating ideas, expanding ideas, and expressing them orally.

Keywords: ESL learners, ESL teachers, higher-order thinking skills, i-THINK Mapping, reading comprehension.

1. INTRODUCTION

In Malaysia, many students lack English language proficiency. One way to master a language is through reading, as it is a multifaceted operation that enhances only with practice (Murray, 2016). Reading skill is viewed as essential skill for second language learners; yet, teaching reading comprehension strategy is still unheeded in English language teaching (Azmuddin et al., 2017). The major problems occur when the students are unable to explain what they have read as they do not understand the text (Kiew & Shah, 2020). Students struggle to comprehend the meaning of the text and hardly can infer from the text (Yunus et al., 2016). Hence, the students cannot answer the reading comprehension questions and give relevant answers. Fitrisia et al. (2015) supported this argument by explaining that students fail to construe information obtained from the text, lack critical thinking, and face difficulty in using contextual clues to acquire the gist and meaning from texts.

To sustain student interest in reading comprehension, i-THINK Mapping was chosen by the ESL teachers in this study as they felt students need an opportunity to explore and discover their own learning styles and build their thinking skills at their own pace. I-THINK Mapping strategies allow students to transfer information by using short words, pictures, images, and designs to help them comprehend better and improve memory. Teachers must explore and use appropriate teaching strategies to enhance student reading skills. Reading comprehension is not an inborn skill, and thus it has to be inculcated by teaching specific reading comprehension strategies (Alfassi, 2004). Some of these i-THINK maps, such as Circle Map, Bubble Map, Tree Map, and Flow Map, promote a better understanding of a

reading comprehension text or task. Furthermore, teachers have to consider different student learning styles. They should recognise that each student is gifted with different kinds of intelligence, as Gardner (1983) propounded that i-THINK maps can bring out the best in student learning styles.

Learning a language involves four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Reading is considered one of the most vital skills in mastering a language (Chang et al., 2018). Developing substantial reading skills in students is one of the main aims of every early education programme. Harrison (2013) mentioned in her study that the PISA reading scores suggest that Malaysian students need to compete with other countries by improving their reading skills to become proficient readers. In reading, students need to imply and detect the information from the text so that they can answer the reading comprehension test correctly. Reading comprehension necessitates students to grasp a text exposed by responding to some questions associated with the text (Nurjanah, 2018). Ebrahimi (2012) pointed out that readers not only depend on the feature of the given text, but reading also encompasses the aspects of readers and tasks. Reading instruction must be clear to assist students in their reading process effectively to enable answering the reading comprehension questions, and they must know how to interpret, predict, and make inferences.

Teachers, especially ESL teachers, play important roles in helping students engage with the classroom learning process (Dara, 2019; Gopal & Singh, 2020; Madzlan et al., 2022; Ridhoni et al., 2022). Teachers' roles are to guide and disseminate knowledge, so they should understand students' needs and rethink ways to make teaching more creative in terms of providing and engaging students in cooperative strategies or techniques or instructional activities (Balakrishnan 2022; Nurjanah, 2018; Rusli et al., 2022). Iftanti (2012) mentioned that most EFL students lacked good reading habits at the early stage, although they formally learned English at school. According to Rizqiya (2013), students have a shallow reading comprehension level due to poor reading habits, which is the ultimate consequence of inadequate reading exposure and interest. To cultivate students' reading interests, habits, and comprehension, the teacher must find innovative ways to intensify the students' reading awareness and curiosity at the beginning (Malekzadeh & Bayat, 2015). Teachers should be creative in finding suitable techniques that can lessen boredom where reading is concerned. ESL teachers need to use a variety of techniques to improve student reading. One such technique is i-THINK Mapping as it can stimulate students' thinking skills.

Hassan et al. (2016) mentioned that the ultimate aim of introducing i-THINK is to produce human capital who are critical, creative, innovative, and competitive in the future. This was supported by Anh (2017) and Okafor (2021) who discovered that effective, determined, and vigilant attention in attaining information and knowledge from others is very important to be adopted by teachers to trigger active learning in the classroom. Thus, this study investigates the use of i-THINK Mapping to teach reading comprehension in the classroom. This study was based on the following research questions:

1. What were the i-THINK Mapping strategies used by ESL teachers to teach reading comprehension?
2. What were the factors that influenced the teachers to use i-THINK Mapping to teach reading comprehension?
3. What were the challenges faced by ESL teachers in teaching reading comprehension using i-THINK Mapping?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Justification of This Study

Schema theory (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983) and Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy for educational objectives, known as Bloom's taxonomy (1956) theory for the instructional purpose, were used in this study. Understanding a text requires readers to conceptualise and grasp its meaning by using their existing knowledge (schemata) to construe and decipher the reading texts so that they can create meaning from it. For teaching and learning English in reading comprehension, ESL teachers can infuse and experiment with various approaches or strategies to assist students with different pre-existing schemas and knowledge in escalating the attainment of the students' learning. A classroom has typically thirty to forty students, and sometimes more. The students come with different learning experiences, abilities, interests, attitudes, and socio-economic backgrounds (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2017). Because of students' differences in many aspects, ESL teachers' pedagogical strategies are limited and therefore lead to an effortless determination on how to teach a student one-by-one in teaching reading comprehension. ESL teachers can adopt and experiment with different effective strategies to fulfil student learning needs in a spectrum and provide more activities in the classroom to encourage active student participation. This was supported by Venita et al. (2010) who divulge that supplementary comprehension skills are required and must be introduced to facilitate learners to organise and find meaning from words or a collection of words if the reader is instructed to maximise the meaning of what a paragraph entails of various sentences and choose one main idea to which all the sentences denote. Reading comprehension can function in two directions, from the bottom up to the top and from the top down to the bottom of the hierarchy. These two types of processing occur concurrently, and collaboration or understanding occurs between the bottom-up and top-down processes (Carrell & Eiserhold, 1983).

Bottom-up processing focuses on lower-level skills, such as matching sounds with letters, syllables, and word recognition, where the meaning of the text is constructed based on the reader's prior knowledge of linguistic items, such as vocabulary, grammar, and syntax. On the other hand, top-down processing focuses on higher-level skills, such as the background knowledge a reader uses to understand a written text. Readers habitually activate and apply their knowledge of vocabulary or lexical items, sentential points, and linguistics patterns to interpret the meaning in a text (Rastegar et al., 2017). Bloom's taxonomy was established and created by Benjamin Bloom in 1956 to show the classification of thinking, learning outcomes, and objectives. Most teachers apply Bloom's taxonomy because it provides them with a technique to activate thinking about their instructional practices and students' learning attainment. In Bloom's taxonomy, comprehension is the second classification level assessed through reading comprehension skills.

2.2 i-THINK Mapping

i-THINK Mapping refers to the teaching tools used in teaching reading comprehension to help students understand the passage better and boost their thinking skills (Mahamod et al., 2019). As a result, it will develop the students' higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). Hyerle (2008) proposed eight types of Thinking Map, in which every type has its own function, i.e. circle, bubble, double bubble, tree, brace, flow, multi-flow, and bridge.

2.2.1 Approaches to teaching reading

ESL teachers have a major role in assisting students in activating and developing their reading comprehension skills. At present, however, systematically-based reading instruction programmes are still not practised and emphasised in the classroom by teachers (Koch & Spörer, 2017). Reading strategies including asking questions or summarising are frequently employed and used by teachers to assess reading comprehension, but these strategies are infrequently imparted (Hollenback & Kalchman, 2013). Beginners are introduced to the Language Experience Approach (LEA) in terms of how to read and students can relate their real-life context experiences by constructing written words. The LEA relies on the learners' expressing their own words, decoded or applied as they explained the task or activity given. This permits the learners to communicate using the text and attain knowledge and comprehend meaning through their own learning experiences (Nestle & Dixon, 2008). The LEA is an approach where the child's specific language and experiences are blended to develop reading material. The learners will be allowed to fully develop knowledge of pronunciation, word formation, and verbs. The LEA approach is reported to be highly encouraging and inspiring, and it increases self-esteem, and integrates excitement and fun. It can be applied to create sight vocabulary and comprehension through cloze exercises. The other approach is Phonics Approach as the teachers teach the relation of the letters known as graphemes to the sound or phonemes they present (Bald, 2007). This approach helps beginning readers recognise familiar words precisely and inevitably "decipher" original words. Readers can articulate printed words by combining the sounds. On the other hand, the sight Word Approach is where words are identified instantaneously and without any analysis as they represent high-frequency words (Buckingham, 2016).

2.2.2 Past studies related to i-THINK Mapping to teach reading comprehension

Many researchers (such as Kumari & Kumari, 2013; Long & Carlson, 2011) have carried out studies explaining how i-THINK Mapping is effective in fostering students' thinking. Saad et al. (2014) and Singh et al. (2017) found that students would fail if the teaching and learning were still delivered using traditional methods, which did not consider thinking skills among students. They stated that a more traditional approach to giving notes and memorising could cause students to fail to understand something meaningful in the lesson, thus causing them to not use the knowledge acquired to solve a problem. According to Mahamod et al. (2019), the drop in student achievement is due to a lack of thinking skills being taught in the teaching and learning process. This view was supported by Yusop and Mahamod (2015) who found that conventional methods used in teaching and learning were less effective in improving students' achievement. Idek (2016) examined the practicability of i-THINK Mapping in fostering students' ability to express their ideas orally in English. The study showed that most students thought that the Thinking Maps helped them generate ideas, expand ideas, and express them orally. Fan (2016) implemented the i-THINK Mapping, especially Circle Maps and Bubble Double Maps, to support students' thinking and decision-making in the elementary school writing program in Taiwan. The results showed that i-THINK Mapping was able to facilitate students in enhancing good structure and providing ideas in their own essay writing.

Thinking Maps are believed to facilitate students hone their critical thinking skills. As stated by Omar and Albakri (2017), thinking maps had a positive impact on student comprehension as well as improvement in English proficiency. Their research findings also

demonstrated that the use of a thinking map increased students' critical thinking skills in generating ideas, productivity, and self-confidence. Earlier, [Omar et al. \(2016\)](#) found that students' critical thinking skill was fostered through the i-THINK Mapping in literature subjects. The researchers explained that thinking maps help students generate ideas, enhance written and oral language proficiency, and develop their self-confidence in presentations. Analysis of past studies showed that most of the studies were mainly focused on: (a) the use of i-THINK Mapping to nurture thinking, (b) conventional instructional strategies, (c) i-THINK Mapping to assist students in expressing orally, (d) embedding i-THINK Mapping to assist students to write better, and (e) increasing student's creative and critical thinking skills. Less attention was given to the use of i-THINK Mapping in teaching reading comprehension among ESL teachers. Therefore, this study is needed to assist teachers in employing i-THINK Mapping, specifically in teaching reading to facilitate students in attaining meaningful comprehension of texts.

3. METHODS

A qualitative research approach, specifically a case study design, was employed in this study. Qualitative research centres on collecting data through open-ended and familiar communication ([Hammarberg et al., 2016](#)). [Fraenkel et al. \(2012\)](#) opined that qualitative research examines the value and aspects of relations, actions, conditions, or resources; a qualitative approach characteristically gathers numerous procedures, such as interviews, observation, and documents rather than depending on a single data source. [Ary et al. \(2010\)](#) defined a case study as an in-depth or profound study about an individual, a unit, a project, a group of people, or an organisation. A case study is an exhaustive study of a specific research problem that seeks to investigate every detail and characteristic of the participant's life and history to investigate the causes and patterns of such behaviour.

In this study, the researchers focused on the use of i-THINK Mapping in teaching reading comprehension in English language classrooms in secondary schools. In this case, the data were obtained only from Form Five English language teachers. The findings were then interpreted descriptively. The focus of this study was to analyse a case of four teachers who had employed i-THINK Mapping in teaching reading comprehension in English language classes. This analysis was conducted by paying attention to the process or the lessons carried out by the teachers through observation and interviews to further obtain insights into the challenges they faced while incorporating i-THINK Mapping in teaching reading comprehension.

3.1 Participants

A purposive sampling technique, or what is also known as judgemental sampling, was used in this study. In this sampling technique, specific settings, people or events are selected to deliver significant evidence that cannot be achieved from other alternatives ([Maxwell, 1996](#)). The researchers selected this sampling technique because the data were required from secondary school ESL teachers who have taught for more than five years. Four ESL teachers were chosen as the participants of this study from a public secondary school in Selangor, Malaysia. The ESL teachers were addressed as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, and Teacher D. All four participants are senior teachers with more than ten years of teaching

experience, and all of them took English language as their major. The respondents are female ESL teachers, as there were no male teachers in that school.

The researchers sought permission from the Educational Planning and Research Division (EPRD), State Education Departments, and District Education Office before officially carrying out the study. All four ESL teachers were informed that the observation was descriptive in nature, and thus it was not for the evaluative purpose. After the classroom observations, the teachers involved were interviewed to accommodate questions that the researchers could not ask during the classroom observation and teaching hours. Document analyses in the form of lesson plans were also used for triangulation purposes.

3.2 Data Collection

The data for this study were collected from three sources, namely classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analyses.

3.2.1 Classroom observations

According to Vidhiasi (2018), a researcher can observe what is happening in a class and at the same time carry out the research process. The non-participant observation was carried out when the teachers were teaching. As stated earlier, the objective was to attain information relating to the use of i-THINK Mapping in teaching reading comprehension by ESL teachers. This would allow the researchers to observe the types of i-THINK Mapping that would surface in the study. The teachers were observed based on their teaching schedules. The researchers were given a copy of the teachers' timetables to ensure no class interruptions. The researchers used an observation checklist for collecting important information throughout the observations with the teachers. Three instruments were utilised in this study namely: classroom observation protocol, interview protocol, and lesson plans. The researchers sought teachers' permission to observe and video-record the lessons.

3.2.2 Semi-structured interview

The four teachers were informed that their interview session would take place right after the end of the second classroom observation. An interview protocol was prepared by the researchers to seek further information regarding the i-THINK Mapping used in teaching writing. Teachers were also interviewed to find out the factors that had led them to apply the i-THINK Mapping strategies, and challenges encountered while teaching reading in the classroom. The interview data were important for the triangulation purpose to seek reasons behind the teachers' actions and use of i-THINK Mapping and how they encouraged students to be critical thinkers during the teaching-learning process.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data from classroom observations, interviews, and lesson plans were analysed thematically. The themes obtained were recorded and coded using labels that showed aspects of the i-THINK Mapping in teaching reading, such as "Application of i-THINK Mapping strategies used by the ESL teachers to teach Reading comprehension", "Circle Map, Bubble Map, Double Bubble Map, Flow Map and Tree Map", "teachers' role as a facilitator to activate students' higher-order thinking skills (HOTS)", "questioning strategies from lower-

order thinking skills (LOTS) to higher-order thinking skills”, “Inducing vocabulary through the i-THINK Mapping strategies”, “teaching English can be a challenging task”, “inadequacy in Reading comprehension”, and “incomprehensibility of words”.

Teachers’ lesson plans were also analysed to match and correlate any pertinent themes that would emerge during the classroom observations. The analysis result showed teachers’ proper instructional planning to include the i-THINK Mapping strategies in teaching reading. It was through the lesson plans and students’ work that the researchers were able to confirm that students were given an opportunity to use the i-THINK Mapping strategies to transfer information from a reading text to show their understanding. The examples of the types of i-THINK Mapping used by the students can be seen in Figure 1 – 4.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Application of i-THINK Mapping Strategies Used by ESL Teachers to Teach Reading Comprehension

4.1.1 Circle Map, Bubble Map, Double Bubble Map, Flow Map, and Tree Map

All of the four teachers observed have used i-THINK Mapping in teaching reading. The teachers observed have used five different types of i-THINK Mapping, i.e. a Circle Map to define in context, a Bubble Map to describe, a Double Bubble Map to compare and contrast, a Flow Map to show the sequence of an event, and a Tree Map to classify different ideas. The teachers employed i-THINK Mapping strategies in teaching reading to encourage students to project their visual language to activate their cognitive process to indicate the transfer of knowledge. Through the reading comprehension activities, the teachers were able to simplify content learning, guide students in decision-making and problem-solving, and enable them to create knowledge for verbal and written communication. All four teachers have provided sufficient input to their students in terms of applying the i-THINK Mapping strategies in teaching reading. The teachers mentioned that students must be equipped with proper schemata in i-THINK Mapping before they are instructed to do the task. For example, Teacher A used a Double Map and a Bubble Map for teaching reading comprehension; Teacher B used a Bubble Map and a Flow Map, and for this particular reason Teacher B instructed the students to present their findings based on the paragraphs; Teacher C employed a Bubble Map and a Flow Map, while Teacher D employed a Bubble Map and a Tree Map.

One of the teachers, Teacher C had used an audio recording in her lesson whereby she had instructed the students to read silently while listening to the audio of the reading text. Teacher C wanted the students to interpret the best title for the text given. Teacher C explained that the reading comprehension in Form Five syllabus consisted of five comprehension questions and a summary of a writing task. Because of time constraints, the teacher asked the students to use a Bubble Map to identify the points for the summary task as a discussion activity in the class and gave the reading comprehension questions as the students’ homework. Teacher C explained that the use of Bubble Maps could help the students complete both reading comprehension and summary tasks. Teacher D explained that she had to demonstrate how to use an i-THINK map to transfer information obtained from the reading task assigned. Teacher D instructed the students to discuss in pairs to complete the i-THINK map given. Students were then asked to come forward and paste their

i-THINK map on the board and share their findings with classmates as illustrated in Figure 1-4. Figure 1 shows an example of a Double Bubble Map and a Bubble Map from Teacher A, Figure 2 shows an example of a Bubble Map and a Flow Map from Teacher B, Figure 3 shows an example of a Bubble Map and a Flow Map from Teacher C, and finally, Figure 4 shows an example of a Bubble Map and a Brace Map from Teacher D.

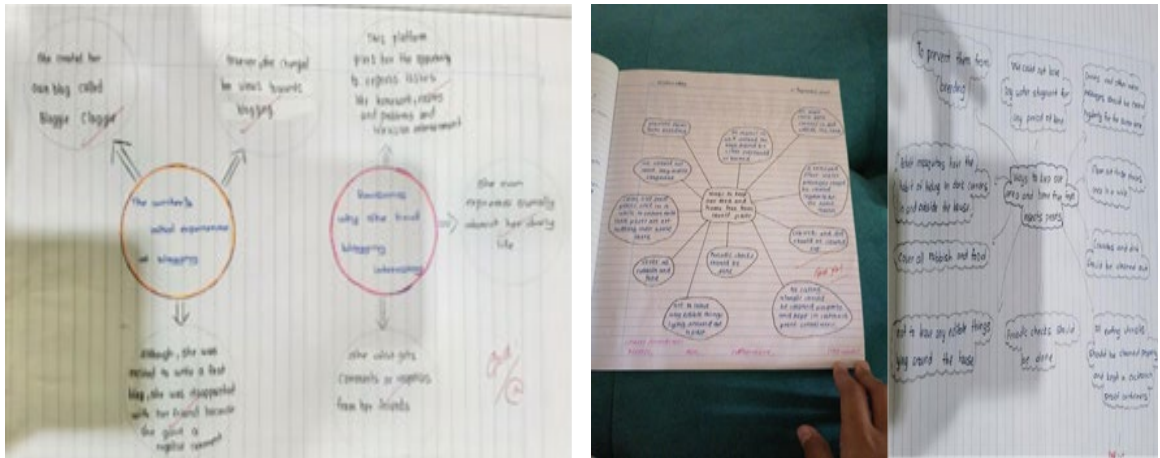


Figure 1. Double Bubble Map and Bubble Map (Teacher A).

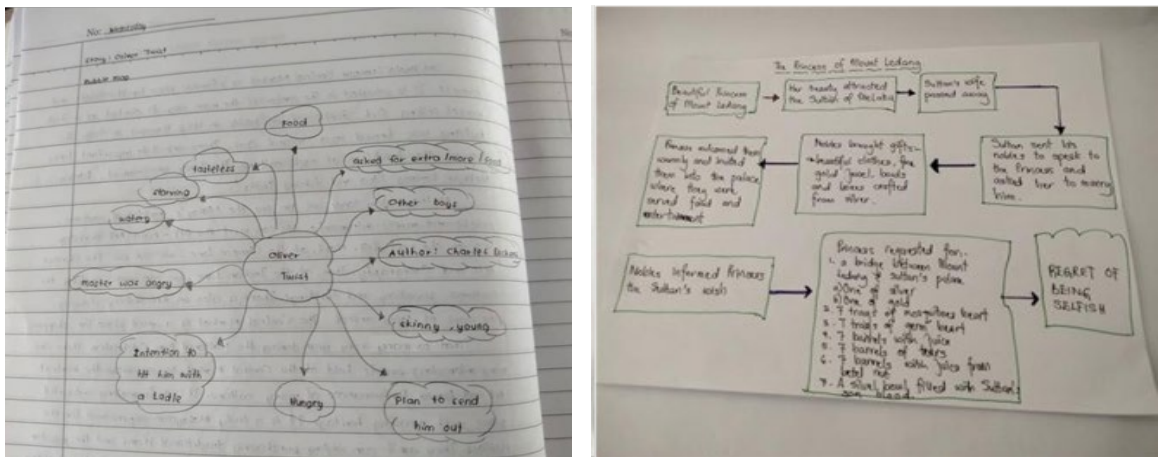


Figure 2. Bubble Map and Flow Map (Teacher B).

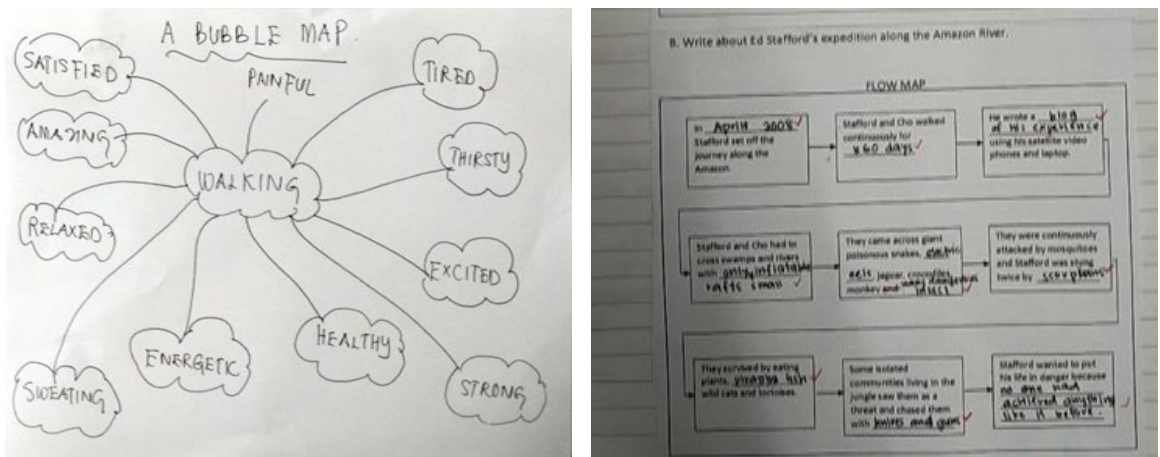


Figure 3. Bubble Map and Flow Map (Teacher C).

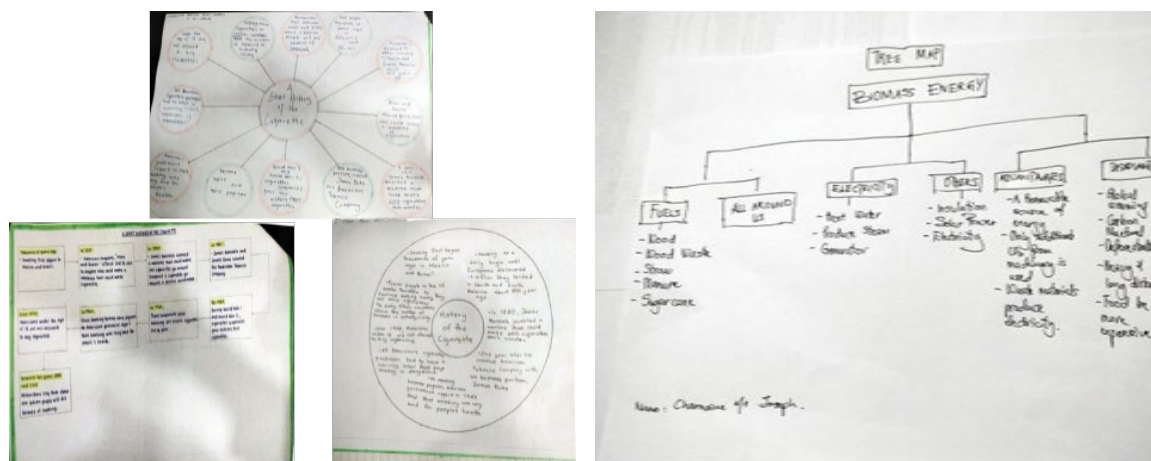


Figure 4. Bubble Map and Brace Map (Teacher D).

4.1.2 Teachers' role as a facilitator to activate students' higher-order thinking skills

The teachers agreed that they have an important role as a facilitator in guiding the students to detect the main ideas and supporting ideas and examples from the text. The teachers believed that i-THINK Mapping should be applied cognitively and graphically steadily to ensure students are given ample support for continuous cognitive development to build further their confidence to be able to function in the real-world context. All four teachers started their lessons with an explanation of the learning objectives to inform students what they should achieve at the end of the lesson. Teachers emphasised the importance of directing the student's attention to the lesson so that the students could state the title of the reading passage and provide some examples from the first paragraph to the last paragraph to test their schemata.

4.1.3 Questioning strategies from lower-order thinking skills to higher-order thinking skills

Teachers ensured that students read the passage carefully before moving to the task of transferring information from the reading passage using the i-THINK Mapping strategies. The teachers repeated the instructions to ensure that students understood the task. This was to double-check the students' attention and understanding of the task so that they would be focused and quickly detect the supporting details of the main idea to complete their Double Maps and Bubble Maps (Teacher A). The teachers discussed the points with the students and asked them at random to state the points aloud. Based on all the points identified by the students, they were instructed and advised to transfer the points discussed using the i-THINK Mapping to ensure all points were written in their final summary. This shows how the students comprehended and applied the information from the text and discussed it to complete the selected i-THINK map.

Furthermore, i-THINK Mapping was not uncommon for all students. The students had previously been exposed to i-THINK Mapping in other subjects. Based on the observations, for example, Teacher B applied a Bubble Map to elicit more information from the students to transfer information from the reading passage in pairs and individually. The i-THINK Mapping motivated the students to discuss, brainstorm and cooperate to detect the details from the given reading texts. The students gained more confidence from the i-THINK Mapping as they could comprehend the text better. It also encouraged peers' cooperation

and creativity. The teacher helped the students by asking LOTS and HOTS questions which led to the details of the texts, and finally helped the students to transfer the ideas into the i-THINK Mapping. Teacher B believed that i-THINK Mapping could increase and develop students' understanding to comprehend the text. Teacher B guided the students by asking LOTS questions to attract students' attention and interest in the topic that they were going to discuss. Teacher B directed the students' focus by showing how to use a Bubble Map to comprehend a text. She used a series of questions to guide the students to fill in the Bubble Map and to stimulate the students' thinking skills.

All four teachers encouraged the students to complete their own i-THINK Maps based on their discussion. A Bubble Map was not only used to help the students to understand the story but also to help them deal with the comprehension questions which were prepared as their homework. The teachers in this study agreed that they had instructed their students to recall their existing knowledge. For example, Teacher C asked her students to recall what they felt when they were working on their Bubble Map. The students were required to complete a Bubble Map in which they could share and compare their findings with their friends. Teacher D explained the need to raise questions to the students based on topics taught in the lesson.

4.1.4 Inducing vocabulary through the i-THINK Mapping strategies

All four teachers agreed that they managed to induce vocabulary through the i-THINK Mapping strategies in teaching reading. They ended the lessons with a vocabulary activity in which the students had to match the words that were related to the text with the correct meaning as a closing activity. The students managed to complete the vocabulary exercise as the vocabulary was taken from the texts that have learned. One of the i-THINK maps is the Bubble Map, which enabled the students to comprehend the text quickly and gain ideas of the meaning of some words used in the text.

Teacher C instructed her students to identify unfamiliar words from the text. The teacher believed that once the students were able to comprehend the vocabulary, they would be able to associate the main ideas in each paragraph. Teacher C taught English to a group of low-proficiency students. She mentioned that a Flow Map was more suitable for low-proficiency students as they had to fill in the blanks with suitable words or phrases from the text. Teacher C divulged that she usually gave some time for students to think, comprehend and complete the task. According to Teacher C, the Flow Map showed the important details in the text accordingly (refer to Figure 4 Bubble Map and Flow Map used by Teacher C). This helped the students comprehend the reading questions.

4.2 Factors Influencing Teachers to Use i-THINK Mapping to Teach Reading Comprehension

4.2.1 Teaching English as a challenging task

The four teachers agreed that teaching English can be a challenging task. The teachers mentioned that the students' different socio-economic and educational backgrounds could have some impact on the ways they view the learning of English. The teachers also explained that parents' educational background could also impact the students' performance and achievement in English. Students' variables, including attitude, interest, confidence, and motivation were reported to have some effect on the students' performance in class, and the

teachers had to find ways to fulfil students' different needs and learning styles. Despite exposing students to a variety of texts and books to spark their interest will lead to developing their reading skills, students need a fun and conducive learning environment. A large number of students was another issue that the teachers had to face. All of them ensured that students worked in groups and with peers using the i-THINK Mapping strategies to assist in envisioning the concepts found in selected reading texts. Teachers also mentioned that they had to give clear, proper, and comprehensible instructions to teach reading comprehension.

4.2.2 Inadequacy in reading comprehension

Inadequacy in reading comprehension could affect students' academic performance in both the summative assessment and national examinations which are compulsory for students to pass to enter the tertiary level. According to the teachers, students could read texts, but they found it difficult to visualise the deliberated ideas and discuss new concepts or views to express themselves through the reading text. Teachers shared that they were accountable for student learning, and for this purpose, they had to employ i-THINK Mapping strategies to ensure students read, extract, transfer ideas and explain using their own words. This shows that most students could read, but they were unable to apply it for self-development. It was apparent from the classroom observations in terms of the individualised feedback provided to the students through the teachers' questioning strategies to activate their lower-order thinking to the higher-order thinking skills. By doing so, the teachers were able to monitor each student's progress and provide corrective feedback.

4.3 Challenges Faced by ESL Teachers in Teaching Reading Comprehension in Using I-THINK Mapping

4.3.1 Incomprehensibility of words

Teacher A divulged that reading comprehension became a complex task for students when they did not have an adequate amount of vocabulary. Students' inability to comprehend the words in texts would make it difficult for them to understand the text. When this problem surfaced, the students were unmotivated to read the text or attempt the reading comprehension task. The students would then have problems identifying the topic sentence and main idea in each paragraph of the given text. Teacher B explained that her students had similar problems whereby they were unable to understand the meanings of certain difficult words. Her students had difficulties reading between the lines and pronouncing unfamiliar vocabulary.

4.3.2 Student attempts at translation using L1

Teacher C, who taught students with low-level of English proficiency, said that their problem was a result of the difficulty in understanding simple words, and this became more complicated when they tended to translate word by word using their mother tongue to understand the text. Teacher D associated her students' problems in terms of comprehending words or their inability to understand the topic or content. Nevertheless, all four teachers agreed that i-THINK Mapping could help enhance students' understanding of the text because the students could detect the main ideas and supporting details from the text. In the end, it helped the students answer the questions correctly. However, producing a correct and

complete i-THINK Mapping based on the text would take more time, especially for low-proficiency students who lacked vocabulary.

5. DISCUSSION

This study was focused on the application of i-THINK Mapping strategies in teaching reading comprehension as it is closely associated with ESL teachers and students. That interest is focused mainly on literature concerning i-THINK Mapping. Literature on teaching reading strategies abounds, but very little is related to an individual teacher's pedagogical strategies in employing i-THINK Mapping. [Ishak \(2015\)](#) stated that the Thinking Maps method improved students' enthusiasm for learning. [Haerazi and Irawan \(2020\)](#) detailed that reading comprehension can be facilitated effectively through visual mapping, relationship connections between concepts, and exposure to the appropriate strategies that are modelled and practised. Although teachers' beliefs impact how they teach, teachers have to adjust, redesign, and rethink teaching reading to support student mastery of reading. Teacher pedagogical practices of teaching reading will improve and develop students' mastery in reading comprehension. After a thorough analysis of data, some interesting strategies, including the use of the i-THINK map that facilitated students' ability to identify the main idea in a text, text organisation, cohesive devices, and summarising ideas in the text, were identified through Circle Map, a Bubble Map, a Double Bubble Map, a Flow Map, and a Tree Map. Teachers' role in assisting students in comprehending a written text was insufficient, but they had to expose the students to locate selected linguistic evidence or clues to the comprehensive meaning of the reading text. This was supported by [Yue et al. \(2015\)](#) who explained that teachers must instruct students to highlight the reading passage for students to identify important concepts, ideas, and information to self-regulate learning from the text. Teachers in this study agreed that they had trained students to skim and scan a text, identify the main ideas and topic sentences in each paragraph and identify unfamiliar words, but students still need to master comprehension skills. Moreover, this is an active, meaning-making process that facilitates comprehension as it helps the students to develop a global understanding of the whole text and remember important information ([Hagaman et al., 2016](#)). According to [Keleş \(2012\)](#), this helps students learn new information, think and develop their conceptual schema. The purpose of the i-THINK program which was introduced by the Malaysia Ministry of Education was to motivate students by using Thinking Maps as learning tools in Malaysian primary and secondary schools ([Omar et al., 2016](#)). i-THINK maps show the students' ability to display critical thinking skills ([Yaakub et al., 2018](#)). According to [Hassan et al. \(2016\)](#), to stimulate their thinking, questioning could be used as a tool to promote the students to think outside their normal thinking box. [Wang et al. \(2015\)](#) mentioned that students who are engaged in the questioning process will be able to clarify their thinking, share and verbalise their thoughts with new ideas, and enhance problem-solving skills. The act of asking questions could help the teacher and the students involve actively in the lessons and motivate them to keep thinking ([Meng et al., 2012](#)).

[Saori \(2020\)](#) revealed that reading activities need learning activities that promote HOTS among students. Students are required to practice and explicitly apply the level of thinking from the i-THINK Mapping ([Hassan et al., 2016](#)), and thinking maps are effective in fostering students' interest ([Kumari & Kumari, 2013](#)). This was supported by [Setianingsih et al. \(2018\)](#) who argued that a complex interaction between texts and readers is shaped by the readers' schemata, attitude, and language community. Moreover, one of the most

important aspects of the i-THINK maps is the students' ability to display critical thinking skills to complete the maps (Alomari, 2019). Research conducted by Hassan et al. (2016) on 11th-grade students found that the thinking levels of analysing and synthesising were the strengths of the concept map while a particular strategy also strengthened students' mastery of information on HOTS (Awofala, 2011). Sattar and Salehi (2014) reported the need to have adequate control over different lengths of text and the ability to deal with them and apply appropriate strategies to those texts. Mahamod et al. (2019) added that applying conventional methods was less effective in improving students' achievement. Factors such as students' learning ability with different levels of competence and their attitude toward learning English can delay the pace of teaching using i-THINK Mapping because the students are slow at grasping concepts. The challenges faced by the ESL teachers in this study in using i-THINK Mapping in teaching reading comprehension in the classroom were time constraints in lesson preparation and the students' low language proficiency level. Another challenge was that the teachers were aware of the benefits of using i-THINK Mapping in teaching reading comprehension. Furthermore, the teachers also had sufficient knowledge of i-THINK Mapping; but because of the time constraints and the influence of students' low proficiency, they thought it was not practical to apply i-THINK Mapping in all their teaching classes.

6. CONCLUSION

i-THINK Mapping could improve students' understanding and achievement in reading comprehension skills even though students faced difficulties given their low proficiency level. Furthermore, i-THINK Mapping encouraged the ESL teachers to instill more group activities, use a variety of questioning techniques, and encourage active student participation, which in the end led them to HOTS. Students need to collaborate to transfer the ideas and details from the reading text to their i-THINK maps and to make it easier for them to deal with the reading comprehension questions later on. The factors that encouraged the use of i-THINK Mapping in teaching reading comprehension to Malaysian students include an injection from the Malaysia Ministry of Education with the incorporation of HOTS in the English language syllabus and the teacher's guidebook. The ESL teacher's perspective of i-THINK Mapping, time constraints, and the level of students' proficiency were the major challenges faced by the ESL teachers in applying i-THINK Mapping in teaching reading comprehension.

The results of this study are unfitting to be generalised to ESL populations in other settings. This study explored only four teachers from one rural secondary school in Hulu Selangor; hence, it is inappropriate to assume that similar actions or answers would be derived from other populations, such as ESL teachers at primary schools or educators teaching in universities. Future research can be carried out with more participants studying at the lower secondary school levels to discover the effect of i-THINK Mapping in comprehending reading skills.

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Uncovering EFL Learners' Demotivation towards English Online Learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic in Indonesia

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Abstract

Online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic has demotivated Indonesian tertiary EFL students to learn English, which affected their English performance and achievement. This article ferrets out the features of the EFL students' demotivation, the factors affecting their demotivation, the solution to reduce their demotivation, and the implication of their demotivation towards their English performances and achievement. The data for this descriptive quantitative research were collected through an online open-ended questionnaire to the EFL students of two Islamic state colleges in East Java, Indonesia. The questionnaire was distributed when the Covid-19 pandemic was still at its peak. There were 71 out of 76 respondents who completed the questionnaire claimed to experience demotivation with online learning mode. The data from those 71 respondents were then analyzed descriptively. The results of this study indicate that online learning experiences were found to be the main factor that affected their demotivation. This was further evident in their English performance and achievement. Meanwhile, the aspects of teachers, online

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learning infrastructures, family, and student-related demotivators contributed to conducting effective online learning. This study utilized qualitative data from the learners' perspective so that further studies which take a different perspective, such as family, teachers, lecturers, and policymakers, would enrich these findings.

Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic, EFL learners' demotivation, EFL online learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

Online learning amidst Covid-19 pandemic is assumed to demotivate students in their learning of English. This online learning platform which has been used frontally and massively due to this pandemic has forced both teachers and students to be able to use online learning media and applications, equip themselves with good digital skills, and have an adequate internet connection. Moreover, the unpreparedness of the lecturers to employ online teaching was assumed to be the emergent cause of students' demotivation which further affected students' academic and learning process. This demotivation within online learning is due to the lack of social interaction with classmates and teachers (Gonzalez-Ramirez et al., 2021) and internet connection (Adara & Najmudin, 2020). Jahedizadeh et al. (2016) pointed out that the demotivation of EFL learners has a negative impact on their language mastery and achievement. Meanwhile, motivation as the negation of demotivation is proved to be the most important variable in their performance and learning outcomes (Zeynali et al., 2019).

There have been some previous studies on demotivation in English online learning which focused on the factors affecting demotivation at various levels of education. A study at a high school level conducted by Soviana (2018) found that vocational senior high school students were demotivated both internally and externally. This proved that the external demotivators, which cover teacher's habits and competencies, teaching methods, learning environment and subject matter, have a more influential than the internal ones i.e., students' attitudes towards English, failure experiences, and students' self-esteem. In addition, studies have proved that the demotivators in online learning include teachers, classmates, textbooks and activities, student characteristics (Khusyabaroh et al., 2018), lack of facilities and learning resources in schools (Haryanto et al., 2018), and learning failure experiences (Gloria, 2020). At the college level, EFL students' demotivation is caused by a lack of teacher competence and a lack of student intrinsic motivation (Adara, 2018), a lack of social interaction, a mismatch between expectations and learning content, as well as problem-setting and learning environment (Meşe & Sevilen, 2021), learning materials and interest in language learning (Pathan et al., 2020), and student's attitudes towards the need for learning English (Evans & Tragant, 2020). This literature fact indicates that a study exploring the EFL learners' demotivation during EFL online learning in a comprehensive manner which includes its form, causes, solution, and implications to their English performance at Islamic state colleges in Indonesia during the Covid-19 pandemic is under-researched.

Meanwhile, to reveal the factors affecting the EFL learners' demotivation to attend English online learning and other variables such as types of demotivation and

its implication to their English performance is significant to achieve the learning goal. As indicated by [Minalla \(2022\)](#), EFL learners' demotivation affects the EFL classroom interactional process. For example, various levels of demotivation dramatically influence the quality of request and refusal speech acts produced by the learners in their English classes ([Molavi et al., 2018](#)) and contribute to their English listening and speaking achievement ([Zhang et al., 2020](#)).

This present study aims at filling this gap by illustrating how online learning has affected students' demotivation amid the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia. This study demonstrates that the most significant construct variable influencing Indonesian EFL learners' performance and proficiency in English is their demotivation during the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, this article raises four main questions, namely: (a) what are the forms of demotivation in English online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic? (b) What are the factors that cause their demotivation? (c) What are the solutions to reduce their demotivation during the online learning? (d) What are the implications of their demotivation toward their English performance and achievement?

According to the social and literature facts presented in this section, this paper investigates the EFL learners' demotivation in online English learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. This was carried out based on an argument that online learning that emerged as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic has caused demotivation among EFL learners in their learning of English. This further affected their decreasing performance during the process of learning English. Moreover, the demotivation experienced by EFL learners while learning English online negatively affected their English performance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Online Learning

Online learning had developed since 1995, when web-based learning, such as blackboards was built. This term has various meanings. [Singh and Turman \(2019\)](#) conducted a systematic review of the literature review of 37 definitions extracted from 151 articles published between 1988-2018 to explain this term. This paper adapts the concept proposed by the two researchers who bring it into the context of learning a second language as a foreign language. By adapting the concept that has been abstracted by [Singh and Thurman \(2019\)](#) from various sources, this paper defines online learning as a model of learning via the internet in an online classroom where students and teachers interact with each other even though they are physically separated. The definition emphasizes three aspects, namely the internet, interaction, and physical distance.

Online EFL learning that utilizes internet technology as a medium in its implementation can be seen in two forms; synchronous and asynchronous ([Alibakhshi & Mohammadi, 2016](#); [Memari, 2020](#); [Perveen, 2016](#)). Synchronous online learning utilizes a platform that allows virtual face-to-face interactions. Synchronous online EFL learning as a learning condition carried out during this pandemic shows that there are changing values in teaching strategies and assessment implementations which result in the emergence of discomfort in the teaching and learning process for lecturers and students. Meanwhile, online learning asynchronously is a learning that utilizes a

platform that uses the internet but has time flexibility in its use. Platforms that fall into this category include Google Classroom, Google forms, and Moodle (Basri et al, 2020; Dziubata, 2020). This asynchronous learning process results in no direct or personal interaction. For this type of online learning, it is necessary that students have high motivation and self-discipline, internet connections, and information technology devices for learning (Dziubata, 2020). In short, online EFL learning with synchronous and asynchronous forms has encouraged adaptation to the changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic from both lecturers and students. However, the failure to adapt to these changes can lead to demotivation

2.2 Demotivation

The concept of demotivation is defined as a lack of interest in and enthusiasm about your work (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). Operationally, Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013) defined demotivation as a specific external force that can reduce or eliminate the motivation which underlies the desire for ongoing behavior or action. In this concept, demotivation is seen as an external force that causes a decrease in motivation to learn. In the context of this study, demotivation is a condition where EFL learners' motivation decreases or disappears during online language learning. Kikuchi (2015) defined demotivation as a negative process that causes a learner's motivation to decrease due to both internal and external factors. The definition states two aspects: demotivation and internal strength in the form of reduced or lost drive or motivation. In addition, demotivation relates to external forces that cause a loss of interest and enthusiasm to do something or look at something. In line with the previous opinion, Zhang (2007) defined demotivation as a force that can reduce a student's learning energy or even eliminate a force that can encourage students to learn.

Internal factors do not cause demotivation without being influenced by certain external triggering factors (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013). This shows that demotivation is caused by two main demotivators, namely external which include teachers-related factors and classroom-related factors, and internal ones are students related factors (Sharififar & Akbarzadeh, 2011). First, external demotivators in the form of teacher-related factors are one of the main factors for demotivating EFL learners to learn English. Zhang (2007) revealed that incompetent lecturers are the main source of demotivation for EFL learners. They are characterized by tedious and confusing teaching methods, unfair assessments, and overloaded information delivery. Poor teaching practices (Evans & Tragant, 2020) and the negative impact of English teachers, such as impatient lecturers (Kim & Seo, 2012), are also external factors that can cause EFL demotivation. Other external demotivators, namely classroom-related factors, include a learning environment that is not equipped with adequate language learning facilities (Khouya, 2018; Sharififar & Akbarzadeh 2011; Vakilifard et al., 2020). In addition, Çankaya (2018) proved that the characteristics and the classroom environment are the cause of the emergence of demotivation. In the context of online learning, the classroom learning environment refers to the availability of internet network resources, LMS, and software as well as digital literacy. Second, the EFL learners' demotivation is also caused by their internal conditions such as 'lack of interest' and 'experiences of failure' (Jahedizadeh et al., 2016), negative attitudes of their classmates, and personal issues (Han et al., 2019).

Demotivation is the negative counterpart of motivation. Learners who experience demotivation are characterized by reducing or losing interest in learning. In the context of online learning, demotivated learners are regarded as losing their interest in online learning. Demotivation in online learning, a learning condition that arises due to the Covid-19 pandemic, is influenced by various factors with different levels of influence. It is a complex problem in foreign language learning (Chambers, 1993), and it affects students' English learning outcomes. It is not only influenced by internal and external factors, but it is also a result of self-restraint and student personality dimensions (Pathan et al., 2020). Currently, one of the factors that influence learning is the Covid-19 pandemic which has changed learning from face-to-face classes to virtual or online classes, which contributes to the demotivating factor of students in learning.

There are five forms of factors that influence demotivation in online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. Adara and Najmudin (2020) revealed five manifestations of these factors, namely test scores, teacher competencies and teaching styles, incomplete learning facilities, learning content and materials, and lack of intrinsic motivation. The first factor, test scores in the form of low-test results due to online learning, is the most influential. This factor results in students' low self-esteem (Krishnan & Pathan, 2013) because they think they have failed in learning (Kim & Kim, 2016). Secondly, teacher competence and teaching style also cause demotivation because even though the material provided is interesting, the teacher's competence is low. Their teaching style is not engaging, which makes students feel bored with learning (Adara & Najmudin, 2020). The third factor includes the incompleteness of learning facilities, inadequate information technology used in learning, and teachers' lack of competence in using it (Adara et al., 2019). The fourth factor is the content and learning materials, which emphasizes grammar rather than students' language skills (Adara & Najmudin, 2020; Kim et al, 2018). The last factor is related to the lack of students' intrinsic motivation. This does not significantly affect student demotivation during the pandemic because students feel they have more time to study and are not distracted by other things (Adara & Najmudin, 2020; Meshkat & Hassani, 2012). In short, the current Covid-19 pandemic has led to online learning, which on the one hand, is the right solution during the pandemic, but on the other hand, this causes demotivation in learning English.

3. METHODS

This research implemented a descriptive quantitative method through an open-ended questionnaire delivered using Google Forms. It was originally written in English, but after getting feedback from an expert judgment, it was translated into Bahasa Indonesia, the respondents' mother tongue. The questions in the questionnaire, which were developed by referring to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013) and Adara and Najmudin (2020) about demotivation, factors, and their manifestation, are divided into four parts. The first part contains the purpose and instructions of the questionnaire survey. The second part contains prerequisite questions that ask two things, namely their claim about the decline in their learning motivation due to online learning and their willingness to complete this questionnaire. Thus, the respondents who filled out this questionnaire were demotivated. The third part asks about the identity of the

respondents. The fourth part asks about their demotivating experiences when they attended English online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic with four open-ended questions in line with the research questions:

- What are the forms of decreasing motivation that you have experienced while learning English online during the Covid-19 pandemic? (For example, rarely attending lectures, not being enthusiastic about studying)
- What caused the decrease in motivation that you experienced while attending English online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic? (For example, lecturers' teaching strategies are not attractive, the applications used are not widespread, frequent connection problems)
- What did you do to overcome the decrease in motivation that you experienced while attending English online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic? and
- Has the decrease in motivation you experienced because of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic affected your English learning achievement (for example, declining Semester GPA)?

The data collected through the questionnaires, which were distributed on April 24 to 28, 2021, are in the form of the respondents' statements which contain the forms of their demotivation, factors affecting their demotivation, the solution to overcome their demotivation, and the implications of their demotivation towards their English performance and achievement. The form of demotivation was revealed from demotivating indicators such as attitude, behaviors, and statements containing claims made by the respondents. Various attitudes and behaviors that showed demotivation were mapped out, and the student's claims were used as verification data. Meanwhile, the factors that caused demotivation in online EFL learning involved internal and external factors. Practical reasons were used as the basis for interpreting the emergence of their demotivation.

The data were analyzed qualitatively through the stages proposed by [Miles et al. \(2018\)](#) which began with condensing data—to select, focus, simplify, abstract, and transform data that appeared in the full body of the interview transcript—and displaying data related to forms of demotivation, factors affecting demotivation, solution of demotivation and its implication towards their English competence and performance in summary form, and verifying data for the inference process. Subsequently, drawing the conclusion was carried out by following an interpretation technique starting from the “restatement” of the data, and then they were described to find patterns or trends, and “interpretation” was made to reveal the meaning of the collected data.

4. RESULTS

Of 76 respondents who voluntarily completed the questionnaire, 2.6% (Respondents 3 and 6) did not experience demotivation. Thus, their answers were excluded. The number of answers to the questionnaire analyzed was 74 (97.4%). In the process of further analysis regarding respondents' self-identity, three respondents were found to come from different universities. Because the number of those three respondents did not match that from the other two universities, their answers were also excluded. Thus, the number of answers analyzed further was obtained from the 71 respondents. Four key findings emerged from this study: the type of demotivation

experienced by students while learning English online, the reasons behind this demotivation, the strategies used by students to cope with it, and the effects of demotivation on students' academic performance.

4.1 Forms of Demotivation During English Online Learning

The results of this study indicate English learners' demotivation during the Covid-19 pandemic. The decreasing motivation experienced by respondents is in the form of reduced enthusiasm and experiencing failure (see Table 1).

Table 1. Forms of demotivation.

No.	Form of demotivation	Variants
1.	Decrease in enthusiasm	Unmotivated/lazy/forgetting/studying
		Lazy/forgetting/not doing assignments
		No desire to improve/not wanting to review lessons/rarely studying
		Just skipping classes
		Weak/sick/quickly feel tired/dizzy/sore eyes
		Passive
2.	Experience of failure	Not understanding the material
		Forgetting to attend classes
		Learning difficulties
		Waking up late in the morning
		Feeling isolated
		Disappointed these

4.1.1 Decrease in enthusiasm

Students' lack of excitement is observable from attitude or actions. Respondents who experienced a change from in-person instruction before the pandemic to online learning during the pandemic experienced a significant change in attitude. They became less enthusiastic and even not enthusiastic at all. They were lazy, had no intention to study, and were not passionate about participating in online learning, as expressed in the following quoted respondent's statement:

- (1) "...but something bad happened, my enthusiasm for learning during this pandemic suddenly dropped". (HNK)

Their demotivation was also shown through the changes in their behavior during online lectures. They tended to be passive learners, rarely studied and some even did not study at all. They also ignored the assignments, as stated in the respondent's statement:

- (2) "I always participated in learning activities, but sometimes I had no passion or enthusiasm to be actively involved in class discussions with lecturers". (SM)

The learners expressed their demotivation in various forms, all of which led to the reduction or loss of their motivation to participate in online English language learning.

4.1.2 Experience of failure

Another form of demotivation is the experience of failure. Many respondents claimed that they did not understand the material and felt disappointed. It was also found that they did not attend some online classes, missed lectures, forgot to fill the attendance list, encountered some difficulties, felt that attending class was a burden, and even believed that online lectures did not give them any progress. Those findings are reflected in the following respondents' quoted statements.

- (3) "I often missed the class and assignment". (AS)
- (4) "...lacked understanding of the materials delivered by the lecturers". (YNS)
- (5) "...online learning was boring and made me disappointed". (SZ)
- (6) "Even though I never missed classes, I was not motivated to join the class and felt that attending the lecture was a burden". (YG)

Forgetting to fill out the attendance list in online learning was an unexpected finding because many of them thought that their presence was more important than achieving the goal of studying itself. This is implied in the following quotation from the respondent's statement:

- (7) "... Not enthusiastic about studying and only relying on filling out the attendance list". (WAA)

The demotivation on a broad and acute scale impacted their performance in and out of virtual classes while doing exercises assigned by the lecturers, as implied in the respondent's quoted statement:

- (8) "What I felt was that I became lazy to follow the learning process. This happened because of a total change in the learning process". (HNK)

The data shows that online learning increased the number of assignments given by lecturers to be completed in a short period. This made students more demotivated, which resulted in their despair during the online learning. Even, it was found that filling out attendance sheets was considered more important for them than the lecture itself. As reflected in the respondent's statement:

- (9) "Online lectures were only available during attendance; besides that, they were not too enthusiastic about attending lectures". (AB)

Such conditions had an impact on decreasing both their English learning performance and competence. Thus, the quality of English graduates during the pandemic will also be affected by such a condition.

4.2 Factors Causing Demotivation During English Online Learning

From the 71 responses, 19 of them provided more than one cause of demotivation, such as less exciting teaching strategies and complex learning material. However, from the results of data analysis, there were six points (See Table 2) claimed as demotivational factors, namely: (1) lecturers, (2) students, (3) internet connection, (4) learning environment, (5) learning ecosystem, and (6) supporting facilities. Of the

seven factors, there were three dominant factors, including lecturers (cited by 34 respondents), students (29 respondents), and an internet connection (29 respondents).

Table 2. Factors that cause demotivation.

No	Factors	Variants	Form
1	Lecturer	Teaching Strategy	1. Less interesting 2. Less effective 3. No/lack of explanation 4. Lack of feedback
		Assessment	Unfair
		Teaching materials	Lack of application/ Supporting materials
2	Students	Time management	Too many activities/tasks
		Understanding	Do not understand
		Negative attitude	1. Lazy
			2. Relaxed
3. Bored			
3	Study environment	not ideal for learning	
		Lots of distractions from family	
		Boring	
4	Internet Connection	Distraction	1. Disturbed (blackout, rain, bad signal) 2. Limited internet data package
5	Learning Ecosystem	1. Too many portals used for absent, collecting assignments	
		2. College time colliding	
		3. (difficult to adapt) with new learning models	
6	Supporting Facilities	Laptop error	

4.2.1 Teacher-related factors

Table 2 shows seven factors influencing student demotivation in online learning during the pandemic. Most respondents (47%) claimed that lecturers were the leading cause of the decline in their motivation. It did not refer to their personality but was related to teaching strategies, teaching materials, and assessments carried out during the teaching process. They consider that less attractive and less effective online teaching strategies are the biggest causes of demotivation. It was found that during online learning, many lecturers gave assignments without sufficient explanation and no feedback. This was shown in the following respondents' quoted statements:

- (10) "... the lecturer gave assignments without explaining the material, so every week they gave assignments without any feedback". (WAA)
- (11) "... I got bored easily because there were so many assignments, and I did not understand because there was no explanation". (BL)

Students were trapped in a confusing condition to understand and practice English. In addition, less applicable teaching materials, lack of supporting materials, and materials without being equipped with sufficient explanations from lecturers were also the main demotivators. Moreover, the evaluation system without being adjusted to the online learning system and unfair tests were also considered the main

demotivators. In other words, lecturers who did not apply interesting teaching strategies and objective assessments were the leading causes of learners' demotivation.

4.2.2 Student-related factors

The questionnaire showed that 41% of respondents stated that they were also the main demotivator during online learning amidst Covid-19 pandemic. During this time, most respondents (58%) worked as part-timers. This indicates that in addition to being busy with college assignments, they had to do their job. Most of them claimed that they did not have good time management skills, which had an impact on decreasing their motivation to learn English. In addition, the impact of the pandemic, which required students to spend much time at home, has made them actively pursue their hobbies and help with housework. Poor time management for completing coursework and other assignments ultimately increased demotivation. This was exacerbated by negative student behavior, such as laziness, boredom, tiredness, and relaxation, as stated in the respondent's statement:

- (12) "... there were too many tasks that sometimes I forget that something had not been done yet". (HRF)

In short, it can be concluded that students were the main demotivators due to their poor time management and negative attitudes.

4.2.3 Internet connection

The internet connection problems due to a sudden blackout, rain, and bad signal were the cause of the EFL learners' demotivation during online learning. A respondent stated:

- (13) "...the electricity often went out, which interfered with the internet connection" (ERK).

Power outages caused by emergency conditions such as fallen trees, maintenance, and other wire network problems when students were learning online led to internet connection problems. The concentration and mood of students' learning were suddenly disturbed, along with the emergence of internet connection problems. Likewise, the student's internet connection is disrupted when it rains heavily while attending online lectures. They abruptly joined and exited cyberspace, and it was claimed that this lowers their motivation. This was more problematic for respondents who lived in signal-poor areas, such as in mountainous regions and around the southern seas of Java, necessitating their search for locations. Some respondents complained that online learning policy was not backed up with free internet data from the government, which made them also unmotivated to learn English online.

4.2.4 Learning environment

Another demotivator is the unsuitable home learning environment during the Covid-19 pandemic, as revealed in the quoted respondent's statement:

- (14) “Because I studied at home, there were many other activities to do in addition to attending online learning classes, which sometimes overlapped with the class schedule which was changed in short notice by the lecturers”. (SM)

Some students reported that when learning online from home, there were many distractions from the family, especially in a crowded home situation due to various activities of all family members at the same time and place, calls or requests from parents to help with housework, attending family events, and the list continues. Besides, the impact of a two-year online learning made them experience boredom because they could not physically interact with their classmates or lecturers while learning.

4.2.5 *Learning ecosystem*

The data of this present study show that the online learning ecosystem during the pandemic was also a demotivating factor. During online learning, each lecturer used various online learning applications so that students who took several courses with several different lecturers had follow different platforms to submit assignments, complete attendance, and perform other learning activities. This is implied in the following quoted respondent’s statement:

- (15) “The teaching system was too complicated, such as filling out the attendance list by attaching the assignment as the attendance proof, which had to be sent to the course coordinator. Filling out the attendance list through GC, Edmodo application, and e-learning made me sometimes negligent and forgetful because there were too many different media provided by the lecturers”. (SM)

This variety of learning media was claimed to be their demotivator. Meanwhile, the changes in the learning platform from offline to online mode, which required several adjustments, evaluation systems, and learning instruments, led students to make some adaptations. The difficulty of adapting to these changes was claimed to be a contributing factor to the decreased motivation to learn English. The learning ecosystem also covered the sudden changing schedule made by lecturers. These distractions resulted in students’ inconvenience because they had to revise their schedules.

4.2.6 *Infrastructure*

Infrastructure, namely devices for online learning, such as laptops and smartphones, were found to be one of the causes of students’ demotivation. One respondent who experienced a laptop error during his online learning process reported:

- (16) “Connection problems and laptop errors made me demotivated to learn English online”. (NAP)

This fact shows that a minor cause of demotivation was a damaged learning support devices. To sum up, those six factors leading to the EFL learners’ demotivation during online learning can be grouped into two demotivators, namely intrinsic demotivators (students-related factors) and extrinsic demotivators (teachers-related factors, internet connection, learning environment, learning ecosystem, and infrastructure).

4.3 Student Solutions to Overcome Their Demotivation in English Online Learning

The students' demotivation was rooted in intrinsic and extrinsic sources (see Table 3). The data indicate that students tended to focus on improving themselves: (1) building independent learning, (2) motivating themselves, and (3) cooperating with friends and relatives to find solutions, as stated in a respondent's statement:

- (17) "Discussion with friends and family". (SM)
- (18) "...took notes...". (DMS)
- (19) "...built a learning environment". (KPP)

These solved some of the demotivating problems. However, the problem with the lecturer as the external factor could not resolved. Building good communication and conveying problems with lecturers would undoubtedly be one solution to creating motivating online learning activities.

Meanwhile, the connection interruption could be solved by finding a better location or changing providers. Some students pointed out that the connection breakdown did not seem too serious. This matter indicated that the problem was not crucial because they could solve it. What was more crucial for them was to build independent learning. This could affect their learning outcomes so that some further solutions, such as moral support and counseling from campus and home environment, should be provided for them.

Table 3. Demotivators and solution of demotivation.

No	Demotivators	Solutions
1	Lecturers	Communicating conflicting schedule
2	Students	Doing independent learning (finding other learning resources)
		Self-motivation
		Time management
		Adapting to a new habit
		Doing relaxation
		Doing morning activities as if going to college
		Collaborating with classmates
3	Learning Environment	Building a good learning environment
4	Internet Connection	Finding better connection

4.4 The Implication of Demotivation towards EFL Learners' Achievement

The data show that 68% of respondents (Figure 1) admitted that their demotivation for online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic influenced their achievements.

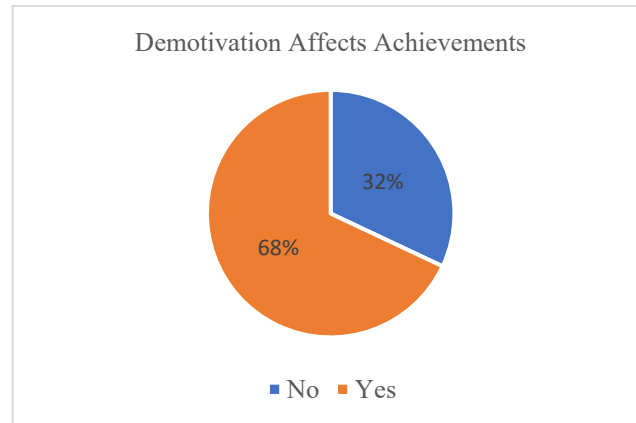


Figure 1. Implications of demotivation on achievement.

This demotivation has implications not only for achievement but also for their performance and psychology. Table 4 indicates that they found difficulties in understanding the learning material, and this decreased their Semester GPA. Their demotivation negatively affected their performance, which is characterized by a decrease in their scientific attitude during the online learning process. This can be clearly seen in the following respondents' quoted statements:

- (20) "In addition to the decreasing my GPA, I think the implication of demotivation is that I became less curious, ignored the lesson during the learning process, paid less attention to the presentation by my classmates, did other activities while attending the course, and withdrew from the learning activities". (HNK)
- (21) "Besides getting low GPA, my motivation to learn English through online mode decreased, and this made me difficult to understand the materials delivered by the lecturers. I completed the assignment without the necessity to understand it. As a result, I felt that it was useless because I was lazy to attend online learning". (ID)

Their curiosity decreased and they even tended to be ignorant. They did not intend to reach full understanding and achievement but, more importantly, to complete teachers' assignments. Students' dependence on the internet when doing quizzes had also increased along with the decline in their performance. The demotivation that they experienced during online learning also had implications on their psychology; namely, they become more emotional, stressed, and apathetic.

Table 4. The implications of demotivation for EFL online learning.

No	Implications	Variants
1.	Achievement	Decreasing GPA
		Stagnancy of GPA
		Dropping score
2.	Performance	Not optimal
		Absent from college
		Not completing quiz
		Reluctant to read
		Not concentrated
		Not doing the assignment
		Late to submit assignment
		No improvement
		Encountering learning difficulties
3.	Psychology	Decreasing learning curiosity

Table 4 continued...

		Not interested in studying
		No social interaction
		Image dropping
		Stress
		Feeling far from getting any knowledge
		Apathetic

5. DISCUSSION

This paper shows that there has been demotivation in learning English due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The emergence of demotivation can be seen in two main forms, i.e., decreasing and losing motivation to learn English and feeling a failure to participate in online learning. The first form of demotivation is indicated by two sub-variants, namely psychological variants such as lack of enthusiasm, decreased enthusiasm, boredom, depression, lack of passion, laziness, upset, lack of intention, lack of focus, and even disappointment. This fact indicates that the implementation of English online learning has triggered students' demotivation. As found by [Zaccoletti et al. \(2020\)](#), the pandemic period had led to a decrease in students' motivation. The second type of demotivation is physical, including weakness, tired eyes from staring at the screen too often, quick tiresomeness, and dizziness. [Octaberlina and Muslimin \(2020\)](#) found that one of the main obstacles during online learning is the physical – tired eyes staring at the screen. The experience of failure proves the second form of demotivation during English online learning. This study ferrets out that the changes in online learning during Covid-19 made students encounter some problems, i.e., they could not understand the material well, found it challenging to study, forgot to fill out the attendance list, joined lectures late, and had less social interaction. [Famularsih \(2020\)](#) also found that online learning leads to a lack of interaction between lecturers and students. The finding of this study also supports the previous finding of [Rahman \(2020\)](#), revealing that online learning during Covid-19 could not fully facilitate understanding of the material that the students were studying.

The two forms of demotivation found in this study—decreased motivation and learning failure—occurred because of four demotivators related to lecturers, students, learning environment, and learning tools, as illustrated in Figure 2. First, this research revealed that teachers with uninteresting teaching techniques such as giving materials and assignments without adequate explanations became a demotivating factor. It is in line with [Wang and Guan \(2020\)](#), who found that the teacher was the main construct factor in demotivating language learners. Such a technique of teaching implies a decline in student performance and achievement. [Elashhab \(2020\)](#) stated that the application of motivational teaching strategies could increase active learning interactions and student achievement.

[Allo \(2020\)](#) also revealed that engaging online learning can be achieved by choosing the right strategies, such as collaborative learning and providing material and assignments that are preceded by explanations. Another important point revealed is that the lecturers needed to determine teaching strategies that could build active involvement between lecturers and students so that each could be actively involved during the learning process. As found by [Martin and Bolliger \(2018\)](#), the selection of learning strategies that involved active engagement between teachers and students

(engagement strategies) can strengthen the success of online learning. In addition, assignments given by lecturers without following by feedback can cause students to become increasingly unmotivated. Hence, their achievement decreased, as revealed by [Li et al. \(2020\)](#) that feedback given by teachers in online learning can increase participation in online learning assignments, but it must be accompanied by feedback. Additionally, it was revealed that students found the lecturers' unfair evaluation to be a demotivator during their online language learning. This is in line with [Adara and Najmudin \(2020\)](#) who proved that the test score became one of the main demotivating factors for students after the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic.

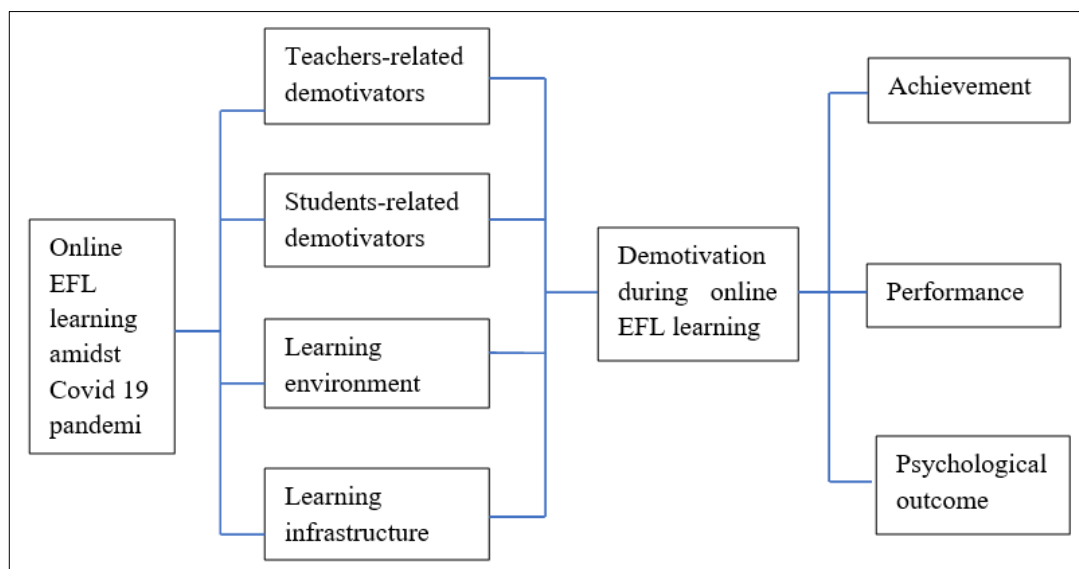


Figure 2. Factors and implications of demotivation in English online learning.

Second, the demotivation during English online learning has also been caused by student-related demotivators, namely students' negative attitudes towards online learning. Laziness, boredom, or tiredness like sore eyes were a few. All of these had an impact on how well they learned. Some previous research revealed that attitudes, motivation, self-confidence, and the use of technology play an important role in building academic performance ([Aguilera-Hermida, 2020](#)) and achievements ([Jee & Byun, 2020](#); [Kim & Shin, 2021](#)). Besides, the experience of failures such as the inability to follow the lessons well and their declining achievements was also revealed to be demotivating factors. This fact is consistent with a study which revealed that the experience of failure due to getting low scores leads to demotivation ([Liu, 2020](#); [Talpur et al., 2021](#)). Another significant point revealed from this study is that self-regulated learning skills such as problems in time management were also a demotivating construct factor. It was found that the weakness of students in managing their time due to overwhelmed tasks and activities done simultaneously during the learning period also had implications for their decreased performance and achievement. This is in line with [Carter et al. \(2020\)](#) who revealed that self-regulated learning skills become one of the determinants of the effectiveness of online learning.

Third, demotivation in English online learning during the pandemic also occurred because of the poor learning environment. The online learning environment at home was conducive because of the distraction from the family. A family consisting of several family members with a variety of different jobs simultaneously could not

guarantee a good learning environment. [Mauliya et al. \(2020\)](#) revealed that apart from teachers, families also contribute significantly to the emergence of demotivation which has implications for poor academic performance, which results in decreasing students' learning performance. Moreover, the various applications offered by lecturers for each course triggered students' demotivation which further affected their learning performance and achievement. This shows that creating a pleasant learning atmosphere and environment can prevent demotivation from supporting good performance ([Farjami & Takhti, 2020](#)).

Fourth, students' demotivation was caused by poor internet connection. In line with this finding, [Nartiningrum and Nugroho \(2020\)](#) found that one of the main challenges during online learning is an unstable internet network which can demotivate students ([Adara & Najmudin, 2020](#)). Poor network and connectivity are proven to be the most disliked element in online learning ([Hasan & Khan, 2020](#)). The continuity of English online learning is highly dependent on an internet connection. [Chung and Mathew \(2020\)](#) stated that students with a good internet connection feel satisfied with online learning. Internet connection is determined by several aspects, including technical and natural disturbances such as rain and technical disturbances such as blackouts and bad signals. Internet connection disturbances that occur during online learning can have direct implications for students' performance and psychology because their enthusiasm and mood for learning are disrupted. In addition, it was also found that the availability and feasibility of online learning tools, such as good laptops compatible with advances in online learning devices and the familiarity of online learning applications also had implications for the success of online learning. This supports a study revealing that online learning readiness significantly influenced students' outcomes ([Joosten & Cusatis, 2020](#)). [Hendrawaty \(2021\)](#) also found that using online learning which is popular with students, can lead to positive experiences and a sense of comfort while studying online during Covid-19.

6. CONCLUSION

This study found that teacher-related demotivators caused students' demotivation in English online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic, such as the selection of appropriate teaching strategies, materials following learning objectives, familiar and applicable online learning applications, and fair assessments and grading. Determining these influential factors was essential to building a positive online learning environment. Lecturers play a significant role in determining students' motivation and involvement during the learning process. In other words, if lecturers fail to play their role during online learning, students will experience demotivation. Other demotivators come from students, learning environment, and infrastructure.

An analysis of the demotivation of English online learning has revealed two important findings. First, the demotivation of English language learners was dynamic and constructive, which occurred due to external and internal factors of the learner. This indicates that the meaning of demotivation during English online learning can be viewed from two equally significant angles. Second, the research also provided a new perspective in looking at the demotivation related to the solutions applied by the students. By examining the concept of internal demotivation and how students dealt

with it, research on demotivation in English online learning during the pandemic has led to the discovery of new strategies to prevent it.

This study is limited to analyzing one area of higher education located in the suburbs and at the level of English learners' perspective. This analysis does not allow the results to be used as a reference to explain demotivation in a broader scale and from a more complex point of view, such as students, teachers, and parents. Likewise, the view of students as the basis for inferring the occurrence of demotivation in English online learning does not provide a comprehensive picture of the emergence of demotivation during the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to these limitations, further research needs to be carried out by focusing on comparative aspects such as region, gender, and multiple data sources. Thus, a more representative formula will be found as a way to prevent demotivation in English online learning both during and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

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Exploring the Effects of Pair-Interaction Model on Improving Indonesian Adult Learners' English Proficiency

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Abstract

The phenomenon of poor English language proficiency among Indonesian students suggests revisiting the instructional methods that have long been commonly used in English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms. This long-lasting problem makes it essential for English practitioners to seek alternative approaches paving the ground for the EFL learners to reach more promising achievements. One of the approaches that may fill in this lacuna is Pair-Interaction Model (PIM). Therefore, the present study was an attempt to disclose the effects of PIM on fostering Indonesian EFL learners' proficiency compared to the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM). For this purpose, a total of 90 first-year English students from

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three renowned universities in South Sulawesi, i.e. Hasanuddin University, Indonesian Moslem University situated in Makassar, and the Muhammadiyah University of Pare-Pare, were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The participants went through a pre-test, an intervention, and a post-test procedures. Findings revealed that the English proficiency of the participants who received instructions based on the principles and procedures of PIM significantly improved at the end of the interventions. This improvement was particularly seen in the participants' grammar knowledge and speaking skills. The findings offered strong evidence that PIM can be implemented in the Indonesian classes to foster EFL learners' proficiency. The study concludes by offering some implications for relevant stakeholders and opening up some avenues for further research.

Keywords: English-language media discourse, functional potential, innovation, multiculturalism, sustainable development.

1. INTRODUCTION

A wide range of publications, including unpublished research reports, theses, and dissertations, has revealed that the English proficiency of Indonesian learners, particularly college and university students, is not promising. Yassi (2009) found that the average level of English proficiency of first-year students of the Cultural Science Faculty at the University of Hasanuddin, majoring in English linguistics and English literature was at a lower intermediate level. Such low levels of proficiency were not adequate for the learners to perform the classroom tasks in English. Consequently, communication in classrooms was mainly carried out in bilingual mode, mixing English and Indonesian. A far worse case was disclosed by Suhartina (2012), who conducted a study on revisiting the effectiveness of “Yassi’s Pair Interaction Model” on the English proficiency of 120 first-year English language students from four universities in Makassar. The findings demonstrated that the English proficiency of the participants was mostly elementary (44.43%). Similarly, Hanafiah (2011) uncovered that, on average, the English proficiency of students at the English Department of the University of Dayanu Ikhsanuddin, Baubau was elementary (44.42%). Additionally, Zaid (2012) examined eight secondary public and private schools in Makassar City and Gowa and found that on average the English proficiency levels of the students were lower than the intermediate.

The low levels of English proficiency of the Indonesian graduates have adversely significantly affected their abilities to get success in international affairs. The British Council (2006), in one of their surveys, asserted that the Indonesian graduates did not absorb 67% of the overseas scholarships provided by the various foreign foundations due to their failure on English tests such as TOEFL and IELTS. Similarly, Novera (2004) reported that most Indonesian graduates could not win a foreign scholarship to pursue their postgraduate study abroad due to their low levels of English proficiency. Thus, it can be concluded that English language education in Indonesia has not achieved the educational objectives. A possible reason for this can be attributed to the teaching approaches implemented in the classroom. Observational evidence asserts

that the prevalent teaching approach is Grammar-Translation Method (GTM). Thus, it is essential to explore if the implementation of new teaching approaches such as the Pair-Interaction Model (PIM) results in substantial improvement in the English proficiency of Indonesian EFL learners. However, to the best knowledge of the researchers, to date, no studies have investigated the effects of PIM on fostering Indonesian EFL learners' proficiency. In response to this gap, the present study is an attempt to examine the effects of PIM on fostering Indonesian EFL learners' proficiency in the higher education context. It is hoped that the results of this study can further the understanding of Indonesian EFL teachers and learners to consider PIM as a good alternative teaching approach to make the way for more efficient learning.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Pair Interaction Model

Pair Interaction Model (PIM) was developed by Yassi in 2009. As such, it has long been designed and examined for its effectiveness for more than a decade. It is found that the teaching model has empirically proven to be relatively effective in improving not only the grammatical competence of the learners but also the four language skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing) of the learners, especially the learners' communicative skills and speaking performance. Unfortunately, regardless of its crucial role in using English well, communication skills have largely been overlooked due to the implementation of Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) in the EFL classes in Indonesia (Yassi, 2009). GTM does well in terms of raising EFL learners' syntactic awareness, morphological awareness, etc., but it is proved to be less effective in facilitating EFL learners' communication skills (Yassi, 2008).

Furthermore, PIM has continuously been studied for its effectiveness in improving learners' English proficiency. Yassi (2012) tested the model for its efficacy in improving EFL learners' English ability in different situations and contexts and a much more comprehensive research site against the conventional teaching method. The findings revealed that PIM was more efficient than the conventional approaches such as GTM. Also, in 2013, PIM was studied for its effectiveness in improving English proficiency against the other interactive-based grammar teaching model employing various small groups. The findings documented that the students who used interactions to complete a task gained more promising results. A similar study was conducted by Yassi (2020), indicating that when EFL learners interacted in pair group activities, they could achieve better results. Likewise, Yassi (2014) examined whether the PIM model could be applied in deductive teaching or inductive teaching approaches. The findings revealed that it was effective for both deductive and inductive teaching approaches. However, it was found that when delivered in deductive mode, PIM was more effective for younger learners. While it was applied in an inductive form, PIM was more effective for adult learners.

2.2 The Nature of the Pair Interaction Model

As an interactive-based model of learning, Pair Interaction Model (PIM) is more oriented toward 'integrated skills' or 'whole language approach' (An & Thomas, 2021). Though the activities are not presented explicitly and structured, the development of four language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing) is viewed as a by-product of the learning outcomes of PIM. This point has become one of the merits of PIM in comparison to other models of teaching English which largely ignore language skills (An et al., 2021). Furthermore, PIM is similar to Task-based Teaching (TBT) in regards to enabling EFL learners to communicate in real situations (Joe & Lee, 2013). However, unlike TBT that designs interactions in a group of 4-5 students, the PIM groups the learners in pairs (two students). This is intended to avoid silence among the other group members that sometimes occurs in the interaction of groups of more than two students (Chin, 2006). One of the common phenomena in the EFL classroom is that the passive and introverted learners tend to remain silent because their mistakes make them less confident in front of their classmates (Lo & Macaro, 2012). Generally, this phenomenon occurs in many English classes in Asia, including in Indonesia (Namaziandost et al., 2021; Tomlinson, 1990). A major part of this problem may be ascribed to the weakness of teaching approaches such as GTM where EFL learners have to interact with the teachers in front of other classmates.

Regarding the focus of learning, PIM emphasizes the internalization of the rules of the English language. Although the focus of education is on the understanding and internalizing of English grammar rules, in its implementation, the grammatical items are in a dialogic form rather than in a narrative one. Thus, such a dialogic grammar teaching material allows the learners to practice speaking skills, including listening skills course while learning the grammatical rules when they perform the given task with their peers in pair work. This aspect is considered as an outstanding merit of the PIM compared to GTM. Moreover, the role simulation is performed alternately by group members and is done repeatedly until the optimal results are achieved. Thus, PIM provides the learners with a high opportunity to practice speaking and listen to spoken English in the classroom. As a result, such a high intensity of practicing speaking in English and comprehending it could improve their speaking performance and listening skills. Concerning the other two skills, writing and reading, they would be automatically enhanced along with their grammatical competence and knowledge (see Kyriacou & Zhou, 2008; Namaziandost & Çakmak, 2020; Yassi, 2014). These studies empirically proved that grammar knowledge correlates positively to writing and reading competencies.

Furthermore, in the interaction, learners perform the given dialogic tasks based on the prescribed role. This clearly shows that PIM utilizes the two language skills, namely speaking and listening, as the primary medium of the interaction. There is a consensus that the effective language learning-teaching process transforms the real world into the classrooms as the learning process or activities of this method are more authentic (Yassi, 2020). Thus, the learners are more interested in and enthusiastic about performing all the given tasks (see, for example, Senior, 2002).

2.3 Grammar-Translation Method

For more than 2,500 years, issues related to grammar teaching were always identified with the teaching of foreign languages (Rutherford & Smith, 1985). This asserts that teaching grammar plays a crucial part in the teaching of foreign languages. Teaching grammar is very likely to have the oldest language teaching history as it dates back to Renaissance (Celce-Murcia, 2001). In those days, classical languages such as Latin were taught using a ‘Grammar-Translation Method’, which first became known in America as the ‘Prussian Method’ (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). With the analysis of the detailed rules of grammar as its typicality, this method emphasized the aspects of the study of literature, followed by exercises in the form of sentences to be translated into the target language or vice versa (Ellis, 1997; Celce-Murcia, 2001; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Although the application of this method continues to this day and is even used extensively against the teaching of contemporary language, it remains unclear whether this method is representative of a theory as no literature is found to give rationalization or justification regarding this method (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The most crucial disadvantage of this method is that it does not leave any room for communication of the target language; in this regard, as it is very important for Indonesian learners to communicate in English, Grammar-Translation Method cannot satisfy their needs (Sugiharto, 2006).

2.4 Theoretical Foundations

The theoretical foundations of the study were drawn from the Constructivism Learning Theory (Bada & Olusegun, 2015). According to this theory, humans acquire knowledge from experiences (Amineh & Asl, 2015). Spivey (1997) enriches the theoretical concepts of Constructivism in terms of learner involvement in an interactive discourse, cooperative learning groups, activities rich in context, and social experiences. Moreover, the theory plays a significant part in the establishment of Dell Hymes’s Communication Theory (Hymes, 1972), commonly called ‘student-centered learning’, and Michael Long’s Interaction Theory (Long, 1990) that emphasizes the role of input and output in second language (L2) development. Other approaches such as the theory of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) of Vygotsky stresses the aspects of a discrepancy between the actual learner’s level of development and the level of their potentialities, that is the learners’ achievement is improved with support from partners or classmates who are more competent (Vygotsky, 1986). In other words, the environment and peers could significantly enhance the learning process (Poehner & Wang, 2021). Thus, the role of social interactions in the development of learners’ cognition is very substantial.

Another theory that derives from the development of Constructivism Learning Theory is the Readiness Approach of Piaget (1981). This theory stresses the need for learners to participate in the process of learning actively. The learning process will likely be more successful if learners are allowed to experiment with their knowledge. Thus, as Arlin (1981) notes, the role of teachers should be reoriented to be no longer the central and dominating figure in a teaching process but instead acts as a facilitator who guides and stimulates learners in carrying out their learning activities. Both of the theories amalgamated to give birth to a learning theory, commonly called Cooperative

Learning Theory (Slavin, 1985). On this theory is the design of PIM based. Vygotsky's approach emphasizes the social aspect of learning, while Piaget's theory emphasizes active learning. Both elements are of paramount importance for designing such an interactive-based English teaching model, PIM (An et al., 2021).

Regarding the methodology, the communicative approach in foreign language learning proposed by Krashen (1982) makes communicative abilities the ultimate goal of learning by developing the four language skills (i.e. speaking, writing, listening, and reading). Meanwhile, Littlewood (1983) claimed that both functional and structural aspects of a language should go hand in hand in communication. While Krashen (1982) stressed the language function, Littlewood (1983) emphasized the understanding of structures in the context of guided exercises to the natural communication activities. In an interaction, language skills cannot be separated. When someone is speaking, other persons must be listening and even making and reading the notes that they have made to check the truth. This phenomenon proves that in using a language, all four language skills are always integrated. At least, we use two skills at once, for example, speaking and listening. This is in line with Harmer (1994) affirming that it is impossible to talk without listening, reading, or writing. Therefore, Brown (2007) confirmed that full integration of the four language skills is the most reliable interactive communication design in English learning.

The learning model that integrates the four language skills is known as the Whole Language Approach (Goodman, 1989). It has been attracting experts in language teaching methodology over the last decade (Mirhosseini & Sharif, 2022). There are various models of learning by using this approach, among others are Content-Based Teaching (CBT) (Lyster, 2017), Theme-Based Teaching (ThBT) (Dirkx & Prenger, 1997), and Task-Based Teaching (TaBT) (Nunan, 2004). The model of CBT is a model that integrates language learning with other sciences, such as biology, history, physics, and the like. It is a learning model that uses the principle of automatic, meaningful, with intrinsic motivation and communicative competence. TaBT is a learning model that focuses on class activities. Nunan (1991) mentions five typical features of a TaBT as follows: (1) the need to communicate in the target language, (2) the use of authentic materials, (3) the provision of learning opportunities as many as possible for the learners, (4) the use of the learners' experience in the learning process, and (5) the creation of a learning atmosphere in the classroom to be just like a natural interaction in a community. Similarly, Richard-Amato (1988) introduced 'Cooperative Learning' (CL) as a technique for effective learning because learners can help other learners in a group of 4-5 people to achieve the group's learning objectives.

Considering these robust theoretical foundations of PIM, it is essential to explore its effectiveness in the improvement of EFL learners' English proficiency. However, the available literature reveals that PIM effectiveness in the improvement of the English proficiency of university students has remained largely unexplored. Thus, the present study purported to explore the effectiveness of PIM in the improvement of Indonesian EFL learners' proficiency. To meet this objective, the research was set to answer the research question "Does PIM lead to improving Indonesian EFL learners' English proficiency compared to Grammar-Translation Method?"

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Research Design

The present study used a quasi-experimental design. According to [Riazi \(2016\)](#), a quasi-experimental design is used to create a cause-and-effect relationship between variables where participants are assigned to groups based on non-random criteria. Therefore, to conduct this study, two intact classes were selected and randomly assigned into an experimental group and a control group in each university. Afterward, they went through pre-test, treatment, and post-test procedures. Overall, the researchers employed a quasi-experimental design to disclose the effects of PIM on improving EFL learners' proficiency.

3.2 Research Participants

To meet the objectives of the current study, a total of 90 EFL learners were selected through a purposive sampling at two private universities in South Sulawesi, Indonesian Muslim University (UMI) of Makassar and Muhammadiyah University of Parepare (UMPAR), and one state university, the University of Hasanuddin (UNHAS) of Makassar. As a form of non-probability sampling, the researchers used a purposive sampling technique to choose participants from a population based on their own judgment ([Riazi, 2016](#)). The underlying reason for selecting the participants was their easy availability to the researchers. The participants included both males (N = 41) and females (N = 49) and aged from 21 to 35 years old. They had been learning English as a foreign language and did not have opportunities to speak English outside of their universities. Thus, this study used three replications, namely, learners of UNHAS (replication 1), learners of UMI (replication 2), and learners of UMPAR (replication 3), comprising 30 students from each of the three universities for both the control (N = 30) and experimental groups (N = 30). Of particular note is that the participants expressed their consent to participate in the study by signing a written consent form (in Indonesian). The researchers ensured the participants' performances during the study would remain confidential, and they would be kept informed about the final findings. It should be stressed that the researchers recruited a well-experienced EFL teacher to run the classes.

3.3 Instruments

The researchers used some instruments to collect the required data. The first instrument entailed two English proficiency tests, including two International English Language Testing System (IELTS) tests ([Crosthwaite et al., 2017](#)) and the grammar part of two Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) ([Gear & Gear, 2002](#)). They were implemented as a pre-test and a post-test to measure the participants' English proficiency prior to and after the interventions. The researchers recruited two well-experienced EFL teachers to select two samples of the IELTS tests. The IELTS tests measure the language proficiency of non-native English language speakers in terms of gains in listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Additionally, to measure the participant's grammar competence, the EFL teachers selected two samples of the grammar part of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

It should be noted that the EFL teachers confirmed the validity of the IELTS and TOEFL tests. In doing so, they went through the test and examined if they had an acceptable level of face, content, and construct validities. However, to measure their reliability, the researchers piloted the tests on 20 EFL students who were similar in terms of English language proficiency to the participants of the main study. The results of Cronbach alpha yielded 0.88 and 0.78, respectively for the pre-test and the post-test which were found to be acceptable for the purposes of the current study.

Another instrument included the first four units of the American English File (Intermediate Level) (Latham-Koenig et al., 2020). As its content was a little higher than the participants' language proficiency, it was adopted to meet the purposes of the present study. This instrument was used to instruct the two groups through the two different teaching approaches. The reason for using the coursebook was that it gives a clear focus on grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation and covers the four language skills fully. It embeds interesting topics and texts that pave the way for EFL learners to foster communicative competence in English substantially.

The third instrument was a rubric adapted from the IELTS test (see Table 1) (Shabani & Panahi, 2020). The rationale for the adaptation from the IELTS rubric to the current rubric was that it could measure the participants' proficiency appropriately. It should be noted that the researchers adapted the rubric using the 0-100 scale because it was a normal scoring practice in the classroom in the Indonesian context. The researchers used it to measure the participants' English proficiency before and after the treatments.

Table 1. The rubric of English proficiency level.

Band Score	Category	Descriptor
≥ 81	Good User (G.U.)	The student possesses a highly effective mastery of the language, even though he occasionally misunderstands messages and gets them wrongly in some situations. Overall, the student can work with complex expressions well.
61-80	Competent User (CU)	Even though the student has some unintelligible forms and misreading, they generally have adequate mastery of the language. The student can work with reasonably complex language, especially in familiar contexts.
41-60	Modest User (MU)	The student has mastery of the language partly. Although the student could perform lots of mistakes, they can work with meaning in various contexts. The student could communicate reasonably well in a familiar context.
21-40	Limited User (LU)	The language mastery is limited to familiar contexts. Hence, the student frequently has problems understanding an expression. The student could not work out well with complex language.
< 21	Extremely Limited User (ELU)	The student could work out well with only the general meaning in very familiar contexts. Thus, communication breakdowns frequently occur.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

The researchers took some steps to conduct the present study. In the first step, they selected the target participants and obtained their consent by signing a written consent form. In the second step, they ran the pilot study to measure the reliability and

validity of the pre-test and the post-test. In the third step, they administered the pre-test to measure the participants' English proficiency prior to the treatments. In the fourth step, the treatments were delivered on two times a week by the instructors which lasted 20 weeks.

Concerning the experimental group, the teacher taught the class in line with the principles and procedures of PIM. In the first session, the same instructor teaching in the three universities learned the participants' names and experiences with English and determined their communication skills by asking some questions orally. In doing so, the participants were invited to demonstrate their communication skills by interacting with the instructor. Then, she created a welcoming and friendly learning environment to help the participants feel comfortable and relaxed in the classroom. Afterward, she displayed how interactions could be used to facilitate English learning process in front of the classroom. To be exact, she clearly showed when the participants were engaged with interactions they could receive input and generate output, which are two crucial things for learning an L2. She encouraged the participants to join interactions and shape positive attitudes toward interactions. After presenting the new learning materials from the American English File, the instructor asked the learners to join their pairs and complete the given tasks to consolidate their learning through interactions with their peers. In actual fact, the learners had to interact together to jointly perform the target tasks. During the completion of the tasks, for example speaking tasks, they had to interact with each other to accomplish them or provide feedback on their peers' performances. In simple terms, the instructors went through the pre-task, while-task, and post-task procedures to accomplish the target tasks. In the pre-tasks, the participants' background knowledge was activated by playing short clips or showing some relevant pictures, and the key chunks and structures were illuminated by presenting them in simple sentences.

In the while-task, the participants jointly interacted together to accomplish the intended tasks. In the post-task phase, the participants' performances were assessed to disclose their communication skills. In all the phases, the instructor moved around the class and monitored the learners to make sure that they were interacting together in English to accomplish the intended tasks. Afterward, she offered appropriate feedback on the learners' performances and interacted with them to gain a clear understanding of the problems with their performance. In relation to the control group, the classes were run using GTM wherein the instructor read out the parts of the textbook and translated them into the participants' mother tongue. The participants had to write down the translations beneath the sentences carefully. They did not have any interactions in English in completing the intended tasks.

In the last step, the researchers administered the post-test to gauge the participants' gains of English proficiency after the treatments. It is worth noting the pre-test and the post-test were administered by two professional IELTS examiners at the agreed time with the participants and the officials of the universities in comfortable places in the universities. It took two hours for the participants to complete the tests and they were administered in four sessions. After that, the grammar section of the TOEFL was administered, and the participants were allotted 30 minutes to complete the test.

3.5 Data Analysis Procedures

To analyze the collected data, the researchers used the SPSS software version 23. Firstly, the data were tabulated and classified based on their respective groups. Secondly, the researchers performed an analysis employing the rubric of English competence levels adapted from IELTS to measure the participants' English proficiency prior to and after the treatments. Next, they calculated the discrepancy between the learners' mean scores in the pre-test and post-test. Finally, they concluded the effectiveness of PIM in improving the learners' English proficiency compared to the GTM method.

4. RESULTS

4.1 The Learners' English Proficiency before the Treatments

As reported in Figure 1, before the treatment, the students' English proficiency in the groups for all three sites, namely UNHAS, UMI, and UMPAR, was about the same, that is, Modest User (MU). Of particular note is that the scores were given by two raters and their average is reported here. The average score for the students of UNHAS was 49.5, 44.2 for the students of UMI, and 40.8 for the students of UMPAR. This figure is substantial in the aspect of reliability of the data as far as the same start for the students' English proficiency is concerned.

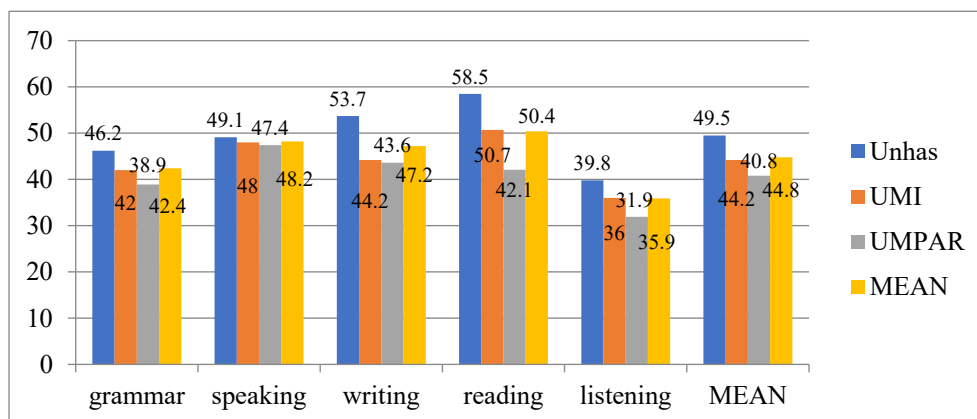


Figure 1. The average scores of the students' initial English proficiency for the control group.

Similarly, Figure 2 presents the average scores of the initial students' English proficiency for the experimental group. They were all in Modest User (MU) level. The average score for the students of UNHAS was 45.6; for the students of UMI, 42.4; and for the students of UMPAR, 40.1. As such, the groups had the same level of English proficiency prior to the treatment.

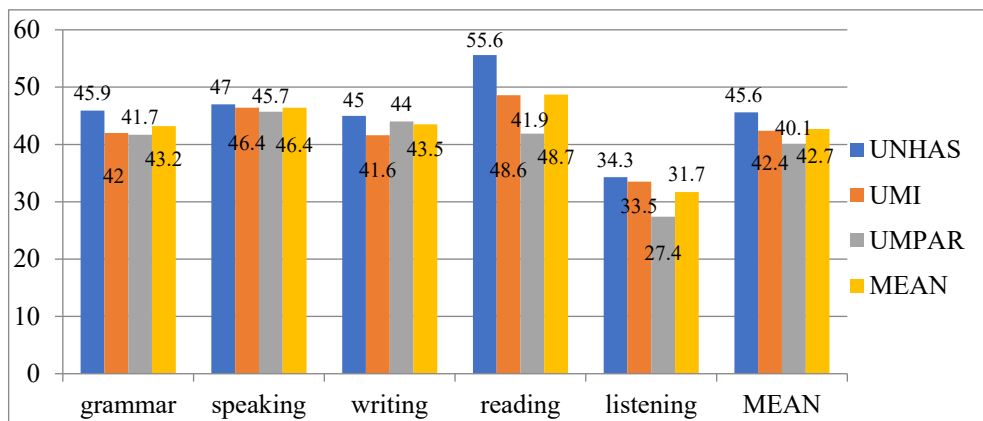


Figure 2. The average scores of the students' initial English proficiency for the experimental group.

Figure 3 reports the comparison between the initial English proficiency of the students between the control and experimental groups at the three universities. As can be seen, the initial English proficiency in both groups was at about the same level, and they were all in the Modest User category. Thus, the eligibility of this study as far as the same starting points for the two experimental groups was met.

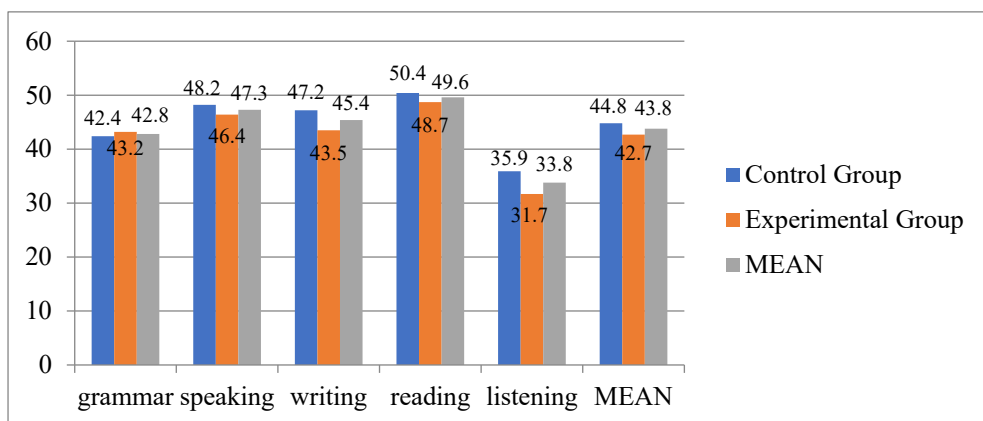


Figure 3. The mean score of initial students' English proficiency of the three universities for both the control and experimental groups.

4.2 The Learners' Types of English Proficiency after the Treatment for the Three Universities

Figure 4 reports the English proficiency of participants from UNHAS after the treatment. The two experimental groups show a positive trend after the treatment. However, the experimental group relatively underscored the control group in all five English competencies. For grammar, the experimental group's progress reached up to 24.3 points while the control group reached only 9.0 points. For speaking, the experimental group's progress reached 33.4 points while the control group reached only 15.1 points. For writing, the experimental group reached up to 23 points while the control group reached up to 8.4 points. Finally, for reading, the experimental group reached up to 16.7 points while the control reached up to 8.4 points. About the listening comprehension section, the experimental group reached up to 10.6 points while the

control group reached up to only 4.0 points. This figure shows that the learners' progress in the experimental group steadily doubled that in the control group at UNHAS (Replication 1).

Figure 5 shows the English proficiency of learners at UMI (Replication 2) after the treatment. As shown in the figure, both groups demonstrated an increase in the learners' achievement regarding the gains of the five different parts of English proficiency. However, the learners' achievements in the experimental group were significantly higher than those in the control group. Significant improvements occurred in the grammar and speaking parts, in which they reached up 73.5 and 76.7 points, respectively. Thus, both parts increased from Modest User (MU) category to the Competent User (CU) one.

Although the points increased, the other parts remained somehow unchanged for the groups. Similar results were also reported for the participants in Replication 3 (UMPAR) (see Figure 6).

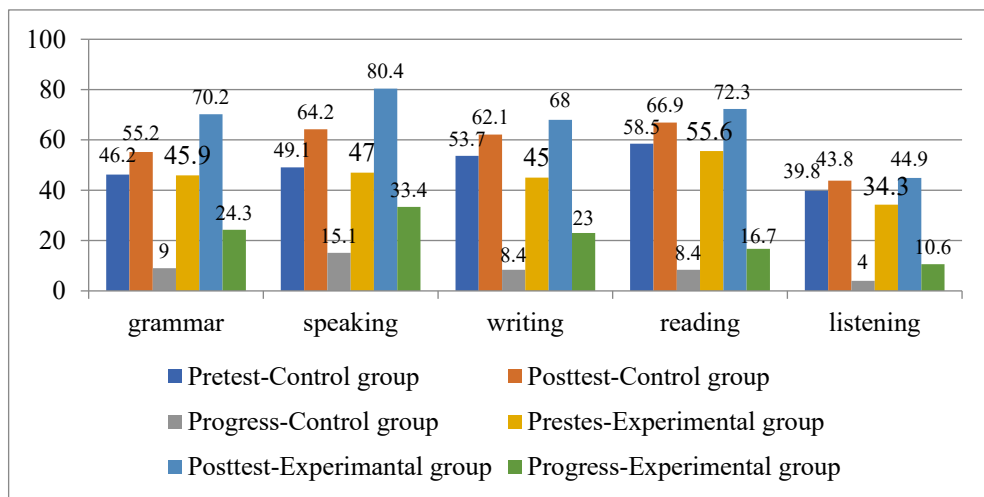


Figure 4. The learners' five types of English proficiency of UNHAS (replication 1) after the treatment.

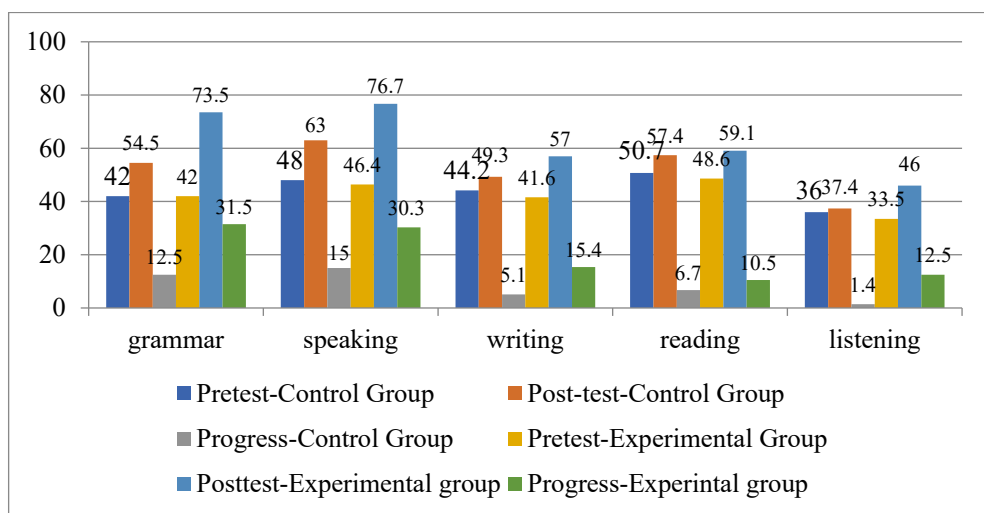


Figure 5. The learners' proficiency after the treatment for replication 2 (UMI).

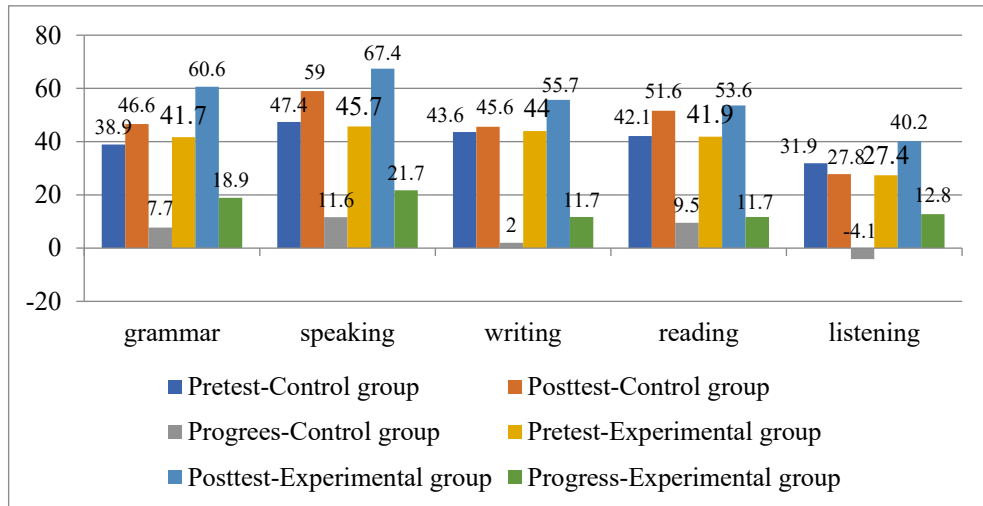


Figure 6. The learners’ proficiency after the treatment for replication 3 (UMPAR).

4.3 The Learners’ Average English Proficiency after the Treatment for All the Replications

Figure 7 presents the learners’ average English proficiency after the treatment for all the three replications. As can be observed, the mean scores of English proficiency in all the three repetitions (UNHAS, UMI, and UMPAR) significantly increased up to one proficiency level, namely from the category of Modest User (M=42.7) to Competent User (M=61.7). In the control group, while there was an increase in their mean scores, there was no change in their category, starting from 44.8 (Modest User) to 52.29 (Modest User). This indicates that the PIM model was more effective to improve the learners’ English proficiency compared to the conventional GTM approach. Moreover, the findings demonstrates that PIM can be considered an effective alternative which could foster significantly the participants’ English proficiency.

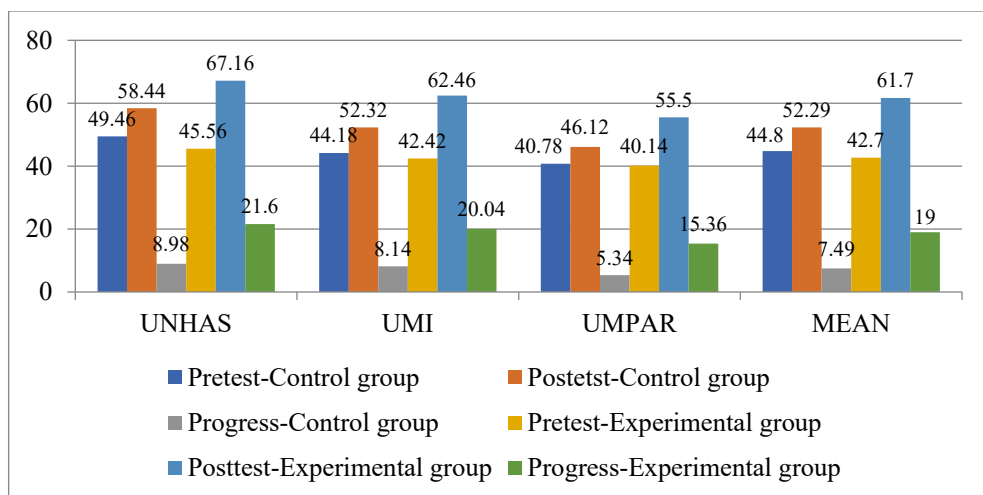


Figure 7. The recapitulation of the average learners’ proficiency after the treatment for all the observed sites.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study are in accordance with those of [Muho and Kurani \(2011\)](#), reporting that a considerable number of their participants found interaction very fruitful to improve their language proficiency. Additionally, the results of the study are compatible with those of [Saito et al. \(2021\)](#), revealing that longitudinal interaction impacted the Japanese EFL learners' oral proficiency regardless of their experience and oral proficiency levels. Further, the findings of the study are in congruent with the results of the previous studies ([Jiang & Zhang, 2019](#); [Rahayu, 2020](#); [Yang et al., 2021](#)), indicating that EFL learners perceived interaction in the classroom as helpful to foster their English proficiency levels.

The findings of the study may be explained using the premises of the Interactive Hypothesis ([Long, 1996](#)). Along with this hypothesis, it may be argued that the conversational interaction among the participants was useful because they might have facilitated “language acquisition because it connects input (what learners hear and read); internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention; and output (what learners produce) in productive ways” ([Long, 1996, pp. 451-452](#)). In line with the findings of the study, it may be argued that implementing PIM might have provided the participants with sufficient exposure to comprehensible input and constructive feedback for their peers, and these resulted in changes in their output ([Gass & Mackey, 2007](#); [Masrizal, 2014](#); [Swain, 2005](#)). To justify the findings of the study from the Interactive Hypothesis, it may be argued that the interaction among the participants might have led to the negotiation of meaning. This, in turn, might have provided the opportunity for the participants to notice the differences between the target forms and their own interpretation of the target forms ([Yang et al., 2021](#)). In a sense, the findings of the study receive support from this commonly accepted principle in the field of second language acquisition: “there is a robust connection between interaction and learning” ([Gass & Mackey, 2007, p. 176](#)).

The significant improvement in the participants' English proficiency at the end of the treatment may be explained from the perspectives of Sociocultural Theory ([Vygotsky, 1986](#)) and Social Constructivism ([Bruner, 1990](#)). These theories state that the social interaction among the participants plays a positive role in the learning process because it places the learning process in the zone of proximal development (ZPD) of the participants ([Rezai, 2022](#)). Accordingly, this might have assisted the participants to co-shape the target forms and structures substantially ([Azizi & Rezai, 2022](#); [Ellis, 2008](#); [Saito et al., 2021](#)). Another line of discussion for the findings from these theories may be ascribed to this widely accepted assumption that the learning process starts from the interpersonal level, and then it is internalized and consolidated at the intrapersonal level with the help of meaningful interaction ([Brown, 2007](#); [Lantolf et al., 2021](#)).

The noticeable gain of the participants may also be justified from the perspective of comprehensible input hypothesis ([Krashen, 1997](#)). Aligned with this hypothesis, it may be argued that when the participants engaged in interaction together, they might have been exposed to sufficient comprehensible input. That is, the interaction among the participants might have made the input be tailored to their needs. Additionally, it may be argued that the interactive input might have been more useful than the non-interactive input due to the interactional modifications which might have occurred in the negotiation of meaning when a communication problem arose ([Ellis, 2008](#)). In other

words, according to the findings, it may be argued that the interactional modifications might have made the input comprehensible, and the comprehensible input might have promoted the acquisition of the target linguistic forms (Krashen, 1991). Long (1996) stresses when participants could negotiate meaning, the input comprehensibility might increase, and they tended to notice the salient linguistic features.

All in all, it can be argued that the interaction may have provided sufficient opportunities to affect the different aspects of the language processes, especially when the participants might have faced communication breakdowns (Yang et al., 2021). This might have allowed the participants to work together to shape the required linguistic knowledge.

6. CONCLUSION

As noted above, the present study explored the effects of PIM on improving Indonesian learners' English proficiency. The results of the study documented that PIM significantly improved the participants' English proficiency. In other words, the findings evidenced that, as opposed to GTM, PIM could facilitate English learning so effectively that the EFL learners could achieve a good command of English at the end of the instruction. It can be concluded that PIM enjoys the required capabilities to be considered an effective solution to the long-lasting problem of learning English in the Indonesian EFL context wherein EFL learners cannot converse in English in real-life situations after attending English classes. Of particular note is that due to the noticeable advantages of PIM to raise the participants' English proficiency, it can be implemented in large classes which are the typical format in Indonesia.

The findings of the present study may have some important implications for different educational stakeholders. The first implication is for the educational policy-makers in Indonesia. They can benefit from the results of this study to consider PIM as an effective alternative to the conventional teaching methodologies. Thus, they can supply the required conditions for the implementation of this approach in the education systems. The second implication is for teacher educators. They can take advantage of the findings of this study to include PIM as a new teaching approach in their syllabus for student teachers. For this, they can instruct the principles and procedures of PIM such that student teachers can implement PIM efficiently in their future classes. The third implication is for materials developers. They can gain a better understanding of the fundamental features of PIM and design and develop the educational materials based on its tenets. The last implication is for EFL teachers who may have been seeking an alternative teaching approach that can meet EFL students' needs. They can accommodate PIM in their classes and make the way for their learners to learn English efficiently.

Given the limitations imposed in the current study, some suggestions for further research are presented. First, as the study was conducted in the setting of three universities in Indonesia, more studies can be carried out in other parts of the country to increase the credibility of the findings. Second, because the current study included university students, further studies can entail elementary school students and high school students with different levels of English proficiency to increase the generalizability of the results of the study. Third, since the present study used a quasi-experimental design, future studies can employ qualitative designs, such as

observation, interviews, and a microgenetic development approach to disclose how PIM leads to improving EFL learners' achievement. Likewise, considering the present study was a cross-sectional study, longitudinal studies need to be conducted to uncover how PIM results in the improvement of English learning over a period of time. Finally, as the present study was book-based, which includes grammar, vocabulary, speaking, etc., further studies on a specific aspect of language proficiency should be implemented, such as peer correction on writing and peer review on collaborative dialogues.

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Group Work in Zoom Breakout Rooms to Enhance English-Speaking Self-efficacy for Active Learning Activities

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Abstract

The study aimed at analyzing the effectiveness of assigning students to work in groups using Zoom breakout rooms to enhance their speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities in an online learning context. Thirty-six students of Diploma 3 of the Accounting Program attending English for Accounting course were purposively selected as the respondents of the study. The data were collected using a three-part questionnaire distributed electronically using Google Forms. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were measured using Pearson correlation and Cronbach Alpha. The students reported that their sources of English-speaking self-efficacy were enhanced as they had opportunities to develop both mastery and vicarious experience of English speaking, received social persuasion in the form of encouragement and motivation from one another, and experienced lower speaking anxiety. The teaching strategy enhanced the students' English-speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities to a moderate level. From being quiet and passive, they gradually transformed into active learners who could ask questions, chair discussions, answer questions, defend arguments, etc. It can be concluded that a group work in Zoom breakout rooms facilitated active learning activities as the students experienced opportunities to enhance English-speaking self-efficacy. There was a significant positive correlation between the use of group work in Zoom breakout rooms and students' self-efficacy to participate in active learning

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activities. Implications and limitations of this current study are presented, and suggestions for further studies are offered.

Keywords: Active learning activities, group work, speaking self-efficacy, Zoom breakout rooms.

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching online during the Covid-19 pandemic posed teachers with incredible pedagogical challenges as many students experienced online learning fatigue (Ebner & Greenberg, 2020). Students' attention and commitment to learning, engagement, and attendance decreased (Hollister et al., 2022; Ubu et al., 2021). Considering this, coupled with their reflection on the failure to have well-engaged online classes in the previous semesters due to a lack of student-student interactions, the authors, who were also serving as the lecturers of the classes, changed the online learning platform to Zoom videoconferencing application. Studies found that Zoom has become one of the most preferred online learning platforms (Agustina, 2021; Correia et al., 2020; Sakkir et al., 2020). Besides being easy to use, a feature that attracts teachers and students to using Zoom is its breakout rooms (hereafter "BRs"). It allows its host to split participants into small groups in different rooms so that students would have more significant opportunities for student-student interactions, collaborations, and discussions (Naik & Govindu, 2022). Working in small groups increases students' participation and enhances their learning experiences, leading to better academic performance (Cavinato et al., 2021).

Despite a large body of research investigating the uses of Zoom application for online learning and its benefits across disciplines (Correia et al., 2020; Sharmin & Zhang, 2022; Venton & Pompano, 2021) and in ELT (English Language Teaching) in particular, there is a paucity in the studies on the use of Zoom to enhance self-efficacy. In the ELT context, the use of Zoom and its BRs was responded positively by students (Bamidele, 2021), increased learners' interactions and engagement (Kohnke & Moorhouse, 2022), increased attendance and speaking participation (Lee, 2021; Nisa et al., 2021), and developed creativity (Putri & Yosintha, 2022). However, its effects on students' speaking self-efficacy are relatively unexplored. This study aimed to fill the gap in the area by focusing on the effects of using Zoom BRs to enhance English-speaking self-efficacy among students to participate in active learning activities. The result of this research is significant because self-efficacy affects students' performance (Mills et al., 2007; Pajares, 2008; Verešová & Foglová, 2018), efforts, perseverance, and emotional reactions to a particular task (Ferrell & Barbera, 2015; Zulkosky, 2009).

Facilitating students to actively participate in group work (hereafter "GW") in BRs potentially enhances their mastery experience as the main source of speaking self-efficacy. More intense interactions in small GW will also serve as vicarious experience as students can have more peer models for their speaking development. In addition to the two other sources of self-efficacy, i.e. social persuasion and affective states (Bandura, 1997; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021; Usher & Pajares, 2008), these mastery and vicarious experience potentially enhance students' self-efficacy. Relevant to these propositions, three research questions were set to guide this study.

- How did GW in Zoom BRs enhance students' sources of speaking self-efficacy information of mastery experience, vicarious experience, social persuasion, and speaking anxiety?
- How was the students' speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities after having GW in Zoom BRs?
- Was there any correlation between GW in Zoom BRs and students' English-speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities?

Speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities is an extension of the self-efficacy construct proposed by Bandura (1997), defined as the student's beliefs about their ability to participate in active learning activities in their English class. Active learning became an issue as more and more lecturers and teachers voiced their concern about students' passivity and even "fatigue," borrowing the term from Wiederhold (2020), in attending online classrooms. They joined the class, but were easily distracted from materials and instructions (Tian & Wu, 2022), experienced a decline in engagement (Luburić et al., 2021), or even left the class earlier without notice to the teacher (Efriana, 2021). Enhancing students' English-speaking self-efficacy to participate and get involved in active learning activities is, therefore, very crucial. How Zoom BRs can be used to address the issue is an urgent and interesting topic to study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Zoom Breakout Rooms in Online Learning

Breakout rooms (BRs) in Zoom is an electronic breakout group (Lougheed et al., 2012; Prince, 2004), where a class is divided into smaller groups to let students discuss a topic. In Zoom, a teacher or a trainer as the host can create separated virtual spaces disconnected from the main room and assigns students or training participants to work in groups independently and conveniently. They can privately talk and share screens and files, which can only be accessed by their peers in the same room (Bailey et al., 2021). This helps them feel more relaxed and less threatened, so interactions among the group participants can be boosted, and independent work can be facilitated (Chandler, 2016). By using BRs, a language teacher can encourage students to create meaning-focused output and more student-to-student interactions, which become essential elements of the success in language learning (Correia et al., 2020; Nation & Yamamoto, 2012).

Previous studies found that using Zoom BRs for online learning was positive, even "overwhelmingly positive" (Venton & Pompano, 2021). Using BRs for an active learning class, in which a few students work in a small group, has increased learning engagement and class attendance. More students voluntarily had the camera on and talked more during the group work. Introvert students spoke that speaking in BRs is more comfortable than speaking in the main room. Studies by Abuhassna (2020) and Lee (2021) on the use of Zoom BRs in English classes found that students were very satisfied with BRs as they could engage in practical conversations with their friends more conveniently and complete class assignments in groups. Nisa et al. (2021) also found that students' confidence to participate in discussions in the main room increased after they had discussed the topic with their friends in BRs.

However, there are some limitations in using BRs (Cavinato et al., 2021). Groups in different BRs cannot interact or share ideas directly unless they return to the main room. This makes communication move at a slower pace. The teacher also can only monitor and interact with a group at one time. If the students in a group are not active and no student partakes in the group discussion, they only get stuck there and learn nothing from the breakout rooms. A study by Sharmin and Zhang (2022) found that students enjoyed the use of BRs as long as they actively participated in doing the assigned tasks.

2.2 Self-Efficacy

The construct of self-efficacy was introduced by Bandura in his social learning theory, which later became popular as social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997). It is defined as people's beliefs in their ability to successfully perform, manage, and control the courses of actions required to complete tasks. Self-efficacy affects how people think, feel, behave, and motivate themselves (Zulkosky, 2009); therefore, it is fundamental and determining. A student with high self-efficacy tends to set a higher goal, has a better commitment to the goal, feels confident to approach difficult tasks, and even treats the tasks as challenges that motivate them to exert more effort, and exhibits a lower level of anxiety (Mills, 2014). These characteristics lead them to better performance and success.

In language learning, studies found that self-efficacy correlates with and influences achievement and performance. For example, Mills et al. (2007) concluded that self-efficacy predicts the final course grade of intermediate-level French students. The study found that students with strong self-efficacy beliefs could use different kinds of learning strategies, had better self-regulation, and could sustain necessary efforts to complete tasks. Therefore, they performed well (Wang et al., 2013). There is also a significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and speaking skills (Desmaliza & Septiani, 2017). Students with high speaking self-efficacy more actively participated in class, studied harder, and demonstrated less adverse emotional reactions when encountering problems (Darmawan et al., 2021). In a survey involving 310 participants, Chen and Hsu (2022) reported that EFL learners with a higher level of self-efficacy tended to challenge themselves with learning content that required higher proficiency, which results in better language skill development.

Practicing the language enhances speaking self-efficacy. The study by Leeming (2017) in Japan with students having quite limited English speaking ability found that after being taught using task-based language teaching (TBLT), which involved students working in small groups, having discussions and conversations with the group members, the students could achieve a significant growth in their English speaking self-efficacy at the end of the semester. A similar research finding was found by Gorsuch (2009), with 150 U.S. undergraduate students learning different languages. Opportunities to practice and use the language increased self-efficacy.

2.3 Student Active Learning

Active learning is a learning process created through activities and/or discussion in a class instead of passively listening to an expert (Cavinato et al., 2021). In an active learning class, students are active and engaged, highly motivated, and involved in

higher-order thinking activities. They take control of their learning and can develop a sense of classroom ownership. They feel that the class belongs to them, not only the teacher. The class atmosphere is more relaxed and conducive to learning (Hinde & Kovac, 2001). Active learning increases students' examination performance (Freeman et al., 2014) and narrows achievement gaps for underrepresented students (Theobald et al., 2020).

In language learning, active learning allows students to speak simultaneously 4 to 5 times more than a traditional class does. It activates multi-sensory learning (reading, listening, and speaking), enabling the brain to retain more of what the students have learned. Therefore, it has become a significant component of language teaching (Devira, 2020). The principles of active learning, among others, are as follows: students are involved in learning, there is a greater emphasis on skill development, students are engaged in various learning activities, and students learn to think the way they learn (Bahri et al., 2011).

An active learning pedagogy is an effective strategy to involve and engage students with teaching and learning activities (Fook et al., 2015; Riggs & Linder, 2016). This pedagogy has been proven effective and is a good fit with the learning styles of Millennials (Donohue & Richards, 2009). However, it had become a challenge for teachers, especially when classes had to suddenly move online. For English as second/foreign language teachers, the challenge was much harder. While active learning requires communication and collaboration, many students were unprepared to do so. Their target language proficiency and other personal factors such as motivation, speaking anxiety, and self-efficacy are major issues prohibiting them from actively participating in classroom activities. This results in passive learning, low engagement, and low performance.

Social cognitive theory suggests that what people believe, think, and feel influences how they behave (Bandura, 1986). In triadic reciprocity, human behavior is collectively influenced by personal agency, self-beliefs, and external environmental factors. Students' participation in active learning activities is much affected by their belief in their abilities. Therefore, a teacher needs to choose teaching practices that potentially foster students' self-beliefs in their ability to participate and get involved in learning activities (Mills, 2014). Using BRs and giving learners ample time to discuss and share ideas in small groups disconnected from the main room, theoretically, will positively affect students' self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities. As Naik and Govindu (2022) suggest, giving students opportunities to have informal communication in BRs develops student psychology and social skills.

3. METHODS

The study adopted a quantitative research paradigm of pre-experimental research as it did neither have a pre-test nor a control group. An important element of the quantitative research design of this study was the experimentation with the teaching strategy of assigning students to have GW in Zoom BRs.

3.1 The Respondents

Thirty-six freshmen attending the English for Accounting Course served as the respondents of the study. Only seven students in this group were male (20%), and their ages were between 18 to 19 years. This group was purposively selected as the class size was not too large for active learning activities. There were some other classes of English for Accounting course in an undergraduate program, but the class mostly had fifty to sixty students. In addition, because this study was not intended to generalize its findings to a bigger population, this purposive sampling method was still considered appropriate.

Although there was no pre-test to measure their initial competence in English speaking and their self-efficacy, the observation within weeks 1 to 3 of the semester showed that most students had low to moderate English-speaking proficiency. During the learning process, they were passive and quiet, and most of them had their camera off and gave a late, even no, response to calls and questions. Poor and unstable internet connection was the common reason for not responding. Many reported that they did not use Zoom for their online learning during their previous years at senior high school and never had worked in breakout rooms.

3.2 Procedure

From weeks 4 to 14, after a general introduction to the topics and modeling for around 15 to 20 minutes in the main room, the respondents were randomly assigned to do GW in BRs. The course itself aimed at developing students' speaking skills through discussions and presentations. In BRs, they discussed topics or questions or practiced specific language skills. On other occasions, they prepared and gave presentations. This group work lasted from 15 to 30 minutes. The teacher visited BRs, observed what was happening, answered questions, and gave explanations if necessary. As they returned to the main room, they had classroom discussions, presentations, and feedback.

3.3 Instrument and Data Collection

The data were collected using a three-part questionnaire written in Indonesian as the respondents' native language. It was distributed to the respondents electronically using Google Forms on Week 15 as they completed the learning activities and prepared for their final exam. The first part of the questionnaire has 16 statements covering four sources of self-efficacy information of mastery experience (ME), vicarious experience (VE), social persuasion (SP), and anxiety coping (AC) (Bandura, 1986; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). It is a Likert-type questionnaire with five scales of agreement, from "strongly disagree" (scale 1) to "strongly agree" (scale 5). The second part collected information about the respondent's perceptions of how the teaching intervention enhanced their speaking self-efficacy sources. It has six questions requiring the respondents to respond on a 7-degree rating scale from "very little" (scale 1) to "very much" (scale 7). The third part collected information on the respondent's speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities. It includes 15 "can-do" statements (Bandura, 2006). The respondents were to respond to them based on their beliefs and confidence in their abilities to do activities in active learning on a

rating of 10 scales of confidence from “not confident at all” (scale 1) to “very confident” (scale 10). The validity of the questionnaire was measured by the Pearson correlation coefficient, while for reliability, Cronbach alpha was used. The questionnaire was proven valid and reliable as the r_{observed} of all the items of the three parts of the questionnaire was higher than 0.329 ($n=36$). The Cronbach alpha of the three parts was consecutively 0.860, 0.864, and 0.987.

3.4 Data Analysis

All the data collected were subject to statistical analysis. The first step was a data completeness check to ensure all sets of data required were complete. A descriptive statistical analysis was the second step. The minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation of each variable were obtained. To check whether there was a relationship between the use of BRs and students’ speaking self-efficacy, correlation analysis was run using the product-moment correlation coefficient or Pearson r (Gay et al., 2012).

4. RESULTS

4.1 Group Work in Zoom Breakout Rooms to Enhance the Source of Speaking Self-Efficacy Information

The effect of assigning students to do GW in Zoom BRs on the sources of speaking self-efficacy enhancement was measured by a questionnaire in a Likert scale of 16 statements requiring responses on the level of agreement. The interpretation was made based on the mean scores. A mean score of 1 – 2.333 indicates the respondents perceived no enhancement, and a mean score of 2.334 - 3.666 indicates the respondents perceived low enhancement. Finally, a mean score of 3.667 to 5.000 indicates that the respondents perceived high enhancement. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the results.

Table 1. The effect of GW in Zoom BRs on the source of speaking self-efficacy.

Statements	Source	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
By doing GW in BRs, I can have enough opportunities to talk about my ideas.	ME	36	4.00	5.00	4.278	.4543
In BR, I can practice giving presentations assigned by the lecturer.	ME	36	3.00	5.00	4.278	.5133
By doing GW in BRs, I can discuss the questions given by my teacher with my friends.	ME	36	3.00	5.00	4.278	.5133
By doing GW in BRs, I can ask my friends about things I do not know very well.	ME	36	4.00	5.00	4.417	.5000
By doing GW in BRs, I can watch how my friends speak and present more closely.	VE	36	2.00	5.00	4.194	.6685
In BR, I can see more students willing to speak.	VE	36	2.00	5.00	3.889	.8204
In BR, I can see my friends who never speak in the main room are able to speak.	VE	36	3.00	5.00	4.056	.5828
In BR, talks and discussions work more intensively.	VE	36	3.00	5.00	4.306	.6243
In BR, we encouraged each other to get involved in the discussion.	SP	36	2.00	5.00	4.250	.6918

Table 1 continued...

In BR, my friends motivate me to express my thoughts.	SP	36	3.00	5.00	4.139	.5426
My friends' interactions in BRs encourage me to get involved in discussions or practices.	SP	36	2.00	5.00	4.306	.7099
BR makes me more motivated to speak and practice the language.	SP	36	3.00	5.00	4.139	.6393
I feel more relaxed when speaking in BRs.	AC	36	2.00	5.00	4.056	.7149
For me, speaking in BRs is not threatening.	AC	36	4.00	5.00	4.389	.4944
Speaking in BRs does not make my heart pound.	AC	36	2.00	5.00	4.000	.8281
My body is not trembling when speaking in BRs.	AC	36	2.00	5.00	4.222	.6375
Valid N (listwise)		36				

Table 1 shows the mean scores of the statements between 3.67 to 5, which means that the respondents agreed with the statements. They perceived that doing GW in Zoom BRs highly enhanced their sources of speaking self-efficacy. They had opportunities to do or practice the tasks of English speaking (mastery experience), to watch other students speak, which could serve as models for them (vicarious experience), and to have encouragement both from their peers and the activities themselves (social persuasion). They also could feel that speaking in Zoom BRs was more relaxing and less threatening, which helped them more confidently participate in the speaking activities.

To see how the teaching strategy, in general, affects the sources of speaking self-efficacy, another set of data is presented in Table 2. Here, students responded to 6 questions on how much the teaching strategy gave them an experience of speaking in English, having models or examples of speaking from both their teacher and peers, how much they felt encouraged to speak, and how the teaching strategy decreased their speaking anxiety. The interpretation of the result was made by referring to the mean score of each response. Three categories were set: low, moderate, and high. The mean scores between 1.00 to 3.00 show a low effect, the mean scores of 3.01 to 5.00 indicate that the teaching strategy had a moderate effect, and finally, the mean scores between 5.01 to 7.00 indicates a high effect of the teaching strategy.

Table 2. The effect of TS on speaking self-efficacy enhancement.

Questions	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
How much did the teaching strategy give you experience of speaking in English?	36	3.00	7.00	6.000	1.095
How much did the teaching strategy give you experiences of having speaking models or examples from your teachers?	36	3.00	7.00	6.139	.931
How much did the teaching strategy give you experiences of having speaking models or examples from your friends?	36	3.00	7.00	5.944	.984
During the implementation of the teaching strategy, how much did you get encouragement to speak in English from your teachers?	36	3.00	7.00	6.417	.996
During the implementation of the teaching strategy, how much did you get encouragement to speak in English from your friends?	36	3.00	7.00	5.861	1.150
How much did the teaching strategy decrease your speaking anxiety?	36	4.00	7.00	5.833	.971
Valid N (listwise)	36				

As all the mean scores are above 5.01, it can be confidently interpreted that the teaching strategy highly enhanced the students' English-speaking self-efficacy. It could create learning situations where they had the experience of speaking in English, observing models and examples of speaking English both from their teachers and peers, having encouragement to speak in English, and also of having low speaking anxiety.

4.2 English Speaking Self-efficacy to Participate in Active Learning

English-speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities was measured by using 15 statements requiring responses on ten scales of confidence, from "not confident at all" (scale 1) to "very confident" (scale 10). The interpretation was made by referring to the mean scores of the statements. Three categories were set: low self-efficacy (mean scores between 1.00 to 3.33), moderate self-efficacy (mean scores between 3.33 to 6.67), and high self-efficacy (mean scores between 6.67 – 10.00). The detailed result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Students' English-speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning.

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
I can speak English.	36	1.00	10.00	6.417	2.222
I can use English vocabulary commonly found during learning and discussions.	36	2.00	10.00	6.639	2.072
I can understand what my teacher and friends mean when they speak English.	36	2.00	10.00	6.861	2.072
I can use English grammar appropriately.	36	1.00	10.00	5.556	2.431
During the discussion, I can express my opinions and ideas.	36	1.00	10.00	5.917	2.256
During the discussion, I can ask questions to the group.	36	2.00	10.00	6.139	2.072
I can answer questions.	36	1.00	10.00	6.111	2.240
I can give English presentations assigned to me.	36	2.00	10.00	6.444	2.248
During learning, I can speak in English without being nervous.	36	1.00	10.00	5.750	2.156
I can ask questions.	36	2.00	10.00	6.278	2.037
During the discussion or group work, I can express my disagreement.	36	2.00	10.00	6.444	2.144
I can chair a group discussion.	36	2.00	10.00	5.778	2.205
During the discussion, I can ask my friends to give opinions.	36	2.00	10.00	6.250	2.209
During the discussion, I can express my critical opinions about a topic.	36	2.00	10.00	6.250	2.062
During the discussion, I can defend arguments.	36	2.00	10.00	6.417	2.170
Valid N (listwise)	36				

Table 3 shows that the lowest mean score is 5.56 (I can use English grammar appropriately), while the highest mean score is 6.86 (I can understand what my teacher and friends mean when they speak English). This is the only statement that belongs to the high category, indicating that the students had a high level of confidence or an increased belief in their ability to understand their teacher's and friends' English speech. The other statements (14 items) fall into the moderate category, suggesting they had a moderate level of confidence in successfully doing the tasks. Therefore, it can be concluded that the students had a moderate level of English-speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities.

4.3 The Relationship between the Teaching Strategy and Students' Self-efficacy to Participate in Active Learning

A correlation analysis was run to see the effect of the teaching strategy and students' English-speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities. The scores of the student's perceptions of the effect of the teaching strategies on the sources of self-efficacy enhancement were correlated to those of the English-speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. The results of correlation analysis.

		Students' perception of the effects of the teaching strategy	Students' self-efficacy to participate in active learning
Students' perception of the effects of the teaching strategy	Pearson Correlation	1	.470**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N	36	36
Students' self-efficacy to participate in active learning	Pearson Correlation	.470**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	36	36

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) value is +0.470 and is significant at 0.01 (2-tailed). This indicates that teaching strategy to enhance sources of self-efficacy information was moderately correlated to the students' self-efficacy to participate in active learning (Gay et al., 2012). The positive coefficient indicates a positive relationship; the higher the students' sense of the effectiveness of the teaching strategy to enhance self-efficacy information is, the higher their sense of self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities becomes. Reversely, the lower the sense of the teaching strategy's effectiveness they have, the lower their sense of self-efficacy is.

5. DISCUSSION

The first objective of the research was to analyze how assigning students to GW in Zoom BRs enhanced the sources of self-efficacy. As self-efficacy is developed by the four main sources of information, namely mastery experience, vicarious experience, social persuasion, and physiological and affective states, in this case, anxiety coping (Bandura, 1986; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021), analyzing the respondents' perceptions about the effects of the activities on the sources of their self-efficacy is a key for the interpretation. The results show that respondents perceived the teaching strategy enhanced the sources of their speaking self-efficacy. The mean scores of all indicators are between 3.67 and 5.00 (see Table 1), which is confirmed by the data in Table 2. The mean scores of the responses to the six proposed questions were between 5.01 and 7.00, which suggests that the teaching strategy had a high effect on the enhancement of their speaking self-efficacy.

Mastery experience is the most influential source of self-efficacy information (Bandura, 1997; Mills, 2014; Usher & Pajares, 2008). It is the experience of doing the

tasks at hand. The respondents agreed that GW in Zoom BRs enhanced their opportunities to talk, deliver presentations, discuss the topics assigned with their teamwork, and ask questions about what they did not know. These are the actual experiences of using English for active learning. The researchers observed the students' activities in BRs by joining each group and staying for some time and saw the interactions among the group members using English. In addition to providing students with actual practices in using the target language in learning activities, GW in BRs also enhanced the respondents' vicarious experience as they observed how the group members talked and interacted in the target language. As more students were willing to speak and take part in the discussion, more models were available. Watching other people perform the task of speaking serves as an evaluative indicator of capabilities by comparing the self with others. This experience is effective as it can raise a student's efficacy belief by fostering the belief that they can do the same, especially when the person performing the task is believed to have the same capabilities as they do (Mills, 2009; Pekmezi et al., 2009). The study's findings augmented the previous studies suggesting that group work in breakout rooms promotes collaborative learning activities (Agustina, 2021; Lee, 2021). This collaboration facilitates students to have the experience of speaking and, at the same time, to have the experience of observing models.

The interactions in breakout rooms could also facilitate the emergence of social persuasion, defined by Chen and Usher (2013) as a kind of encouragement from influential others such as teachers, parents, and peers. The respondents agreed that they encouraged and motivated one another to participate in the discussion. GW in BRs created persuasive nuances that encouraged them to participate in the learning activities. They admitted that the interactions they created encouraged them to get involved in the discussions or practice, which motivated them to speak and practice the language. As Chandler (2016) suggested, GW in BRs can allow students to have peer-to-peer support and contacts and empower them to contribute to the discussion and speak up for their queries and concerns.

The last source of self-efficacy information, the affective state, was also enhanced as they experienced lower speaking anxiety. They could feel more relaxed, so speaking was not threatening. Physical symptoms of speaking anxiety, such as heart pounding and body trembling, could be minimized. This is positive, as anxiety has long been a problem for Indonesian English learners (Hartono & Maharani, 2019). This supports Nisa et al.'s study (2021), which found that working in breakout rooms boosts individual confidence and increases active participation, including, in this case, the reserved students who rarely talked in the main room (Venton & Pompano, 2021). GW facilitates collaborative learning and interaction. Using BRs could enliven group activities (Rucker et al., 2020), better facilitate collaborative learning and interaction, and increase student engagement (Saltz & Heckman, 2020).

The second research question of this study was about the students' English-speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities. The data presented in Table 3 showed that, in general, the respondents had a moderate level of speaking self-efficacy. Except for the statement, "I can understand what my teacher and friends mean when they speak in English," the mean scores of the statements belong to the moderate level. The students admitted that they could speak in English, use appropriate vocabulary, and understand their teacher's and friends' English. Furthermore, they could express opinions, ask questions, give presentations, chair a discussion, express

disagreement, and defend arguments. Although it did not belong to a high level, there had been significant progress compared to the condition during the first few meetings of the class, where most students were passive and quiet. As they were assigned to do GW, their speaking confidence improved, and their participation in learning activities increased. The students acknowledged that they were actively involved in collaborations and discussions by expressing opinions, asking questions, and responding to questions.

Another clear indication of this improvement was when students were voluntarily requested to respond to the teacher's questions or commands as they returned to the main room. During the first few meetings before they were assigned to GW in BRs, the students rarely responded to the teacher's requests or questions. This no-response behavior was evident on several occasions. Despite continuous motivation and persuasion to respond delivered by the teacher, they kept quiet. After being assigned to do GW in BRs, their participation gradually improved. On several occasions of discussion in the main room, several students did raise their hands and voluntarily took the opportunity to take the floor and speak.

The last research question in this current study was whether the teaching strategy of assigning students to do GW in Zoom BRs correlated to students' English-speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities. To answer this question, the coefficient of the Pearson correlation analysis (Table 4) is interpreted. The coefficient (r) is +0.470 and significant at 0.01. The positive correlation means that two correlated variables move up and down in the same direction. The coefficient of 0.470 indicates that the two variables are moderately correlated (Gay et al., 2012). GW in BRs moderately predicts students' speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning. This is in line with the statement that self-efficacy is malleable (Bandura, 1997; Gerhardt & Brown, 2006) and is subject to its sources of information. Providing students with more opportunities to practice the language and get involved in active learning activities through GW in BRs improves self-efficacy. The students' positive sense of success in doing the assigned tasks enhanced their self-efficacy (Ferrell & Barbera, 2015). Zoom, with its BRs, is a good platform for active learning in online classes. As Riggs and Linder (2016) suggest, using BRs encourages students to develop metacognition and reflections and makes the students engaged in learning.

The findings lead to some implications. First, online learning platform affected students' learning experience, satisfaction, and achievement. Students appreciated interactions with their peers and teachers and collaboration in a virtual classroom. Therefore, teachers should use the platforms or applications which make interactions and collaboration possible. Secondly, given the vital role of self-efficacy in performance and achievement and the fact that self-efficacy is malleable, teachers should enhance their students' self-efficacy by designing learning materials and organizing classroom activities in such a way that facilitates self-efficacy enhancement. In an online learning context, small group discussions in BRs can be adopted.

6. CONCLUSION

The objectives of the study were to analyze the effectiveness of a teaching strategy of using Zoom breakout rooms (BRs) to enhance the students' English-

speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities. With the application, the researchers randomly assigned students to work in small groups. They were requested to practice, discuss, share ideas, give presentations, and the like related to the topic of the week. The intervention lasted from weeks 4 to 14 of the semester. The results show that the intervention was effective. The student's sources of English-speaking self-efficacy information were enhanced as they could develop mastery and vicarious experience, be given encouragement and motivation by their peers, and experience low speaking anxiety. As a result, their self-efficacy to participate in active learning improved. A significant and positive correlation lay between the teaching strategy's use and students' self-efficacy to participate in active learning at a moderate level.

There are several limitations of the current study. First, this study was pre-experimental research, and thus the data were collected after treatment only. As we were unable to compare the students' speaking self-efficacy before and after treatment, making a strong claim on the positive effect of GW in BRs on students' speaking self-efficacy, as this current study suggests, is not possible. Second, the researchers were the lecturers of the class. Although it had been emphasized several times that the questionnaire results would not affect the course grades, it was hard to guarantee fair and honest responses from the participants. Another limitation is that the current research did not measure the effect of self-efficacy on performance, so we were unable to prove whether there was an effect or relationship between self-efficacy and performance, as previous studies had suggested. Future research is expected to address these limitations. How interactions and collaborations develop in BRs and how they affect self-efficacy beliefs and performance with a pre-test and a post-test are worth investigating. They will significantly contribute to the growing body of research in this field.

Despite the limitations, the authors believe that the current study can still contribute to our understanding of students' speaking self-efficacy to participate in active learning activities, especially in a virtual learning context. Students of English as a foreign or second language need to make efforts to believe they can speak the language. One effort that teachers can do is to organize classrooms in such a way that facilitates the use of the students' learned language. BRs feature found in Zoom videoconferencing application can be considered as a medium to help in the process.

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Factors Impacting English Teachers' Creativity in Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia

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Abstract

Teachers bring various experiences to the classroom, and their beliefs about 'creative teaching' or 'good teaching' practices are frequently influenced by various factors, including their own teaching experiences, individual motivation, and organizational constraints. This context frames their early efforts to develop creative practices, and recognition of influences further affects the level of creativity displayed by teachers. This study aims to ascertain the factors that affected teachers' creativity in English language teaching (ELT) in contemporary Indonesian higher education. We interviewed twenty Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers about the factors influencing their creativity and their motivations for teaching creatively. We identified three factors which influenced teachers' creativity: their knowledge and teaching experiences, their motivation, and the role of technology. These three factors served as a guide for teachers regarding how they might integrate creativity into their teaching practice. Additionally, Indonesian EFL teachers believed that their creativity was necessary to assist students in learning, create an

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enjoyable learning experience, and encourage students to be creative. This belief appears to be partially due to the affordance of the rapidly changing digital environment which enables student-centred and self-directed learning. Finally, this study indicates that creativity is not instinctive to teachers; however, they can nurture their creativity by accepting their innovative ideas through developing their abilities to teach creatively.

Keywords: EFL classrooms, higher education, motivation, teacher creativity.

1. INTRODUCTION

For over two decades, there has been a growing global recognition of '21st-century skills' in which 'creativity' is recognised as a core competency for students to develop and is embedded in school curriculums. In Indonesia, this was articulated in *Kurikulum 2013* (Al Faris, 2016). Beyond the curriculum, it is routinely described as one of the '4Cs', along with communication, collaboration, and critical thinking (World Economic Forum, 2016). There has been broader interest in the concept of creativity in recent years, and the term is frequently used as an educational imperative for both students and teachers to develop (Aikhenvald & Storch, 2019; Alves et al., 2021; Kettler et al., 2018). Of specific relevance to this study, numerous studies have also examined teachers' creativity in language teaching and learning (Artini & Padmadewi, 2020; Fitriah, 2018; Masadeh, 2021; Wang & Kokotsaki, 2018). In this literature, two factors contribute to the growing interest in creativity at schools: students' fulfillment and their future success as knowledge-based economy participants (Craft, 2003; Kampylis et al., 2009).

Raising educational achievement coupled with 21st-century skills inevitably secures increased employment opportunities and maintains economic performance. Creativity is seen as a strong driver for developing new products or services, solving new problems (Chua et al., 2014), enhancing personal success, and resolving conflict positively (Hennessey & Amabile, 2010). As a result, over the last few decades, an increasing number of policy statements have been made to incorporate creativity into the curriculum to nurture students' and teachers' creativity. However, the definition of creativity in educational settings varies according to the context in which it is viewed (Chan et al., 2019; Larraz-Rábanos, 2021).

Generally, we can recognize creative acts or efforts when we see them, but defining them remains challenging as creativity is expressed in diverse ways (Maley, 2015). Consequently, much of the research mainly focuses on creative practices, creative processes, the concept of creativity, and the creative pedagogy of technology use (Mejia et al., 2021). In contrast, there is a dearth of research that focuses on resources for teachers' creativity development. To fill this gap, this study is intended to provide an answer to the topic of what factors influence teachers' creativity in the classroom within the context of Indonesian tertiary education. The research question for this study is: What factors affect the creativity of English language teaching (ELT) in Indonesian higher education?

Understanding teachers' creativity is pivotal as they are the ones who engage students, present them with challenging ideas, and expose them to the language in

meaningful contexts. It is also interesting to learn about the factors motivating teachers to be creative in their teaching to understand their attitudes and activities in their work environment. One key aspect that may influence teachers' creativity in this study is motivation, as it is a basic need for individuals to achieve 'self-actualisation.' The findings of this study will portray a comprehensive view of the essential elements necessary for teachers to maintain their creativity and the actions they take to keep their creativity current.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Teachers' Creativity

Definitions of creativity vary from one context to another in the literature. Csikszentmihalyi (1988), for example, is known for using creativity as a key construct in articulating his 'flow theory' within positive psychology. In focusing on teacher creativity, this study is informed principally by two key definitions of creativity: one proposed by National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE, 1999) as a 'democratic definition' that distinguishes between teaching creatively and teaching for creativity, and Craft (2005) proposing 'little c creativity' (LCC). According to the democratic concept of creativity, everyone can be creative in their relevant knowledge and skills. In a complementary way, Craft (2005) describes creativity as daily creativity associated with one's ability to cope, identify, and make decisions. These two ideas of creativity are more relevant for understanding teachers' creativity in classroom practices since they both see creativity as a natural ability that all instructors (potentially) have.

While creativity is viewed as a natural ability shared by all teachers, it does not occur automatically. Teachers must possess specific characteristics to teach creatively, and Lin (2011) proposes a three-element framework fostering creativity in teaching that builds upon the NACCCE approach. Likewise, Amabile (1983, 1996) says that creativity results from the interaction of three pivotal components, namely knowledge, creative thinking, and motivation. The first component, knowledge, encompasses pertinent information that serves as the basis for developing innovative products (Renzulli & De Wet, 2010). Creativity occurs when teachers have absorbed sufficient knowledge to ponder, generate connections, and produce new ideas (Cropley, 1999; Feldman, 1999). It requires a level of domain competence, and if they have assimilated the information, they may be able to develop something innovative (Fautley & Savage, 2007; Runco, 2003). A study on the factors influencing teachers' self-efficacy in creative teaching found three key conclusions (Huang et al., 2019). First, school support, the practicality of creative teaching, teacher perceptions of their own creative behaviour, and student expectations affected teachers' intentions to teach creatively. Second, a teacher's self-assessment of their creative behaviour has a significant impact on their confidence in adopting creative instructional strategies and student engagement. The students' expectations are significant for the dimension of student engagement, whereas the expectations of colleagues are significant for the self-efficacy dimension of creative teaching strategies. Thirdly, teachers in suburban and rural schools are more influenced by the school environment, whereas teachers in urban schools are more influenced by student expectations. Even though this study's

finding does not specifically mention knowledge as a contributing factor to creative teaching, teachers' knowledge is critical for their creativity. For example, when they adopt creative strategies, they need a solid knowledge base to modify what they do in the classroom. By sharing information and creative ideas with others, people can foster creativity and create new angles on the same problem (Wang & Noe, 2010).

2.2 Creativity from Three Types of Knowledge

In probing the knowledge component, creativity can draw from three types of knowledge: procedural, declarative, and conditional knowledge (Anderson, 2014; Gardner, 1993; Murphy, 2009). Procedural knowledge, or 'knowing-how', describes both the knowledge and skill of doing things (Anderson, 2014) and explains how to carry out an activity within well-defined processes (Yilmaz & Yalcin, 2012). The emphasis is on cognitive abilities such as decision making, mathematical problem solving, computer programming, and language production (Anderson, 1983). It is frequently associated with changes in knowledge, skills, and task performance (LeFevre et al., 2006). Declarative knowledge or 'knowing-that' is conceptual knowledge or knowing about something (Anderson, 2014). Conditional knowledge is often more complex in combining aspects of 'knowing-when', 'knowing-why', and sometimes 'knowing-if' (Arroyo & Hunt, 2011; Rahmat et al., 2022). Conditional knowledge represents people's comprehension of why a method works or whether or not a technique is accepted (Hiebert & Lefevre, 1986). Anderson (1983) asserts that knowledge begins with declarative acts, the awareness, and control; this control paves the way for the procedural process. Declarative knowledge is the foundation of knowledge transfers. On the other hand, procedural knowledge plays an important role in the conceptual structure and attaining declarative knowledge (Lawson et al., 2000). Alternatively, creativity is also conceived as emergent, sometimes spontaneous and associated with 'mindset' (Crowell & Reid-Marr, 2013; Pretz & Nelson, 2017).

The second term 'creative thinking skills' refers to an individual's capacity to combine previously unrelated pieces of knowledge and comprehend it in novel ways (Fautley & Savage, 2007). The more experienced a teacher is, the more likely they are open to new methods of instruction. They may teach the same topic several times, but they are different each time, for example, in how they improvise in dealing with the materials. As previously said, creativity emerges when people have enough knowledge to ponder, discover connections, and produce new ideas (Fautley & Savage, 2007). Thus, thinking in this context aims to mix and link what instructors know to create a new understanding of information.

The next consideration concerns motivation which, in this context, refers to a desire to solve problems or discover new approaches in creative productions (Amabile, 1983). Creativity occurs when teachers have an access to sufficient information to think, combine, and connect what they have already known. Moreover, Trunnell et al. (1997) also stated that passion, enjoyment in learning, eagerness to help people, and satisfaction motivated teachers to be creative in teaching. According to Hennessey and Amabile (2010), motivation is critical for creative production. It indicates the distinction between what creative people are capable of accomplishing and what they will accomplish in any particular scenario. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivational orientations can motivate people to be creative (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2010).

Extrinsic motivation, such as monetary rewards or status and recognition, may have a limited effect on individual performance. However, people will continue to engage in uninteresting activities regardless of such incentives. This is in contrast to intrinsic motivation. Individuals will perform various tasks and employ a variety of strategies if they are motivated, interested, and enjoy doing so. It is clearly stated that motivation significantly impacts the direction of an individual's behaviour and actions. By being motivated to complete tasks and accomplish goals, people may be driven to the desire for success or the pursuit of excellence by exploring their creativity. That is why [Hennessey and Amabile \(2010\)](#) asserted that motivation is critical to an individual's ability to be creative. It is also supported by the investment theory of creativity, which includes six critical resources for developing individual creativity: intelligence, knowledge, intellectual style, personality, motivation, and environment. It explains why some people are more creative than others ([Sternberg & Lubart, 1992](#); [Zhang, 2013](#)). Again, motivation is a considerably significant part of building teachers' creativity as it encompasses the 'why' creative teachers should be creative teachers.

The ongoing development of the digital environment also provides important context as a stimulus of creativity ([Bruno, 2022](#)). Innovations in digital technology and advancements in specialized fields such as human computer interaction and user experience provide specialist perspective, as they contribute to understanding usability, user appeal and acceptance. Moreover, the increasingly pervasive nature of digital technology means that it is a feature of the environment and more than 'just a tool' to be used. An important caveat, however, is that depending on context digital technology can be experienced as enabling or frustrating. Thus, for teachers there may exist both a need for professional development as well as stimulus to be creative. Among the affordances of the rapidly changing digital environment is that it enables self-directed learning which requires that teachers 'keep up' with developments and arguably compete for students' attention ([McVaugh & Robinson, 2022](#)).

3. METHODS

A qualitative approach was undertaken to obtain an insight into the lived experience of factors sustaining teachers' creativity and reasons for being creative. Twenty EFL teachers (10 males and 10 females) who came from seven different institutions (three state institutions and four private institutions) with more than five years of teaching experience participated in this study. Most of the teachers were ELT professionals with postgraduate degrees, and only six of them had bachelor's degrees. They teach English at non-English departments in universities in East Java, Indonesia. They were specifically selected based on three criteria: (1) teaching in fields other than English; (2) possessing ELT credentials; and (3) possessing at least three years of teaching experience. Establishing these criteria is critical for three reasons.

First, students majoring in non-English subjects, such as Mathematics, Science, Information, and Technology, may exhibit a different level of motivation than English majors. Teachers must develop their creativity to meet the challenges. Second, we noticed that many EFL teachers in fields other than English lack ELT credentials. They are employed as a result of their international education. This ELT qualification is crucial for ensuring that instructors have the appropriate knowledge and abilities to teach ELT, since this study recognized teachers' inventiveness. Third, we assumed that

instructors with at least two years of classroom experience would be better at innovative teaching than teachers with no experience. To elicit rich and comprehensive information about the subject, we conducted semi-structured interviews with twenty EFL teachers, allowing us to develop questions in response to the participants' responses (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Gall et al., 2007).

This study used a thematic analysis in analysing the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Flick, 2014). The analysis began with the researchers becoming familiar with the data by transcribing the interviews. Since all of the participants were English teachers with ELT qualifications, the interviews were done in English. When they ran out of suitable words to convey their ideas, some of them turned to Bahasa Indonesia. The transcription enabled us to gain our first understanding of the data. After that, we read the entire dataset and assigned notes or codes to each statement. The notes or codes represent the participants' statements' content or meaning. It was a recursive process that required constant back-and-forth movement between the entire dataset. We followed the same procedure with the twenty interview transcripts. Then, we created a 'codebook' containing the coding list from twenty interviews, categorized them, and classified them into themes. In reporting on this research, codes are used throughout the discussion to refer to each participant for ethical reasons.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We identified three factors that influence teachers' creativity: their knowledge and experience, their motivation to be creative, and the role of technology (see Figure 1). The participating teachers gained knowledge and experience through various avenues: formal education, professional development, on-the-job training, and teaching experience. They believed that each of these experiences aided in the development of their knowledge and teaching abilities. *Motivation* is defined as a strong desire or interest in discovering new ways, resolving problems, and enhancing teaching practices that result in creative production. Teachers believed that technological tools such as the internet, mobile phones, YouTube videos, and laptops enable them to explore their creativity by transforming their concepts into reality.

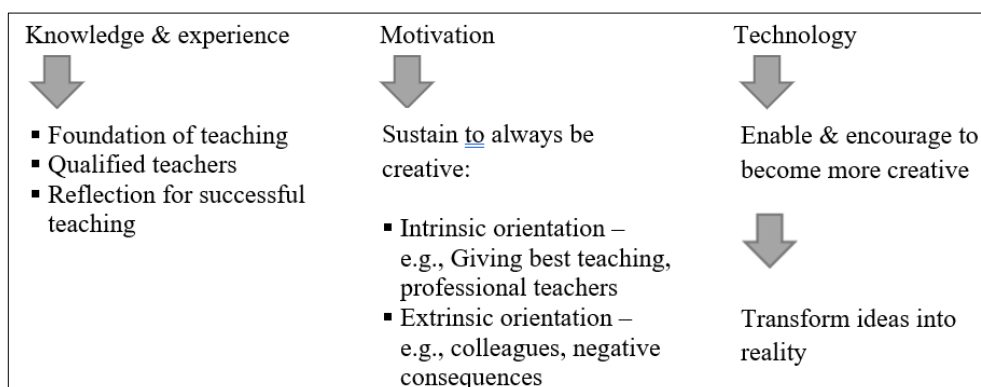


Figure 1. Factors influencing teachers' creativity.

4.1 Knowledge and Experience

As previously stated, teachers gained their knowledge and experience through formal education, professional development, learning experiences, and teaching experiences. Their formal education gave them a solid foundation and comprehension of the theoretical components of teaching. They became qualified teachers after completing professional courses and on-the-job training. Their academic experience may perform as a mirror for effective teaching. Teachers believed that formal education was necessary for establishing a solid foundation for teaching, but they gained additional knowledge through professional development courses and their teaching practices. RD, for example, stated unequivocally that his formal education provided him with a foundation for teaching, and he was aware that the emergence of technology might alter how people view education. As a result, he was required to adapt to change by utilizing technology (e.g., the internet) to align IT development in the classroom. RD's creativity came from combining what he learned in formal education using technology to increase students' engagement. Two teachers shared a similar view of the advantages of formal education in providing English knowledge. They were required to take professional courses and reflect on their current practices to enhance their teaching abilities and creativity.

Additionally, they explained that taking professional courses enhance their thinking and creativity. Professional development courses increased their motivation and confidence in teaching because they allowed them to meet new people, discuss specific issues, and share their concerns with others (GD; WD). This indicates that professional development courses serve as a mirror for how a teacher should behave. They may discover new approaches or strategies they had not previously considered, which benefit their thinking and creativity.

- (1) My education gave me a foundation, but education has changed so much in the last ten years with the emergence of technology. Nowadays, the internet is ubiquitous, and students do not like to read much. (RD)
- (2) My skills were developed not only from the university; I obtained more experiences from my previous institutions. The university just gave me a theory. I learned a lot from my teaching practices. (GD)
- (3) I learned a lot from the professional courses I attended. When I did my Bachelor's and Master's Degree, I only learned English, but I learned the way to teach the students somewhere else. (WD)

All participants agreed that professional development courses were helpful in the development of their knowledge and teaching abilities. They improved in various areas, including pedagogical skills, motivation, confidence, personality, and assessment. Most teachers indicated that they gained valuable knowledge about meaningfully transforming information and creating an encouraging learning environment for specific language skills.

Two teachers reported that professional development increased their motivation and confidence in the classroom. This may occur as they gain more teaching experience and become more familiar with the subject being discussed and how to manage a class. For instance, when teachers observe students' reluctance to participate in classroom activities, they can take different approaches to resolve the issue. However, participants recognized that they could not immediately apply what they learned in professional development courses to their classroom practices. There was a need to adjust and choose a specific issue, approach, material, or method to address

the students' diversity. Thus, the two teachers emphasized that there was no quick way to develop their skills and creativity; it took time and effort to teach confidently. What they learned from professional courses was a critical component of their creativity.

Another important source of knowledge for teachers is their own experience as learners, or in other words, as 'reflective practitioners' (Schön, 1991). This experience, be it positive or negative, had a positive effect on teachers' creativity. Positive learning experiences identified include learning with teachers who could explain the same concept/topic in various ways and employ a variety of strategies to motivate students to learn. Negative learning experiences include being in a boring class with a strict teacher. These experiences inspired participating teachers to act similarly to their previous teachers and do something different when they felt their previous teachers' actions were not a good instructional practice example. For instance, RD believed that the ability to explain the same concept in various ways aided students in comprehending the materials. RF encountered an unfavorable learning environment, but he did not perform in the same manner as his previous teacher. He believed that being a strict or harsh teacher hindered students' learning, and he had his vision of the ideal classroom. As the study notes, both positive and negative learning experiences positively affect the way these teachers teach. Positivity in the classroom teaches them how to create an ideal, encouraging, and interesting class. At the same time, an unmotivating learning environment informs them of the attitudes and behaviors that may impede students' progress.

4.2 Motivation

Another factor that contributes to teachers' creativity is motivation. This refers to a strong interest in figuring out how things work, solving problems, and improving one's skills and creativity and depends on self-reflection. This study identified two distinct motivations: intrinsic and extrinsic motivations (see Table 1). Intrinsic orientation entails an individual's satisfaction, enabling them to be creative in their teaching and an awareness of their responsibility to be creative. Extrinsic motivation refers to external factors that can help teachers develop and encourage their creativity. This study's intrinsic orientation includes providing students with novel and superior teaching, successfully performing teaching, being professional teachers, feeling satisfied with successful teaching, and feeling disappointed with unsuccessful teaching. Colleagues' accomplishments and institutional evaluations of teachers' work were extrinsic motivators for teachers' creativity.

Table 1. Type of motivation.

Intrinsic	Extrinsic
Giving something new	Colleagues' achievement
Providing best teaching	Institution evaluation
Being professional teachers	
Performing successful teaching	
Satisfaction for conducting successful teaching	
Disappointment for doing unsuccessful teaching	

As illustrated in Table 1, intrinsic orientation is critical for teachers to maintain their creativity. Four teachers reported that providing students with innovative and effective instruction motivated them to be creative and perform acts of creativity in the

classroom. They hoped that they would inspire the students to do the same by demonstrating their energy. As a result, when they visited the classroom, they ensured that their students received the best instruction possible. Teachers recognized that developing something new was necessary to accommodate students' diverse personalities, learning styles, and abilities. Notably, these teachers teach adult learners: they cannot simply hand students an answer; they must provide adequate opportunities for students to identify and solve problems and achieve educational goals. FJ stated that he needed to make teaching beneficial and meaningful, which he could accomplish by providing the best instruction. He appears to understand that his actions may affect students' thinking and perceptions of what constitutes a good education. Providing the best instruction is his responsibility as a teacher. The best teaching is when teachers offer something novel and different: for example, a difference in enhancing students' learning, a difference in using the materials, or a difference in transforming information.

- (4) I always believe that in life we have to do the best things we can, so we can be someone meaningful: meaningful for others. That motivates to be creative. (FJ)
- (5) I want my students to have a good learning experience. They may be a teacher someday so they can learn from my teaching on how to create an enjoyable classroom. (FD)
- (6) What motivates me? I always have new students every year. New students mean new characteristics, new persons with different characteristics. This motivates me to give something new for them. (FB)
- (7) It's self-satisfaction when I can create something new, I can make the students motivated, they will have fun in their learning, and I'm also satisfied with my own teaching strategies. That's the reason of why I am trying to always make something new. (AN)

Another intrinsic motivation identified was pursuing a career as a teacher. Two teachers stated that their desire to be professional in their work motivated them to be creative in their teaching. They desired to appear professional and engage students in their instruction (DN; RF). RF defined professionalism as successfully imparting knowledge by creating an enjoyable learning environment. If he can accomplish this, he can serve as a role model for his students. In this instance, being a professional teacher entails creating an enjoyable learning environment and assisting students in their learning. They believed that they could influence students' perceptions of, for example, how to teach creatively by being professional.

The last intrinsic orientations reported were satisfaction with successful teaching and disappointment with ineffective teaching. The majority of the teachers indicated that they would be satisfied if they could teach successfully, which they defined as students comprehending the materials. MN, ID, HN, and GD indicated that they would be excited if students demonstrated comprehension of the lesson. MN expressed how pleased she was to create something new, motivate students to learn, and engage them in enjoyable activities. Additionally, it was evident that her instructional strategy was effective with students. GD presented an eloquent case for her passion to teach. She knew that her responsibility was to assist students in reaching their greatest potential and that she would be happy if she could do so.

Teachers, interestingly, admitted that their work environment, or extrinsic incentive, was one of the elements motivating them to be innovative in their teaching. This relates to the atmosphere that fosters creativity in teachers, such as peer accomplishment and institutional assessment. Two teachers stated that their creative coworkers pushed them to be innovative and that they would feel ashamed if they

could not be as creative as their colleagues (FD; DN). Therefore, creative coworkers positively affect teachers' perceptions or attitudes toward teaching. They may feel embarrassed if they continue to teach in the same manner without attempting to make their classrooms more enjoyable.

Furthermore, these teachers have a competitive advantage. Students typically compare what DN does in the classroom to what other teachers do, signaling that he must be creative in his instruction, according to DN. Another driving factor in the job was avoiding unpleasant results. DN remarked that institutional assessment drove him to be unique in his teaching. Perhaps his institution conducts a survey to evaluate the performance of teachers. DN appears to be concerned about the ramifications of his poor teaching performance. It may have a survey employment status; for example, if he cannot demonstrate extraordinary accomplishment, the institution may opt not to extend his contract.

4.3 Role of Technology

Participating teachers recognize the value of technology in their creative practices and incorporate it into their classroom instruction through laptops, computers, Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) projectors, the internet, social media, PowerPoints (PPTs), and YouTube videos. Among the technological tools listed, audio-visual materials (e.g., videos and PowerPoint presentations) and hardware (e.g., laptops and LCDs) are most frequently used. LCDs and laptops/computers are standard equipment in all classrooms, and teachers use them in conjunction with PowerPoint presentations. When they present information using PowerPoint presentations, they automatically utilize a laptop/computer and LCD projector to transform the information easily. YN, for example, stated that using PPTs enabled her to explain the materials better because she could attach images and hyperlinks to relevant videos.

Another teacher noted the value of using technology (e.g., a video recorder), particularly when requiring students to complete a speaking project outside of the classroom (RF). He asked students to video record the activity and upload it to Schoology (a learning management system) to identify and provide feedback on their conversation recording. The two teachers appear to recognize the pedagogical benefits and potential of incorporating technology into their practices. It is up to their creativity to maximize their use of technology to make learning more meaningful. For instance, RN used PowerPoint presentations that combined images and video. She may believe that the presentation will be unappealing if she uses only words on the slides. Additionally, videos can supplement information about a particular subject and help students better understand the subject. Thus, technology-mediated processes encourage these teachers to be more creative in their practices, particularly when selecting appropriate technological tools and combining them with other resources to benefit students' learning and achievement of goals.

Additionally, the majority of the teachers reported using the internet in their classrooms. They did not, however, use it live in their actual teaching. They prepared their lessons using the Internet outside of the classroom. They believed that the internet facilitated the expression of their ideas and the exploration of their creativity. RD and DD accessed resources via the internet. RD, for example, required internet access when he asked students to participate in a class debate. The students conducted their research outside of the classroom, on the internet. RD provided learners with creative

spaces to search for and select information to complete their tasks. Students may need to develop a specific strategy for defending their opponent's argument during class debates, such as using logic and clear reasoning. They can do so if they are conversant with and understand the subject. Internet technology enables students to access educational websites, articles, and other resources that aid their comprehension of specific topics.

MY required internet access, particularly when asking students to engage in fictitious travel. The students researched the most beautiful places they desired to visit and pretended to book the flight and hotel to accomplish this. MY was able to carry out this activity using internet technology. Thus, internet technology encourages students to engage in real-world scenarios/conditions associated with virtual travel. What MY did may help students describe their dream travels more accurately because they had factual information about the location they wished to visit, the hotel they intended to stay at, and the flight they wanted to book. MY's ideas and creativity flourish because of the technology. If there were no internet technology, students might have not been able to make an online reservation or search for affordable accommodation. Thus, technology is critical in bringing MY's ideas and creativity to classrooms.

- (8) I need the internet to research a class debate. I do not teach it, but I supervise the students in doing the research. For example, when they are doing the debate, they need to search for information. The students do this outside the classroom. (RD)
- (9) I need to use the internet because the library provides limited resources. I use the internet not in the classroom, not during the teaching and learning process but outside the classroom. (DD)
- (10) I use the internet when I teach speaking classes. I usually ask the students to imagine their traveling by Googling the most exciting place in the world they want to visit. So, they search on Google to find the best place for them to visit, and they make an online booking for flight and hotel. They can do this because of the technology. (MY)

Interestingly, despite technology's positive effects on creativity, teachers are also aware of its limitations. MY recognized that creativity was not dependent on facilities. A typical classroom tool, such as a 'ball,' may be the source of teachers' creativity. Being creative is associated with teachers' intelligence, and creative teachers can utilize a ball as an excellent tool for performing creative teaching. She emphasized that creativity is not contingent on technological advancements such as the internet. Although the internet is a critical tool for examining teachers' creativity, it is not the only one, as creativity can be found everywhere (MY).

5. DISCUSSION

The study's findings indicated that three factors influence teachers' creativity: knowledge and experience, motivation, and technology. This suggests that knowledge and learning experience are essential in developing teachers' creativity. When they have a certain base of knowledge, they can produce something new. Creativity occurs when someone has absorbed enough knowledge to allow them to think and produce novel insights (Cropley, 1999; Feldman, 1999). Studies also indicated that teachers with more professional knowledge were able to produce creative pedagogy by incorporating their own learning objectives into professional development activities (Bae et al., 2013; Hughes, 2005). In other words, teachers with less professional

knowledge (e.g., pre-service or novice) may still require supervision or professional learning opportunities to perform creative teaching. In learning contexts, teachers use their prior knowledge and experience to interpret, challenge, or evaluate new knowledge, and the “extension and enrichment of their professional knowledge base” is crucial for their lifelong learning (Borko & Putnam, 1995, as cited in MacPhail et al., 2019). Therefore, knowledge is essential because it can help them decide what to do in the classroom.

This finding confirms two sources (e.g., knowledge and motivation) for creativity in the investment theory of creativity (Sternberg & Lubart, 1991, 1995). Specifically, this study addressed Sternberg and Lubart's (1995) two approaches to a certain extent, but it does not encompass all facets of the investment theory of creativity's person-centered approaches. In this study, knowledge, experience, and motivation refer to teachers' needs and commitments to develop their skills to perform creatively. Therefore, knowledge, experience, and motivation are all oriented around the individual, whereas technology is oriented around the context.

According to Zhang and Sternberg (2011), a person-centered approach entails pursuing untested but valuable ideas. Teachers in this study believed that the knowledge they acquire through professional development courses and teaching experience is critical to their skill development. Each time they take a particular professional course, they may use the information to reflect their classroom practice: for example, have they implemented the discussed approaches? If not, or if they believe their strategies are ineffective, they may change or adjust them to the situation. As a result, their knowledge through professional courses and teaching experiences can foster personal development and boost creative performance. Teachers in this study view technology through the lens of the investment theory of creativity's context-centered approach or environment. It is a method of addressing the current situation or context. Teachers may notice that students are more comfortable with technology use nowadays. Thus, they use this tool to engage students' creativity and encourage them to take risks by implementing creative ideas. This section will expand on the three critical components of teacher creativity identified in this study (knowledge, motivation, and technology) and explain why those three resources are critical for Indonesian teachers.

First, knowledge and experience are the primary sources of teachers' creativity, and they serve as a foundation or starting point for creative endeavors. Teachers gained knowledge in various ways, including formal education, professional development, personal experience as learners, and teaching experience. These experiences developed their pedagogical and cognitive abilities, increased their teaching confidence, and deepened their understanding of effective or creative teaching. According to scholars, knowledge is a necessary component of the creative process (Jordan & Charlile, 2012; Renzulli & De Wet, 2010), serving as a foundation for individual creativity (Weisberg, 1999). Therefore, when teachers lack sufficient knowledge, there appears to be a constraint on creative performance.

Amabile (1998) defines knowledge as information that enables individuals to solve problems, and this data serves as a foundation for developing new understanding. Referring to the study's findings, participating teachers stated that they gained knowledge through learning experiences, whether they are positive or negative. These educational experiences shape their perceptions of effective teaching and the classroom role they should play. Teachers may compare their past teachers' messages

and behaviors, and their beliefs about professional practices may justify or affect what they do in the classroom (Devine et al., 2013; Karekatti & Shinde, 2012). Individuals become creative when surrounded by enough information to think, make connections, and develop new insights. Thus, knowledge is a necessary component of an individual's creative performance. Without knowledge, teachers will be at a loss for where to begin as novel ideas and behaviors emerge, at the very least, from prior knowledge or experience (Masadeh, 2021; Renzulli & De Wet, 2010; Zhang, 2013; Zhang & Sternberg, 2011).

Motivation is the second source of teachers' creativity. As illustrated in Table 1, this study identified two distinct motivational styles: intrinsic and extrinsic orientations. The majority of the teachers stated that intrinsic motivation was critical to maintaining their creativity. To be creative, one must be intrinsically motivated and focus on the task at hand rather than on the potential rewards. Typically, innovative ideas that result in successful products result from extensive trial and error over a relatively long period. Individuals cannot be truly creative unless they genuinely invest in the task at hand (Zhang & Sternberg, 2011). Some research has demonstrated the critical nature of such motivation for creativity (Auger & Woodman, 2016; Hennessey & Amabile, 2010).

There are two reasons why intrinsic motivation appears to be the most influential factor in motivating them to be innovative in their classroom instruction. First, the teachers appear to understand that their job is to educate and make a difference, at least in the classroom setting. They made an effort to be creative as part of their role as educators. This finding is consistent with other research demonstrating the critical nature of creative people's dedication to their jobs (Auger & Woodman, 2016; Kreitler & Casakin, 2009; Zhang & Kitalong, 2015). Second, teachers did not work in the hope of receiving external recognition for their efforts or accomplishments, such as high salary or social recognition. They were, however, creative in the hope of improving students' performance. 'Improving students' performance' appears to be their reward for being creative in their teaching. Although they did not express it explicitly, their intention to give something new, provide the best teaching possible, and become professional teachers reflects their sense of fulfillment. It was a form of reward for them, and they took pleasure in doing it. As teachers in this study noted, being creative enables them to be excellent and professional educators. Good teachers were able to assist students in learning to their full potential, and achieving this goal was satisfying (Harmer, 2010; Hediandah & Surjono, 2020).

Technology is the final source or stimulus for teachers' creativity. Teachers can foster everyday creativity by incorporating technology into their instructional practices. In this study, teachers used various technological tools in their creative practices, including a computer, a mobile phone, the internet, an LCD projector, and videos. The frequency with which it is used varies from one teacher to another. Additionally, the majority of the teachers used the internet in their teaching practices, but not in the classroom. Teachers used the internet to prepare for classroom activities. Teachers, for example, used the internet to conduct a 'class debate' or a 'class presentation' on 'virtual travel'. They instructed students to conduct pre-class searches on the internet and directed them to search for information they needed for the activity. The internet is a necessary tool for information retrieval, and teachers can use this activity due to the Internet's existence. Thus, internet technology enables educators to create authentic situations and access reliable information (Fitriah, 2018). According

to scholars, the application of technology can affect how teachers and students work (Fautley & Savage, 2007; Henriksen et al., 2016), and technology can transform teachers' ideas into real classroom activities (Alobaid, 2020; Jordan & Charlile, 2012; Szymkowiak et al., 2021).

Any technological tools used by teachers in this study had a beneficial effect on their practices. Audio-visual materials (e.g., videos and PowerPoint presentations) and hardware (e.g., laptop and LCD) assisted teachers in meaningfully transforming the information. Teachers used the internet to access supplemental materials and bring their ideas and creativity to class. This study demonstrates that being creative does not require students to exclusively use the internet in the classroom. Teachers can use other technological tools to stimulate creative activities, such as electronic devices and audio-visual materials. They can still create interesting and creative activities and encourage learners' creativity using these tools. The critical point is that teachers understand how to incorporate or utilize technology into their instruction to align with students' interest in digital practices (Chun et al., 2016; Fitriah, 2018). Any technological tools used by teachers are a necessary component of teaching. Teachers in this study did not prioritize technology use, and technology could not transform teachers' knowledge. Technology by itself does not generate ideas; it can supplement skills by facilitating experimentation and exploration (Jordan & Charlile, 2012). Technology implementation can be meaningful or effective if teachers understand the 'know-how' of integrating it into classroom activities.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study found three key aspects in driving teachers' creativity to accomplish their tasks: knowledge and experience, motivation, and technology. They could perform at a high level of creativity if they had the necessary technical knowledge and skills. Attending academic courses and reflecting on previous classroom practices were critical for their personal development as they gained valuable insight into what constitutes effective teaching. Additionally, when a teacher was willing and motivated to continue learning, they could improve their knowledge, competency, and creativity in education. The finding emphasizes the critical nature of teachers' motivation, enthusiasm, and dedication to their profession. Their performance and attitudes did not only assist students in comprehending cognitive information, but their vitality also enabled them to inspire students' enthusiasm. Another point made in this study is that teachers used technology to assist them in actualizing their creativity meaningfully and excitingly. However, technology could not do all of the work on its own, and it needed to be used with other factors, like teacher creativity, student participation, frequent interaction, and cooperation.

The study's findings have three significant implications for EFL educators and researchers. First, this study established that for the cohort studied, intrinsic motivation is the primary factor influencing teachers' creativity. However, as a limitation, there is no information about how these teachers teach in their classrooms. As a result, future research should include classroom observation to understand teachers' creativity better. Second, teachers emphasized the critical role of technology in bringing their ideas into their classrooms. Future research should therefore also concentrate on the creative pedagogy of technology integration in classroom practices and how teachers

incorporate technology into creative classroom activities. Third, there is insufficient information about teachers' creativity from the students' perspective. Thus, future research could examine students' attitudes toward creative pedagogy.

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Students' Perception toward the Use of Open Educational Resources to Improve Writing Skills

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Abstract

Open educational resources (OER) can be used by English as a foreign language (EFL) students to improve their language skills, such as writing skills. The purpose of this study was to find out the students' perception of using OER in improving their writing skills and to identify factors that affected their perception. A quantitative approach in the form of a descriptive survey design was used in this study. The study was conducted at Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta, Indonesia, with 270 EFL students as the participants. The survey adopted two previous studies in which the data were analyzed using descriptive analysis, Pearson product-moment, and multiple regression analysis. The finding revealed that most students had positive perceptions toward using OER to improve their writing skills. Perceptions of using OER were influenced by interest factors (type of writing activity, type of learning writing delivery), experience factors (teaching effectiveness in the writing skills, cost of education), and from the participants, including gender. It is crucial to maximize the use of OER from different aspects, including quality, value, cognitive, affective, and course quality, particularly to increase their perception toward using OER in improving writing skills.

Keywords: EFL students, open educational resources (OER), perception, writing skill.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Writing, as one of the English productive skills, is very crucial in communication. This language skill becomes an important skill for providing personal links without having to meet each other (Graham et al., 2013). It is also one of the essential language skills since it is tested in the most standardized assessment, particularly to measure the academic success of the students' knowledge and writing proficiency (Harmer, 2004; Tan, 2011). Besides, the students' writing is a reflection of the power of their language (Triana et al., 2020). Therefore, writing as a productive skill plays a crucial role in language learning.

Some studies reported that writing in higher education has been considered a problem among learners. The problem from the students' point of view, especially in a writing class, includes problems in the writing aspects and students' personal experiences (Hutchison, 2019). Problems in writing aspects consist of linguistic problems (grammatical structure, word form, word class, word error, and article usage) and cognitive problems (organizing paragraphs, having word class difficulties, forgetting generic structure, using correct punctuation, and drawing a proper conclusion) (Rahmatunisa, 2014; Toba et al., 2019). Meanwhile, students' experience problems include a lack of writing practice (Ismail et al., 2012; Rahmatunisa, 2014; Toba et al., 2019), lack of preparation for the writing process from the curriculum (Al-Hammadi & Sidek, 2015), time limitation allocated to study writing (Ismail et al., 2012), students' low expectation in academic writing (Lea & Street, 2006; Lillis & Turner, 2001), unavailability of the exact link between the centrality knowledge of text production and students' learning (Aitchison & Lee, 2006), and negative writing perception (Rahmatunisa, 2014). These aforementioned problems would affect the students' learning motivation and their writing skills (Huy, 2015; Rahmatunisa, 2014; Toba et al., 2019). During the COVID-19 outbreak, the students were required to study independently and asynchronously (Triana & Nugroho, 2021). This indicates that many learning aspects may affect the overall students' writing skills, which include the students, lecturers, learning methods, and learning media.

There have been many solutions addressed to overcome those problems. One of the solutions is to think creatively in using learning devices and learning resources, as well as in applying media, methods, or approaches, to make improving writing skills more motivating (Li & Mak, 2022). Another solution is to give students more freedom to practice writing inside and outside the class to upgrade their skills. By using technology, more practice can be given online. This enables the provision of wide and equal learning access to all students, establishes new awareness of their writing ability, and facilitates the learners to practice their writing skills both inside and outside the classroom (Ismail et al., 2012; Law & Baer, 2020; Regan et al., 2019). One type of technology that can be utilized to access free resources in education is open educational resources (OER).

OER is a digital resource used by users such as teachers, students, and researchers in the education sector. It has been widely used in the last two decades and has become a major trend in pedagogy (Menzli et al., 2022). The development of technology and teaching methods that can be delivered in different learning modes has become crucial in 21st-century education. OER has emerged to give opportunities with great potential to support some aspects of education, especially in acquiring knowledge in higher education, both directly and indirectly (Pawłowski & Bick, 2012; Weller et

al., 2015). The direct impact of this application can be seen in the increase in students' performance, the educators' reflection, and the successful usage in a formal study such as in higher education (Yuan et al., 2008). Meanwhile, the indirect impacts may happen in adaptation and the increase in sharing and open practice (Weller et al., 2015). OER as digital resources adequately provides enormous digital resources based on the students' needs.

Some studies revealed particular points about the utilization of OER in the pedagogical field. The greatest extent of OER is that it, at least, is used as a source to enter the mainstream of the entire education system (Barneva et al., 2018; Clinton, 2018; Katz, 2019; Lin, 2019; Mishra, 2017; Otto, 2019), to save the textbook cost (Barneva et al., 2018; Clinton, 2018; Katz, 2019; Lin, 2019), and to improve the quality of teachers and students as well as dynamic accessibility in language learning (Katz, 2019; Lin, 2019; Mishra, 2017; Otto, 2019) leading to improved students' performance (Ozdemir & Bonk, 2017). This implies that the use of OER as an educational tool has many advantages, especially in education.

Previous studies have explored the use of OER to support the students' writing skills. The advantages of applying OER in a writing class include 1) It provides asynchronous learning experiences to master key competencies that could serve the needs of students' writing development while receiving immediate feedback (Yaeger et al., 2021), 2) It could be used as additional materials, prescribed textbooks, or exclusive educational materials at the institutions, and 3) It could enhance the project writing classroom successfully (Vengadasalam, 2020). Based on the usefulness of OER for language learning, especially in improving writing skills, more support from the other stakeholders is needed to use OER effectively in education.

In terms of the students' perception of the use of OER in improving writing skills, research by Zhang (2018) showed that theory-based material adoption can improve students' language knowledge. However, the data about the students' perceptions was still very limited, particularly because the research only focused on discourse and content analysis, and only four undergraduate students became the research participants. Therefore, more studies related to this issue were needed.

There have been many previous studies which deal with factors affecting students' perception of using OER. A study about students' perception of using OER in teaching and learning, conducted by Rowell (2015) that contrasted the OER dimensions with the demographic characteristics found that time duration may influence students' cognitive learning of using OER in their classes. Another survey conducted by Fine and Read (2020) showed that the students' perception of using OER was influenced by many factors including students characteristics (age, connectivity to the course), course characteristics (course cost, course delivery), and university characteristics (cost of education, faculty satisfaction, university support). However, those two aforementioned previous studies about factors affecting students' perception of using OER were conducted to examine undergraduate students in general areas. There is a lack of research examining factors affecting students' perception of using OER in improving a specific skill, such as in a writing class. Therefore, this study explores the use of OER in improving writing skills. The researchers particularly assessed the students' perception of the use of OER and the factors influencing their perceptions of the use of OER. It is expected that this study can offer an objective and valid analysis. As the guideline for this study, the researchers formulated the following research questions:

1. How do EFL students perceive the use of OER in writing skills?
2. What factors affect the EFL students' perception of using OER to improve their writing skills?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Students' perceptions are progressively being used in education for many purposes, including to better comprehend certain factors that influence the learning process. These perceptions also give an essential voice related to learning contexts, teaching effectiveness, and the success of the teaching evaluation system (Chen & Hoshower, 2010; Schenke et al., 2017). Another study also claimed that the students' factor acted as the most impacting factor in gaining students' achievement (Elliot et al., 2019). The findings of research related to students' perceptions are getting important because they become new insights into teaching and learning.

2.1 Students' Perceptions of Writing Skill

Students' perception of writing manifests different points of view. It may become challenging, elusive, and difficult, particularly when students have different expectations than their teachers or when they lack basic concepts in terms of strategies for foreign language (FL) and second language (SL) students. Having prior negative experiences and lacking concepts (Menke & Anderson, 2019), purposes (Hales, 2017), basic writing strategies (Ceylan, 2019) make the students consider writing unimportant. In contrast to this negative perception, students' positive perceptions are attributed to certain factors, including writing strategies (Ismail, 2011) and certain purposes in the learning process (Deveci, 2018). This implies that students have two different perceptions of the improvement of their writing skills, which can be positive or negative depending on how basic writing strategies, methods, and certain media are utilized in the learning process.

Different perceptions may be caused by many factors, including factors that come from the perceiver (attitude, motive, interest, experience, and expectation), from the object or target being perceived (novelty, motion, sound, size, shape, shade, silhouette, movement, background, proximity, and similarity), or from the situation (time, work setting, and social setting) in which the perceptions are made (Kondalkar, 2007; Robbins & Judge, 2017). Therefore, perception arises because people have experienced things previously.

Several studies have confirmed that students may indicate different perceptions in learning writing, which can be positive or negative. One study conducted by Ismail (2011) examined students who had positive views both in the specific writing course, academic writing course, and general writing course. Ismail (2011) further reported that the students had positive perceptions because they knew their writing needs. Similarly, Deveci (2018) found that the students who were taught using collaborative writing were satisfied and positively perceived writing skills. They were mainly excited with the use of technology and with the critical thinking activities, which helped them develop their general skills.

In contrast, the study by Hales (2017) revealed that the students were not responsible for improving their writing skills and were less interested in their teacher's

instruction. In the same vein, [Menke and Anderson \(2019\)](#) found that the students faced many problems in writing, including a lack of clarity of the students' expectations and interpretation of the content and language in writing. Furthermore, [Ceylan \(2019\)](#) explained that many students lacked basic strategies in writing, including pre-writing, drafting, editing, and deciding the topic of the writing. Besides, they perceived language-related components in academic writing to be more difficult than structure/content-related components.

The studies above indicate that positive perceptions are attached to students who are facilitated with elements such as writing strategies, methods, and certain media that can assist them in studying the writing process. On the contrary, learning writing may become a big problem when students have different opinions from their teachers or lack basic concepts in writing strategies.

2.2 Students' Perception of Using OER

Studies on students' perceptions of using OER have been conducted in many disciplines. In Math class, the students who use online resources such as Khan Academy resources had a better understanding of the given concept than those who used printed textbooks ([Venegas-Muggli & Westermann, 2019](#)). Similarly, the study in astronomy conducted by [Mathew and Kashyap \(2019\)](#) indicated that the selected OER might fulfill the students' and teachers' needs and lower the high textbook cost. Therefore, OER can eliminate the barriers among students ([Mathew & Kashyap, 2019](#)). Similarly, [Harsasi \(2015\)](#), who conducted the study in management, noted that the students had positive perceptions of using OER with video since it acted as the most interesting resource for them. Moreover, integrating OER in EFL classes facilitates the students' language skill improvement. A study in EFL classes revealed that integrating OER into the teaching process could help students improve their communication strategy ([Lin & Wang, 2018](#)). This indicates that OER is not only an attractive tool for learning the course content, but it also plays an important role in developing the students' competence and English skills. In contrast to the earlier findings, one study in psychology conducted by [Engler and Shedlosky-Shoemaker \(2018\)](#) found that whether it was OER or textbook did not result in different learning results. Based on the explanation above, students' perceptions can show different results in some disciplines in which OER can have a positive or neutral effect on student achievement.

The use of OER, in fact, allows people to get advantages from free materials. A study in higher education proved that lecturers might only use online learning resources that are interesting to the students ([McBride & Abramovich, 2022](#)). Therefore, using OER needs a proper teaching method, particularly to improve the students' language skills. Moreover, teaching English with an interactive method can promote meaningful learning in a blended EFL classroom ([Cheng, 2022](#)). Thus, OER could not help the students learn independently, but with the role of lecturers as instructors, OER utilization can give better benefits.

Students are the essential stakeholder in education and become the target evaluation of the educational system. Therefore, student-centered learning has become a new trend in higher education. The concept of student-centered learning is a system in education that allows students to decide their learning autonomously based on their learning needs to take different actions based on their views and interpretations. OER

could be used in student-centered learning, particularly to help the students gain experience, sharpen pedagogy, and increase confidence in performance. A study in an EFL classroom in China showed that using OER in a creative teaching method can build the topic knowledge and students' creativity (Zhang, 2021). Moreover, using OER with lecturers' role in an EFL classroom optimizes the learning and teaching process (Cheng, 2022). It is also important to note that the students will participate actively in the learning process which uses printed materials, electronic tools, or other media (Chen et al., 2004).

Six dimensions could affect the students' perception of the use of OER in improving their writing skills (Rowell, 2015). The dimensions include motivation to learn, quality of learning, the significance of OER in writing, cognitive learning, affective learning, and quality of the course. OER is perceived to affect the level of motivation to learn in class. Sclater (2011) proved that the development of OER can provide positive experiences where students and lecturers are very active in using it in the classroom. Sandanayake (2019) also reported that developing OER technology with the blended learning method can improve the quality of learning and teaching. Specifically, she also revealed that OER could build fun activities in class. Moreover, using OER with didactic strategies could encourage students to practice writing (Álvarez & Bassa, 2013). Many students with positive views explained that OER could help them in many aspects (Menzli et al., 2022). They can use effective and efficient virtual tools to explore learning in or outside the class. Additionally, the students' perceptions of the use of OER in improving their writing skills can also be influenced by 14 factors (Fine & Read, 2020), i.e., age, gender, semester, parents' income, type of writing activity, type of learning writing delivery using OER, monthly income, monetary benefit, connectivity course, writing course cost, teaching effectiveness in writing skills using OER, university support, faculty satisfaction, and cost of education.

3. METHOD

3.1 Research Design

A descriptive survey design that belongs to quantitative research was used in this study. As noted by Creswell (2012), survey research design can be defined as the way to conduct research quantitatively in which the researchers may administer particular surveys to the whole population or take a sample of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population. This research design was intended to explore the students' perception of using OER to improve their writing skills and the factors that affect their perception. This study was conducted from March to April 2022 and was held at the English Department of Universitas Raden Mas Said, Surakarta, Indonesia. The department was selected because it is an A-rank department based on the Indonesian Ministry of Education accreditation. Before determining the research participants, an online interview was conducted with some lecturers to find out information about the use of OER in writing classes. Then, an online survey was administered to the EFL students for the quantitative data collection.

3.2 Population and Sample

The enrolled undergraduate EFL students of the English Department at Universitas Raden Mas Said, Surakarta, Indonesia, are the target population in this study. The total population of the targeted students was $N=883$. Considering the proportional sample in each group, the researcher took the second-, fourth- and sixth-year students (18-22 years old) as the sample of this study by using proportionate stratified random sampling. This technique was chosen to determine the proportionate sample in each level representing the population.

Furthermore, the researchers administered a representative sample size of the population to make the research efficient, as suggested by [Krejcie and Morgan \(1970\)](#). Therefore, to decide the total sample of the population, the researchers followed [Krejcie and Morgan \(1970\)](#). If the population consists of 900 participants, and the sample size is around 269. As mentioned previously, the sample of this study was taken from each level proportionately by using Proportionate Random Sampling formula, $n_i = (N_i/N) * n$. The total number of participants in each semester varied because the total number of students in each semester was very heterogeneous. Based on the formula, the researcher took 270 students as the sample of this study with the following calculation:

$$\text{Semester 2} = 344/883 * 269 = 104.8 = 105 \text{ students}$$

$$\text{Semester 4} = 244/883 * 269 = 74.3 = 75 \text{ students}$$

$$\text{Semester 6} = 295/883 * 269 = 89.9 = 90 \text{ students}$$

3.3 Research Variables

Based on [Cohen et al. \(2007\)](#), a variable can be considered a construct, operationalized construct, or particular property in which the researchers are interested. An independent variable is an input variable that causes a particular outcome; it is a stimulus that influences a response, an antecedent or a factor that may be modified (e.g., under experimental or other conditions) to affect an outcome. Meanwhile, a dependent variable, on the other hand, is the outcome variable caused, in total or in part, by the input, antecedent variable. It is the effect, consequence of, or response to an independent variable. In other words, an independent variable can affect a dependent variable after a treatment ([Creswell, 2012](#)). In this research, the use of OER in learning writing and factors affecting the students' perception were the independent variables. Meanwhile, the students' perception with six dimensions (motivation to learn writing, quality of learning writing, the value of OER in writing, cognitive learning in writing, affective learning in writing, and course quality of learning writing) was the dependent variable.

3.4 Research Instrument

An instrument can be defined as a mean to quantify, observe, or take the document of quantitative data. It contains specific questions and response possibilities that can be established or developed before the study ([Creswell, 2012](#)). The researchers used a questionnaire distributed for undergraduate students to examine: 1) students' perception of using OER in improving their writing skills, 2) factors that affect the students' perception of using OER in improving their writing skills.

A questionnaire is a widely used and valuable instrument to collect survey information and provide structured numerical data. A questionnaire can be administered without the presence of a researcher, and the result is often comparatively straightforward to analyze (Wilson & McLe, 1994, as cited in [Cohen et al., 2007](#)). The questionnaire of this study was designed to explore the students' perception of using OER in the writing skill six dimensions and also to find out factors affecting students' perception of using OER in improving their writing skills. This questionnaire was distributed to students in the second, fourth, and sixth semesters using Google Forms. It consists of a Likert scale in the form of positive items. This questionnaire was completed with additional information at the beginning of the survey, including the purpose, confidentiality statement, consent form, contact information of the researchers, and the respondents' demographic data. The questionnaire used four alternative responses, i.e., Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaire in this study was adapted from a study by [Rowell \(2015\)](#) about student perceptions of the use of OER, and a study by [Fine and Read \(2020\)](#) about factors impacting the students' perception of the use of OER.

There were three parts of the questionnaire. The first part included attributive questions covering age, gender, and semester. The second part of the questionnaire consists of six dimensions related to the students' perception of using OER in improving their writing skills, i.e., motivation to learn, quality of learning, the value of OER in writing, cognitive learning, affective learning, and course quality. Meanwhile, the third part of the questionnaire covered nine factors affecting the students' perception of using OER in improving their writing skills, namely type of writing activity, type of learning writing delivery using OER, monetary benefit, connectivity course, writing course cost, teaching effectiveness in writing skills using OER, university support, faculty satisfaction, and cost of education. The summary of the instrument is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The instrument blueprint of attributive questions ([Fine & Read, 2020](#)).

Dimension	Purpose
Age	to find out the distribution of students based on age
Gender	to find out the distribution of students based on gender
Semester	to find out the distribution of students based on semester
Parents' income	to find out the distribution of economic background

Table 2. The instrument blueprint of students' perception ([Rowell, 2015](#)).

Dimension	Purpose	Item number
Motivation to learn writing using OER	to examine the students' perception of their motivation in learning writing using OER	1,2,3,4,5,6
Quality of learning writing using OER	to explore how the students perceive the learning quality environment in the course that used OER in improving writing skill	7,8,9,10
Value of OER in writing	to know the students' perception of the value of OER in learning writing	11,12
Cognitive learning writing using OER	To observe the students' perception based on the cognitive learning level of using OER in improving their writing skills.	13,14

Table 2 continued...

Affective learning writing using OER	to examine the students' perception based on the affective learning level of using OER in improving their writing skills.	15,16,17
Course quality of learning writing using OER	to see the students' perception of the course quality that used OER	18,19,20,21

Table 3. The instrument blueprint of factors affecting students' perception (Fine & Read, 2020).

Components	Purpose	Item number
Type of writing activity	To see how the students perceive the type of writing activity	22,23,24,25
Type of learning writing delivery using OER	To examine the type of learning writing delivery using OER perceived by the students	26,27,28,29,30
Monetary benefit	To see the monetary benefit that the students get when they use OER	31,32,33
Connectivity course	To know how the students perceive the connectivity writing course by using OER	34,35,36
Writing course cost	To examine writing course cost perceived by the students	37,38,39,40
Teaching effectiveness in improving writing skills using OER	To know how the students perceive teaching effectiveness in the writing skill by using OER	41,42,43,44
University support	To examine the kinds of university support available in learning writing skills by using OER	45,46,47
Faculty satisfaction	To know how the students perceive faculty satisfaction	48,49,50
Cost of education	To see the cost of education in that university based on the students' perception	51,52,53

3.5 Data Collection

The current study distributed the questionnaire to 270 EFL students at the Department of English, Universitas Raden Mas Said, Surakarta, using an online platform, Google Form. The Google Form link was distributed via WhatsApp groups by the course lecturers. To investigate the students' perception of using OER to improve their writing skills, the questionnaire was adapted from Rowell (2015). Twenty-one items were piloted before they were distributed to EFL students. It was carried out to facilitate the researcher's study design. To determine the factors that influence the students' perception of using OER to improve their writing skills, the researchers developed a questionnaire designed by Fine and Read (2020). Thirty-two survey items also went through the same process before the distribution.

3.6 Data Analysis Technique

The researchers attempted to examine the actual data of the students' perception of using OER to improve their writing skills. The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed descriptively and calculated using SPSS software. After that, the results were converted into a descriptive analysis following the data conversion table

proposed by Perez and Mardapi (2015). Furthermore, regression is an analysis in statistics that is intended to investigate and make a certain model of the relationship between the variables (Montgomery et al., 2012). Therefore, multiple regression analysis was performed to examine factors that influenced the students' perception of the use of OER in improving their writing skills.

4. RESULTS

The results of the study were based on the questionnaire distributed to EFL students at the English Department of Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said, Surakarta.

4.1 Students' Perception of Using OER in Learning Writing by Dimension

4.1.1 Motivation to learn writing using OER

Motivation to learn writing using OER dimension was measured using five items consisting of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The item means, standard deviation, frequency, percentage, and interpretation of the data are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Dimension of motivation to learn writing using OER.

Variable M, SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Interpretation
	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	
I enjoy working on my writing assignments using OER. M=3.077, SD=0.543	0.7	8.9	72.2	18.1	(72.2%) Agree
I enjoy learning in an environment that incorporates OER. M=3.037, SD=0.544	0.4	11.9	71.5	16.3	(71.5%) Agree
I would describe using OER as interesting. M=3.066, SD=0.541	0	11.5	70.4	18.1	(70.4%) Agree
I study hard in writing using OER because I want to get a good grade. M=3.322, SD=0.665	1.1	7.8	48.9	42.2	(48.9%) Agree
I want to learn writing using OER for my future carrier. M=3.251, SD=0.618	0.4	8.5	56.7	34.4	(56.7%) Agree

The motivation to learn writing using the OER dimension received positive responses from the students, in which the interpretation from five questions had five agree responses, and the mean scores from all items were 3.00 or higher, suggesting that the respondents had a high motivation to learn writing using OER in the institution. The highest mean score ($\bar{x} = 3.322$) belonged to extrinsic motivation, in which they were motivated to learn writing using OER because they wanted to get a good grade (grade purposes). Meanwhile, the lowest mean score was in the intrinsic motivation ($\bar{x} = 3.037$), which can be interpreted that they enjoyed the environment of learning

writing that incorporated OER. The mean for the motivation to learn writing using the OER dimension was 3.151.

4.1.2 *Quality of learning writing using OER*

The quality of learning writing using the OER dimension was measured by four items. The items related to the students' perception of learning writing quality using the OER dimension are reported in detail in Table 5.

Table 5. Dimension of quality of learning writing using OER.

Variable M, SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Interpretation
	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	F(%)	
OER makes me feel more engaged with my writing learning. M=3.070, SD=0.530	0.4	9.6	72.6	17.4	196 (72.6%) Agree
If given a choice, I prefer learning using OER to learning using a conventional textbook. M=2.892, SD=0.633	0.4	24.8	60.0	14.8	162 (60.0%) Agree
OER directly improves the quality of my learning experience in writing. M=3.118, SD=0.443	0	7.0	74.1	18.9	200 (74.1%) Agree
There is a connection between the OER content and specific learning objectives in learning writing. M=3.011, SD=0.443	0	9.3	80.4	10.4	217 (80.4%) Agree

The interpretation from the quality of learning dimension showed that all items contained agreement. The mean scores of the items in this dimension were rated 2.892 or higher. The highest mean score in the perception of using OER in learning writing within this dimension showed that OER directly enhanced the students' learning quality from the experience side ($\bar{x} = 3.118$). The mean of learning writing quality using OER was 3.023.

4.1.3 *Value of OER in writing skill*

Two valid questions measured the value of OER in the writing skill dimension. The items related to the students' perception of the value of OER in improving their writing skills are presented in Table 6.

In terms of OER significance in the learning writing dimension, the respondents also rated with positive responses in the two questions. The mean score of the items was 2.844 or higher. In this dimension, the highest response indicated that the students believed that OER could help them understand and learn more topics better than could textbooks (2.863). The mean of OER value in improving students' writing skills was 2.853.

Table 6. Dimension of the significance of OER in improving writing skills.

Variable M, SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Interpretation
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	
I believe I can learn more through OER than through a textbook. M=2.844, SD=0.563	0.4	23.7	67.0	8.9	181 (67.0%) Agree
OER helps me understand topics better than textbooks. M=2.863, SD=0.571	0	24.1	65.6	10.4	177 (65.6%) Agree

4.1.4 Cognitive learning writing using OER

The cognitive learning writing using the OER dimension was measured using two valid questions. The items of this dimension were related to the students' perception of cognitive learning writing using OER. The data summary is presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Dimension of cognitive learning writing using OER.

Variable M, SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Interpretation
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	
I can organize course material in the writing class using OER. M=2.933, SD=0.498	0.4	14.8	75.9	8.9	205 (75.9%) Agree
I can intelligently criticize the OER used in learning writing. M=2.585, SD=0.643	2.2	43.3	48.1	6.3	130 (48.1%) Agree

The interpretation from a cognitive dimension of this study was all rated 2.585 or higher. The highest item ($\bar{x} = 2.933$) indicates that students could organize course material in the writing class using OER. The scale mean for cognitive learning writing using the OER dimension was 2.759.

4.1.5 Affective learning writing using OER

The affective dimension distinguishes the students from different social and emotional factors from those who rely more on logic (Hyland, 2003). The affective learning writing using the OER dimension was measured by three questions. The items were related to students' perception of affective learning writing using OER. The complete data are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Dimension of affective learning writing using OER.

Variable M, SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Interpretation
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	
I have changed my attitude in learning writing using OER. M=2.840, SD=0.572	0.7	23.3	67.0	8.9	181 (67.0%) Agree

I feel more confident because of this course using OER. M=2.829, SD=0.545	1.1	21.5	70.7	6.7	191 (70.7%) Agree
I feel I am a more sophisticated thinker because of this course using OER. M=2.844, SD=0.589	0.4	25.2	64.1	10.4	173 (64.1%) Agree

Overall, effective learning writing using the OER dimension received quite positive responses. The items were rated similarly, ranging from 2.829 to 2.844. The item with the highest response ($\bar{x} = 2.844$) showed that the students considered themselves sophisticated thinkers because of learning writing using OER. The scale mean for this dimension was 2.838.

4.1.6 Course quality using OER

Four items measured the course quality of learning writing using the OER dimension. The items were related to the students' perception of the course quality of learning writing using OER. The mean, standard deviation, frequency, percentage, and interpretation of the data are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Dimensions of course quality.

Variable M, SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Interpretation
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	
I would like to take more courses that use OER. M=2.733, SD=0.618	1.5	31.5	59.3	7.8	160 (59.3%) Agree
I would recommend a course that uses OER to others. M=2.925, SD=0.540	0.4	17.4	71.5	10.7	193 (71.5%) Agree
Overall, the learning experience in this course using OER was positive. M=3.151, SD=0.554	0.4	7.8	68.1	23.7	184 (68.1%) Agree
Overall, the quality of the OER content of this course was excellent. M=3.092, SD=0.540	0.4	9.3	71.1	19.3	192 (71.1%) Agree

The course quality of learning writing using the OER dimension received positive perceptions with responses of agreement for all questions. The highest item ($\bar{x} = 3.151$) of this dimension pointed out that the learning experience writing course using OER was considered positive. The scale mean of this dimension was 2.976.

4.2 Factors Affecting Students' Perception of the Use of OER in improving their Writing Skills

A descriptive statistic of factors that affect the students' perception of using OER to improve their writing skills includes mean and standard deviation. The data covers students' perception, gender, age, semester, parents' income, type of writing activity, type of learning writing delivery, monetary benefit, connectivity to the course, writing

course cost, teaching effectiveness, university support, faculty satisfaction, and cost of education. Table 10 describes the result in Table 1 about attributive questions and Table 3 about factors affecting student's perception.

Table 10. Descriptive statistics of factors affecting students' perception.

No	Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Students' perception	2.975	.590
	Gender	1.119	.324
	Age	2.604	1.039
	Semester	1.944	.850
	Parents' income	1.318	.482
	Type of writing activity	3.105	.611
	Type of learning delivery	3.094	.693
	Monetary benefit	3.414	.593
	Connectivity course	3.198	.645
	Writing course cost	3.184	.558
	Teaching effectiveness	3.124	.601
	University support	2.986	.673
	Faculty satisfaction	3.192	.566
	Cost of education	2.937	.656

The highest mean score out of the independent variables belonged to monetary benefit ($\bar{x} = 3.414$). There is no standard deviation value that exceeds the mean score. This means that the data distribution is categorized as normal or unbiased.

Multiple regression analysis was calculated to investigate what factors affected the students' perception of using OER to improve their writing skills, as shown in Table 11.

Table 11. Coefficients of the analysis in Multiple Regression.

Model		Coefficients ^a			t	Sig.
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	16.471	2.888		5.703	.000
	Gender	-1.843	.885	-.092	-2.082	.038
	Age	-.172	.360	-.027	-.477	.634
	Semester	.475	.454	.062	1.048	.296
	Parent income	.268	.588	.020	.457	.648
	Type of writing activity	1.350	.262	.263	5.146	.000
	Type of learning delivery	.699	.229	.182	3.051	.003
	Moentary benefit	-.410	.280	-.099	-1.463	.145
	Conectivity course	.510	.269	.127	1.895	.059
	Writing course cost	.078	.246	.021	.316	.752
	Teaching effectiveness	.771	.207	.230	3.729	.000
	University support	-.356	.208	-.093	-1.714	.088
	Faculty satisfaction	.072	.276	.016	.260	.795
	Cost of education	1.404	.238	.308	5.894	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Student_Perception

Table 11 shows that factors that affected the students' perception of the use of OER ($\text{sig.} < .05$) include gender, type of writing activity, type of learning delivery, teaching effectiveness, and cost of education. Meanwhile, the strongest factor was the

cost of education ($\beta = .308$). Table 12 describes the coefficient of determination of the variables.

Table 12. The summary of the model.

Summary of the Model ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.732 ^a	.536	.513	4.53995

Table 12 indicates the percentage of independent variables that affected the dependent variable with $R^2 = .536$. In other words, the independent variables that affected the students' perception of the use of OER in improving their writing skills were 53.6%. Table 13 describes the regression model using ANOVA analysis.

Table 13. Analysis of ANOVA.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6107.035	13	469.772	22.792	.000 ^b
	Residual	5276.450	256	20.611		
	Total	11383.485	269			

Table 13 shows that the independent variables were statistically significant to predict the dependent variable, $F(13, 256) = 22.792, p < .0005$. This indicates that the regression model used was a good fit for the data.

Therefore, the analysis from the sequence of Tables 11, 12, and 13 of multiple regression was run to predict the students' perception based on gender, age, semester, annual parents' income, type of writing activities, type of learning delivery, monetary benefit, connectivity course, writing course cost, teaching effectiveness, university support, faculty satisfaction, and cost education, resulting in $R^2 = .536$, adjusted $R^2 = .513$, F -statistic=22.792, Significance =.000, with $n=270$. Five variables (gender, type of writing activities, type of learning delivery, teaching effectiveness, and cost of education) were statistically significant in predicting the students' perception, $F(13, 256) = 22.792, p < .0005, R^2 = .536$. These five variables added statistically significant value to the prediction, $p < .05$.

5. DISCUSSION

The first objective of this research was to examine the students' perception of using OER to improve students' writing skills. The second objective was to investigate factors that may affect the students' perception of using OER to improve writing skills. Each research objective is discussed in the following subsections.

5.1 Students' Perceptions of the Use of OER in Improving Writing Skills

Several studies have shown that the students' perception of using OER in some subjects may be positive or negative. In many studies, students perceived that OER was interesting since it could fulfill the students' and lecturers' needs, decrease educational costs, and remove the barriers among the students. This is in accordance

with the current learning needs which revealed that OER could be used to improve the students' understanding (Lin & Wang, 2018). Besides, the students also perceived that they had a better understanding of using OER in their classes. Those findings are also in line with the perception framework proposed by Atkins et al. (2007), who stated that OER could remove the barrier, sponsor high-quality content, understand and stimulate usage, and equalize access. In contrast, a limited literature review showed that students might have negative perceptions since there was no significant difference between the students who used OER in their class and those who used textbooks.

Similarly, previous studies about students' perceptions of improving writing skills could also be positive or negative. The students had positive perceptions because they received specific writing strategies, methods, or media that could facilitate them in improving their writing skills (Ismail, 2011). Meanwhile, the students had negative perceptions when the expectations, basic concepts, writing strategies, and negative experiences became obstacles to improving their writing skills.

The findings of this study report two issues. The first is about the students' perception of using OER, and the second is about the students' perception of improving their writing skills. In this study, dimensions used to measure the students' perceptions include motivation to learn writing using OER, quality of learning writing using OER, the value of OER in writing, cognitive learning writing using OER, affective learning writing using OER, and writing course quality using OER (Rowell, 2015). As stated previously, this study aimed to explore the students' perception of using OER to improve their writing skills. The results of this study indicate that most students had a positive perception toward the use of OER in improving students' writing skills, with a mean of 2.975 and a standard deviation of .590. The motivation dimension obtained the highest mean ($\bar{x} = 3.151$). This indicates that the students were highly motivated to learn writing using OER. Meanwhile, the lowest mean was obtained from the cognitive learning dimension ($\bar{x} = 2.759$), showing that the students' perception of cognitive learning writing by using OER was not as positive. Based on the above results, the negative perception of using OER reported by previous studies (Chen & Hoshower, 2010; Engler & Shedlosky-Shoemaker, 2018; McBride & Abramovich, 2022) was not evident in this study. Meanwhile, this study strengthened the previous research (Cheng, 2022; Lin & Wang, 2018; Zhang, 2018) that reported the positive impacts and significant benefits for students who used OER with certain strategies from their lecturers. Implementing OER with the active role of lecturers can increase the students' motivation and learning achievement.

These results reflected those of Rowell (2015), who also found that students had a positive perception in the classroom and were highly motivated to learn using OER. The use of OER with interactive strategies helps students understand materials faster. The study reported by Zhang (2018) also indicated that using OER in blended learning activities in a writing class increased the students' understanding of the materials compared to when they used a conventional textbook. This is noticeable through students' positive perception of using OER in improving many skills, including writing.

5.2 Factors Affecting Students' Perception of the Use of OER in Improving Writing Skills

As mentioned in the literature review, many factors can influence someone's perceptions. Those factors include demographic data (i.e., age, gender, semester, and parents' income), type of writing activity, type of learning writing delivery using OER, monetary benefit, connectivity course, writing course cost, teaching effectiveness in writing skill using OER, university support, faculty satisfaction, and cost of education (Fine & Read, 2020). This current study revealed the factors that affected the students' perception of using OER to improve their writing skills.

The study results pointed out that five predictors (gender, type of writing activities, type of learning delivery, teaching effectiveness, and cost of education) were statistically significant in predicting the students' perception of the use of OER in improving their writing skills ($p < .05$). The gender variable of this data was found to be significant ($p=.036$), and the beta was negatively sloped ($\beta= -.092$). In this research, the variable coded as male=1, female=0, with $p=.036$ and $\beta= -.092$, meaning that the variable significantly predicted the dependent variable in which the female variable had a higher mean of the groups. Therefore, the gender variable in this research acts as a suppressor or enhancer variable. This variable will increase the R2 from .498 to .506 without and with the gender variable as an additional variable. Although the previous study showed that the gender variable ($p=.025$ and the $\beta= -.091$) was a suppressor variable, it was not a factor affecting the students' perception of using OER (Fine & Read, 2020).

In contrast to a previous finding by Fine and Read (2020), the gender variable in this study was considered a factor affecting the students' perception of using OER to improve their writing skills. This conclusion was based on Pandey and Elliot's (2010) study that proposed some advantages of using suppressor variables, i.e., determining more accurate regression coefficients associated with independent variables, improving the overall predictive power of the model, and enhancing the accuracy of theory building. Therefore, five predictors significantly predicted the students' perception of the use of OER in improving students' writing skills, i.e., gender, type of writing activities, type of learning delivery, teaching effectiveness, and cost of education. The most dominant factor was the cost of education ($\beta=.308$).

The literature review points out that perception can be influenced by some factors, including the perceiver (attitudes, personalities, motives, interests, past experiences, and expectations), the object or target being perceived (novelty, motion, sound, size, shape, shade, silhouette, movement, background, proximity, and similarity), or the situation (time, work setting, and social setting) (Kondalkar, 2007; Robbins & Judge, 2017). This current study results indicate that factors influencing the students' perception of using OER to improve their writing skills came from the perceiver and the target being perceived. From the perceiver, it covered interests (type of writing activity and type of learning writing delivery) and experiences (teaching effectiveness in the writing skill and cost of education). The results are the same as those in previous studies. A study reported that OER could influence students to internalize language knowledge in the learning process (Zhang, 2018).

This finding was contrary to that of previous research which found some factors impacting the students' perception of using OER. Those factors were the students' characteristics including age and perceptions of connectivity to the course, course

characteristics such as course cost and course delivery, and university characteristics including the overall cost of education, faculty satisfaction, and university support (Fine & Read, 2020). These different results suggest that the students' perception of the use of OER in improving other skills differs from that in improving only writing skills. The current study shows that the students' perception of using OER could be affected by certain writing activities, types of learning writing delivery, teaching effectiveness, cost of education, and gender. Besides the flexibility and effectiveness of the material, OER can reduce education expenses (Barneva et al., 2018; Clinton, 2018; Katz, 2019; Lin, 2019). Another finding from this study also shows relevance to previous theoretical literature, which states that a teaching model for a writing class with improved instruction can significantly affect the students' language knowledge (Hales, 2017). This means that teaching processes, including writing activities, modes of delivery, and teaching effectiveness were significant factors that affected the students' perceptions.

6. CONCLUSION

The main goals of the current study were to determine the students' perception of using OER in improving their writing skills and to examine some factors that affected their perception of using OER in improving their writing skills. The result of this study has confirmed that the students had a positive perception of the use of OER in six dependent variables or dimensions of learning writing, including motivation to learn writing using OER, quality of learning writing using OER, OER value in learning writing, cognitive learning writing using OER, affective learning writing using OER, and course quality of learning writing using OER. The findings show that using OER to improve language skills was needed. However, using OER in the classroom required the role of lecturers to facilitate the students to improve their learning abilities. Most students who had high motivation to learn writing using OER could be caused by extrinsic motivation, i.e., for getting good grades, which is also problematic. Instead of using OER to improve language skills, the lecturer has not been able to generate intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation would encourage students to use OER in learning activities, not just for a short-term purpose.

Moreover, this study also examined specific factors affecting the students' perception of using OER to improve their writing skills. The findings indicate that the students' perception was affected by gender, types of writing activity, types of learning writing delivery, teaching effectiveness in improving writing skills, and cost of education. These results show that the use of OER in learning could reduce expenses. In addition, the results also indicate that the role of lecturers as supervisors and the role of students as active learners were very influential in the learning process.

The limitations in conducting the research are acknowledged in this study. Further research with a larger number of participants from different universities in Indonesia, and perception analysis on the use of OER in different language skills are highly recommended to confirm the findings of the current study. It is also necessary that future research focuses on the role of lecturers in using OER in the classroom. Therefore, there will be many other relevant variables to discuss the use of OER in higher education, especially in the EFL classroom.

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Pre-service Teachers' Views on Using English Comics to Improve Pupils' English Language Skills

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Abstract

This paper highlights the ESL pre-service elementary school teachers' views on using English comics in the classroom and using English comics to assist elementary school pupils in improving their English language skills. A descriptive survey research design was used, and a quantitative method study was done among 64 pre-service teachers utilising an internet questionnaire as an instrument aimed to answer questions concerning their views towards the use of English comics as a medium for teaching and learning English and the effectiveness in improving pupils' English language abilities. The results from the questionnaire were analysed quantitatively, and the findings were summarised using descriptive statistics and frequency count to characterise the properties of the large group of samples. From the survey, it was found that most pre-service teachers have positive perceptions of using comic books as teaching and learning tools in class. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the pre-service teachers believe it is advantageous to improving students' English language abilities. The study offers other recommendations for future research and implications that might help ESL instructors and young students enhance their students' English language proficiency.

Keywords: English comics, English language, multimodal, pre-service elementary school teachers.

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1. INTRODUCTION

New perspectives on education emerge due to fast technological breakthroughs in this globalised 21st century of teaching and learning. Nowadays, the resources utilised during teaching and learning English are diverse, in which learners are expected to participate in an interactive educational environment using various tools. In order to promote students' participation, teachers must expose students to a range of materials. The value of presenting a range of educational resources to learners cannot be underestimated; it is regarded as a vital process in engaging the students' attention, encouraging second language (L2) learners to embrace the language, and ensuring that they are not intimidated by it. This corresponds with [Assaiqeli et al. \(2021\)](#), who emphasised that language teachers need to shift their views in looking at language as an object and start emphasising the 'human factor' instead when teaching the language, where the primary objective is for students to utilise the language. In this method, the students can engage in meaningful interactions with engaging content while learning and mastering the language.

As a result, in the effort to create an innovative educational environment, several learning modalities or composite texts, such as English comics, can be among the best tools that teachers and pre-service teachers may use as effective teaching materials when teaching and learning English in the classroom. Adopting English comics not only provides a different variety of printed multimodality but also inspires students to read, boosts students' awareness of language usage, and assists students in improving their English proficiency level ([Ahmadi et al., 2017](#); [Sarada, 2016](#)). According to [Krashen \(2004\)](#), every language learner can benefit from reading comics as it is the most direct approach to acquiring a second language, especially English language learners (ELLs) with poor English competence who require time and assistance in order to be fluent in English in both academic and social aspect. According to [Baker \(2011\)](#), the number of ELLs with poor English competence has increased dramatically over the last 20 years, and these ELLs need to catch up to their native-speaker classmates. Nevertheless, English caricatures in comics are among the strongest literary instruments that assist these students in bridging the void and operate as an aiding tool that ESL teachers can use in teaching English. In a study by [Liu \(2004\)](#), visual representations of language in textbooks for ESL and EFL students, such as images, caricatures, and comic strips, assist readers in assimilating information and recalling the relevant input despite the text's linguistic complexity.

Realising the diversity of different learning capabilities of students, i.e. some students seem to be more advanced than others, has led to a study of the various aspects of language learning and teaching strategies, [Manno \(2014, as cited in Sarada, 2016\)](#) revealed that comics, as a visual component in a multimodal text, can help and inspire struggling learners to spark their interest and curiosity while integrating English in the lesson. This improves their English language abilities and makes the teaching and learning sessions more effective. The purpose of visual representation or multimodal pedagogy offered by comics goes beyond just pleasantly learning a language. It can also teach students the importance of deciphering the messages behind an image that may encapsulate and signify a culture depending on the material used. [Assaiqeli \(2021\)](#) demonstrated how Palestinian visual language, for example, works to record and express significant Palestinian national themes, thereby contributing to the preservation of Palestinian national identity and the revival of Palestinian nationalism

and national consciousness. This study established that people could transmit sentiments and invoke memory despite historical oblivion just through visual language.

Given that studies on teachers' attitudes toward using English comics in English language classes have been conducted by many researchers, pre-service elementary school teachers' views of using this learning material as a tool in language classrooms remain poorly researched and under-theorised. Limited information was known regarding pre-service teachers' attitudes toward using English comics in the classroom, particularly to help learners improve their English language abilities. Due to their lack of experience, pre-service teachers are increasingly concerned about their inefficiency in applying theory to practices and, eventually, to the real world (Bolton-Gary, 2012). This is consistent with Yoon (2012), who stated that the lack of professional classroom teaching experience contributes to the incapacity to employ composite or multimodal texts in class, including using English comics in formal classrooms. Teachers are seen as an essential key feature in the classroom, and these ESL teachers must endure substantially more anxiety than experienced ESL teachers. Furthermore, there are conflicting attitudes in language learning and prejudices against multimodality, such as comics being utilised in educational settings and as part of English language instruction because they are not regarded actual books (Callahan, 2009 as cited in Goh, 2017).

The primary research objective of this study was to analyse ESL pre-service elementary school teachers' views towards the use of English comics in the teaching and learning process as well as to identify the ESL pre-service teacher's views on the efficiency of English comic books in helping elementary school students in developing their English language skills.

To meet the objectives of this research, the following research problems are formulated:

1. What are the perceptions of pre-service elementary school teachers related to the usage of English comics in the classroom?
2. What are pre-service elementary school teachers' views on the effectiveness of English comics in helping students improve their English language skills?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The current education community has shifted their focus from teaching basic skills to higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), where students need to learn, think creatively, come up with reasons and decisions, and have skills to solve problems. This reinforcement may be provided to ELLs through reading materials containing visuals and texts. English comics can help enhance L2 learners' English proficiency level in terms of four main skills: (1) reading skills, (2) writing skills, (3) listening skills and (4) speaking skills.

2.1 Comics in Enhancing Reading Skills

Before proceeding to more complex readings, many students start with comics since they require time and guidance to become proficient in formal educational and social language. Merç (2013) suggested comics be used in class, especially to

encourage and increase learners' interest in reading and pointed out in the recent literature that visual aids in reading comprehension can be a great teaching aid. Comics offer endless advantages, where not only can they elicit information and assist in language production, but they can also act as one of the methods to assist slow readers (Baker, 2011). Apart from that, comic text activities can also expose teachers to new instructional methods and tactics, as well as ways to improve their own pedagogies (Marlatt & Dallacqua, 2013). This is not unexpected as Ulu et al. (2017) also stated that students' critical reading abilities would increase as they assess and relate the meanings represented by diverse teaching aid; therefore, teachers should find ways to incorporate multimodal literacy into the teaching and learning process, particularly to enhance the students' critical reading capabilities.

Initially, the pre-service teachers were sceptical about utilising imagery to enhance their material and act as a motivator for reading and writing. However, based on their written observations, sentiments shifted substantially following their application of the tools in class (Barry, 2012). The pattern of the results is congruent with Dual Coding Theory (DCT), as noted by the researcher, who stated that students who utilised comic strips had a solid beneficial impact and were able to retain the text with the assistance of a comic strip, while learners who did not have access to comic strips struggled to understand textbooks. This is in line with the results of Abdullah and Yunus (2019), who discovered that most students considered that English comics provided numerous benefits in enhancing their reading abilities. Thus, it has been proven that comic strips could help enhance low-level and high-level learners' reading comprehension.

2.2 Comics in Enhancing Writing Skills

On the other hand, writing involves the process of encoding, which may be one of the most challenging skills to be taught, even for adults. While some learners are always eager to try writing in English, others may be hesitant, which may stem from concerns about their spelling or ability to build phrases and paragraphs. If these concerns are reinforced due to their inability to accomplish writing duties satisfactorily, the learners' attitude toward writing is likely to worsen (Rani, 2016). As more people realise the importance of communicating effectively in English, advanced writing skills are becoming increasingly respected. Learners need much practice and long-lasting effort to enhance their writing skills. This is as quoted by Bowkett (2011, as cited in Ahmadi et al., 2017), who stated that using comics, pictures, and graphic novels could assist learners in generating, organising, and refining their ideas when writing; this further develops their creative writing abilities. In addition, elementary school students are more inclined to engage in highly structured narrative forms. This situation unintentionally promotes broader meta-cognitive abilities that develop their thinking skills in writing.

Gorjian and Branch (2016) claimed that through comics, learners could practice writing reported speech and practice writing stories in sequential order. In addition, comics could also assist learners with the use of time-sequence transition words in order to maintain the flow of a story or a paragraph. Therefore, English comics can help learners to improve their writing skills. According to Baker (2011), combining text and visuals will cause learners to study the relationship between the two and promotes their critical thinking, thus enabling them to enhance their writing skills.

English comics could serve as a medium for transmitting the content, organisation, and grammatical components of narrative texts to the learners. Hence, English comics can be considered in teaching writing skills in addition to their appealing forms (Megawati, 2012). Comic books combine text and visuals in a way that can effectively communicate ideas and encourage students' engagement, making comics an appealing substitute for teachers who wish to help pupils with their English. The aforementioned research was carried out by Baker (2011), Megawati (2012), and Gorjian and Branch (2016), and the results show that English comics play a significant role in promoting a diverse classroom environment and, at the same time, enhancing students' writing skills.

2.3 Comics in Enhancing Listening Skills

Teaching and learning listening skills by using comics are still underexplored, and there are a minimal number of studies that focus on this area. This is probably because it may be hard for teachers to use textual teaching tools to teach listening, in which they usually would use audio aid instead. However, based on the findings of a study conducted by Arast and Gorjian (2016), reading comic strip stories along with comic illustrations had a more significant influence on the growth in vocabulary knowledge than just listening to the stories alone. It has been found that reading comic strip stories aloud can influence accidental vocabulary development. The use of English comics allows for various listening activities where these pre-service teachers can read aloud from stories and use props or artwork in a classroom setting.

According to Ahmad (2011), learning new vocabulary is crucial for ESL students who want to become proficient and competent in their target language, making it easier to talk and write clearly. It is believed that texts in comic strips are excellent instruments for acquiring vocabulary and enhancing the learners' listening abilities (Arast & Gorjian, 2016). The results of their study revealed high variations in the average post-test scores after the treatment, which utilise comic strip stories. The study also showed that hearing funny stories could also positively impact vocabulary acquisition. Tovar (2017) explained that using comic strips is vital in cooperative learning sessions since it is an excellent technique to make pupils work together and become engaged in education. The classroom activities of asking pupils to repeat the words in the comics help to enhance pupils' listening and speaking skills. Thus, it needs serious efforts from the teacher to assist pupils in using this tool to learn the language. However, teachers should not be afraid of losing control of the classroom and ignore the potential of using comics during English teaching and learning process (Fasae & Akinwamide, 2018).

2.4 Comics in Enhancing Speaking Skills

A comic strip story is a piece of media with comedic elements that helps to calm the learning environment and is well-known to pupils. Since comics are entertaining yet require interpretation, reading them has several educational advantages. Cartoons are humorous and open-ended, which enables the reader to pause and think. Pupils were not afraid to present a "wrong" answer because all they had to do was to show reasons for why their opinion was reasonable rather than "correct" (Wylie & Neely, 2016). It indicates that teaching speaking through comic strips is a valuable method to

develop students' speaking skills by providing basic examples of comic strip stories that are easy to grasp since they are relevant to students' daily lives (Nuarita, 2015). However, most L2 learners now need help in speaking English, and the topic of Malaysian students' English proficiency has been addressed and debated extensively. One of the linguistic abilities they lack is speaking ability. They may have passed the English language section of the final test. However, many people do not fare well in English-language interviews (Mohtar et al., 2015). This is most likely because the language has developed into a fear-inducing factor that prevents pupils from speaking the language. Nevertheless, utilising English comics as a teaching medium can be appealing and exciting when teaching English speaking abilities to young pupils. According to Anggriani (2013), students who use English comics to supplement their studies show more significant interest in the material and greater levels of engagement. Students at a young age frequently prefer to read comic books for fun and educational pleasure, and these young learners may be unaware that they are enhancing their English language skills while having fun with their activities. Klau (2015) claimed that the improvement in the speaking skill likely occurred since pupils found it less daunting to speak while holding comic strips instead of textbooks.

Comics can help students improve their speaking skills since the text in the comics is easier for them to understand and is not just material that focuses on texts and visuals. It employs readers with cultural and linguistic integration and helps learners enhance their speaking skills (Clydesdale, 2007). In addition, the pictures in comic strips will eventually facilitate learners to memorise and recall words a lot easier and thus increase engagement in conversation. In addition, Gavigan and Tomasevich (2011) stated that comics make texts less threatening and create a less intimidating atmosphere in class, thus helping to increase learners' motivation as they usually do not realise that they are learning English. Csabay (2006) also mentioned that comic strips could help learners make a conversation in both formal and informal language. Using comics as a teaching and learning tool can also help learners not sound too 'textbook' or bookish due to the excessive exposure of written and formal language.

2.5 The Conceptual Framework of the Study

English teachers should employ engaging, enjoyable, and suitable media in the teaching and learning process in the classroom to increase the students' interest and motivation in learning English. Csabay (2006) mentioned that comic book is one of the media that may assist students in dealing with both written and spoken language. Students are inspired to interpret their thoughts based on the facial expressions of comic characters. Moreover, the plot in the comics gives the student information to narrate or explain. In an English language lesson, a comic is one medium that might help students become more engaged. The mental model theory proposed by Marcus et al. (1996) provides a solid justification. These researchers contend that since pictures and images may convey crucial information more succinctly than similar written assertions, they help lessen the cognitive burden associated with complicated reasoning tasks. This benefit is also strengthened by the fact that illustrations are easier to understand than text because they eliminate the need for the reader to create a mental model of the relationships. Figures illustrated in a comic book can assist students in dealing with spoken and even casual language.

Furthermore, a comic book has a plethora of visual signals that can engage students and make the material provided in comics stay in the students' mind for a more extended period. By considering those theories, it is expected that a set of comic books can be used to enhance students' language skills. Comics can also help students become more motivated to study English in fun and engaging ways. Therefore, the results of the present research result are expected to identify the actual scenario of to what extent the pre-service teachers are willing to conduct lessons to elementary school pupils by utilising English comics and to find out their views on the effectiveness of English comic books as a tool in improving elementary school pupils' English language abilities.

3. METHODS

This study employed a quantitative method in collecting, analysing, and interpreting data (Creswell, 2009). The descriptive survey research design has been chosen as the research method for the researchers to build a collection of predetermined questions to characterise the properties of the sample. Questions pertinent to the study's topic are included in descriptive survey designs. To get honest responses from teachers, an online survey was used to examine pre-service teachers' views on the use of English comics in order to enhance elementary school students' English language proficiency. In essence, descriptive research involves outlining the actions of those whom the researcher has chosen to participate in the study process to thoroughly grasp the topic and aid in defining the characteristics of the population.

3.1 Participant Characteristics

The population for this study was the pre-service teachers enrolling at Diploma in TESL in one of the college universities located in Cheras, Kuala Lumpur. The data and information in this study were primary data, where a non-probability sampling technique was employed, and a controlled quota sampling technique was chosen to accomplish this research's purposes.

Certain constraints were put in place to limit the choice of participants to collect representative data. Only pre-service teachers who had completed or were presently completing their teaching practice as English teachers in elementary schools as part of the completion requirement in the Diploma of Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) were selected as respondents. There were 64 pre-service teachers, including 12 male teachers and 52 female teachers ranging from 20 to 26 years old. Achieving an equal number of female and male responders was unattainable due to a lower proportion of male pre-service teachers enrolled throughout the intake. Additionally, most survey participants were Malay, with just one Iban participant. These pre-service teachers taught elementary school English to students in grades 1 through 6 at the time of data collection or had done so in the past internship.

3.2 Research Instruments

Due to the outbreak of Covid-19 resulting in the implementation of the lockdowns, an online close-ended questionnaire was used as the research instrument

in this study. It consisted of a series of questions (items) designed to elicit responses from the pre-service elementary school teachers, and this online questionnaire was distributed by the course coordinator using Google Forms.

The questionnaire consisted of 42 main items divided into some sections. The first section of this questionnaire sought general information on potential variables that impact pre-service English teachers' attitudes toward using comics in the classroom, i.e. gender, age, race, and grade level. The second section comprised elements to record pre-service teachers' perspectives and attitudes on using English comics in English classes to teach reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. The final section dealt with pre-service elementary school teachers' opinions on the effectiveness of English comics in developing young learners' competency in the English language.

The questionnaire has various question types, such as a dichotomous scale in the demographic background section on the respondents' gender, race, and grade level. The five-point Likert scale questions ranging from '1=Strongly Disagree', '2=Disagree', '3=not sure', '4=Agree' and '5=Strongly Agree' and '1=not effective', '2=somewhat effective', '3=not sure', '4=effective' and '5=very effective' were also employed in the instrument. Respondents may quickly respond to inquiries and indicate their degree of agreement in five points using this psychometric response approach. This scale was included in the questionnaire to enable respondents to acknowledge their degree of agreement or disagreement to various claims about attitude, object, person, or event (Taherdoost, 2019). Before the questionnaire was administered to the target participants, a pilot study had been conducted to determine the internal reliability of all items in the questionnaire, and Cronbach alpha reliability index was calculated. The alpha coefficient for the 42 items is $\alpha=.906$, suggesting that the items had relatively high internal consistency.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analysed quantitatively. Descriptive analysis was then utilised to discover the answer to the questions of ESL pre-service teachers' perception towards the use of English comics in classrooms and their views regarding the use of English comic books as a tool in improving elementary school pupils' English language skills. This research focuses on the four primary language skills, i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Pre-service Teachers' Perception of the Use of English Comics in Classroom

The first research question addresses the perception of pre-service elementary school teachers on the use of English comic books in the teaching and learning process. According to the findings, most of the respondents, despite different age or gender, viewed English comic books favourably. Table 1 displays the pre-service teachers' views of English comics.

Table 1. Pre-service teachers' perception regarding English comics.

Item	Category	Percentage
Read English comics as a child	Yes	90.6%
	No	9.4%
	TOTAL	100.00%
Introduced to English comics during teacher education prior to teaching	Yes	68.8%
	No	31.3%
	TOTAL	100.00%
If yes, to what extent?	Selected 'No' to previous items	31.3%
	Very briefly	7.8%
	Briefly	37.5%
	Often	20.3%
	Very often	3.1%
	TOTAL	100.00%
Frequency of using graphic novels/English comics with pupils	Never	29.7%
	Once per month	12.5%
	Once per week	43.8%
	3 times per week	12.5%
	Everyday	1.6%
	TOTAL	100.00%
General feelings about using graphic novels/English comics in classrooms	Will never use	1.6%
	Might use	21.9%
	Use in some situations	67.2%
	Use them whenever possible	9.4%

According to Ulu et al. (2017), it is essential that pre-service elementary school teachers develop self-efficacy in multimodal literacy and critical reading during their undergraduate studies. It is vital that these ESL in-training elementary school teachers be well-informed and trained about this alternative teaching component, particularly since it will have a significant impact on their students' language learning acquisition. Based on the data collected, 31.3% claimed that they were never introduced to English comics as teaching and learning tools during teacher education prior to teaching, and 68.8% claimed that they had been exposed to the teaching tools. Nevertheless, despite the exposure, only a small proportion of respondents – 20.3% and 3.1%, respectively, said it was frequently and very frequently discussed, whereas 37.5% and 7.8%, respectively – said the topic was just briefly covered during their diploma education. This indicates that these pre-service elementary school teachers still lacked sufficient expertise in employing multimodal elements, which led to a lack of confidence in conveying knowledge to their students using the stated sources.

Many new teachers are concerned about literacy instruction during their internship programmes (Barry, 2012), which is consistent with the current research findings. The pre-service teachers surveyed indicated that they never utilise English comics as teaching and learning tools (29.7%), and this is probably due to a lack of instruction and exposure. However, positive general feelings about using graphic novels/English comics in the classroom can be seen in the data, with 21.9%, 67.2%, and 9.4%, respectively, mentioning that they might use comics, use them in some situations, and use them whenever possible if they learned more about them during their diploma in Teaching English as a Second Language. This is consistent with Clark (2013, as cited in Marlatt & Dallacqua, 2019), who believed that the hesitancy of pre-service teachers to employ comic books as a teaching aid might stem from a lack of knowledge and fear that administrators, other teachers, parents, and even their students would perceive their class as too easy because of the use of comic books. Moreover,

they were also worried that they would not be able to meet content standards appropriately.

Nonetheless, despite the assertion, most respondents claimed that they had used English comics with elementary school students during their teaching practice sessions on a monthly to daily basis. There was 43.8% (n=28) of the respondents who said that they read comics once a week; while 12.5% (n=8) of them said that they read them three times a week and once a month; and only 1.6% of the respondents said that they read comics daily. Based on the data collected, it can be seen that these pre-service teachers do have an interest in teaching tools that assist them in directing the students' attention to classroom lessons. It is understandable why these aspiring pre-service elementary school teachers have begun to rely on them and use them throughout the teaching and learning process, particularly among elementary school students as English comics provide various vocabulary, appealing colours, intriguing visual art, and page layout (Wylie & Neeley, 2016).

Table 2 presents the pre-service teachers' perception of using English comics in teaching English skills.

Table 2. Pre-service teachers' perception of using English comics in teaching English skills.

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree %
Reading	0.0%	1.6%	10.9%	50.0%	37.5%
Speaking	0.0%	6.3%	25.0%	45.3%	23.4%
Writing	0.0%	3.1%	34.4%	40.6%	21.9%
Listening	1.6%	15.6	34.4%	29.7%	18.8%

Most respondents agreed that they would utilise English comics to teach all four main English skills based on the order; reading, speaking, writing, and listening. This is consistent with Liu (2004), who stated numerous rationale on why educators should employ visual art in reading: (1) representation, in which repeating text material from visual elements of the comics will aid students' comprehension; (2) organisation of illustrations will improve the comprehensibility of the text; (3) function of transformation will be used to capture vital information in graphics into a distinctive form; and finally (4) caricatures and images will improve students' motivation in acquiring linguistic skills. According to Baker (2011), due to the reinforcement of visual elements, English comics may be highly motivational for learners and are much simpler to comprehend. This may explain why most respondents agree on utilising English comics in teaching.

4.2 Elementary School Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of English Comics to Enhance Students' English Language Skills

The second research question was about ESL pre-service elementary school teachers' views of the effectiveness of English comic books in enhancing the language skills of elementary school students. Based on the total mean score of all four English skills, reading skill had the highest mean with an average of 4.28 (SD=0.54), followed by speaking skill of 4.21 (SD=0.57), listening skill of 4.16 (SD=0.59) and writing skill with an average of 4.03 (SD=0.60).

The responses from the pre-service elementary school teachers involved in this study and the descriptive analysis for the mean scores to the second research question were sorted from ‘most effective’ to ‘not at all effective’, and the total mean score was organised from the highest to the lowest. The results are as follows:

4.2.1 Reading skills

Table 3 presents the pre-service teachers’ perception of using English comics to increase elementary school students’ reading skills.

Table 3. Perception towards the usage of English comics to increase reading skills.

Item		Percentage %				
		Not effective at all	Less effective	Not Sure	Effective	Very Effective
R7	Encourage pupils to actively engage in reading activities.	0%	0%	7.8%	35.9%	56.3%
R4	Improve pupils’ vocabulary and spelling.	0%	1.6%	12.5%	35.9%	50.0%
R2	Support pupils’ understanding of what they have read.	0%	0%	10.9%	46.9%	42.4%
R3	Assist pupils in drawing inferences based on what they have read.	0%	0%	18.8%	37.5%	43.8%
R5	Boost pupils’ L2 reading rate.	0%	3.1%	9.4%	46.9%	40.6%
R6	Enhance pupils’ L2 reading attitudes.	0%	1.6%	17.2%	40.6%	40.6%
R1	Aid pupils in identifying the key points of the reading materials.	0%	3.1%	15.6%	50%	31.3%

Based on data from the questionnaire, reading skills were the most positively perceived language skill that may be enhanced by utilising English comics. The questionnaire statement ‘motivate pupils to participate actively in reading activities’ received the most significant proportion of effective and very effective responses for the attribution of reading skill, while the item ‘assist pupils in identifying the main ideas of what they have read’ received the lowest. The respondents stated that employing English comics may be particularly effective in motivating students to participate in L2 reading activities and in improving students’ attitudes toward L2 reading.

Furthermore, the surveyed pre-service teachers felt that using English comics may assist pupils in improving their vocabulary. According to [Gorjian and Branch \(2016\)](#), studying comic books while learning English allows students to practise various verb tenses, synonyms, antonyms, character descriptions using adjectives, and vocabulary growth. Additionally, the pre-service teachers were also found to have good impressions on the effectiveness of English comics in enhancing students’ understanding, encouraging students to draw inferences, and recognising the major concepts of the materials that they have read. This further led to an increase in L2

reading speed. Indeed, such intersemiotic complementarity, as indicated by Assaiqeli (2021), would have a collocational relationship between the visual and verbal elements of the text that reinforced the message communicated — intersemiotically (verbal-visual intersemiosis).

4.2.2 Speaking skills

Table 4 presents the pre-service teachers' perception towards using English comics to increase elementary school pupils' speaking skills.

Table 4. Perception towards the usage of English comics to increase speaking skills.

Item		Percentage %				
		Not effective at all	Less effective	Not Sure	Effective	Very Effective
S1	Encourage pupils to communicate in simple phrases.	0%	0%	7.8%	50.0%	42.2%
S3	Help pupils overcome timidity in English-language conversations.	0%	0%	14.1%	43.8%	42.2%
S2	Help pupils to feel relaxed to speak English in class.	0%	0%	14.1%	42.2%	43.8%
S7	Motivate pupils to participate actively in speaking assessment.	0%	1.6%	12.5%	43.8%	42.2%
S6	Help pupils to feel less worried about speaking English in class.	0%	1.6%	14.1%	46.9%	37.5%
S4	Assist pupils in speaking in English during formal and informal settings.	0%	0%	18.8%	45.3%	35.9%
S5	Assist pupils in speaking with appropriate grammatical structure.	0%	7.8%	20.3%	45.3%	26.6%

Based on the results of data analysis, these pre-service teachers believed that English comic strips could assist them in improving elementary school students' speaking skills and that this technique could build a better foundation for pupils' speaking proficiency. According to the data, most respondents agreed that reading aloud activities using English comics can help students speak basic phrases; 50.0% (n=32) of respondents believed it was effective, while 42.2% (n=27) believed it was extremely effective. In addition, it is demonstrated that English comics help overcome reluctance during English conversation, with 43.8% (n=28) believing it was effective and 42.2% (n=27) very effective. Based on Table 4, the total accumulative for 'effective' and 'very effective' have the majority proportion for all items inquiring into these pre-service teachers' views of using English comics to improve speaking skills. According to pre-service teachers, it made students feel more at ease when speaking English in class and motivated them to participate actively. The pre-service teachers also believed using comics could make students feel less intimidated to speak English in class. Furthermore, 81.2% and 71.9% of respondents, respectively, agreed that using

this teaching resource would help students interact in English in both formal and casual settings and speak with appropriate grammatical structure.

According to [Mohtar et al. \(2015\)](#), the issue of students' lack of English competence has been emphasised and debated, and speaking English as a second language is undoubtedly one of the language skills that they lack. This is due to the weak foundation established at the primary level as one of the factors. Cartoonists commonly aim to mimic the experience and speak English in an informal tone in comic strips, and this type of material has colloquial dialogues within the pages, resulting in the improvement of spoken English abilities. Nevertheless, according to the findings of [Klau's \(2015\)](#) study, it was found that using English comics sparked the students' interest and motivated them to learn English. As a result, the students were more eager to participate in the teaching-learning process and speak up in class. Additionally, the students involved in the experiment of the study began to become more conscious of their pronunciation when speaking. Similar findings can also be found in [Nuarita \(2015\)](#), in which the researcher used English comic strip stories to improve the students' speaking ability. The findings revealed that using visual arts, such as English comic strips, to teach speaking skills effectively encouraged students to participate more actively in the learning environment and helped them become more confident speakers.

4.2.3 Listening skills

Table 5 presents the pre-service teachers' perception of using English comics to increase elementary school pupils' listening skills.

Table 5. Perception towards the usage of English comics to increase listening skills.

Item		Percentage %				
		Not effective at all	Less effective	Not Sure	Effective	Very Effective
L4	Help pupils comprehend words that are most frequently used in the topics that are immediately relevant to them personally (e.g., fundamental knowledge of one's self and family, shopping, the geography of the area, and occupation).	0%	0%	12.5%	53.1%	34.3%
L5	Assist pupils in drawing inferences based on what they have listened.	0%	0%	20.3%	42.2%	37.5%
L6	Encourage pupils to be attentive listeners.	0%	3.1%	14.1%	45.3%	37.5%
L7	Motivate pupils to participate actively in listening assessment.	0%	1.6%	12.5%	43.8%	42.2%
L2	Explain or support pupils' understanding of what they have listened.	0%	1.6%	14.1%	54.7%	29.7%

Table 5 continued...

L1	Assist pupils in identifying the main ideas of what they have listened.	0%	1.6%	15.6%	53.1%	29.7%
L3	Help increase listening comprehension.	0%	3.1%	15.6%	53.1%	28.1%

Listening skills were the third most positively viewed language skill that could be improved by using English comics in teaching and learning English in class. Based on Table 5, the total responses for ‘effective’ and ‘very effective’ occupied the majority proportion for all items inquiring into these pre-service teachers’ views of using English comics to improve listening abilities. According to the data, respondents believed that using English comics was significant in helping students understand phrases and listen to the most frequently used language connected to topics of the most immediate personal importance, particularly simple words and phrases that can be used in daily conversation. Many respondents (53.1%) believed it was effective, while 34.3% believed it was extremely effective.

The total number of respondents choosing ‘effective’ and ‘very effective’ were 82.8% agreeing that using English comics in teaching and learning practices would inspire students to be active listeners, and 86% of respondents believed that English comics could encourage them to fully engage in the listening practices. In addition, 84.4% of respondents agreed that when students participated in a read-aloud exercise in class using English comics, visuals from English comics might effectively help students understand what they were listening. Finally, 81.2% and 82.8% of respondents, respectively, understood that using English comics helped students identify important ideas and facilitate comprehension of what they have heard.

4.2.4 Writing skills

Table 6 presents the pre-service teachers’ perception of using English comics to increase elementary school pupils’ writing skills.

Table 6. Perception towards the usage of English comics to increase writing skills.

Item		Percentage %				
		Not effective at all	Less effective	Not Sure	Effective	Very Effective
W6	Expose pupils to a range of interesting vocabulary.	0%	0%	14.1%	40.6%	45.3%
W5	Help pupils to write narrative texts.	0%	3.1%	18.8%	48.4%	29.7%
W2	Assist pupils in writing a variety of sentence structures in English.	0%	3.1%	23.4%	42.2%	31.3%
W7	Motivate pupils to participate actively in writing assessments.	0%	3.1%	25.0%	40.6%	31.3%
W1	Assist pupils in writing using appropriate spelling, capitalisation, and punctuation.	3.1%	3.1%	21.9%	37.5%	34.4%

Table 6 continued...

W4	Assist pupils in logically organising their ideas when writing a paragraph.	0%	3.1%	25.0%	45.3%	26.6%
W3	Assist pupils in writing an outline to logically organise their ideas before writing.	0%	3.1%	29.7%	42.2%	25.0%

According to the data, using English comics to improve writing abilities was the respondents' least favourably evaluated language skill. The majority of respondents – 40.6% – thought that English caricatures were very helpful in exposing primary students to a wide range of vocabulary that could help them in their writing, while 45.3% believed that they were highly effective. Following this, it reveals that English comics helped students write narrative texts, with a proportion of respondents (n=31) who believed it to be 48.4% effective and 29.7% highly effective. This is supported by a study by [Gorjian and Branch \(2016\)](#), who found that using English comics can be helpful for students to practise using different verb tenses (for instance, by altering the past tense of the action strip to the present tense). According to 42.2% (n=27) of respondents, the use of English comics was also effective in helping students produce a variety of English sentence forms and highly effective according to another 31.3% (n=20) of respondents.

In addition, these pre-service teachers felt that English comics might encourage pupils to actively engage in writing activities and utilise appropriate English spelling, punctuation, and capitalisation, with the same overall total of respondents picking “effective” and “very effective” of 71.9%. A large proportion of pre-service teachers' also felt that employing English comics in classes could help pupils organise their ideas logically when writing a paragraph and helped them construct better outlines before composing essays with a total number of respondents choosing ‘effective’ and ‘very effective’ of 71.9%. and 67.2, respectively. This is in line with [Krashen's \(2004\)](#) assertion that reading can improve one's literacy and writing skills, and it is congruent with the findings of [Rani \(2016\)](#), who found that English comics may enhance free handwriting, enable students to write with less grammatical errors, and help them write systematically. As a result, most respondents believed reading English comics helped students enhance their writing abilities.

The data also revealed a comparable quantity of respondents choosing ‘not sure,’ ranging from 14.1% to 29.7% on using English comics to enhance students' writing abilities. Respondents were unlikely to recognise how English comics might improve their writing skills as effectively as English reading, speaking and listening skills. Table 7 describes the overall item mean score for the second research question.

Table 7. Overall items mean scores on the perceptions of the effectiveness of English comics to help enhance students' English language skills.

Variables	Frequency of variables selected / (number of respondent x number of items) x 100	Total Summary %
1. Not effective	2/1792 x100	0.11%
2. Somehow effective	32/1792 x100	1.79%
3. Not Sure	292/1792 x100	16.29%
4. Effective	802/1792 x100	44.75%
5. Very effective	664/1792x100	37.05%

Based on summary ratings for the second research question, containing 28 items that were developed to reflect the whole dimension of discussion, it was found that 64 respondents chose “not effective” and “somewhat effective,” which obtained the lowest percentages of 0.11% and 1.79%, respectively. As shown in Table 7, 16.29% of respondents were unsure of how English comics could improve students’ English skills, and this might be related to the results of earlier research questions, which demonstrated the inadequacy of the exposure these pre-service teachers received while pursuing their diploma. Nevertheless, most respondents selected “effective” and “very effective,” suggesting that these pre-service teachers had favourable impressions of using English comics to enhance pupils’ English skills. The combined percentages for “effective” and “very effective” were 81.8%, demonstrating that these pre-service teachers believed that English comics were effective in improving their learners’ English language skills.

5. CONCLUSION

The main objective of the study was to determine the perceptions of pre-service elementary school teachers related to the use of English comics in the classroom. Meanwhile, the secondary objective was to find out how pre-service elementary school teachers view the effectiveness of English comics in helping learners improve their English language skills. According to the results of the questionnaire designed to address the primary research objective, 68.8% of pre-service teachers were introduced to English comics during their teacher training before beginning their teaching practice; however, 45.3% of those respondents agreed that they only learned it briefly during their training. The respondents showed positive opinions regarding English comics since 70.3% of them already shared comics with their pupils ranging from once per month to a regular basis. Only 1.6% of those surveyed said they would never utilise English comics in the classroom, while the remaining 98.4% expressed interest in using the resources to teach the language.

Meanwhile, according to the responses to the questionnaire aimed at achieving the second research objective, the total mean score of the four English skills, ranging from 4.03 to 4.28, indicated that reading skill had the highest mean, followed by speaking skill. Meanwhile, listening skill was ranked third, and writing was ranked last. Overall, the findings revealed that most ESL pre-service elementary school teachers involved in this study supported using English comic books in education settings and showed positive views of English comics as tools to help improve pupils’ English skills. However, greater exposure to these media was necessary throughout their TESL diploma before starting their teaching practice, particularly since many respondents expressed an interest in employing English comics as a teaching tool but needed to figure out how to integrate them when teaching the language. Once these pre-service teachers are equipped with formal education on utilising English comics as teaching tools, they can manipulate instructional techniques and ideas when utilising English comics as a teaching tool in their classroom setting.

However, this study has several drawbacks, the most prominent of which is the small sample size – 64 pre-service elementary school teachers from one of the colleges in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, excluding 11 participants involved in the pilot study. Although the findings can generate a certain presupposition, it is unwise to make

generalisations that apply to all pre-service elementary school teachers, and the result can only be used within this specific demographic. In addition, the findings of this study cannot be generalised since it is challenging to locate an equivalent number of pre-service elementary school teachers that fall under the same age, racial, and gender categories, as well as those who teach at a level and in a year that is comparable to their current year. As evidenced by the statistics, most respondents were females and predominantly Malay. As a result, the perspectives of different genders and nationalities cannot be fully explored. Finally, because the research instrument was designed to assess pre-service elementary school teachers' perceptions, this study cannot verify if English comics may actually improve Malaysian elementary school students' English language skills. According to the conclusions of the data interpretation, an additional study on pre-service teachers from different universities may be proposed to discover if there are any differences or similarities in their views regarding the use of English comics and the effectiveness of English comics in helping elementary school students enhance their English language skills. Because the present study concentrated on the perception of pre-service elementary school teachers, additional research, such as experimental studies that focus on investigating the effectiveness of employing English comics as a teaching and learning tool in enhancing elementary school students' English language skills, should be conducted.

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Research Gap Strategies in Article Introductions of Different Rank Applied Linguistics Journals

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Abstract

Research gap (RG) becomes an important rhetorical work in research article introductions in all fields, especially in a competitive research publication atmosphere. A research article (RA) submitted to a reputable journal may be rejected because the writers fail to show the 'niche' in reviewing previous relevant studies to justify their research project. This research aims to find how writers in Applied Linguistics (AL) published in international journals of different quality in terms of their quartile value address the novelty in their journal article introductions. Forty articles were selected from eight different reputable international journals in AL of different tiers for the corpus of this study. The content analysis method under the umbrella of the qualitative approach was applied in the data collection and analysis. Six RG strategies, as suggested by Arianto et al. (2021), were used as a model for analysis and then the linguistic features used by the writers in realizing the RGs. The results show that among the six different RG strategies, the most frequently used by international writers are Strategy 2 (inadequate research) and Strategy 4 (contradictive/conflicting evidence). Among the four groups of RAs, those published in Quartile 1 journals used the most frequent strategies. The frequent linguistic features used by international writers are adversative conjunctions and adjective-modifying nouns to signal their RG strategies. To improve the quality of an article introduction, writers, especially novice

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writers, should use multiple strategies with the appropriate linguistic features.

Keywords: Applied linguistics, international journals, journal ranking, research article introduction, research gap strategies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Writers need to establish a research gap in their article introduction to show readers that previous studies have some limitations or shortcomings; therefore, their research is necessary or important. Miles (2017) recommends that developing a research gap becomes important in crafting a research article (RA). According to Lim (2012), writers need to convince readers that their research results will have an important contribution to the available body of knowledge, and therefore, readers should read their articles. Similarly, Arianto et al. (2021) claim that the novelty or newness of a piece of research is usually addressed in an article introduction; that is, when writers state the research gaps (RGs). However, writers publishing in international journals of different rankings may use different rhetorical strategies and linguistic realizations in addressing their RGs, and the different strategies and linguistic features may affect the quality of articles published in international journals.

The RG statement is aimed at showing what has been investigated in the previous studies on the same topic and the rationale of why further study is still necessary (Lim, 2012). According to Swales (1990), the RG claim is usually written in the introduction section of an RA, especially in the rhetorical work of ‘establishing a niche’ (p. 142). Deveci (2020) suggests that the way writers address their RGs in the introduction section will significantly impact readers’ interest in the whole article. In other words, if readers are impressed by the writer’s argument on why their research is important and valuable, they will then read the entire article, and if they are not, they may abandon reading the article.

Although RAs, especially those published in reputable international journals in English written by native or non-native writers in various fields, have been frequently investigated, studies on how writers address their RGs in their article introductions are rarely found in the literature (Arianto et al., 2021). Studies on RGs are important because the quality of an article may depend on how writers justify their research; that is, to fix the shortcomings or add new information to the previous research results, and therefore readers should read their article comprehensively (Lim, 2012). In other words, addressing the RGs becomes a rhetorical strategy by article writers to support the importance of their research project. However, writers publishing in international journals of different tiers may address RGs rhetorically differently. As a guideline, this research is aimed at answering the questions below.

1. What research gap strategies are often used in the article introductions in Applied Linguistics (AL) written by international writers published in different tier journals? and
2. What linguistic features are often used by international writers in AL to address the research gap in their article introduction?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Writers' Strategy in Establishing Research Gaps

Among limited studies on writers' strategy in establishing an RG in their article introduction are those conducted by [Lim \(2012\)](#), [Suryani et al. \(2015\)](#), [Müeller-Bloch and Kranz \(2015\)](#), [Chen and Li \(2019\)](#) and [Arianto et al. \(2021\)](#). [Lim \(2012\)](#) found that compared to writers in Educational Psychology, Second Language Writing, and Biochemistry, more writers in the field of Management indicated their RGs in their article introductions. According to Lim, scholars in the field of Management address the RG to convince and persuade readers to accept the novelty of their research findings. Similarly, [Suryani et al. \(2015\)](#) investigated how Malaysian university researchers in Computer Science address RGs in their RA introductions and found that the majority of the writers in the data of their study already addressed some RG in their article introductions. According to [Suryani et al. \(2015\)](#), this is because the writers have realized the importance of RG in a competitive research environment. Also, [Chen and Li \(2019\)](#) found that compared to earlier learners, recent learners in their study were more critical in their composition, particularly in writing the introduction. According to Chen and Li, this is because of the academic writing training offered by the university's graduate program.

[Müeller-Bloch and Kranz \(2015\)](#) investigated research gaps used by authors in 40 RA introductions in the field of Information Systems. They found eight types of research gaps: 'contradictory evidence', 'knowledge void', 'action-knowledge conflict', 'methodological conflict', 'evaluation void', 'theory-application void', 'parallel presentation' and 'sequential presentation' (p. 8). According to [Müeller-Bloch and Kranz \(2015\)](#), among the eight types of RG, 'knowledge void' is the most frequently used by the authors in their study. They recommend that more studies be conducted to identify common and frequent research gaps authors use in a particular field or discipline. Similarly, [Miles \(2017\)](#) suggests seven similar types of research gaps that authors can use to justify their research in their RA introductions; these are 'evidence gap', 'knowledge gap', 'practical-knowledge conflict gap', 'methodological gap', 'empirical gap', 'theoretical gap', and 'population gap' (p. 2). However, unlike [Müeller-Bloch and Kranz \(2015\)](#), [Miles \(2017\)](#) did not examine his framework in an empirical study to see whether or not it could effectively capture the RG strategies used by authors in article introductions.

2.2 Research Gaps Strategy in the Field of English Language Education

A more recent study on RG strategy in the field of English language education of AL is by [Arianto et al. \(2021\)](#). In their study, [Arianto et al. \(2021\)](#) compared three groups of writers in AL (i.e., Indonesian doctoral students, Indonesian faculty members, and international journal writers) in the ways they support their research in the article abstracts and introductions. They found that the majority of the writers use one or more of the five different strategies: 1) claiming nonexistent research dealing with a specific topic, 2) suggesting inadequate research in a particular aspect, 3) stating limitation(s) in previous research, 4) claiming contradictive or conflicting previous research findings, and 5) suggesting solution(s) in abstracts and introductions of their journal articles (p. 28). According to [Arianto et al. \(2021\)](#), Indonesian writers (faculty

members and doctoral students) do not use the five strategies as frequently as international writers do. Among the three groups of writers, the Indonesian doctoral students used the least strategies, while the international writers used the most strategies. According to [Arianto et al. \(2021\)](#), this is because the writers lack understanding and awareness of how to criticize previous studies for revealing the RGs. In other words, the academic culture and research practices may have affected Indonesian writers, especially postgraduate students, in writing academic work, such as articles and dissertations.

The study by [Arianto et al. \(2021\)](#) provides beneficial information that Indonesian writers in ELT use different strategies in addressing their RG in the abstracts and introductions of their articles from international writers. This can help and train Indonesian students and writers to write better article introductions, especially in establishing an RG in their introduction to be submitted to reputable international journals. However, [Arianto et al. \(2021\)](#)'s study compared three groups of writers of different levels of expertise (i.e., university students, Indonesian university lecturers, and international writers), and therefore, the results are different.

If the writers are of the same level of expertise (international writers in the language-related field) publishing in international journals, their RG strategies may be similar. This information is important because the choice of a particular RG strategy may indicate the quality of an article's introduction. Also, [Arianto et al. \(2021\)](#) did not look further at how the writers linguistically realize the statement of the knowledge gap. This information is important because different gap-establishing strategies may be realized using different linguistic features. This is the rationale for this study; that is to know whether or not international writers in AL publishing in different tier international journals use the same RG strategies and whether or not they use the same linguistic realizations to address the RG strategies in their article introductions.

3. METHOD

This research used a content analysis method following [Drisko and Maschi \(2016\)](#). According to Krippendorff (2013, cited in [Drisko & Maschi, 2016](#)), content analysis is "... a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts or other meaningful matter to the contexts of their use" (p. 2). They further suggest that the content analysis method can be used to analyze and record a person's behaviors, opinions, and concerns or a group of people of varied backgrounds. However, according to [Drisko and Maschi \(2016\)](#), most researchers use this method descriptively, although they may use it to create a new hypothesis or examine an already available theory. In this study, the content analysis method was used qualitatively to describe what research gap strategies authors use in their RA introductions and how they use the strategies to address the novelty of their studies.

3.1 The Corpus of the Study

The articles chosen for this research came from eight reputable international journals indexed by Scopus with different ranking or quartile values. Table 1 below presents the distribution of the journals included in this research.

Table 1. The distribution of the RAs in the corpus of this study (data are of 2021).

No.	Journals	Code	Country of Publication	SJR Score	Number of articles
1.	Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching	SSLLT	Poland	1.76	5
2.	Journal of Asia TEFL	JAT	South Korea	0.39	5
3.	Studies in English Language Education	SiELE	Indonesia	0.27	5
4.	Journal of Language Education	JLE	Russia	0.22	5
5.	Journal of Research in Applied Linguistics	RALs	Iran	0.16	5
6.	Asian Journal of Applied Linguistics	AJAL	Hongkong	0.16	5
7.	Journal of English Studies	JES	Spain	0.12	5
8.	Taiwan International ESP Journal	TESP	Taiwan	0.11	5
Total					40

As can be seen in Table 1, 40 articles were taken from eight different journals for this research. Following [Amnuai \(2017\)](#), the journals were chosen based on representativeness, quality, suitability and accessibility. First, they were chosen because they are reputable international journals indexed by an international indexing organization or Scopus. Second, these journals publish an article in the field of English Language Teaching or Applied Linguistics. Third, the quality of the journals is shown by their Quartile value of Quartile 1, the highest, and Quartile 4, the lowest, when the articles were downloaded. Then, these journals are published in several different countries in Asia and Europe. Also, the articles published in the journals can be accessed and downloaded for free.

Finally, we took the recent articles published in these journals to represent the recent characteristics of articles published in these journals. It is believed that the articles have represented other articles recently published in the journals because they were taken from the recent publication. It can be noticed in Table 1 that the Scimago Journal Rank (SJR) value of the journals chosen for this study is different from one journal to the others; the higher the Quartile value, the higher the SJR value is. The SJR score is based on the transfer of dignity from one journal to another; such dignity is transferred through the references cited in one journal to the rest of the journals and to itself ([Scimago Research Group, 2007](#)). In other words, the higher the SJR score of a journal, the better it is, and more readers read and cite the articles published in the journal.

3.2 The Data Collection Technique 1

The RG is often addressed in the introduction section of an RA ([Swales, 2004](#)), although some writers may also address the research gap in the abstract of their articles. According to [Miles \(2017\)](#), research problems are not always research gaps; research gaps are obtained from the critical analysis of reviewing relevant studies. Although there have been several models for RGs, such as from [Müller-Bloch and Kranz \(2015\)](#) and [Miles \(2017\)](#), this study followed the framework of [Arianto et al. \(2021\)](#). This is because this model is more recent and more suitable for the research context of Applied Linguistics. This model has also been found effective in capturing RG strategies in article introductions published in national and international journals ([Arianto et al., 2021](#)). The RG strategies suggested by [Arianto et al. \(2021, p. 28\)](#) are 1) claiming

nonexistent research dealing with a specific feature, 2) suggesting inadequate research in a particular aspect, 3) stating limitation(s) in previous research, 4) showing contradictory or conflicting previous research findings, and 5) suggesting solution(s). Below are examples of the rhetorical work of each strategy.

3.2.1 Strategy 1

Strategy 1 is claiming nonexistent research dealing with a specific feature, as in the following example.

- (S1) It is clear that M-reader is a useful tool to develop ER in students, and that Extensive Reading has a great potential in developing learners' reading proficiency including reading fluency and improved reading habits. Despite the many studies on M-reader in different parts of the world, **no studies** have focused on students' ideas toward the pros and cons of M-reader and how they can be improved. To address the gaps in the previous studies and to check whether or not M-reader is working from students' view, the researcher attempts to investigate Omani students' actual perceptions of M-reader at the Foundation Program at SQU.

The extract in S1 was taken from an article titled 'Students' perception on M-reader' written by [Rajabpour \(2020\)](#), published in TEFLIN Journal volume 31 issue 2. As seen in S1, the writers claim that no study has ever been conducted focusing on using M-readers; therefore, the study is important.

3.2.2 Strategy 2

Strategy 2 is suggesting inadequate research in a particular aspect, as in the following example.

- (S2) The literature review above reveals that previous studies on glossing have generated inconclusive findings as to whether glosses indeed promote L2 reading comprehension as purported by researchers, teaching material developers, and L2 reading teachers. That is, while working memory has been championed as a central component of L2 reading comprehension, the role of phonological short-term memory **has not received its due attention** from researchers.

The extract in S2 was taken from an article titled 'The role of glossing and working memory capacity in second language reading comprehension' by [Jung \(2021\)](#), published in The Journal of Asia TEFL volume 18 issue 2. As identified in the extract, the writer claims that studies on the role of phonological short-term memory have not been conducted frequently enough, and therefore, this study is necessary.

3.2.3 Strategy 3

Strategy 3 is stating limitation(s) in previous research, as in the following example.

- (S3) As presented above, despite the existence of informative studies on various issues on writing done by college EFL learners, **there is only a paucity of studies** that looked into learners' experiences in and views on writing in a disciplinary-specific course, especially for those who study English to become English teachers or practitioners (TEFL, 18.2).

The extract in S3 was taken from an article titled ‘EFL undergraduate and graduate learners’ views on a writing intensive online subject matter Course’ by [Sung \(2021\)](#), published in *The Journal of Asia TEFL* volume 18 issue 2. As seen in S3, the writers claim that there is a limited study ever conducted on the topic of learners’ experiences in and views on writing in a disciplinary-specific course; therefore, this study is justifiable.

3.2.4 Strategy 4

Strategy 4 is showing contradictive or conflicting previous research findings as in the following example.

(S4) It can be seen from these studies that teachers’ and students’ opinions of the motivational attributes of a task **are not always similar**, and this difference depends on such factors as personal, professional, academic, and cultural backgrounds and experiences.

The extract in S4 was taken from an article titled ‘Task-related motivational strategies in EFL classrooms: A glimpse into teachers’ and students’ perceptions’ written by [Truong \(2021\)](#), published in *The Journal of Asia TEFL* volume 18 issue 2. As can be seen in S4, the writer claims that the findings of previous studies on the perception of teachers and learners on motivational aspects of an assignment are inconsistent; therefore, this study is necessary.

3.2.5 Strategy 5

Strategy 5 is suggesting solution/s as in the following example.

(S5) Such interventions to promote pre-service teachers’ reflective practice **need to be incorporated** into teacher education programs to develop pre-service teachers’ reflection and evaluate the level of their reflection. ... Thus, incorporating pre-service teachers’ reflections in portraying their initial professional development during teaching practicum **is recommended**, as conducted in this study. In resonance with this crucial measure, this present study focused on discovering: a) pre-service teachers’ knowledge base of teaching and b) the extent to which they perceive and reflect on the implementation of their knowledge base of teaching in their microteaching class.

The extract in S5 was taken from an article titled ‘Assessing English pre-service teachers’ knowledge base of teaching: Linking knowledge and self-potrayal’ written by [Triastuti \(2020\)](#), published in *TEFLIN Journal* volume 31 issue 1. As indicated in S5, the writer suggests a solution for pre-service teachers to incorporate their reflections in portraying their initial professional development in teaching practice.

3.2.6 Strategy 6

We propose another type of RG strategy, which is not included in [Arianto et al. \(2021\)](#), continuing the previous studies or Strategy-6. Here, the writers claim that their research aims to follow up on the finding of previous studies to know more about the phenomena being discussed. According to [Swales \(2004\)](#), writers may also argue that the rationale for their research project is only to add to what is known; therefore, they do not have to evaluate or criticize the findings of previous relevant studies. Below is an example.

- (S6) The importance of this study is that it provides an examination of the extent to which the procedural repetition of narrative tasks shapes AF levels in the students' classrooms. Moreover, this study **contributes to existing knowledge** on the interaction of AF in tasks whose design is complex, in other words, "the result of the attentional, memory, reasoning, and other information processing demands imposed by the structure of the task on the language learner" (Robinson, 2001, p.29).

The extract in S6 was taken from an article titled 'Role of task repetition and content familiarity in EFL students' fluency and accuracy in narrative tasks: A case study' by [Arredondo-Tapia and Garcia-Ponce \(2021\)](#), published in *Journal of Language & Education* volume 7 issue 2. As indicated in the above example, the writers mention that their research aim is to add to the existing knowledge on the communication of AF (accuracy and fluency) in complex exercises in narrative tasks. It is important to note that the writer/s may use more than one RG strategy in one RA introduction.

3.3 The Data Collection Technique 2

The second research question in this study was answered by analyzing the linguistics realization used by the writers in addressing the RG strategy to justify their research project. Following [Arianto et al. \(2021\)](#), the writers may use one or more of the following phrases to indicate their RG.

- Connective adverbs, such as: nevertheless, nonetheless, yet, however, etc.
- Prepositional phrases such as: despite this research ..., ... remain largely a mystery, notwithstanding these views ..., etc.
- Adjective modifying nouns, such as: ... relatively unexplored, ... understudied phenomenon, ... limited information, ... sporadic evidence, etc.
- Negative verb phrases, such as: ... do not sufficiently explain ..., do not explicitly consider ..., has not addressed ..., etc.
- Phrases denoting uncertainty, such as ambiguity, mixed evidence, lack of consensus, conflict with, inconsistency with, etc.
- Phrases denoting suggestion, such as: ... previous studies suggest that it is suggested ..., etc.
- Phrases denoting the need for a further study, such as: To further explore the efficacy of EMI teacher support, an EMI training program was designed and is reported in the current study.

The writers may use one or more linguistic clues in signaling their RG strategies in their RA introductions and these linguistic features can also be used by readers to analyze the RG strategies used by the writers of the articles being read.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

The chosen RAs were downloaded from the journals and stored in separate files. The introduction sections of the RAs were extracted and saved in a separate file for analysis. The data analysis procedure was broken down into several phases. First, [Swales' \(2004\)](#) creating research space (CARS) approach was used to identify the moves and steps in each RA introduction, particularly Move 1 (establishing a territory) and Move 2 (establishing a niche). Second, the analysis was focused on the authors' statements about the research gap. Here, specific words, phrases, and sentences indicated a research gap were highlighted, coded, and classified using the framework

described in the data-collecting procedure above. Then, the specific linguistic realizations used by the authors in addressing their research gap were also highlighted, coded, and classified following Arianto et al. (2021). Finally, the frequency of each type of RG strategy and specific linguistic features in the authors' introduction were counted and tabulated using simple descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage.

3.5 Validating Data Analysis Results

In this study, an independent coder was asked to analyze the RG strategy on randomly chosen articles to establish the accuracy of the research data. The independent coder for this research was a faculty member at the Study Program of English of Universitas Bengkulu who holds a Master of Arts degree in English Education. The independent coder was taught how to analyze the strategy using the research instrument (attached in Appendix 1) to analyze the RG strategy well. The independent coder was then asked to analyze the possible strategies in a sample of eight RA introductions (four RA introductions were chosen at random from the four sets of RAs in the corpus of this research). Then, if any mislabeling or different coding results happened, the researcher and the independent coder discussed until reaching an agreement. Finally, the independent coder coded the sample articles using the same research instrument.

The inter-coder agreement was assessed using Cohen's Kappa coefficient. According to Corder and Foreman (2014), Cohen's kappa statistical analysis has a maximum score of 1.00 and a minimum score of 0.00. Then, a Cohen Kappa score of below 0.40 was classified as bad, 0.40-0.59 average, 0.60-0.74 acceptable, and 0.75 or higher exceptional (Kanoksilapatham, 2005). The Kappa coefficient value was determined after comparing the researcher and independent coder's coding results on the chosen samples of RA introductions. After comparing the analysis results from the researcher and the independent coder, the Kappa coefficient score was determined and the results are presented in Table 2. As can be seen in Table 2, the obtained Cohen's Kappa score is 0.82, an exceptional total inter-coder reliability. This implies that analyzing and classifying the RG strategies in the RA introductions was decent.

Table 2. Inter-coder reliability results.

No.	Research gap strategies	Cohen's Kappa Score
1.	Nonexistent research	0.82
2.	Inadequate research	0.80
3.	Limitation in previous studies	0.70
4.	Contradictive or conflicting evidence	0.87
5.	Suggesting solution	1.00
6.	Continuing previous studies	0.70
Mean		0.82

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

The data analysis results on the research gap strategies used by the authors are shown in Table 3, while the differences between the journal articles of different

quartiles are given in Figure 1. Then, the linguistic features used by the authors to address the research gap strategies are shown in Table 4.

4.1.1 Research gap strategy in the research article introductions

Data analysis results show that international writers in AL publishing articles in different-tier international journals use different strategies in addressing their RG in their RA introductions. The distribution of the RG strategies is shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequencies of RG strategies in RA introduction.

No.	RG strategy	Journal quartile value				Total N=40	%
		Q1 n=10	Q2 n=10	Q3 n=10	Q4 n=10		
1.	S1-Nonexistent research	4	2	1	-	7	10.45
2.	S2-Inadequate research	5	5	6	7	23	34.32
3.	S3-Limitation in previous studies	5	1	3	1	10	14.93
4.	S4-Contradictive/conflicting evidence	13	2	2	1	18	26.87
5.	S5-Suggesting solution	-	-	-	-	-	-
6.	S6-Continuing previous studies	2	3	2	2	9	13.43
Total		29	13	14	11	67	100

Table 3 indicates that the most dominant strategy used by the international journal writers is Strategy 2 (revealing inadequate research in a specific aspect) or 23 samples (34.32%), and the second dominant strategy is Strategy 4 or showing contradiction to previous research findings (18 samples or 26.87%). Below are examples of the two strategies taken from the data of this study.

- E1 Although studies that focus on the manifestation of abstract discourse patterns have been widely conducted (see Lubis & Kurniawan, 2020), **scant attention has been paid to the development of genre knowledge manifested in abstract move patterns.** (SIELE-1)

The extract in E1 was taken from a journal article titled ‘Rhetorical move and genre knowledge Development of English and Indonesian abstracts: A comparative analysis’ by Pratiwi and Kurniawan (2021), published in SIELE Journal volume 8 issue 3. In the above example, the writers claim that many studies have been conducted on the rhetorical move patterns of article abstracts, but very few of them look at the effect of the education level of the writers on the development of their genre knowledge; therefore, it is classified as strategy 2.

- E2 Some studies have explored the effects of EMI on content learning with mixed results (Dafouz, Camacho, & Urquia, 2014; Fidan Uçar & Soruç, 2018; Graham et al., 2018; Hernandez-Nanclares & Jimenez-Munoz, 2017; G. Hu & Duan, 2019; Ibrahim et al., 2017; Manan, 2019). Students in Fidan Uçar and Soruç’s (2018) research believed that EMI facilitated their content learning. **However, other studies which compared academic results of EMI and non-EMI groups of students found no significant differences** (see, for example, Dafouz et al., 2014; Hernandez-Nanclares & Jimenez-Munoz, 2017) which suggests, in those contexts at least, that EMI did not foster content learning. (AJAL-5)

The extract in E2 was taken from an article titled ‘Learning scenarios in an EMI classroom in higher education: Students’ perceptions in Taiwan’ written by [Huang \(2020\)](#) and published in the *Asian Journal of Applied Linguistics* volume 7 issue 1. As can be seen in the above example, the writer claims that studies on the use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) have contradictory results and therefore, it is classified as strategy 4.

Table 3 also shows that other strategies (Strategy 1 or claiming nonexistence of research on a specific aspect, Strategy 3 or stating limitation/s in previous research, and Strategy 6 or following up the previous studies) are also used by the international writers although not as often as Strategy 2 and 4. Below are examples of other strategies found in the RA introductions in the data of this study.

- E3 However, **no study** has compared the consistency of students’ revisions in terms of writing elements such as substance, coherence, grammar, word selection, and mechanics, between the classroom and asynchronous online communication peer feedback, and **no research study** compares students’ perceptions after experiencing those two kinds of peer feedback interactions (JLE-2).
- E4 However, **several past studies have not distinguished these two types of knowledge**, which may partly contribute to their inconsistent results (JAT-3).
- E5 **Following this line of scholarship**, this study aimed to conduct a needs analysis in a Daikin company, which is one of the largest global companies. This study addresses the gap in the literature by investigating Daikin engineers’ needs and difficulties in learning and using English in their workplace in Vietnam (TESP-6).

E3 was taken from an article titled ‘Experiencing peer feedback activities with teacher’s intervention through face-to-face and asynchronous online interaction: The impact on students writing development and perceptions’ written by [Astrid et al. \(2021\)](#), and published in the *Journal of Language & Education*. As indicated in E3, the writer states that no study has compared the consistency of students’ revisions in terms of writing elements, and that is why this is categorized as strategy 1. E4 was taken from an article titled ‘Diagnosis of Korean EFL high school students’ reading fluency using informal reading inventory’ written by [Ryu and Lee \(2021\)](#), published in *The Journal of Asia TEFL* volume 18 issue 2. As indicated in E4, the authors mention that several past studies have not distinguished the two types of knowledge and, therefore this is classified as strategy 3. Finally, E5 was taken from an article titled ‘Needs analysis of Vietnamese Daikin Engineers in their workplace: A preliminary study’ by [Cheng and Uyen \(2020\)](#), published in *Taiwan International ESP Journal* volume 11 issue 2. In this article, the writers mention that their study was following the results of previous studies to learn more about the topic.

It can also be seen in Table 3 that articles in Quartile 1 journals use the most strategies (29 or 43.28%), and on average, one article uses three RG strategies of the same or different types. The articles in journals with other quartile values (2, 3, and 4), on the other hand, use RG strategies equally frequently but use only 1 strategy on average. If presented in a chart, the frequencies of the RG strategies in the RA introductions are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 shows writers of the articles published in Quartile 1 international journals rely heavily on Strategy 4 (showing contradictive previous research findings) in establishing their research niche or gap while justifying the importance of their

research. Writers in other Quartile journals (Quartile 2, 3, and 4), on the other hand, rely on the use of Strategy 2 (stressing insufficient research in a specific aspect). Strategy 5 (suggesting solution/s) is apparently rarely used in all Quartile journals.

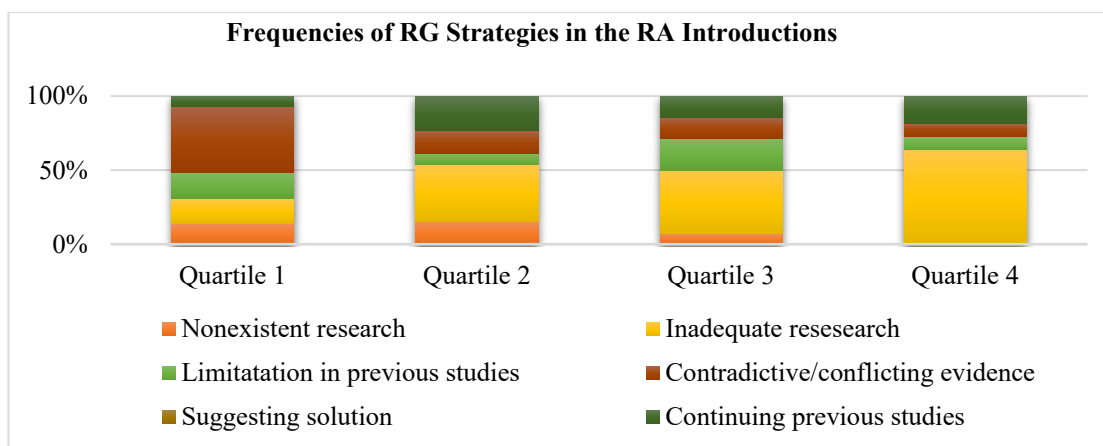


Figure 1. RG strategies in RA introductions of different quartiles.

4.1.2 The linguistic features realizing the research gap strategies

The second analysis was on the use of specific linguistic features in addressing the RG strategies in the article introductions. The results are displayed in Table 4.

As presented in Table 4, concessive connectors (adverb), such as ‘however’, ‘nevertheless’, ‘yet’, etc., are the most frequently linguistic features to signal a research strategy in the introductions of articles published in reputable international journals in the language-related field. The second most frequent linguistic features found in the article introductions are adjective modifying nouns, such as ‘limited research’, ‘little evidence’, ‘few studies’, etc. Table 4 also shows that concessive connectors (prepositional phrase), such as ‘despite...’, ‘while ...’, ‘although ...’, etc. and negative verb phrases, such as ‘not ...’, ‘do not ...’, ‘no...’, ‘not all ...’, ‘have not ...’, etc. are also often used by the writers to signal a research gap strategy. However, one or more linguistic clues can be used by the writers to address their research gap strategy such as in E6.

Table 4. The linguistic features in addressing the research gap strategies.

No.	Linguistic features	Examples	f	%
1.	Adversative conjunctions plus a clause	... however , there has yet to be a detailed analysis of teachers’ corrective feedback practice through, for example, an analysis of the teacher feedback corpus.	32	32.99
2.	Adversative conjunctions plus a prepositional phrase	... despite the existence of informative studies on various issues on writing done by college EFL learners, ...	17	17.55
3.	Adjective modifying nouns	In the study of second language reading and education, however, ORF has been relatively less scrutinized as a predominant characteristic until very recently, ...	23	23.71
4.	Negation	Don’s (2017) discussions of ‘status’ and ‘contact’ are highly relevant to the present study. However, Don (2017) does not develop system networks for her work on alignment.	12	12.37

Table 4 continued...

5.	Phrases denoting uncertainty	However, previous studies have not differentiated these two kinds of knowledge, which may partly add to their inconsistent results .	7	7.22
6.	Phrases denoting suggestion	-	-	-
7.	Phrases denoting a need for further study	This article will extend the use of the framework to focus on children's use of evaluative language with their peers, rather than with an adult, and in play, rather than in a formal literacy learning context. Three questions are addressed.	6	6.19
Total			97	100

- E6 **However, despite the apparent link between fluency and reading comprehension**, for EAL learners, high levels of reading fluency **may not** correlate with good reading comprehension (Lesaux et al., 2010). (SSLLT-5)

E6 was taken from an article titled 'Exploring the importance of vocabulary for English as an additional language learners' reading comprehension' written by Brooks et al. (2021) and published in *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, volume 11 issue 3. As indicated in E6, the writers use three linguistic features (however, despite ... and ... not) in addressing their research gap. Another example is given below.

- E7 While theoretical discrepancies exist, there is **limited evidence** whether L2SCA indices can reliably test the linguistic features in the corresponding dimension when tested on a large dataset. (AJAL-2)

E7 was taken from an article titled 'Emotion and syntactic complexity in L2 writing: A corpus-based study on Chinese college-level students' English writing' by Wang (2020)₂, published in the *Asian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, volume 7 issue 1. As indicated in E7, the writers use an adjective modifying noun (limited evidence) in advocating their RG.

4.2 Discussion

The first objective of this research is to find the research gap strategies often used in the papers by international writers published in different tier journals in the language-related field. The findings show that the most frequent strategies used by the international writers in AL are Strategy 2 (suggesting inadequate research in a particular aspect) and Strategy 4 (claiming contradictive previous research findings). This is probably because the writers must justify their research project based on the weaknesses or limitations of similar studies already conducted before. In other words, the writers always review relevant studies to search for the gap, and their studies are aimed at filling the gap. According to Swales (1990), the main reason for particular research is to fill in the gap left by previous relevant studies, such as shortcomings, inconsistency, or fault. Belcher (2009, p. 140) also suggests '... you must relate your research to the previous research to be published. According to Belcher (2009), a journal editor and reviewer can accept an article to be published if the writers review the results or findings of previous relevant studies. They have to ensure readers that their research will not only repeat what has been done before and therefore gives an

important contribution to the available knowledge in the literature. Thus, journal readers expect that by reading a particular journal article, their knowledge of a particular topic, case or issue will significantly extend (Arsyad et al., 2018).

These findings also show that international writers publishing in the highest-ranking journals (Quartile 1) used an average of three of the same or different strategies, while writers in lower-ranking journals (Quartile 2, 3, and 4) used only 1 strategy in their introductions. This finding is different from that of Arianto et al. (2021), who found that Indonesian writers publishing in national and international journals used fewer strategies in their RA introductions than international writers. According to Arianto et al., this is because Indonesian writers often avoid negatively evaluating or criticizing the findings of other researchers in the literature. Therefore, they justify their research by using other strategies than showing a research gap. Iranian writers publishing in local journals also used fewer RG strategies compared to native writers in English journals (Farnia & Barati, 2017). Similarly, Jogthong (2001) found that Thai writers avoided criticizing the results or findings of previous relevant researchers in the RA introductions. According to Adnan (2014), this may be because the writers have been affected by their first language culture in which respecting other people, including in academic text, is important. Therefore, they tend to avoid negatively evaluating or criticizing the work of others in their texts. On the other hand, international writers, especially those publishing in high-rank journals, must criticize the work of others to create a niche or space for publication since publishing in a high-impact journal is very competitive (Swales, 2004).

The different frequencies of RG strategy used in Quartile 1 journals and those in lower Quartile journals may show the different quality of the articles published in the journals. As presented in Table 1, the Q1 journals have a higher SJR score than those in Q2, Q3, and Q4. The SJR score is calculated from the transmission of dignity from one journal to another journal; such dignity is transmitted through citations that a journal does to works in other journals and to itself (Scimago Research Group, 2007). According to Falagas et al. (2008), the SJR score is an indicator of a journal's quality by calculating the frequency of quotations to the articles published in the journals and being compared to that of other journals in the same field.

The second objective of this research is to know the linguistics features often used by international writers in AL in addressing the research gap in their article introductions. The results show that the majority of the writers use adversative conjunctions and adjective-modifying nouns to signal their RG strategies. This is probably because authors need to address the research gap in the introduction section and adversative conjunctions satisfy this rhetorical need; that is, to contrast their research focus or objectives and those of previous studies. According to Zhang (2021, p. v), "adversative conjunctions are expressions that indicate semantic relations of contrast between text spans of varying extent". Thus, by using these conjunctions, writers show readers that their research is different from those that have already been conducted because there is a limitation, inconsistency, or fault in the methods or results of the previous relevant studies. In addition, an adjective modifying noun is the second most frequent linguistic feature used by the international writers in AL in their RA introductions to show a research gap. This noun phrase often follows the adversative conjunction to show what research world problems may occur on the same topic that needs further study.

A similar result was found by [Ngadiman and Tanone \(2014\)](#) when they analyzed 20 articles written by English authors from Indonesia and published in six different Indonesian journals. They found 14 types of conjunctions, and 8 of them are classified as adversative conjuncts. They also found that out of the adversative conjuncts, however, was the most frequently used by the Indonesian authors. However, [Ngadiman and Tanone \(2014\)](#) did not discuss why the authors used such conjunction most frequently in their articles. One possible reason is since the authors write in English as a foreign language, they have a limited vocabulary to use and therefore, they use the most common word or phrases. According to [Tovar-Viera \(2018\)](#), it is unavoidable to use worldwide generic formats and conventions, especially in scholarly writing. Therefore, inexperienced or novice writers must follow or adjust their writing style to the discourse conventions in which they intend to publish their research to gain a worldwide reputation for publishing in reputable journals.

5. CONCLUSION

Several conclusions can be drawn from the results of this research. First, the most frequent RG strategies used by the international writers in AL are Strategy 2 (claiming insufficient research in a particular aspect) and Strategy 4 (showing contradictive previous research findings). Second, the writers publishing in Quartile 1 international journals used significantly more RGs of the same or different types in their RA introductions; they use an average of three strategies in an article introduction while writers in lower quartile journals use only one strategy. Third, the most frequent linguistic realizations used by international writers to signal their RG strategy are adversative conjunctions and adjective-modifying nouns.

This study, however, only included 40 articles from different quartile journals in Applied Linguistics (ten articles from Quartile 1, ten articles from Quartile 2, ten articles from Quartile 3, and ten articles from Quartile 4 journals). However, this may not represent all journals in the four rankings in the same field. Therefore, future studies have to analyze more extensive samples obtained from more journals to represent the features of the articles in the journals regarding the RG strategies and linguistic features to realize the strategies.

The results of this study have an implication, especially for postgraduate students and young faculty members in writing journal articles. It is suggested that they are familiar with the RG strategies often used by international writers in their fields when writing an article for a reputable international journal. If they use multiple appropriate RG strategies in their RA introduction, the article may be considered for publication in the journal because the multiple and appropriate strategies will help convince editors and reviewers to accept their manuscript for publication. For the teaching of academic writing purposes, such as journal articles, the teachers or lecturers should introduce students to various types of RG and teach them how to write it. Different types of RG may have different impacts on readers, and it may affect the quality of the argument in their article introduction.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Research gap strategy checklist.

No.	Strategies	Description	Examples
1.	Nonexistent research	Claiming nonexistence of research bearing a particular characteristic or that the proposed topic has not been conducted by previous researchers	They have not, however , explicitly addressed how wiki-mediated collective production helps individual L2 writing performance. The present study aims to fill this gap.
2.	Inadequate research	Claiming inadequate research on a specific aspect or a limited number of studies (e.g., prediction of absenteeism)	Although students are the key players in pair or group work, little is known about their perceptions of or attitudes towards collaborative writing and how these factors influence patterns of interaction and language learning opportunities during such activities.
3.	Limitation in previous studies	Revealing limitation/s in previous research or identifying shortcomings from previous research, such as in classification, methodology, etc.	The previous studies give insight into that in translating cultural humor into the graphic novel...the translator should consider the paralinguistic elements... However, different from the previous studies , this present study recognized the challenge of translating cultural humor by applying Vandaele’s (2002) humor translation theory and classifying the data findings using

Appendix A continued...

			Newmark (1988, p. 95) proposes five cultural categories of the translation of 'foreign' cultural words.
4.	Contradictive evidence	Contradictive or conflicting previous research findings or finding similarities and differences among previous research findings.	The findings of the studies reviewed above indicate that the effect of gender on the choice of speaking strategies is not yet conclusive and that the correlation between speaking strategies and speaking proficiency is not yet clear .
5.	Suggesting solution/s	Suggesting solutions or Proposing techniques, methods, or any solutions to solve problems either from real phenomena or previous research studies	Despite this gap in the research literature, many textbooks suggest the use of collaborative writing tasks for pre-and in-service teachers (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2013; Peregoy and Boyle, 2012).
6.	Continuing previous studies	Adding to the available knowledge from the results of previous studies or continuing the previous research projects	The importance of this study is that it provides an examination of the extent to which the procedural repetition of narrative tasks shapes AF levels in the students' classrooms. Moreover, this study contributes to existing knowledge on the interaction of AF in tasks whose design is complex, in other words, "the result of the attentional, memory, reasoning, and other information processing demands imposed by the structure of the task on the language learner" (Robinson, 2001, p.29).

Appendix B. Linguistic Realizations (LR).

No.	Linguistic realization	Examples
1.	Adversative conjunctions plus a clause	... however , there has yet to be a detailed analysis of teachers' corrective feedback practice through, for example, an analysis of the teacher feedback corpus.
2.	Adversative conjunctions plus a prepositional phrase	... despite the existence of informative studies on various issues on writing done by college EFL learners , ...
3.	Adjective modifying nouns	In the study of second language reading and education, however, ORF has been relatively less scrutinized as a predominant characteristic until very recently, ...
4.	Negation	Don's (2017) discussions of 'status' and 'contact' are highly relevant to the present study. However, Don (2017) does not develop system networks for her work on alignment.
5.	Phrases denoting uncertainty	However, previous studies have not differentiated these two kinds of knowledge, which may partly add to their inconsistent results .
6.	Phrases denoting suggestion	...suggests to...; ...would better to...; The suggestion is...
7.	Phrases denoting a need for further study	This article will extend the use of the framework to focus on children's use of evaluative language with their peers, rather than with an adult, and in play, rather than in a formal literacy learning context. Three questions are addressed.



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Stance-Marking of Interaction in Research Articles Written by Non-native Speakers of English: An Analytical Study

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Abstract

Stance-marking of interaction is considered an important element for achieving effective communication in any academic discourse. Based on a descriptive-analytic approach, the present study addresses a two-fold objective: a) analyzing and comparing stance-marking of interaction across disciplines in the research articles written by Arab non-native speakers of English, and b) describing how researchers' lack of using interactional linguistic markers in their research articles would constrain readers from interacting with the arguments and opinions they expressed in their academic articles. The corpus data comprised forty research articles selected randomly from two disciplines: sciences (ten engineering and ten medicine) and humanities (ten education and ten applied linguistics). The findings of the study showed an evident lack of stance-marking in research articles written in English by Arab researchers. A total of 307 occurrences of lack of stance markers were detected in the study corpus. Arab non-native researchers' deficiency in employing stance markers in their research articles is likely to be attributed to their lack of knowledge and awareness about the effectiveness of stance-marking of interaction in academic writing. The results also show that science discipline articles have a higher frequency of lack of stance markers than humanities discipline articles. The difference between the two disciplines could be attributed to the distinctive persuasive nature of each discipline.

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The study concluded with some recommendations, including the inclusion of stance-marking of interaction in evaluating papers for publication and teaching academic writing to Arab non-native English postgraduate students.

Keywords: Academic interaction, metadiscourse, research articles, stance markers.

1. INTRODUCTION

A researcher's stance-marking of interaction is an essential factor for appraising any academic article. Some researchers postulate that an academic article needs to encompass metadiscourse markers as resources that enable the researcher to reflect on his stance and attitude toward his arguments (see, e.g., Hyland, 2004, 2005b; Hyland & Tse, 2004; Swales, 1984, 2004). Hyland (2005b, p. 173) maintains that "the ability of writers to deploy metadiscourse markers effectively to acknowledge, construct and negotiate social relations is deemed as a defining feature of an academic discourse".

A plethora of research studies over the last 20 years has been conducted to examine the use, function, and type of metadiscourse markers/resources in several contexts, disciplines, and genres, such as Ph.D. theses (Bunton, 1999), textbooks, and academic writing (Hyland, 2004), academic articles (Intaraprawat & Steffensen, 1995), lecture comprehension (Pérez & Macià, 2002), and academic lectures (Thompson, 2003). Other studies have compared the use of metadiscourse devices and their various types across languages and disciplines, such as research on English and Arab non-native speakers of English (Al-Zubeiry, 2019), sociology and English (Bruce, 2010), English L1 and L2 (Burneikaitė, 2008), and English and Persian (Faghih & Rahimpour, 2009). These studies focus on exploring the metadiscourse markers in different academic discourses and comparing their use across languages and fields.

However, further studies are necessitated to appraise writers' stance-marking of interaction in research articles and to account for how writers' lack of using interpersonal markers in expressing their stance and relating to readers (Hyland, 2005b) is likely to pose difficulty to the prospective readers in evaluating their views and arguments. Filling this gap of research, the present study attempts to address a two-fold objective: a) analyzing and comparing stance-marking of interaction across disciplines in research articles written by Arab non-native speakers of English, and b) describing how researchers' lack of using interactional linguistic markers in their research articles would constrain readers from interacting with their opinions expressed in the propositional content of their articles. In line with the study objectives, the following research questions will be addressed:

1. What stance-marking of interaction do Arab non-native speakers of English lack in their across-disciplines research articles?
2. How would Arab researchers' lack of using interactional linguistic markers in their research articles constrain readers from interacting with their opinions expressed in the propositional content of their articles?

Drawing on Hyland's (2005b, p. 174) negotiation of the necessity of adopting a "model of interpersonal discourse that unites and integrate linguistic features that

assure effective persuasive communication”, we take on Hyland’s (2005b) ‘stance and engagement model of interaction’ as a framework for appraising stance-marking of interaction in research articles written by Arab non-native speakers of English. Hyland’s (2005b) model of authorial stance and voice in academic discourse has been widely used among applied linguistics researchers as it has proven to be simple, clear, and comprehensive (Abdi et al., 2010; Al-Zumor, 2021; Çandarlı et al., 2015; Sayah & Hashemi, 2014).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Persuasive Writing

Hyland (2005b) believes that academic writing is no longer perceived as a form of discourse that is evaluated considering its traditional tag of being impersonal and objective. He believes academic writing is “a persuasive endeavor that entails social interaction between writers and their potential readers/audience” (Hyland, 2005b, p. 173). An effective persuasive writing is demonstrated through the writers’ competence in using language that establishes social relationships and achieves their personal and academic goals. Hyland (2005b, p. 173) also confirms that a “successful academic text displays the writer’s awareness of both its readers and its consequences”. As a matter of fact, a distinctive feature of professional academic discourse should reflect the writer’s competence in deploying interactional markers that construct the writer’s authorial stance and facilitate writer-reader textual interaction (Al-Zumor, 2021; Alotaibi & Arabi, 2020).

A vast array of research has been undertaken to elucidate how writers and speakers deploy linguistic resources to express their opinions, judgments, and attitudes in their academic discourse. Accordingly, diverse terms have been used by researchers to refer to these linguistic resources, such as appraisal (Martin, 2000; White, 2003), attitude (Halliday, 1994), epistemic modality (Hyland, 1998), evaluation (Hunston & Thompson, 2000), metadiscourse (Crismore, 1989; Hyland & Tse, 2004), stance (Biber & Finegan, 1989; Hyland, 1999; Johnstone, 2009), and writer identity (Ivanič, 1998; Hyland, 2002; Sanderson, 2008). Regardless of which term is preferred to be used by researchers to refer to these resources, “their common interests are to explore how various linguistic devices reflect authors’ beliefs and values and help authors establish effective interpersonal relationships with their readers” (Shen & Tao, 2021, pp. 1-2).

2.2 Interpersonal Relationships in Writing

Representation of interpersonal relationships in writing is closely associated with two prominent discourse studies approaches, systemic functional linguistics and social constructionism (Hyland, 2005b, p. 174). According to these approaches, writers’ language in their academic discourse is governed by social, cultural, and institutional contexts. This can be manifested in the ways writers use linguistic resources to create interpersonal relationships when they comment on their propositions and shape their texts to the expectations of their audiences (Hyland, 2005b). Within systemic functional linguistics, Martin’s (2000) appraisal approach is counted as an appropriate typology of the English evaluative linguistic resources as it

attempts to explain how language is used in evaluating, adopting stances, constructing textual persona, and managing interpersonal positioning and relationship (Wei et al., 2015, p. 235). Hyland (2005b), however, points out that this approach falls short of providing explicit details about “how far these resources are used in certain registers and to what extent they are realized having specific meanings in given contexts of use” (p. 175).

Based on his view that the selection of a model of evaluative discourse should emerge from a study of stereotypes of linguistic features in academic writing, Hyland (2005b) analyzed 240 research articles from eight disciplines to explore how academic writers use language to express their stance and relate to their readers. In light of his research findings, he propounded a model in which the writer-reader interaction is evaluated with reference to two major components: stance and engagement.

2.3 Key Resources of Academic Interaction

Hyland (2005b, pp. 176-178) refers to stance as the “writer-oriented features of interaction,” and it concerns “the ways writers present themselves and conveys their judgments, opinions, and commitments, or the attitude they want to express to a proposition or the reader”. Engagement, on the other hand, refers to “reader-oriented features of interaction” and concerns “the ways writers relate with their readers with respect to the positions advanced in the text”. Hyland’s (2005b) conceptualization of his model is represented in Figure 1.

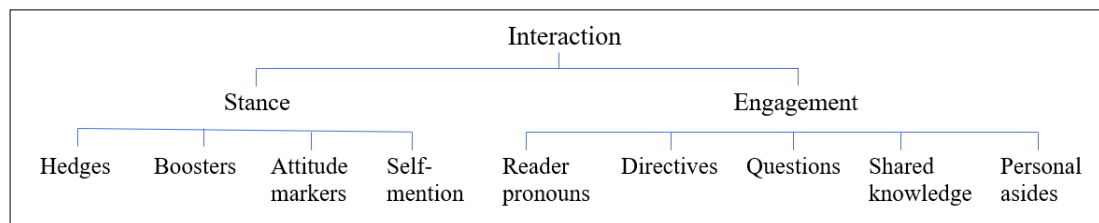


Figure 1. Key resources of academic interaction (Hyland, 2005b, p. 177).

In view of the main purpose of the present study, which is analytical in nature, the study delimits its scope to stance-marking as a writer-oriented feature of interaction. Writers’ stance-marking features are subcategorized into hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions, as shown in the figure above. Hedges are linguistic markers such as ‘possible’, ‘might’, ‘perhaps’, which refer to the writer’s evaluation of different voices and lessen his entire commitment to a proposition. Boosters are devices such as ‘clearly’, ‘obviously’, which refer to the writer’s assurance over a proposition, claim, or evaluation. Attitude markers such as ‘agree’, ‘interestingly’, or ‘sufficient’ express the writer’s opinion or affective attitude toward propositions that convey importance, surprise, agreement, and frustration. Self-mentions such as ‘I’, ‘we’, or ‘the researcher’ refer to the degree of explicit or implicit writer’s presence in the text (Hyland, 2005a, 2005b).

2.4 Studies on Writer’s Stance-Marking of Interaction

A number of research studies have been done in exploring and investigating writer’s stance-marking of interaction in different genres and fields and across

disciplines, languages, and cultures, such as research on Saudi EFL academic writing (Al-Zubeiry, 2019; Al-Zumor, 2021), academic writing (Babaii et al., 2015; Bunton, 1999; Darwish, 2019; Hyland, 2004), journal author guidelines (Hyland & Milton, 1997; Messabhia, 2020; Moini & Salami, 2015), book reviews (Nayernia & Ashouri, 2019), research articles (Qomariana & Soetama, 2021), and doctoral dissertation and Master's theses (Sayah & Hashemi, 2014; Taymaz, 2021). For the convenience of presentation and the limitation of the current study, we attempt to review the most relevant studies to better understand related literature.

To begin, Hyland and Milton (1997) compared the writing styles of Chinese and British learners in their exam scripts written in English. The researchers found that nativeness is counted as an important factor for high occurrences of 'hedges' and 'boosters' markers in expressing certainty and doubt. They concluded that non-native learners had problems expressing their certainty as they lacked knowledge of the effective use of such devices. Then Sayah and Hashemi (2014) conducted a study aiming at exploring the stance and engagement devices across three disciplines: sociology, linguistics, and education. The researchers believe that the highly frequent use of stance-marking devices, boosters, and hedges which were realized in many articles across the three disciplines, reflects their importance in preference of communicative style, interpersonal strategies, and organized preconceptions of each researcher in writing research articles.

Moini and Salami (2015) explored stance and engagement markers in a corpus of 280 author guidelines in seven international journals in humanities and social sciences. The major findings of the study showed that macro and micro interactional metadiscourse were statistically significant. According to the researchers, such overuse of macro interactional metadiscourse devices gives credit to interaction devices for assuring effective communication in journal author guidelines. Babaii et al. (2015) further investigated whether there is a relationship between disciplinary conventions and stance-marking in English. The researchers explored the stance-marking of writer-reader interaction in research abstracts in psychology and sociology. The research findings showed that stance-marking was constrained by disciplinary communities and science conventions.

Al-Zubeiry (2019) used Hyland's (2005a) model in analyzing and comparing forty English scientific research articles written by English and Arab researchers. The researcher noticed that native English writers of scientific articles are more proficient in English academic writing than Arab English researchers, as it was found that their articles embraced more interactional linguistic resources than their Arab counterparts. Raissi and El-Khatib (2018) delved into evidential marking, conveying their stance in the literature review of MA theses in linguistics. The researchers followed a descriptive-analytic approach in their methodology. The study findings revealed that the students had variations in their competence in using different types of evidential marking. They were competent in deploying reporting and inferring markers; however, they still had problems using sensory and belief types of evidential marking.

Darwish (2019) investigated three elements of writer-reader interaction, namely, the text, the text-writers, and the audience. Adopting Hyland's (2005b) model, the researcher analyzed 80 English scripts of the discussion chapters written by MA postgraduate Egyptian students at Egyptian universities and their British student peers at UK universities. The study findings indicated that the UK corpus encompassed more 'hedges' and 'attitude markers' compared to the Egyptian ones. The researcher also

used an interview instrument to elicit four experts' views about the factors that play a role in students' lexical decision-making. The findings showed that these factors were ascribed to "the writer's personal linguistic preferences, supervisor's and other lecturers' feedback, previous education and instruction, and the writer's self-confidence" (Darwish, 2019, p. 7).

Messabhia (2020) explored the frequency and types of stance markers deployed in the research review sections of twenty research articles written by native and non-native writers of English (Britishers and Algerians). Based on Hyland's (2005b) framework of stance interactional metadiscourse markers, the study results showed that the non-native researchers employed limited numbers of stance markers of interaction compared to the native researchers. The researcher attributed such results to the reason that those non-native researchers are "unknowledgeable and unaware of the necessity of stance taking, particularly in the research review section". She suggested that "non-native research writers should not give up their authority as writers by silencing their voice; they must assert their presence and take the responsibility of guiding their readers to discover the intended organization" (Messabhia, 2020, p. 63).

Qomariana and Soetama (2021) analyzed the stance markers of Indonesian writers in social and science journal articles written in English using a qualitative method by investigating the use of linguistic features employed in 16 journal articles written by Indonesian researchers. The study concluded that social science researchers used more stance markers compared to the others. The study also found that self-mention was less employed among the aspects of stance markers.

Considering the above-reviewed studies, we notice that research studies are scarce on appraising stance-marking of interaction in research articles written by Arab non-native speakers of English. Therefore, the contribution of the present study lies in its endeavor to address this gap by analyzing researchers' stance-marking of interaction in academic articles written by Arab non-native speakers of English and describing how researchers' lack of using interactional linguistic markers in their research articles would constrain readers from interacting with their arguments and opinions in the propositional content of their articles.

3. METHODS

3.1 Corpus of the Study

The study aims to analyze and describe Arab non-native English researchers' stance-marking of interaction in academic articles in accordance with Hyland's (2005b) model of stance-marking subcategories. A corpus of 40 research articles was selected randomly from two disciplines: sciences (ten engineering and ten medicine), and humanities (ten education and ten applied linguistics).

Cross disciplines sampling is believed to be conducive to obtaining a relatively broad view about the nature of interactional stance-marking cross-section academic practices. The corpus was limited to articles comprising 15-25 pages and to publications in indexed journals (excluding SCI/SCOPUS) and the duration of 2019-2021. We excluded reputable indexed journals since these journals usually have reviewers and editors much involved in providing suggestions for revisions and in the editing process before publication. Meanwhile, we wanted to fully investigate stance-

marking of interaction in research articles written by Arab non-native speakers of English. Based on our experiences, non-reputable indexed journals have reviewers and editors less involved in the revisions and in the editing process before publication.

3.2 Procedure of Data Analysis

The study followed a descriptive technique of data analysis. Every article of the corpus study was scrutinized to identify the writer's lack of stance markers. This process included all the different sections of each article. When a lack of stance-marking was identified in the articles, it was categorized and described. The categorization analysis was based on Hyland's (2005b) interactional stance-marking which is subcategorized into hedges (e.g., 'possible', 'might', 'perhaps'), boosters (e.g., 'clearly', 'obviously'), attitude markers (e.g., 'agree', 'interestingly', 'sufficient'), and self-mention (e.g., 'I', 'we', 'the researcher'). Our perception of the lack of stance markers is grounded on the context where the writer's ideational negotiations necessitate the use of stance markers prompting potential readers to evaluate the credibility of his arguments and opinions and to evaluate his stance and attitude towards his arguments. We adopted Hinkel's (2004), and Hyland's (2005a) references to gain better insights into how to evaluate the research writer's stance-marking.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main objective of the present study is to analyze the stance-marking of interaction in research articles written by Arab non-native speakers of English by identifying the researcher's lack of stance markers. The analysis and description of the study results are organized into two major sections addressing the two research questions: a) highlighting the frequencies and percentages of the lack of stance markers in the corpus and comparing them across the two disciplines, and b) describing the researchers' lack of using interactional linguistic markers in their research articles and how it would constrain readers from interacting with their opinions expressed in the propositional content of their articles.

4.1 Analysis of Stance-Marking of Interaction across Disciplines

The first research question of this study is concerned with the analysis and comparison of stance-marking of interaction across disciplines in research articles written by Arab non-native speakers of English. The result is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage of lack of stance markers across disciplines.

Disciplines	Science		Humanities		Total	
	Freq.	Per. %	Freq.	Per. %	Freq.	Per. %
Hedges	53	33.54	71	47.65	124	40.39
Boosters	31	19.62	35	23.49	66	21.50
Attitude markers	43	27.22	29	19.46	72	23.45
Self-mention	31	19.62	14	9.40	45	14.66
Total	158		149		307	
Per. %	51.47%		48.53%		100%	

Table 1 shows that a total of 307 occurrences of lack of stance markers were found in the corpus. This finding indicates that Arab non-native English researchers have problems deploying stance markers evaluating the credibility of their arguments and opinions and expressing their attitude and certainty towards them. This finding seems to match with the findings obtained by [Hyland and Milton \(1997\)](#), who found that non-native writers had problems in expressing certainty, which is likely due to their lacking knowledge of the effective use of the interactional devices such as stance markers. This finding also conforms to what has been concluded by [Al-Zubeiry \(2019\)](#) and [Darwish \(2019\)](#), who asserted that non-native writers of English use less interactional devices than their native counterparts.

The results also demonstrate that science appears to have more lack in stance markers than humanities. In total, out of the 307 gaps in the use of stance markers in the corpus, 158 occurrences (51.47%) are in the articles of science compared to in the articles of humanities which receive 149 occurrences (48.53%). The difference between the two disciplines is perhaps due to the varied peculiarities of each discipline. This finding coincides with the previous research findings such as [Hyland \(2004\)](#), who found that sciences include less interactional devices than soft fields such as applied linguistics. This can be justified by the nature of science based on experimental proof for accepted new knowledge, which necessitates reporting experimental; unlike the nature of humanities that requires more lengthy claims for arguments, and thus employs more stance markers ([Hyland, 2011](#)).

4.2 Describing Lack of Using Stance-Marking

The second research question of the present study focuses on describing researchers' lack of using interactional linguistic markers in their research. Based on the study model, the presentation of the analysis of this question is divided into four subcategories of stance-marking, namely hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mention.

4.2.1 Hedges

Hedges are devices employed in academic writing to express writers' commitment. When researchers make claims in their writing, they must refrain from expressing such claims with certainty. For this purpose, they would need to acknowledge "the reader's role in ratifying [these] claims" ([Hyland, 1995, p. 34](#)).

The study results (Table 1) show that hedges markers constitute the highest lacking category, with a total of 124 (40.39%) out of 307 occurrences of lacking stance markers identified in the study corpus. This finding is in accordance with the findings of [Al-Mudhaffari et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Messabhia \(2020\)](#), who found that non-native writers use unhedged statements when introducing their claims. Humanities articles receive a higher frequency of lack of hedges stance markers, i.e., 71 occurrences (47.65%), compared to science articles which receive 53 occurrences (33.54%). This finding is corroborated by [Hyland \(2004\)](#), who found that science fields used less hedging devices than the fields such as humanities. The claims-based argumentation that distinguishes research writing in the discipline of humanities accounts for the high frequency of lack of hedges markers. In fact, such a persuasive strategy drives the

researchers to use more hedges markers that reduce the un/certainty of their arguments and opinions.

Based on Hyland's (2005b) model, hedges are subdivided into three types: lexical verbs, modal verbs, and epistemic devices. These subtypes of hedges are explained below.

a. Lexical verbs

Lexical verbs represent one way of expressing hedging. These are verbs such as 'believe', 'seem', and 'appear'. The analysis of the study shows that non-native English researchers tend to impose their claims and opinions on the audience and leave no chance for their negotiation. Consider the following illustrative examples selected from the corpus:

- (1) The system with SSW achieved better performance. (Science, article 1)
- (2) There is a major need to investigate teachers' perspectives on the principle and goal of global awareness. (Humanities, article 4)

Examples 1 and 2 appear to express strong claims that do not allow for the potential opposing views of the readers. In example 1, the writer makes a strong claim about 'the system with 'SSW''. However, when a hedging verb such as 'seem' or 'appear' is imposed, the claim would be softer. The sentence will then read like: 'The system with SSW seems to have achieved better performance'. The same applies to example 2, where a hedging verb would reduce its certainty. As such, the sentence can read: 'There appears to be a major need to investigate ...'.

b. Modal verbs

Modal verbs such as 'may' or 'could' are widely employed in academic writing to help writers reduce their un/certainty of their arguments. Considering the analysis of the researchers' arguments in their articles, we have observed that they failed to employ these modal verbs in their arguments. Here are selected illustrative examples:

- (3) VSC (Static Var Compensator) is better than CSC [Current Source Converter] because CSC has certain limitations. (Science, article 12)
- (4) ... the findings that constitute a real contribution to the existing literature. (Humanities, article 15)

Regarding example 3, with the use of a lexical verb only, the claim is certainly strong; however, when a modal verb is imposed, it will be reduced. The sentence then may appear as: 'VSC (Static Var Compensator) might be better than CSC ...'. The same also applies to example 4. Here is a better suggestion using a hedging modal verb: '... the findings that may constitute a real contribution to the existing literature'.

c. Epistemic devices

Epistemic devices "are crucial to negotiating knowledge claims with a potentially sceptical audience" (Hyland 2005a, p. 98). These markers help writers raise ideas and claims that the audience might find them to be appropriate and convincing. They also add more politeness to the written text by reducing the writers'

accountability (Rhee, 2011). Here are selected illustrative examples from the corpus that exhibit lacking use of such markers:

- (5) In this paper, a new compact butterfly single element is introduced that supports 5G requirements of wide bandwidth. (Science, article 19)
- (6) This is due to the loss of a few number[s] of oxygen. (Science, article 6)

The above examples express strong claims that do not allow space for the readers' potential opposing views. If epistemic devices had been used here, the statements would have been more appropriate in terms of relationship with the readers. Inserting an epistemic device in example 5, the statement will then read as: '... that would probably support 5G requirements of wide bandwidth'. Example 6 will show a clearer stance when an epistemic hedging device is used. The example could be like this: 'This is possibly due to the loss ...'.

The insertion of proper hedging markers in the examples above has reduced the researchers' claims, and they have become open to any alternative interpretations by the readers. This is one of the reasons why stance markers such as hedges should be employed in writing, particularly by non-native writers who still seem to be short in using them (Darwish, 2019; Hyland & Milton, 1997; Messabhia, 2020).

4.2.2 Boosters

Boosters are words such as 'clearly' and 'obviously', which can help writers "emphasize certainty and constructs rapport by marking involvement with the topic and solidarity with an audience, taking a joint position against their voices" (Hyland, 2005a, p. 53).

The study results summarized in Table 1 demonstrate that the lack of boosters accounts for 66 occurrences (21.50%) of the total lack of stance markers identified in the corpus. This result is consistent with what has been found by Serholt (2012) and Al-Zumor (2021), whom both reported that non-native writers exhibited a deficiency in employing boosters in their academic writings. The results also indicate that humanities articles mark slightly more lack with 35 occurrences (23.49%) as compared to science articles, which reach 31 occurrences (19.62%). This might be attributed to the difference between humanities and science. Science researchers use boosters more as they deal with facts, while humanities researchers deal with views and opinions, and as a result, they are likely to use less boosting markers. The following examples illustrate the lack the use of boosters found in the corpus:

- (7) Teaching reading comprehension to multileveled classes is [...] a big challenge. [undoubtedly] (Humanities, article 15)
- (8) [...] The electric motors are joined with suitable inverters. (Science, article 14)
- (9) This [...] indicates that the technique is efficient and reliable for a wide range of potential applications. (Science, article 16)

Although the examples above express the writers' views about the points they discuss, it seems that they are still short in presenting a clear stance. Using a booster would give a clearer voice to the writers. Therefore, adverbs like 'undoubtedly', 'obviously', and 'genuinely' can be added to examples 7, 8, and 9 to substantiate the writers' stance. These statements can read respectively as: 'Teaching reading comprehension to multileveled classes is undoubtedly a big challenge'; 'obviously, the

electric motors are joined with suitable inverters'; and 'this would genuinely indicate that the technique is efficient ...'. We notice that adding the words to the above examples has assigned more power to the views expressed by the researchers.

4.2.3 Attitude markers

It is common in academic writing that writers express their shared attitudes by using markers such as 'hopefully' and 'unfortunately' (Hyland, 2005b). In fact, these markers are used to signal writers' shared values and attitudes that both express "a position and pull readers into a conspiracy of agreement so that it can often be difficult to dispute these judgments" (p. 180).

The study results in Table 1 show that the lack of attitude markers receives 72 occurrences (23.45%) of the total number of lack of stance markers identified in the corpus. This finding is in accordance with the findings of Al-Zubeiry (2019) and Messabhia (2020), who reported that non-native writers used less attitude markers when compared to their native counterparts. The results also indicate that science articles mark more lack with 43 occurrences (27.22%) compared to humanities ones, which reach 29 occurrences (19.46%). Here are some selected illustrative examples:

- (10) Water storage for later use is specifically [...] essential for Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. (Science, article 12)
- (11) Exploring these factors [...] helps the researcher to approach a holistic understanding of the course design process. (Humanities, article 3)

The above examples expressed the researchers' views and opinions, but their statements do not reflect their apparent attitudes. In research articles, researchers' attitudes are sometimes important to emphasize their arguments' persuasiveness (Hyland, 2005a, p. 70). The researchers' attitudes in the above examples would look more convincing and clearer when adding attitude markers. Explicitly, sentence 10 can read as this: 'Water storage for later use is significantly essential for ...'. As for sentence 11, it can look like this: 'Exploring these factors is expected to help the researcher to ...'.

4.2.4 Self-mention

Self-mention refers to using "first person pronouns and possessive adjectives to present propositional, affective, and interpersonal information" (Hyland, 2005b, p. 181). Currently, it is considered an important feature in academic writing as it is believed to establish "an appropriately authorial persona and [maintain] an effective degree of personal engagement with one's audience in order to connect the two sides and have them engaged to a great deal in the argument" (Hyland, 2005b, p. 148).

The analysis results in Table 1 demonstrate that lack of self-mention stance markers receives the least, with 45 occurrences (14.66%) of the total 307 occurrences of lack of stance markers in the corpus. This finding conforms to the findings of Darwish (2019), who reported a shortage of self-mention among Egyptian and British writers. The results also reveal that science articles mark more lack with 31 occurrences (19.62%) compared to humanities articles which reach 14 occurrences (9.40%). This finding agrees with those of Hyland (2004), who found that science fields use less self-mention as compared to soft fields such as applied linguistics. This

is likely due to the differences between the nature of the two disciplines, as science writers seem to strive for establishing “empirical uniformities through precise measurement and scrutiny of a limited number of controlled variables”, whereas soft sciences such as humanities deal with entities that are less measurable and less clear-cut (Hyland, 2005a, p. 148). This finding is also in accordance with Qomariana and Soetama (2021), who found that self-mention was less among Indonesian researchers.

The data demonstrate two problematic issues concerning self-mention: excessive use of passive voice instead of active and implicit expressions of self-mention such as ‘the writer’, ‘the author’, and ‘the researcher’. The following selected examples give a clear picture of these problems:

- (12) The number of images used in this stage was 275. (Science, article 11)
- (13) In this study, the researcher tries to unveil the difficulties encountered by multileveled class. (Humanities, article 15)

Example 12 lacks the agent of the action. Adding the pronoun ‘we’, the researcher would create an opportunity for the reader to be part of the research discussion. The sentence then can read as: ‘the number of images we used in this ...’. As for sentence 13, even though the implicit use of self-mention by using these expressions is possible in academic writing, researchers also need to display their own self-representation explicitly in what they write by using personal pronouns as a way for “distinguishing their own work from the work of the others and giving individual consumers the impression that they are being addressed personally” (Hyland, 2005a, p. 72).

5. CONCLUSION

This study analyzed the stance-marking of interaction in research articles written by Arab non-native writers of English. The findings of the study showed an evident lack of stance-marking in the targeted researchers’ articles. A total of 307 occurrences of lack of stance markers were found in the study corpus. Arab non-native researchers’ deficiency in employing stance markers in their research articles could be attributed to their lack of knowledge and awareness about the effectiveness of stance-marking of interaction in academic writing. The findings also demonstrated that science discipline articles receive a higher frequency of lack of stance markers, i.e., 158 occurrences (51.47%), as compared to humanities discipline articles which receive 149 occurrences (48.53%). The difference between the two disciplines is likely ascribed to each discipline’s distinctive persuasive nature. Regarding the results of the subcategories of stance-marking, the study findings indicated that hedges markers constituted the highest lacking category, with a total of 124 occurrences (40.39%). Attitude markers and boosters came next with 72 occurrences (23.45%) and 66 occurrences (21.50%), respectively. Self-mention received the least, i.e., 45 occurrences (14.66%).

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations can be suggested. Stance-marking of interaction should be considered in evaluating papers for publication in professional journals. Stance-marking of interaction should be counted in teaching academic writing for native and non-native English postgraduate students. Novice researchers should be exposed to actual examples from authentic works on how stance markers can be appropriately employed. Issues such as boosting

one's writing and marking self-representation with the use of pronouns such as 'we, my, and our' must be encouraged among prospective research writers.

Limitations of the present study lie in the sample size used. Further research can be conducted using samples from different sub-disciplines, which is likely to get further insights into the nature and peculiarities of other disciplines. The study is also limited to research written by non-native English speakers. Using data from researchers from other contexts and across cultures may lead to gaining a better understanding of the factors accounting for researchers' lack of using stance markers in academic discourse.

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Theme Structure in an Introduction Section of Articles Published in Indonesian National Journals

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Abstract

One of the important parts of a research article is an introduction. As the initial part of an article, it should provide all the ideas confirming that the study needs to be conducted. Therefore, the ideas presented should be well organized. One of the ways to confirm a good organization of ideas in the introduction is by paying attention to the theme structure used to build the clauses. This study analyzed the theme types and structure used in the introduction section of articles published in Indonesian national journals. This study was conducted using qualitative content analysis. Using a documentation technique, the data were collected from 15 research articles published in the latest volumes (2020-2021) of four Indonesian national journals. The data were analyzed using a content analysis method, following the established procedure of the clause theme analysis. The results of the study found the dominant use of simple themes in the introduction section of the research articles, indicating a lack of ideas organization. Besides, it was also found that the theme structure of the clauses was realized in nine theme patterns. These patterns are used in presenting different contents of an introduction. It is concluded that theme

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types and patterns contribute to producing a good quality introduction section of a research article.

Keywords: Indonesian national journals, introduction section, research article, theme structure, theme type.

1. INTRODUCTION

A scientific article (research article) is one of the most current sources of information in the world of science. Writing a research article requires specific language skills in conveying information in appropriate and easy-to-understand language, reflected in a well-organized text. One of the ways to achieve such a purpose is by paying attention to the textual function realized in the text. The textual function is among the so-called three language metafunctions – ideational, interpersonal, and textual – proposed by Halliday (1994). The textual metafunction focuses on how ideas are arranged. It enables the clause to be packaged effectively by considering its purpose and context (Eggins, 2004). It has been mentioned in the existing literature that textual metafunction is realized in theme and rheme (Eggins, 2004; Halliday, 1994; Martin et al., 1997). Thus, based on the textual function, every clause is composed of a theme (the first element of a clause that informs what the clause is going to be about) and rheme (the rest element(s) of a clause in which the theme is developed).

The theme-rheme structure has attracted many researchers to conduct studies on it. Several previous studies have investigated the role of thematic progression in building text cohesiveness (Herriman, 2011; Keskin & Demir, 2021; Rosa, 2007a), theme characteristics in different text types as in recounts (Yunita, 2018), narratives (Nurlela et al., 2021), descriptives (Pangestu et al., 2019), descriptions and explanations (Az-Zhahir et al., 2020), and discussions (Anwar & Amri, 2020; Putri & Rosa, 2020), the theme structure in newspaper editorials (Rosa, 2007b), and the use of themes in translation studies (Dejica-Cartis & Cozma, 2013; Esfehiani & Walters, 2018; Ethelb, 2019; Rosa & Sofyan, 2019). The results of those previous studies have confirmed that different texts may have different theme structures. Rosa (2007a), for example, found that the simple linear progression is the thematic progression structure most frequently used in exposition texts written by Indonesian students. In contrast, Keskin and Demir (2021) found that the constant continuous theme was the most frequent structure of thematic progressions used in the argumentative essays written by Turkish students. Furthermore, Yunita (2018) and Nurlela et al. (2021) found that the unmarked topical theme was the most frequent theme structure used in recount text. However, in newspaper editorials, the marked theme was most frequently used when showing their disagreement with the reported issues (Rosa, 2007b). Those previous studies left the gap that can be completed by this present study, particularly in the types of texts (i.e., academic texts, genre-based texts, editorials, and translated texts) used as the study object. Thus, the theme-rheme structure can be studied in other text types, one of which is a scientific text.

This present study explores the theme structure in the scientific articles published in Indonesian national journals. As the media for scientific knowledge sharing, journal articles should contain well-organized ideas that facilitate readers' understanding of

the shared knowledge. As suggested by the previous studies, the theme structure has been examined to have contributed to the organization of a text. Thus, the theme structure in journal articles is worth studying.

One of the most important parts of an article is an introduction in which the reason why a certain study needs to be conducted is described. Besides, an introduction explicitly introduces the novelty proposed in the article. In addition, an introduction is considered a point of reference for readers to decide whether or not to read the article (Lang, 2017). Based on the writers' observation, many articles need resubmission or are even rejected to be published in international journals because of their poor introduction section. In the reviewers' comments, one of the factors leading to such rejection is disorganized ideas that lead to difficulty in understanding the messages contained in the introduction section, one of which is caused by poor theme structure. Therefore, studying an introduction of a scientific article is important as an effort to improve the organization of ideas presented. This study takes an introduction as the research object. In particular, this study answers the following research questions:

1. What type of theme is dominant in the introduction of articles published in Indonesian national journals?
2. How is the theme structure used in the introduction of articles published in Indonesian national journals?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction Section of Research Articles

One of the suggested formats for writing a research article is IMRaD (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion) structure. Previous studies have confirmed that IMRaD was the most frequently used structure in published research articles because it eliminates unnecessary details to facilitate readers' understanding of the presented ideas (Sollaci & Pereira, 2004; Thi Trinh et al., 2020; Wu, 2011). IMRaD guides the writer in addressing the questions essential to understanding a scientific study (Wu, 2011).

In the IMRaD structure, an introduction section plays an essential role in achieving the writer's intention of writing an article. It serves as the foundation for a research article (Bavdekar, 2015; Branson, 2004). The introduction contains a short review of knowledge, which presents the gaps in knowledge to be completed by the present study (Teodosiu, 2019). It provides the reason why the present study needs to be carried out (Nair & Nair, 2014). From the readers' point of view, an introduction explains why they need to read the article or why they should care about it. The ideas above indicate the essential role of the introduction in writing a research article. The introduction is even considered the tool to 'sell' the study to the editors and reviewers (Bavdekar, 2015).

In terms of its format, researchers suggest that an introduction section should be short (Branson, 2004; Teodosiu, 2019) or brief (Nair & Nair, 2014) because it only contains three components: scope, novelty, and significance/purpose (Bavdekar, 2015; Branson, 2004; Mack, 2018; Shah, 2015). This has been confirmed by Zein et al. (2020), who found that a very long introduction leads to the complexity of the ideas presented. In the introduction section, authors are not suggested to write long, heavily

referenced introductions or to provide an extensive literature review, even though some journals want the related literature to be discussed in the introduction section.

In order to make it easy to read and understand, the introduction section should be written cohesively. The main point of every clause and the interaction between clauses in the introduction should be clearly presented and well organized. Such clarity can be explored from the theme structure used in every clause. The quality of the introduction of an article, especially viewed from its theme structure, will influence the readers' interest in reading the article.

2.2 Theme Structure

The theme is the term introduced in Hallidayan systemic functional linguistics to refer to the first element of a clause (Halliday, 1994). The theme identification based on the position of clause element has been confirmed to be applicable in many languages (Eggins, 2004; Lavid et al., 2010; Martin et al., 1997; Refnaldi & Rosa, 2016). As the first element of a clause, the theme informs what the clause will be about (Halliday, 1994), influencing the rest of the message in a clause (Nurlela et al., 2021). These ideas suggest that the themes of every clause affect the organization of the ideas presented in a text. The remaining message of a clause is called rheme, the place in which the theme is developed (Refnaldi & Rosa, 2016).

The theme is both a simple theme (composed of one theme) and multiple themes (composed of several themes or several types of themes) (Halliday, 1994). The types of themes include ideational or topical, interpersonal, and textual themes (Eggins, 2004; Halliday, 1994). The clauses in (a) and (b) are examples of clauses with simple and multiple themes.

- (a) The man bought an apple
- (b) Hi Santi, I'm Jack

The clause in (a) is composed of only one theme, 'The man', the element of a topical theme. Meanwhile, the clause in (b) is composed of two themes. The first theme is 'Hi Santi', the element of an interpersonal theme which is represented by a vocative. The second theme is 'I', the element of a topical theme.

The topical theme is presented by transitivity elements, including participants (realized by a nominal group, e.g., 'Jack', 'an apple', 'the man in a red jacket'), processes (verbal group, e.g., 'walk', 'feel', 'become', 'smile', 'have', 'exist'), and circumstances (adverbial group, e.g., 'yesterday', 'for three years', 'at school', 'according to Brown'). The interpersonal theme is composed of vocatives (a word or a phrase used to address someone or attract their attention, e.g., 'Sir', 'Darling', 'Hi Santi'), modal adjuncts (e.g., 'might', 'can', 'should'), mood marking elements (words indicating probability, usuality, polarity), finite (verbs that are marked for tense and modality, e.g., 'do', 'have', 'may'), and W-H interrogatives. The textual theme is composed of continuatives (e.g., 'uh', 'well', 'yeah'), conjunctions or structural elements (e.g., 'but', 'and', 'or'), conjunctive adjuncts (e.g., 'because', 'although', 'while'), and W-H relatives (e.g., 'who', 'which', 'that'). A topical theme is obligatory among the three types of themes but cannot appear twice in a clause. Meanwhile, interpersonal and textual themes are used only in multiple themes, but they may appear more than once in a clause (Refnaldi & Rosa, 2016).

Previous studies have confirmed the contribution of theme structure in composing a well-organized text. Rosa (2007b), Yunita (2018), and Nurlela et al. (2021) found the contribution of theme markedness in presenting ideas in a text. Rosa (2007a), Herriman (2011), and Keskin and Demir (2021) have examined the contribution of thematic progression structure in building the ideas' cohesiveness in a text. Anwar and Amri (2020) and Putri and Rosa (2020) have confirmed the contribution of theme patterns in organizing ideas in a text. The results of these studies indicate the need of paying attention to the theme structure in developing and organizing ideas to produce a well-organized text.

3. METHODS

This study was conducted using a qualitative approach, employing content analysis as the research method. A qualitative content analysis represents a systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena (Schreier, 2012). This study used this method to describe and quantify the use of themes in research articles. The data were all clauses in the articles published in Indonesian national journals. The data source was 15 articles published in four national journals focusing on social humanities studies.

The first journal, the *Indonesian Journal of Medical Anthropology* (<https://talenta.usu.ac.id/ijma>), was selected because the focus of the journal was considered unique as it addressed the issues of medicine in relation to cultural values and beliefs that might contribute to the different use of the theme types. The second journal was *LingPoet: Journal of Linguistics and Literary Research* (<https://talenta.usu.ac.id/lingpoet>), focusing on the issues in linguistics, applied linguistics, modern and contemporary literature, and comparative literature. The third journal was *the International Journal of Culture and Art Studies* (<https://talenta.usu.ac.id/ijcas>), publishing articles that addressed the issues related to culture, language, and literature viewed from the Indonesian perspective. The fourth journal was *Intellectual Property Rights Review* (<https://talenta.usu.ac.id/iprreview>). The scope of the journal was unique as it addressed the issues related to intellectual property rights. The general reasons for selecting the journals were: (i) they were relatively new journals, as most of them published their first issue in 2020; (ii) all the articles published in these journals were written in English; (iii) all the journals administered blind review process; and (iv) all the articles in these journals are written in the IMRaD structure.

The data were collected using a documentation method. The four selected journals published articles twice a year (biannually). Therefore, the journals published four editions, each containing six articles. The researchers randomly collected one article from the latest volumes (2020 and 2021) from each journal. Hence, the total number of articles collected was 16 (4 articles from each journal). The use of random sampling was motivated by the fact that all the published articles had undergone a blind review process, so the articles were assumed to have the same quality. However, one article was removed because it was not written using the IMRaD structure. Therefore, 15 articles were collected as the data source. Then, the introduction section of the articles was taken as the object of the analysis.

The data were analyzed using a content analysis method, following the procedure of theme-rheme analysis suggested by previous researchers (Vaismoradi & Snelgrove, 2019; Vaismoradi et al., 2013). First, the introduction section was broken down into clauses. Each clause was identified based on its process element in this step. Then, the themes of the clauses were identified and analyzed to obtain the components of the themes. This was particularly important in distinguishing simple themes from multiple themes. As Nurlela et al. (2021) suggested, meaning elicitation was needed to identify the function of each theme component in the clauses. Finally, the findings comprising the dominant type of theme and the structure of the theme used in the articles were formulated.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Dominant Themes in the Introduction of Research Articles

The data analysis results indicate that simple themes dominate the themes used in the research articles published in Indonesian national journals. This is indicated by the frequent use of topical themes, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of themes used in the research articles

Text	Topical			Interpersonal				Textual			
	Part	Pro	Circ	Voc	Mood	WH-i	Fin	Str	Conj	Cont	WH-r
1	39	0	3	0	4	1	0	4	10	0	4
2	81	0	7	0	5	0	0	12	12	0	20
3	33	0	2	0	5	0	0	1	6	0	6
4	64	0	22	0	5	0	0	7	18	0	19
5	53	0	1	0	0	5	0	6	7	0	4
6	15	0	7	0	1	0	2	1	5	4	3
7	24	0	3	0	1	0	0	1	2	2	5
8	40	1	6	0	1	0	0	6	12	0	5
9	35	0	7	0	8	0	0	4	8	2	4
10	64	2	12	0	1	1	0	2	21	1	12
11	40	0	11	0	1	0	0	4	10	2	6
12	19	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	2	4
13	54	0	15	0	1	0	0	5	24	0	3
14	45	0	11	0	7	2	2	15	15	2	5
15	17	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	2
Total	623	3	108	0	42	9	4	70	154	15	102
%	84.9	0.4	14.7	0	76.4	16.4	7.3	20.5	45.2	4.4	29.9
Total	734 (65%)			55 (5%)				341 (30%)			

Notes:

Part = Participant

Pro = Process

Circ = Circumstance

Voc = Vocative

WH-i = WH-interrogative

Fin = Finite

Str = Structure element

Conj = Conjunctive adjunct

Cont = Continuative

WH-r = WH-relative

As mentioned in the previous literature, a simple theme only uses a topical theme as the clause theme. The results displayed in Table 1 show that the number of topical themes (65%) used in all the introductions of the articles is much greater than interpersonal (5%) and textual themes (30%). This indicates that the writers emphasize the topic of the message or information sharing rather than showing the interrelationship among the clauses. They focus on ‘who or what (participant)’, ‘what (process)’, and ‘where, when, why, which, and how (circumstance)’. Although these are pieces of information needed to be shared with the readers, the lack of showing the interrelationship among the clauses makes the introduction difficult to read and understand. In other words, the ideas presented in the introduction section of the articles in the four national journals focusing on social humanities studies lack cohesiveness. Several previous studies have confirmed that textual themes are obviously needed to show a good organization of clauses in a text (Nurlela et al., 2021; Rosa, 2007a; Wang, 2007).

Nevertheless, the less frequent use of interpersonal themes in the introduction section confirms that the ideas presented are factual. This is in line with the previous studies’ suggestions that a good introduction contains important ‘findings and conclusions of the previously published studies’ (Bavdekar, 2015) that the writers know. This knowledge helps the writers formulate the research gap.

Moreover, the results show that the interpersonal themes used in the introduction section mostly present the research questions using finite or W-H interrogatives. Some examples can be seen in (1) and (2).

(1)	First	does	Nyonya Meneer or its heirs	still have the rights to the Mark which has been transferred to a third party based on positive legal procedures and provisions under the Trademark Law regime?
	Continuative	Finite	Participant	Rheme
	Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
	Multiple Theme			
(2)	How far		can a distinction be made between instrumental and integrative motivation and its impact on identity?	
	WH-interrogative		Rheme	
	Interpersonal/Topical Theme			

The two clauses in (1) and (2) are the research questions of the articles. The clause in (1) uses the finite ‘does’ as the interpersonal theme, indicating a yes/no interrogative clause. In addition to the interpersonal theme, the clause is composed of a textual theme (realized by continuative) and a topical theme (realized by the participant). As the clause is composed of three themes, it is categorized as a multiple-theme clause. The use of finite as the independent theme (compared to the clause in (2)) is motivated by the fact that the answer to this question must also be composed of multiple themes because it must contain positive or negative polarity as the first theme.

Unlike clause in (1), clause in (2) is composed of a simple theme. The interpersonal theme ‘WH-interrogative’ also serves as the topical theme because the expected answer to this question will be the element of transitivity, i.e., a circumstance. The answer requires neither an interpersonal theme nor a textual theme. Therefore,

WH- interrogative ‘How far’ in this context serves as both interpersonal and topical themes (Interpersonal/Topical).

The use of interpersonal themes in the research questions has been confirmed in the existing literature (Branson, 2004; Mack, 2018; Teodosiu, 2019). Nevertheless, some journals do not require the introduction to include the research questions. They are replaced by the research objectives, which are not realized in an interrogative mood. The same policy is applicable in the journals taken as the data source of this study, which is also the factor leading to the less frequent use of interpersonal themes found in this study.

The results of the data analysis also show that textual themes are used more frequently than interpersonal themes. This confirms the existing literature that an introduction section of articles should present why the study needs to be carried out and why the reader should care about the article and find it interesting (Mack, 2018; Nair & Nair, 2014). Besides, in reasoning, the logical relationship between the ideas and the good organization of ideas is highly required; therefore, textual themes are very much desired. This confirms the existing literature arguing that textual themes are used to keep the organization of ideas (Eggins, 2004; Halliday, 1994; Refnaldi & Rosa, 2016). Moreover, the results of this study support the findings of the research done by Ebrahimi (2016), who found that textual themes were used more frequently than interpersonal themes in the abstracts. The similarity of the findings is mainly caused by the same object of the study, i.e., research articles. While Ebrahimi (2016) focused on the abstract section, this present study focused on the introduction section.

4.2 Theme Structure in the Introduction of Research Articles

Theme structure in this study is shown in the pattern or order of the theme components used in the clauses, as the simple theme is the dominant theme used in the research articles. Topical is the pattern most frequently used. Study the clauses in (3) and (4).

(3)	The Javanese Succession War	was a war against the Company,
	Participant	Rheme
	Topical Theme	
(4)	On the Javanese side,	they lost around 200,000 lives
	Circumstance	Rheme
	Topical Theme	

The theme structure used in the clauses in (3) and (4) is composed of Topical. However, the elements that compose the Topical pattern are different. The Topical pattern in (3) is realized by the participant, while the circumstance realizes the Topical pattern in (4). The difference is mainly caused by the writer’s intention to keep the organization of the ideas. As mentioned in the existing literature, the theme contains given information (Eggins, 2004; Halliday, 1994). Therefore, the choice of ‘On the Javanese side’, as the theme in (4) is intended to provide given information in the theme position.

The next theme structure used in the introduction section of the research articles is a Textual^Topical pattern. Some examples are provided in (5) and (6).

- (5) however, the voiced uvular trill [ʀ] and the voiced uvular fricative [ʁ] are also widely used in other parts of Germany (especially in the North),
- | | | |
|----------------|-------------|-------|
| Conj. Adjunct | Participant | Rheme |
| Textual | Topical | |
| Multiple Theme | | |
- (6) And many of them will be ungrammatical (i.e. contradictory to the rules in the reference books of grammar).
- | | | |
|----------------|-------------|-------|
| Structural | Participant | Rheme |
| Textual | Topical | |
| Multiple Theme | | |

The textual theme of the clause in (5) is realized by conjunctive adjunct ‘however’, while the topical theme is realized by participant ‘the voiced uvular trill [ʀ] and the voiced uvular fricative [ʁ]’. The Textual^Topical pattern (realized in conjunctive adjunct and participant) is intended to explicitly show how the present clause is related in meaning to the previous clause. In this context, the present clause contrasts the meaning conveyed in the previous clause.

Meanwhile, the textual theme of the clause in (6) is realized by the conjunction ‘and’, and the topical theme is realized by participant ‘many of them’. The use of the Textual^Topical pattern in this context (realized in conjunction and participant) shows that there is another idea that has an equal meaning with the message conveyed in the previous clause.

In addition, the theme structure used in the introduction section of the research articles is an Interpersonal^Topical pattern. This pattern emphasizes the mood function in the clauses presented in the introduction. Some examples can be seen in (7) and (8).

- (7) In general, social classes are divided into three classes that are upper, middle and lower.
- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|-------|
| Comment Adjunct | Participant | Rheme |
| Interpersonal | Topical | |
| Multiple Theme | | |
- (8) Will the copyright legal regime still be able to protect the copyright of the portrait used as a trademark for the product?
- | | | |
|----------------|-------------|-------|
| Finite | Participant | Rheme |
| Interpersonal | Topical | |
| Multiple Theme | | |

The use of the interpersonal theme realized by the comment adjunct ‘In general’ in (7) means that the message contained in the clause is generally true, not completely true. Such a meaning is usually conveyed in the introduction of a research article, particularly in exploring the research gap.

Meanwhile, the interpersonal theme of the clause in (8) is realized by finite ‘will’, indicating interrogative mood. Thus, the Interpersonal^Topical pattern can be used to form an interrogative clause. This pattern is used in writing research questions in the context of the introduction of research articles.

Furthermore, the other theme structure used in the introduction of the research articles is a Topical^Interpersonal pattern, as shown in (9) and (10).

(9)	According to village heads and researcher records during the study,	generally	those who do marriage at a young age no longer go to school, especially for women,
	Circumstance	Comment Adjunct	Rheme
	Topical	Interpersonal	
	Multiple Theme		
(10)	This mere fact, of course,	does not mean	
	Participant	Comment Adjunct	Rheme
	Topical	Interpersonal	
	Multiple Theme		

The Topical[^]Interpersonal pattern is an unusual theme structure because a topical theme commonly occupies the final theme element. As shown in the clause in (9), the interpersonal theme ‘generally’ is used after the topical theme which is realized by the circumstance of angle ‘According to village heads and researcher records during the study’. This is caused by order of importance based on the writer’s point of view. The comment adjunct in this context is considered less important than the circumstance of angle, so when it occupies the initial position, it may change the message intended to be conveyed. The same pattern is also used in the clause in (10). However, the topical theme is realized by the participant. Therefore, the Topical[^]Interpersonal pattern can be realized by all elements of topical and interpersonal themes.

In addition, to be composed of two theme types, the multiple themes in the introduction section of the research articles are composed of three theme types. The first pattern is a Textual[^]Interpersonal[^]Topical pattern, as shown in (11) and (12).

(11)	Because	psychologically and biologically	young married couples	are considered immature to be able to conceive, give birth and not ready to face household problems (Rifiani, 2011; Minarti, 2014).
	Conj. Adjunct	Comment Adjunct	Participant	Rheme
	Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
	Multiple Theme			
(12)	Or	are	they	completely reprobate?
	Structural	Finite	Participant	Rheme
	Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
	Multiple Theme			

The Textual[^]Interpersonal[^]Topical pattern in (11) is realized by conjunctive adjunct, comment adjunct, and participant, respectively. In this context, the pattern wants to convey the message through reasoning, providing some views concerning the young married couple. In other words, the truth of the message is only seen from psychological and biological viewpoints. This shows that the theme pattern has influenced the meaning or message contained in the clause.

The clause in (12) is typically a research question, which can be identified from the element that constitutes the interpersonal theme. The Textual[^]Interpersonal[^]Topical pattern realized by conjunction, finite, and participant constitutes a yes/no interrogative clause. The use of the conjunction ‘or’ has an essential role in showing the relationship between this present clause with the previous clause, i.e., the clause is an additional alternative research question.

Another theme structure composed of three theme types is realized in the Interpersonal^Textual^Topical pattern. Some examples can be seen in (13) and (14).

(13)	especially	when	it	comes to the individual's knowledge and attitude towards the object.
	Comment Adjunct	Conj. Adjunct	Participant	Rheme
	Interpersonal	Textual	Topical	
	Multiple Theme			
(14)	Unlike	if	the one who uses it	is the owner himself.
	Comment Adjunct	Conj. Adjunct	Participant	Rheme
	Interpersonal	Textual	Topical	
	Multiple Theme			

The Interpersonal^Textual^Topical pattern in (13) is used to specify the meaning contained in the present clause from the more general meaning conveyed in the previous clause. Such a meaning is obtained because of the use of the comment adjunct 'especially' as the interpersonal theme.

Like the clause in (13), the meaning of the clause in (14) is also influenced by the element of the interpersonal theme because it occupies the initial position in the Interpersonal^Textual^Topical pattern. Nevertheless, unlike the clause in (13), the meaning contained in the clause in (14) is contrastive, contrasting its meaning from the meaning conveyed in the previous clause.

Based on the results of data analysis concerning the theme pattern, the findings of this study are summarized and displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. Theme pattern used in the research articles.

No.	Theme pattern	Frequency	
		Number	Percentage
1	Topical	435	59.26%
2	Textual^Topical	238	32.43%
3	Interpersonal^Topical	22	3.00%
4	Topical^Interpersonal	10	1.36%
5	Textual^Interpersonal^Topical	9	1.23%
6	Textual^Textual^Topical	8	1.09%
7	Topical^Textual	6	0.82%
8	Interpersonal^Textual^Topical	4	0.54%
9	Textual^Topical^Interpersonal	2	0.27%
	Total	734	100%

As displayed in Table 2, this study found nine theme patterns in the introduction section of the research articles published in Indonesian national journals. The Topical pattern dominates the theme structure. This pattern is the typical characteristic of theme patterns in the simple theme clause. The Textual^Topical pattern occupies the second most frequent use of theme structure. This pattern, in addition to placing an emphasis on the participant, process, and circumstance of the clause, pays close attention to how the present clause is logically related in meaning to the present clause(s). Moreover, this pattern is particularly useful to the reasoning process in arguing that the topic is worth studying and that the article offers a novelty. This finding is in line with the previous research findings suggesting the use of textual themes in writing arguments (Anwar & Amri, 2020; Keskin & Demir, 2021; Wang,

2007). Textual themes help control the flow of information that allows readers to follow the arguments (Keskin & Demir, 2021).

The third most frequent theme pattern is an Interpersonal^Topical pattern. This pattern is particularly used in presenting the research questions in the context of the introduction of research articles. This pattern typically comprises finite or WH-interrogative as the interpersonal theme elements. The finding confirms the existing literature that an Interpersonal^Topical pattern is used to write an interrogative clause (Eggins, 2004; Halliday, 1994). The fourth frequent theme pattern is a Topical^Interpersonal pattern, which is considered the variation of the Interpersonal^Topical pattern. However, this pattern is not used in presenting the research questions; it is used to present reviews on previous studies that help build the presentation of the research gap.

The next frequent theme pattern is a Textual^Interpersonal^Topical pattern. Although this pattern is less frequent than the previous four patterns, it is also valuable for presenting research questions. This pattern is used particularly in formulating a series of research questions to show how all the research questions are related to one another. The other theme patterns, despite their very low frequency, are also needed in writing an introduction of research articles.

These findings confirm the theme patterns in the existing literature. Eggins (2004) proposed four theme patterns, i.e., Topical, Interpersonal^Topical, Textual^Topical, and Textual^Interpersonal^Topical. Moreover, the findings of this study support the results of the research done by Anwar and Amri (2020), who found three theme patterns in the discussion texts written by the third-year students of the English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang: Topical, Textual^Topical, and Interpersonal^Textual^Topical. However, this research found six more theme patterns in the introduction section of research articles published in Indonesian national journals. The different status of the texts causes the different findings.

Furthermore, the results show that a clause theme can be composed of more than one element; therefore, in the case of multiple themes, all theme elements are called the starting point of the message. Nevertheless, the order of theme elements influences the meaning conveyed. This study found that certain order of theme elements (certain theme patterns) conveys certain meaning.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The big gap between the use of simple themes and multiple themes in the introduction section of the research articles published in National Indonesian journals indicates a lack of quality articles in terms of ideas organization. The introduction is a collection of unrelated clauses because they contain many simple themes. More multiple themes, especially those composed of textual theme elements, are needed to show the interrelationship among the clauses in the introduction.

The theme patterns also play an essential role in writing an introduction of research articles. These patterns can be characterized based on the function of the clauses in the introduction, whether to identify the problems studied, present the gap, or formulate the research questions. Moreover, certain theme patterns characterize the meanings or message conveyed in the clause. This implies that the choice of the first theme element greatly influences the meaning of the clause. Thus, studying theme

types and structure is instrumental in improving the quality of the introduction of research articles.

The results of this study have implications to a systematic way of writing research articles, especially in presenting the introduction section. There is a tendency to use different theme patterns in writing different contents of an introduction. A Topical pattern helps introduce several terminologies used in the study. A Textual^Topical pattern is useful in presenting the research gap. Meanwhile, an Interpersonal^Topical Pattern is very helpful in writing the research questions. Introducing these patterns will help writers, especially novice writers, to successfully write a research article.

This study only focuses on the introduction section of the research articles, whose findings may differ when the research focus is addressed to the other sections or parts. Therefore, it is suggested that other researchers study theme structure in the other sections of research articles. Furthermore, this study only focuses on the introduction of research articles published in Indonesian national journals. This provides an opportunity for further research to focus on research articles published in more reputable journals, either reputable national or international journals. In teaching, lecturers are suggested to introduce theme types and patterns in teaching students how to write a research article.

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Rhetorical Structure Mastery of Tertiary Students' Speech: Challenges and Possible Solutions

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Abstract

Rhetorical structure in speaking is essential to guiding students through speaking and making public speeches. Thus, this research explores the students' mastery of rhetorical structure in making a speech, their challenges, and potential solutions. A mixed method with an explanatory design was employed to achieve the objectives. The data were collected through a speaking test and interviews using instruments validated by peer researchers. The data were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively; while the quantitative data were analysed using a simple statistical analysis, the qualitative data were examined using several stages, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The results show that the students' average mastery of the rhetorical structure of speaking was not significantly high. Some students faced challenges such as language problems and problems with rhetorical structures. Language issues were articulated in grammar, anxiety, and the excessive use of fillers. The rhetorical structure became problematic because the students were unfamiliar with how to attract the audience when making a speech, they insufficiently used supported illustrations in their speech, and they rarely concluded their speech. The possible solutions to those challenges include

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training in public speaking and continual guidance from their lecturers. With the guidance of the lecturers, it is anticipated that the students will be able to implement the three components of speech to deliver more convincing speeches.

Keywords: Rhetorical structure, speech, challenges, solutions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Speaking genre is a topic in discourse analysis. Students of the English Department of Universitas Bengkulu, Indonesia, learn discourse analysis as a mandatory subject in their curriculum. In a speaking subject, students need to speak and explore the theory of spoken discourse to help them improve their speaking skills. Hence, they should know the steps related to speaking or rhetorical structure (Pujianti et al., 2018; Zhang & Wannaruk, 2016). In other words, the rhetorical structure of speaking is essential for students to know the steps of speaking in front of many people. It assists the students in organising their speech as a master of ceremony, speaker, presenter in a seminar, or other types of public speaking. Many studies have been conducted on discourse analysis, specifically about the genre in a written discourse (Nasihin et al., 2021; Nur et al., 2021; Wannaruk & Shi, 2014; Zhang & Wannaruk, 2016). However, only some studies pertain to spoken discourse. In fact, more studies deal with written discourse than spoken discourse (Abramova & Boulahnane, 2019).

Speech is a type of public speaking; students need to learn how to deliver public speaking in front of an audience. Thus, they need to know the rhetorical structure of public speaking. Besides, speech or public speaking is one of the compulsory courses in the English Department. Based on the preliminary observation conducted by the researcher the English Department of Universitas Bengkulu, a public university in Indonesia, the majority of students had problems with the rhetorical structures of speaking. The possible cause of this challenge is that the lecturer allowed the students to independently learn the rhetorical speech structures without giving them clear instructions. Besides, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the lecturer did not engage in face-to-face interactions with the students, and many only asked the students to make a presentation video of their speech. Some students complained that the internet connection distracts them from delivering their public speaking. It was difficult for them to upload their assignments on the learning management system. Moreover, the students had many language problems in speaking, such as pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar problems. In addition, only some students in the class were proficient in speaking English.

Furthermore, there have been some previous studies on the rhetorical structure in speaking. In 2011, there was a study on the pedagogical implications of the rhetorical structure of Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton's debates during the democratic campaign period of the 2008 American presidential election. The result of the study suggests that the generic structures of a debate should be taught to students so that they know how to debate (Utama, 2011). Chan (2015) and Kaur and Ali (2017) analysed the rhetorical structure of academic presentations in a conceptual paper or critical review of previous studies. They found that a general rhetorical structure of speaking includes opening, content, and closing. In addition, Fadila et al. (2016) and

Widyawardani (2016) investigated the rhetorical structure of the speech and found that there were three rhetorical types, namely logos or logical proof, ethical proof or ethos, and emotional proof (ethos). Moreover, Singh and Ali (2019) studied the rhetorical structure in the introduction of an academic oral presentation. In their research, some similarities were found in terms of the rhetorical structure of oral presentation in the introduction, namely listener orientation and content orientation.

Furthermore, Widodo et al. (2020) researched the rhetorical structure of a short lecture from a YouTube video. The result shows that there were three moves in short lectures, i.e. introduction, content, and conclusion. In detail, all those short lectures followed the rhetorical structures of content and conclusion, but only 90% of the studies included the introduction move. In addition, Noermanzah, Syafryadin, et al. (2020) studied the rhetorical structure of the master of ceremony (MC) in an *Aqiqah* event, and they found that the rhetorical structure of the MC in the event included opening, content, and closing. Moreover, Noermanzah, Wahyuni, et al. (2020) also researched the rhetorical structure of speech of the Mayor of Lubuklinggau City in South Sumatera, Indonesia, and found that there were five rhetorical structures in the speech, i.e. abstract, orientation, complication, resolution, and coda. Besides, Sroikudrua et al. (2021) analysed rhetorical strategies in Thai TED Talks. They discovered that there were five rhetorical strategies: structural repetition, lexical repetition, the use of rhymes, the use of songs or poetry, and the use of mottos or quotations. To conclude, those previous studies investigated the rhetorical structures of oral communication conducted by MCs and presenters in academic presentations.

In the present study, the researchers explored the students' mastery of the rhetorical structure of academic presentation or speech, its challenges and possible solutions. The research addressed three research questions:

- (1) Do the students master the rhetorical structure of speech?
- (2) What are the challenges experienced by the students in implementing rhetorical structures in their speech?
- (3) What are the possible solutions to overcome the students' challenges in implementing the rhetorical structures in their speech?

The results of this study are significant for students, lecturers, and future researchers. Students can develop their speaking skills if they know the rhetorical speech structure, challenges and solutions. Lecturers can use the results of this study as a reference in teaching public speaking or speaking skills to enrich their conceptual materials to be presented to their students. Finally, future researchers can use the results of this study as a reference to conduct the exact scope of the research, namely rhetorical structures of speech, but with different focuses, such as students' thesis presentations or other types of public speaking.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Rhetorical Structure of Public Speaking

Public speaking is an activity where a speaker conveys information to an audience. Thus, public speaking can be a speech, presentation, or other speaking activity that allows speakers to speak in front of an audience (Marzec-Stawiarska, 2015). However, this study focused on students' speech. It comprises three main

structures: the introduction, the content or body, and the closing or conclusion (Lucas & Stob, 2019; Osborn & Osborn, 2014).

The first structure of public speaking is the introduction. This section aims to grab the audience's attention, reveal the issue, and establish the speaker's authority (Osborn & Osborn, 2014). A speaker can use a story, a question, an illustration, a quotation, a visual aid, a demonstration, humour, or a narrative to grab the audience's attention (Templeton, 2010). Moreover, the speaker delivers background information about the speech topic to the audience in order to reveal the topic (Lucas & Stob, 2019). Finally, the speaker establishes his or her credibility by presenting himself or herself as a qualified person or an expert in the given issue or field (Beebe & Beebe, 2016).

The second structure is the body, which is the most significant and usually the most extended section in a public speech. It is separated into main points and supporting resources (Lucas & Stob, 2019). The most crucial concepts established in the body of a speech to support the basic idea of a speech are referred to as main points (O'Hair et al., 2012). Besides, the speaker uses three types of supporting materials: examples, statistics, and testimony or quotations (Hamilton, 2015; Jaffe, 2016).

Finally, the objective of a speech conclusion is to indicate the end of the speech to the audience and reaffirm the speech's core concepts (O'Hair et al., 2012). These objectives can be met by stating explicitly or directly to the audience that the speech is about to end, summarising the speech, concluding with a quotation, making a dramatic declaration, and repeating the main point of the opening (Coopman & Lull, 2012; German, 2017). To conclude, the rhetorical structure of a speech includes an introduction or opening, content, and closing. For example, in a speech, in the introduction, the speaker needs to attract the audience's attention and tell the speech's background. Then, in the content part, the speaker reveals the main point of the speech and supporting details. In the closing, the speaker concludes the speech.

2.2 Challenges and Solutions in Implementing Rhetorical Structure in Public Speaking

According to Ur (2014), there are a number of issues that students need help with when speaking, i.e. inhibition, lack of ideas, low participation, and the use of the mother tongue. First, when students speak, they experience difficulties or inhibition, indicated by frequent hesitation when presenting their thoughts to an audience (Pabro-Maquidato, 2021). They exhibit shyness or need more confidence in expressing themselves in English. Furthermore, they fear making mistakes when speaking (Wulandari et al., 2022). The second problem, the lack of ideas, indicates that they are still determining what to say (Juanchich et al., 2017). They get stuck when they wish to speak in front of their classmates. The lack of ideas can be caused by their lack of motivation to speak and knowledge (Jaya et al., 2022; Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Thus, the students can be stuck in speaking because they do not know what to say. Furthermore, the problem of low participation occurs because not all students are motivated to participate in the speaking exercises assigned by their teacher (Marzuki, 2017). As a result, only some students are allowed to speak. In such a setting, their participation in the classroom is poor, making individuals unable to develop their speaking skills (Jaya et al., 2022). Finally, many students use their mother tongue when speaking English, which is one of the issues that can make them unable to communicate effectively in English (Syafryadin & Boulahnane, 2021). The use of the

mother tongue when speaking English occurs when students speak the same language as their L1 (Debreli & Oyman, 2015).

In addition to the problems discussed above, Sutarsyah (2017) and Tyas et al. (2019) added anxiety as another problem students face when speaking in front of an audience. This can cause them to get stuck while speaking (Liu, 2018; Tatar, 2005). Moreover, Osborn and Osborn (2014) stated that speaking content is so problematic that attracting students' attention in making a speech or speaking is challenging. Students need to read a lot of resources or references to obtain the content for their speaking. Swales and Feak (2012) point out that problems in rhetorical structure in public speaking can be content problems. For example, the content delivered by the speaker might not be convincing to the audience. Besides, Crick (2017) adds that rhetorical problems in public speaking include difficulty attracting public attention and language problems.

Furthermore, the problems in speaking, be it rhetorical structure or other speaking-related problems, should be overcome by a speaker. One solution to these challenges is public speaking training (Verderber et al., 2012; Wrench et al., 2016). During the training, the students can practice and discuss the problems they experienced when giving public speaking with their trainer. Furthermore, Mandel (2000) and Wrench et al. (2016) suggest that a speaking practice familiarises students with speaking in front of many people. In other words, practice gives students experience in doing public speaking. They can be aware of their weaknesses and strengths. They can also record their speaking to listen and improve.

3. METHODS

The researchers employed a sequential mixed method, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods (Ary et al., 2010; Creswell, 2014; Kumar, 2018) to achieve the research objectives. The research sample consisted of 25 students with a three-year diploma at the English Department of Universitas Bengkulu because they were enrolled in a public speaking course. Those students have completed the basic speaking course. The sampling technique was total sampling because the researchers included all students in the class as the sample.

The data were collected using speech or presentation tests and interviews using the instruments validated by research peers. The students' performances were graded based on how well they followed a rhetorical structure, which included an introduction, body, and conclusion/closing. Each part of the speech was given a point based on how much of the speech it made up: the introduction (30 points), the main part of the speech (45 points), and the ending (25 points). The rhetorical structure was observed based on several indicators, namely introduction, content, and closing, while the challenges consisted of rhetorical structure. Moreover, the data for the solution to the challenges were obtained after the challenges were identified. The procedures of data collection were (1) obtaining permission from the head of the English Department of Universitas Bengkulu, (2) discussing with the public speaking lecturer about the rhetorical structure, (3) asking students to fill in the consent form of research ethics for gathering the data if they agreed to participate in the study, (4) collecting their speech videos, and (5) interviewing ten students about their problems in implementing rhetorical structure in speech.

The data were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The speaking achievement or rhetorical structure mastery or test was analysed using simple statistical analyses. The researchers used co-raters to minimise subjectivity (Arsyad et al., 2020) in assessing the students' speaking rhetorical structure mastery. The co-raters were qualified in terms of educational background and experience in public speaking. The co-raters each had a master's degree in English education and worked as a speaking lecturer at Universitas Bengkulu. In order to make the same perception between the first co-rater and the second co-rater, the researchers calculated Cohen's kappa to analyse inter-rater reliability.

Moreover, the qualitative data obtained from the interview were analysed using thematic analysis. This analysis has several steps, namely familiarising with the data, coding, searching themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing a report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In familiarising the data, the interview transcription about problems and solutions of rhetorical speech structures were determined before the interview data were coded into numeric data. Furthermore, the researchers searched the themes related to the problems and solutions by highlighting the them. Afterwards, the themes were reviewed, defined and named based on the research objectives. Finally, the researchers wrote a report about students' problems and solutions in applying rhetorical structures in their speeches.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

Before analysing quantitatively the students' mastery of the rhetorical structure of speech, the researchers analysed whether the two raters had the same perception in grading the students' speech in terms of rhetorical structure mastery based on Cohen's kappa. The result of the analysis result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Symmetric measures.

	Value	Asymp. Std.Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement Kappa	0.675	0.110	4.595	0.000
N of Valid Cases	25			

Note. a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 1 shows that the coefficient kappa is 0.675 and the p-value is 0.000, suggesting that the p-value is lower than alpha ($\alpha = 0.05$). It indicates that there was no different perception between rater 1 and rater 2, which means that the grades given by the raters are reliable.

4.1.1 The students' mastery of the rhetorical structure of speech

The students' mastery of rhetorical structure can be seen in Table 2. It shows that all students employed the rhetorical structures of speech, including introduction, content, and closing. However, their mean scores were different. In general, the

students got a mean score of 71.16 for their mastery of the rhetorical structure of their speech, which can be categorised at the average level because the range was between 70 and 80. Moreover, the highest total score from the introduction, content and closing was 90, while the lowest was 45.

Table 2. Students' mastery of the rhetorical structure of speech.

		Introduction	Content	Closing	Total Score
N	Valid	25	25	25	25
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		21.32	36.04	13.80	71.16
Median		20.83 ^a	39.23 ^a	14.29 ^a	72.00 ^a
Std. Deviation		3.449	9.231	4.153	11.227
Minimum		15	15	0	45
Maximum		30	45	20	90
Percentiles	25	18.96 ^b	29.38 ^b	11.31 ^b	65.36 ^b
	50	20.83	39.23	14.29	72.00
	75	23.43	43.17	17.38	78.50

a. Calculated from grouped data.

b. Percentiles are calculated from grouped data.

4.1.2 Students' challenges in implementing rhetorical structure in speech

Based on the results of the interviews, the students faced several problems in implementing the rhetorical structure during their speeches. Student 1 faced introduction problems because the student found it difficult to be the centre of attention for the audience in the initial part of her speech. Student 1 said:

- (1) I think my problem is the difficulty to attract the audience's attention at the beginning of my speech or the introduction. (S1)

Student 2 thought that she was nervous during the speech, which made her forget what she wanted to say in her speech, especially in the part of the speech content. She said:

- (2) Sir, I am nervous about delivering my speech, so it causes me to forget what I want to say, especially in the content of my speech. (S2)

Moreover, Student 3 had a problem with the conclusion because he forgot to conclude his speech. He said:

- (3) Sometimes, I forget to conclude my speech, Sir, because of the time limitation. (S3)

Furthermore, Student 4 faced a language problem, especially in grammar. The student needed clarification with tenses to use in his speaking. He reported that:

- (4) My problem is using correct grammar in speaking of all parts of my speech. I was not sure whether to use present tense, simple future, and other tenses. I always misused the verb 'be' and auxiliary verbs. (S4)

In addition, Student 5 encountered difficulties in terms of the content of the speech. The student did not provide evidence to support his speech. Moreover, the student used many fillers in his speaking, and he said:

- (5) I have a problem with the main parts of my speech. I seldom include supporting evidence or facts to support my speech. Besides, when speaking, I always use many fillers, like...mmmm...eeee... So, it influences my speech fluency. (S5)

Finally, Student 6 faced a problem in deciding the topic for his speech. He had difficulty finding an interesting topic to be delivered to the audience when speaking. Therefore, the content of his speech was not interesting. He said:

- (6) I do not know how to decide on an interesting topic for my speech. Besides, the content of my speech is not quite interesting. (S6)

4.1.3 Possible solutions to the challenges in implementing rhetorical structure in speech

Based on the interview results, the participants proposed several solutions to their problems in implementing the rhetorical structure in their speech. First, the students proposed public speaking training. In this case, the students should follow this training to improve their speaking skills in front of an audience. In this context, Student 1 stated:

- (7) I think I need to join a public speaking training. (S1)

Second, the students admitted they need to learn more about the rhetorical structure of public speaking and practice it several times until they can do it properly. In addition, Student 2 and Student 3 said, respectively:

- (8) The possible solution is that I must read a lot about the rhetorical structure of speaking and practice it. (S2)
(9) I need more practice, Sir. (S3)

Third, grammar problems can be solved by reading materials related to the grammar aspects with which they have problems and by asking the lecturer when they do not understand the materials. Student 5 said:

- (10) I have to be careful in using grammar. I should reread the tenses and learn about them. Then, I also need to ask my lecturer whether it is wrong or not. (S5)

Fourth, to solve the problem related to the inability to provide sufficient supporting evidence in speaking and finding an interesting topic, the students needed to read books or other sources to gain more knowledge on possible topics for their speech. Consulting the lecturer was also proposed as a solution. Student 6 said:

- (11) I should provide some information in terms of supporting evidence. I need to be critical...I need to read a lot about the topic. I have to find more interesting topics from many sources, including social media or the library. Then, I need to learn how to speak attractively in front of many people. I also need to discuss this with the lecturer. (S6)

4.2 Discussion

The data analysis in this study has provided three important findings, i.e. the students' mastery of the rhetorical speech structure, the challenges in implementing it, and the solutions for those challenges. First, the students' mastery of rhetorical structure was average. The students' mastery of rhetorical structure in the introduction can be categorised as high, but three students still received low scores in this structure. This low level of rhetorical structure mastery was because those students did not know how to attract the audience by using an introduction in their speech. In this case, the introduction is one of the most important parts of a speech because the speaker can impress the audience to listen to the rest of the speech. Swales and Feak (2012) and Crick (2017) state that attracting an audience's attention is an essential part of public speaking. On the other hand, the students' mastery of rhetorical structure in the content is at an average level. However, two students were still graded in the low-level category because they did not know how to construct their speech content, and they did not have adequate knowledge of the rhetorical structure of the speech content. The students could not get a higher score in this section because they could not successfully transfer their speech content to the audience. Osborn and Osborn (2014) point out that the content of a speech is the main point because the speaker puts the essence of the speech in the content of the speech, which should be delivered using an interesting rhetorical structure. Finally, in closing, the students' mastery of rhetorical structure was also average; however, some students forgot to conclude their speech. This finding showed that the students could not properly deliver the speech's closing.

The second significant finding shows that there were several problems that the students experienced in implementing the rhetorical structure in their speech. The problems can be categorised into two parts: language and rhetorical structure problems. Language problem refers to difficulty in applying correct grammar in a speech. Several students sometimes misused the verb 'be' and the auxiliary verbs in tenses, e.g. 'I here' instead of 'I am here,' 'I am believe that' instead of 'I believe that.' This problem occurred because of insufficient knowledge of English grammar. In addition, some students were not fluent in speaking because they were nervous. They were stuck when they were trying to find the right vocabulary. They also made superfluous pauses in their speeches. Other students used fillers in their speech, such as 'hmmm,' 'eeee,' etc. In this case, Ur (2014) states that the problems that students have in speaking are lack of idea and inhibition. Language problems can influence students' ability to deliver their speech to the audience. Consequently, the rhetorical structures in speech could not be properly implemented by the speaker in their speech (Crick, 2017). The other problem was related to the rhetorical structure. In the introduction, some students found it hard to attract the audience's attention in their speech, which led to delivering an uninteresting speech in front of the audience.

Moreover, some students admitted that it was a daunting task to find interesting topics to discuss. This problem is caused by a lack of reading as they were not engaged in reading about current issues. Swales and Feak (2017) also mention that attracting the audience's attention in a speech is one of the problems. In the content part, some students did not support their arguments in their speaking with relevant examples and evidence. Osborn and Osborn (2014) and Sutarsyah (2017) say that students found supporting their ideas challenging when giving a speech. The same problem was found in the closing part, where several students did not conclude their speech because,

according to the students, they forgot it. This result is different from that of [Widodo et al. \(2020\)](#). Their study shows that the students applied the rhetorical structure in closing their speech. This difference might be explained by the fact that the present study analysed the speech in more detail, focusing not only on the speech in general but also on the speech into three structures, i.e. introduction, content and conclusion.

The third finding shows several solutions to overcome the students' challenges in applying the rhetorical structure in their speech. Some interviewed students believed that public speaking training could solve the challenges because the students will get knowledge about public speaking, which would help them practice their speaking. The students could also consult their speaking trainers regarding their speaking problems. [Osborn and Osborn \(2014\)](#) agree that training can solve students' problems in public speaking by opening the speech, delivering it, and closing it. Another solution is that the students need to read more about rhetorical structure in speaking so that they will know the elements in the introduction, content, and closing of a speech, which would help them deliver their speech. Furthermore, the problem in the use of grammar can be solved by reading adequate materials about grammar and consulting their lecturers when they have questions or when they need to ensure that they have used the grammar correctly. The lecturer can also teach grammar explicitly in relation to the students' speech or speaking. It has been demonstrated that explicit instruction, which is methodical, clear, motivating, and success-oriented, increases student achievement ([Vanpatten & Cadierno, 1993](#)).

This research has shown that the students' mastery of the rhetorical structures in speaking was related to their problems and solutions. Some students had problems with the introduction, content, and conclusion. In addition, they experienced challenges in speaking in front of many people. Those challenges can be solved by their lecturers and trainers who understand their challenges. The lecturers will need extra time to train the students so that they can enhance their speaking abilities. These findings have pedagogical implications in the field of English language education. Teaching students the rhetorical structure of speaking will equip them with how to give a speech in academic or non-academic contexts. They can follow the rhetorical structure of a speech to make the audience and lecturers understand their speeches.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this research, the majority of students have followed the rhetorical structure in delivering a speech, i.e. introduction, body or content, and closing. The students' ability to implement rhetorical structure in speaking can be classified into a medium level. Moreover, the students faced challenges in implementing the rhetorical structure, i.e. lack of knowledge of rhetorical structure in public speaking and language problems. The possible solutions to solving the problems include public speaking training, grammar learning, and speaking practice.

One limitation of this research is that the solutions provided were based on the students' opinions, and thus the effectiveness of the solution cannot be implied. These proposed solutions need to be implemented and analysed to find out whether they could solve the problems experienced by students in applying rhetorical structure and using the language accurately in their speech. Therefore, further research can implement public speaking training to solve these problems. In addition, future

research can study the mastery of rhetorical structure in different types of public speaking, such as ceremonial speaking, persuasive speaking, informative speaking, entertaining speaking, etc. Another study can deal with teachers' mastery of rhetorical structure in public speaking.

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The Relationship Between Motivation and English Language Test Performance among Secondary Vocational Schools' Students in China

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Abstract

In China, secondary school students studying at the vocational stream often struggle to keep up with English language learning. This study investigates the relationship between two types of motivation – extrinsic and intrinsic – towards the English language test performance of students from a secondary vocational school in Chongqing, China. A mixed-method research design was employed via a survey and a semi-structured interview. A total of 212 second-grade students at randomly selected secondary vocational schools completed the questionnaire. A correlational analysis was performed to discover if there was a relationship between students' extrinsic and intrinsic motivation towards their English performance. The results reveal that the intrinsic motivation was strongly correlated with the students' English performance with $r=0.216$, $p<0.05$, while the extrinsic motivation showed zero association with the students' English performance with $r=0.125$, $p>0.05$. A multiple linear regression analysis was also conducted to investigate the extent that students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation predicted their English performance. However, the findings showed that the prediction was only 4.7%. To understand more about the explanation of the findings, a total of 12

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students were then interviewed voluntarily. The interview results reveal three themes revolving around the students' cognitive, affective and social domains in their learning environment. The findings from this study would inform stakeholders to improve the existing teaching and learning models in improving students' motivation towards English language learning, specifically in the China context.

Keywords: English language, extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, learning performance, vocational education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over decades, secondary vocational schools have been known for training students with skills tailored to specific careers. Many students in China chose the vocational education stream because the skills taught align with the country's high-demand jobs. In the vocational stream, the focus is placed on specialised courses that emphasise mostly skilled trades. Thus, English is often regarded as a dispensable and minor subject to which attention is not fully given. In China, most secondary vocational school students are unable to attend mainstream high schools. Research shows that vocational students' motivational baseline is relatively low, and that has grown to many negative drawbacks to English learning (C. Liu, 2020). The secondary vocational school scenario proves this in China, where the students studying at the schools are found to experience many challenges. The most extreme setback involves students' negative learning attitudes and lack of motivation toward English because they do not see the relevance of its usage after high school (Sarani & Ahmadi, 2013).

Through the government of China's efforts, in 2018, the National Vocational Education Reform plan was carried out, and it explicitly pointed out that vocational education is as important as general education. In March 2021, the Ministry of Education (MOE) issued the Notice on the Enrolment in Secondary Vocational Schools, requiring an equal enrolment ratio of secondary vocational and public high schools. According to the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan and the Outline of the 2035 Vision Goals, China will establish the Classified College Entrance Examination (CCEE) vocational education system and develop a number of high-level undergraduates, vocational majors, colleges and universities.

These efforts indicate that the government is paying more attention to vocational education to ensure a good quality work experience given before students enter the labour market, and the prejudice on it will hopefully be eliminated gradually. The scenario of more vocational school students entering colleges or universities would soon become a reality. Therefore, as a compulsory subject in CCEE, English should receive better attention in the vocational education stream.

Learning motivation influences learners' academic performance in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning context (Anwar et al., 2021). Gardner (1985, p. 10) describes motivation as "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes toward learning the language". In the case of vocational students, motivation can also drive learners to achieve their learning goals (Pinem, 2021). Therefore, stimulating learning motivation can improve learning quality and ultimately change learning results.

The two commonly explored and discussed forms of motivation, extrinsic and intrinsic, are among the most highlighted issues for the past few years and have raised much interest in EFL learning (Oletić & Ilić, 2014). However, the literature shows a gap in terms of limited context where the focus on secondary vocational schools, particularly in China, is still scarce. The new vocational education reform has raised the awareness of the importance of English being practised and mastered by the vocational schools' students, especially those who wish to enrol to the tertiary level of education. Therefore, this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. Is there a relationship between intrinsic motivation and English performance among secondary vocational school students?
2. Is there a relationship between extrinsic motivation and English performance among secondary vocational school students?
3. To what extent do intrinsic and extrinsic motivation predict English performance among secondary vocational school students?
4. What factors affect the association between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation with English performance?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivation is the direct power of action. It can stimulate people to achieve the goal of internal action. Learning motivation acting as a driving factor for students' learning outcomes is a dynamic tendency that affects students' learning behaviours and directs them to specific academic goals (Eriyanto et al., 2021). In addition, motivation is also seen as an inner driving force that pushes learners to achieve their goals. From a foreign language learning perspective, motivation refers to a positive attitude that learners exert in order to achieve learning goals (Filgona et al., 2020; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). In the same vein, Dörnyei (1998) states that motivation is considered one of the key success factors in foreign language learning. However, a lack of EFL learning motivation has been reported as one of the leading learning challenges for students (Adara & Puspahaty, 2021; Hibatullah, 2019; Yulia, 2013).

Researchers and educators have long been interested in motivation since it is closely connected to achievement and performance (Meşe & Sevilen, 2021). Soviana (2018) asserts that with motivation, students will be able to achieve their language learning goals via positive drives. These positive drives have forced learners to sustain themselves during the long and tedious learning process of learning a foreign language. Indeed, all the other factors involved in EFL acquisition presuppose motivation to some extent (Dörnyei & Otto, 1998) and maintaining a high level of motivation during a period of language learning is one of the best ways to make the whole process more successful (Daif-Allah & Aljumah, 2020). Among many types of motivation, many researchers use extrinsic and intrinsic motivation as a starting point to examine their effects on learning performance (Davis et al., 1992; Deci, 1976; Ryan & Deci, 2000a; C. Liu, 2020).

2.1 Intrinsic Motivation

Over the past few decades, much emphasis has been given to the importance of students' intrinsic motivation and its values in academic achievements (Oletić & Ilić,

2014). In the view of intrinsic motivation, students learn because of their inner force, personal interest and enjoyment (Indrayadi, 2021). In other words, students are willing to learn new and interesting knowledge to fulfil their curiosity, the need to know and the feeling of competence and growth (Kong, 2009). According to Dörnyei (1998), there are three types of intrinsic motivation, i.e. motivation to learn, to achieve the targeted goals and to experience stimulation.

Intrinsic motivation plays an important part in most learners' EFL learning success. For Dörnyei (1998), intrinsic motivation is directly linked to an individual's pleasure and satisfaction when performing. Moreover, for Deci (1975, p. 23), people who are intrinsically motivated seem to "engage in activities for their own sake" rather than for rewards which are external activities. In short, no extraneous factor could push students to learn because they feel intrinsically motivated to learn, which has been hailed as the most effective way to help them push boundaries and achieve their goals.

2.2 Extrinsic Motivation

In contrast to intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation refers to the performance of an activity to attain some distinguishable outcome (Vatankhah & Tanbakooei, 2014). It can be stimulated by some external factors like environment, rewards, and punishments (Elizabeth & Ena, 2019). Do Quyen (2020) also points out that students are found to be extrinsically motivated to perform a behaviour or to engage in an activity to earn a reward or even to avoid punishment, criticism and threat. For example, when students study hard to get a higher social status (Oletić & Ilić, 2014), career advancement or a course credit (Noels et al., 2001) to win their parents' favour, teachers' praise (Kong, 2009) or even to secure pocket money, they do it because of extrinsic motivation.

According to Ryan and Deci (2000b), extrinsic motivation contains external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation. External regulation refers to the behaviours performed to satisfy an external demand, introjected regulation refers to the performed behaviours to avoid guilt and anxiety or to attain self-esteem or pride, identified regulation is the stage in which individuals get autonomy, and integrated regulation is when identified regulations have been fully assimilated to the self. In other words, extrinsic motivation pertains to behaviours where an activity is performed for reasons not inherent to the task.

2.3 Cognitive, Affective and Social Domains

In acquiring English as a foreign language, cognitive, affective and social variables are considered critical domains in students' learning motivation (Lee & Drajeti, 2019). Firstly, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are predictors of cognitive variables (Noels et al., 2001), which include learning skills predominantly related to mental capacities (Rapita, 2021). Secondly, the affective variables cover lower anxiety and positive attitudes towards language learning. Social variables are defined as deepening understanding and support from the government, schools, and families to be the predictors of motivational intensity (Noels et al., 2001). According to Kim (2020), motivation has been associated with positive cognitive, affective, and social outcomes in educational settings.

2.4 Previous Studies

As motivation is one of the key factors affecting EFL learners' success and performance (Meşe & Sevilen, 2021), many researchers have studied this topic. For example, I. F. Liu (2020) finds that high school students had higher intrinsic motivation while vocational students had stronger extrinsic motivation, which means that the various prizes and rewards of the competitive activities were more attractive to the vocational school students. In another study, a developmental decline in intrinsic motivation for studying, in general, might have an influence on English lessons. Intrinsic motivation, for example, can be predicted by the level of curiosity and enjoyment in EFL learning (Carreira, 2011).

The correlation between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and achievement, however, did not show any significant association (Kreishan & Al-Dhaimat, 2013). On the contrary, Cortright et al. (2013) find that learners with high intrinsic motivation levels show higher achievement in learning, which indicates that there might be a significant association between these two variables. When it comes to which motivation is more dominant over the other, Elizabeth and Ena (2019) report that intrinsic motivation outweighed extrinsic motivation. Interestingly, Azhari and Daayah (2018) find that neither intrinsic nor extrinsic motivations had a positive association with English learning achievement.

3. METHODS

3.1 Research Approach

This research aims to determine the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and the English performance of secondary vocational school students in China. The explanatory mixed-methods sequential design, involving quantitative data collection and analyses prior to those of qualitative data in two consecutive phases within one study, was applied in the current study (Creswell, 2003). A quantitative method was used to collect the quantitative data by distributing the adopted Questionnaire Star, a commonly-used online instrument in China (see Figure 1). Afterwards, a qualitative method was conducted through a semi-structured interview.

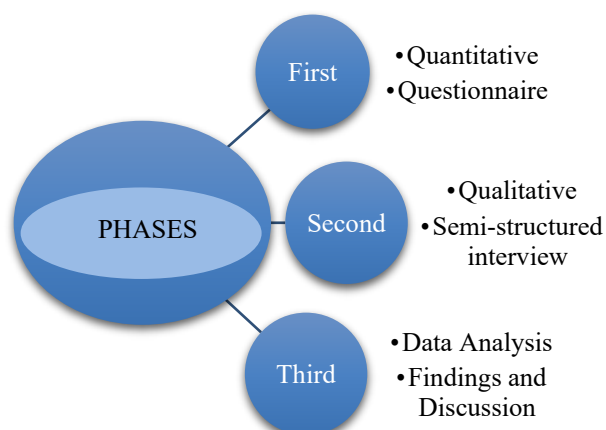


Figure 1. Research design.

3.2 Sample of the Study

The researchers employed a cluster sampling technique for the first phase of the quantitative survey (see Figure 2). A total of 212 students from grade two in different majors and classes were selected as the respondents from a secondary vocational school in Chongqing, China. The researchers administered the Questionnaire Star by providing the respondents with a QR code during their English class. The researchers used the typical-case sampling method for the second qualitative phase (see Figure 2). Of 212 respondents, 12 agreed to be interviewed for the next stage.

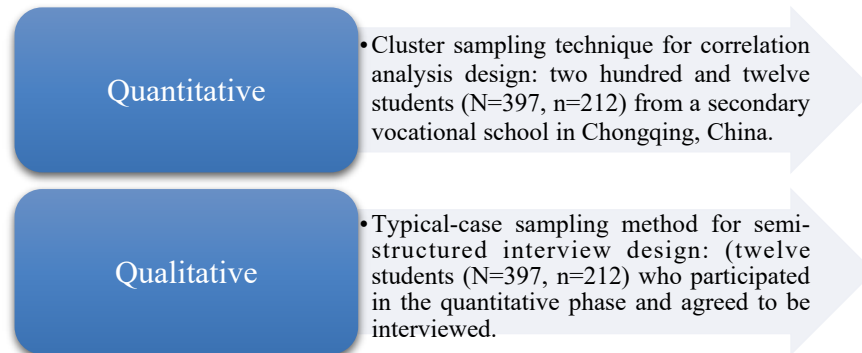


Figure 2. Participant selection techniques.

3.3 Instruments for Data Collection

In the first phase, a questionnaire (see Figure 3) was administered to 212 students from a secondary vocational school in Chongqing, China, through an online platform.

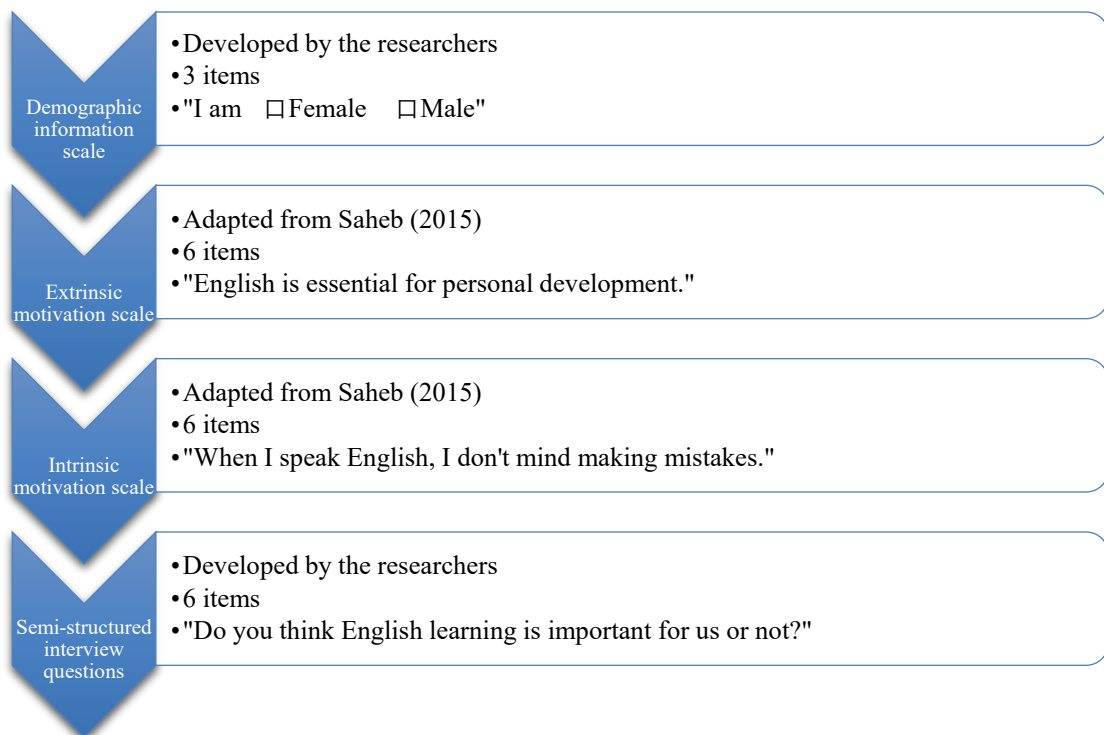


Figure 3. Instruments.

The questionnaire was first translated into Chinese before being distributed to the students for better comprehension and responses. The extrinsic and intrinsic motivation items were adapted from previous research (see [Saheb, 2015](#)). The adapted questionnaire was divided into three different parts. The first part was the demographic information that elicited students' personal information such as gender, time spent on English study every week, and mid-term English performance section. The second part of the questionnaire was the questions for the extrinsic motivation of English learning which included six items, and the third part was the questions for the intrinsic motivation of English learning which also contained six items.

This study used a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' (1 point) to 'strongly agree' (5 points) and asked participants to answer all items in each construct. For the second phase, the researchers developed six semi-structured interview questions (see Figure 3) to further explore why students had such levels of motivation and their connections with their English performance.

3.4 Instruments for Data Analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaire were analysed using the SPSS version 26.0 application. Cronbach's α analysis was performed prior to the other analyses to test the reliability of the instrument (see Table 1).

Table 1. The reliability statistics.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.811	12

The result shows a value of 0.811, which indicates that the instrument had a high reliability level because, according to [Nunnally and Bernstein \(1994\)](#), a scale is considered reliable when Cronbach's α value exceeds 0.70. Descriptive statistical analysis was performed to report participants' demographic section based on gender, time spent on English learning weekly and their English scores section. According to [Boone and Boone \(2012\)](#), Likert scale items should be analysed at the interval measurement scale by determining a composite score (sum or mean) from four or more type Likert-type items. Hence, Pearson's r , t -test, ANOVA, and regression procedures are viewed as suitable data analysis procedures.

Inferential statistical analysis was further performed in addressing the research questions using Pearson correlation analysis. This analysis was chosen to examine the relationship between English learning motivation, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation towards English performance. Meanwhile, a multiple linear regression analysis was applied to examine if intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can predict students' English performance. The level of motivation based on the mean score values were categorised based on [Nailufar \(2018\)](#) (see Table 2). Finally, thematic analysis was employed to analyse the qualitative data obtained from the semi-structured interview ([Braun & Clarke, 2006](#)).

Table 2. Level of motivation ([Nailufar, 2018](#)).

Mean Scores Value	Level of Motivation
3.68 to 5	High degree of motivation
2.34 to 3.67	Moderate degree of motivation
1 to 2.33	Low degree of motivation

4. RESULTS

4.1 Results of Quantitative Data

4.1.1 Descriptive analysis

Table 3 presents the demographic characteristics of the participants.

Table 3. Demographic characteristics (N=212).

Demographic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	134	63.2
	Female	78	36.8
Time spending weekly	less than 1 hour	89	42
	1-3 hours	89	42
	3-5 hours	23	10.8
	more than 5 hours	11	5.2
English performance section	less than 30	64	30.2
	30-59	89	42
	60-79	52	24.5
	80-100	7	3.3
Total		212	100

Out of 212 respondents, 134 were males (63.2%), and 78 were females (36.8%). As for the time the respondents devoted to their English study every week, most spent less than 1 hour or only 1-3 hours a week, accounting for 42% (N=89) of the total participants, respectively. As predicted, only a few respondents spent more than 5 hours per week, with 11 respondents (5.2%). The mid-term results revealed that most students had English test scores between 30 and 59 out of 100. This indicates that more than 50% of respondents had below mediocre performance, and only seven respondents (3.3%) scored high at 80 and above.

Table 4 depicts the minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation of the respondents' English performance and motivation.

Table 4. Descriptive results of English performance and motivations (N=212).

Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
English performance	0.00	94.00	44.38	20.67
Extrinsic motivation	1.67	5.00	4.22	0.57
Intrinsic motivation	1.33	5.00	3.41	0.57
Motivation	1.75	5.00	3.81	0.51

The results in Table 4 illustrate that students' English test performance in the secondary vocational school ranged from 0.00 to 94 (M=44.38, SD=20.67). Based on the mean score values, the extrinsic motivation degree (M=4.22, SD=0.51) of the students in the secondary vocational schools in China was categorised as high, while the intrinsic motivation level (M=3.41, SD=0.57) was considered as moderate. In total, the aggregated score for motivation was 3.81 (SD=0.57), which is considered high.

4.1.2 Normality distribution analysis

In order to determine whether the data is normally distributed, a P-P Plot was shown in Figure 4.

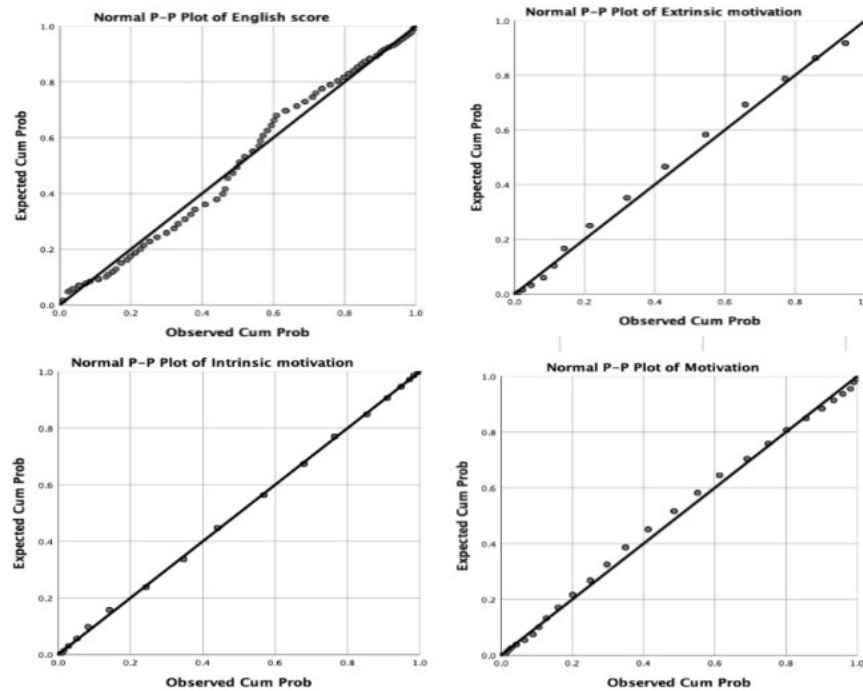


Figure 4. Normal P-P Plot.

From Figure 4, all scatter was evenly distributed close to the oblique line. Therefore, the data on English performance, extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation, and overall motivation followed a normal tabulation. Therefore, a parametric test, Pearson correlation analysis, was selected to determine the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and English performance.

4.1.3 Pearson correlation analysis

In order to answer the first and second research questions, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to seek the relationship between intrinsic motivation and English performance, along with extrinsic motivation and English performance among the respondents. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Correlation coefficients of variables (N=212).

Items	Correlations	English performance	Extrinsic motivation	Intrinsic motivation	Motivation
English performance	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
Extrinsic motivation	Pearson Correlation	0.125	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.069			

Table 5 continued...

Intrinsic motivation	Pearson Correlation	.216**	.573**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	0		
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	.193**	.885**	.888**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005	0	0	

** correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings presented in Table 5 reveal a significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and English performance ($r=0.216$, $p=0.002$, $p<0.05$). However, there was no significant relationship between extrinsic motivation and English performance ($r=0.125$, $p=0.069$, $p>0.05$).

4.1.4 Multiple linear regression analysis

In order to address the third research question, Multiple linear regression analysis was selected, and the findings are shown in Figure 5 and Table 6.

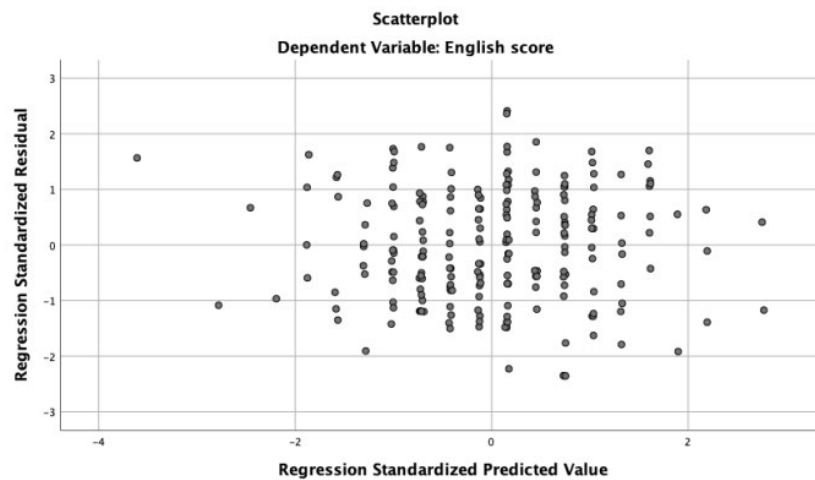


Figure 5. Scatter plot.

Table 6. Multiple linear regression, important statistics (N=212).

Variables	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F (2,209)	Beta	t	Tolerance	VIF
DV English performance	0.216 a	0.047	0.038	5.12				
IV Extrinsic motivation					0.003	0.032	0.675	1.482
Intrinsic motivation					0.215	2.611*	0.675	1.482

* $p<0.05$

Table 6 presents a multiple linear regression analysis conducted to determine the best linear combination of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in predicting students'

English performance. Statistical assumptions, such as the normal distribution of residuals (see Figure 5) and the non-linear correlation between predicted variables and residuals, were all met in the analysis (see Figure 5). The regression method of 'enter' shows that the combination of the two independent variables did not significantly predict the student's English performance, $F(2,209)=5.120$. Intrinsic motivation has significantly contributed to the prediction ($p<0.05$), but extrinsic motivation did not contribute significantly ($p>0.05$) (see Table 5). The Beta weights, presented in Table 6, also suggest that intrinsic motivation contributed higher to predicting students' English performance. The R Square value was only 0.047, which indicated that the model explained 4.7 percent of the variance in students' English performance. The standardised regression formulation is students' English performance = $0.003 \times$ extrinsic motivation + $0.215 \times$ intrinsic motivation.

4.2 Qualitative Findings

As there was a significant positive correlation between students' intrinsic motivation and English performance, the relationship between extrinsic motivation and English performance revealed a low correlation. In addressing the fourth research question and further comprehending the underlying reasons, the researchers conducted a semi-structured interview with 12 students out of the total 212 respondents. Open-thematic coding was the method used for this purpose (Ebadi & Ghuchi, 2018). Therefore, six major themes, namely, personal opinion on English language learning, previous and present feelings on English language learning, problems faced in English language learning, family support on English language learning, environment for English study and policies support for English language learning emerged in this study. Details of the findings are as follows.

4.2.1 Personal opinion on English language learning

For this theme, 11 out of 12 students thought English learning was important for them for various reasons. Students believed that English is a very important subject and has been a part of their life. For example, S11 said:

- (1) It is important because it can be used in many aspects of our life. (S11)

S12 also said:

- (2) ...of course, English is important because it is our second language. (S12)

In addition, the students spoke that English was beneficial for their careers. In this case, S3 said:

- (3) I think English is important because we are tourism and catering majors, and we need to master English to introduce scenic spots and dishes to travellers. (S3)

Both S7 and S9 confirmed that:

- (4) English is important because it is good for our careers. (S7)

Some students said English was useful when travelling abroad and beneficial to other aspects of life. For example, S4 said:

- (5) It is very important. We can use it for travelling and working. It also can help to build our characters. (S4)

In addition, S8 and S10 have similar thoughts:

- (6) English can be used when travelling outside our country. (S8)

Only S6 thought English was not important because he believed that artificial intelligent translators available today can fully be relied on when it comes to English translation that he would need:

- (7) There are some intelligent translators nowadays. There is no use of English, so I do not listen to English class. (S6)

4.2.2 Previous experience in English language learning

Most respondents had a negative experience learning English during their junior high school years. They did not have any interest in learning English. Therefore, their performance was not satisfactory from the beginning. For example, S2 said:

- (8) My English was not good in junior school. I did not like it because I thought passing the test was the only purpose of learning English. (S2)

S7 also said that:

- (9) My English was very poor from the beginning because I did not like to study. (S7)

Furthermore, S4 expressed that:

- (10) My English was poor from the beginning. I never listened to the teacher in class because I thought learning English was not important at that time. (S4)

The same situation applied to S6 and S9, who both agreed that:

- (11) I was poor at this subject from the beginning. There was no reason for this. I just could not understand this subject. It was hard. (S6)

Four interviewed students reported that they were at first good at learning English but later fell behind because they had friends that influenced and started to quit studying. S1 said:

- (12) It was okay at first, but when I was in the second grade, I always went out to play with my friends, and then I felt left behind in English class. (S1)

The same situation was reported by S5, S8, and S10. Furthermore, some students did not like the way English was taught. For example, S12 admitted that:

- (13) No, my English is not good. I did not like it (i.e., the subject). I liked having fun. I did not like to recite words and passages. I loved freedom. (S12)

S3 also added that her interests in English decreased once the teacher in her junior high gave materials that was tedious to her:

- (14) My English was okay in junior high school. It was all right at first, but in the second grade, the teacher always asked us to recite the materials, I did not like it anymore. (S3)

4.2.3 *Problems faced in English language learning*

The majority of the respondents stated that they had problems with vocabulary learning. The respondents revealed that they had very limited vocabulary. Once they could not recognise the words, they would lose interest immediately, making it hard for them to learn English well. For example, S1 said:

- (15) I think the biggest problems are grammar and vocabulary, and there are also too many subjects to learn at the same time. (S1)

The same problem was reported by S4, she said:

- (16) I am short of vocabulary. I did not understand the questions during examinations. (S4)

S9 also spoke of how the speed of learning in the classroom was too fast for him. While he was still struggling with the vocabulary being learned at the time, the next day, the teacher continued to the next lesson of the English class.

- (17) I wanted the teacher to teach us vocabulary. I lost motivation when the class continued to other topics because it was hard for me. (S9)

Another vocabulary problem was reported by S11, who said:

- (18) I do not know the pronunciation of many words, so I do not know how to do tasks related to pronunciation. (s11)

In learning vocabulary, many students expressed concerns on their poor sense of self-regulation, memory problems to learn new words and expressions in English, and learning habits that were not ideal.

- (19) Words and expressions are important, and self-regulation is also important; those are what I lack. (S3)

- (20) My learning habit is not good. I do not like to learn words, and my memory is not sharp either. (S7)

- (21) I cannot understand the English lesson, and I cannot focus on the subject. I am not motivated to learn vocabulary. (S8)

- (22) I have no self-regulation. (S10)

- (23) I have a poor memory and learning habit. (S12)

4.2.4 Family support on English language learning

For theme 4, almost all of the respondents' parents did not provide the necessary support because most were too occupied with work or their work was far from home. For example, S1 said:

- (24) Yes, we often talk about my study, but usually, I have to be responsible for myself because they are busy, and I also have a three-year-old sister, so they have to concentrate on her. We do not talk about English subjects because they do not understand the subject. (S1)

S2, S3, and S5 also had the same opinion, stating that:

- (25) They care about me, but we rarely talk about my study because they are busy. We do not talk about English subjects because they did not learn English at their age, so they cannot understand the subject. (S2)

Furthermore, their parents also did not have much knowledge, especially about English subjects, and thus were not able to offer any assistance to the students. In this case, S4 and S11 said that:

- (26) ...we sometimes talk about my study, but they do not understand English. (S4)

The same case was reported by S2, S3, S5, S7, S9, S10, S11, and S12. In addition, some students did not have a close relationship with their parents, so they did not have a loving and conducive home environment. For example, three of the students' parents were divorced, and they were in the final grade.

- (27) My parents were divorced when I was very young. My father and stepmother are too busy to care about my study, let alone my English subject because they do not understand it. (S7)

- (28) Yeah, they care about my study, but they divorced when I was three, so I do not have much contact with my mother. My father always asks me to send my score report to him, so we sometimes talk about English lessons. (S8)

- (29) My parents got divorced when I was eight. They used to care about my study when I was in primary school, but they no longer cared much. We do not talk about English lessons because they do not understand the lesson. (S9)

Finally, only one student said their parents showed care and support for their studies. The student, S12, said that:

- (30) Yes, they care about my study. We talk on the phone every week to talk about my study, but we seldom talk about my English lesson. (S12)

4.2.5 Environment for English language learning

The findings show that the environment for learning English was not encouraging. Students were often distracted by games on their smartphones, and some were smoking and dozing off in class. The students reported that most of their classmates showed no interest in learning. S2, S4, S5, S6, S8, S11, and S12 shared the same opinion, as expressed in (31).

- (31) The atmosphere of my class was not supportive because many students played with their phones, slept or talked, or just thought about other things, and these behaviours would have a bad effect on my learning process in the class. (S5)

In addition, S1, S3, S7, and S9 said:

- (32) Students would choose to study when they were inclined to do it. Some of them would study, but a majority of them would not. (S7)

4.2.6 Policies support for English language learning

Several students thought the support provided by the school was insufficient, and there was no policy to encourage them to study or punish them if they did not study. Some saw that management was a problem, where the school put more concern on the physical facilities of the school compared to the nonphysical facilities.

- (33) The school does not give enough support. The school does not care much about our studies. (S1)
- (34) The school cares more about physical facilities than nonphysical infrastructure. (S11)
- (35) The school is not well-managed. The headmaster and teachers do not care much about our studies. (S4)

In addition, some students thought that the teachers were so occupied with other responsibilities and tasks that they could no longer monitor what their students were doing. In this case, S10 said:

- (36) The headmaster and teachers only communicate with the students about the lesson because they are busy. They should care more about us. (S10)

5. DISCUSSION

This study attempted to determine the association between two types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic, and English test performance before assessing how much these two motivations predict English performance. The variables influencing the relationship between these two motivational types and English proficiency among Chinese secondary vocational school students were also investigated.

5.1 Quantitative Findings

For the first research question, the quantitative findings show that intrinsic motivation strongly correlated with the students' English performance with $r=0.216$, $p=0.002$. The same results were found in some other studies, such as Cortright et al. (2013), who revealed that intrinsic motivation significantly impacted students' performance. In a similar study, Hendijani et al. (2016) found that students' course grades strongly correlated with their intrinsic motivation with $r=0.47$, $p=0.000$. Likewise, Salehpour and Roohani (2020) also reported a statistically significant correlation between the students' speaking performance and their intrinsic motivation with $r=0.56$, $p<0.05$. However, no correlation was found between extrinsic motivation

and the students' English performance for the second research question, with $r=0.125$ and $p=0.069$. Similarly, [Hendijani et al. \(2016\)](#) revealed that the relationship between students' performance and extrinsic motivation was insignificant, with $r=0.06$ and $p=0.389$.

The result of the multiple linear regression analysis could contribute to concluding that the prediction effect from the aggregated motivation, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, on English performance was only 4.7%. Intrinsic motivation ($\beta=0.215$) contributed more to predicting students' English performance than extrinsic motivation ($\beta=0.003$). This is in accordance with [Elizabeth and Ena \(2019\)](#), who reported that English education graduate students' achievement is dominated more by intrinsic motivation than extrinsic motivation by qualitative research. Another study by [Lemos and Verissimo \(2014\)](#) also revealed that intrinsic motivation is positively related to the students' performance, but extrinsic motivation did not positively correlate with their achievements. [Lepper et al. \(2005\)](#) expressed similar views and reported a significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and the students' academic performance, but a negative relationship was found with extrinsic motivation.

5.2 Qualitative Findings

Through thematic analysis, the semi-structured interview can be discussed from the following domains.

5.2.1 Cognitive domain

From theme one, 11 out of all the 12 interviewees believed that English plays an important role in one's career and for travelling purposes and tertiary education enrolment. All participants expressed their willingness to learn English well in terms of their subjective will. Only one student thought that with the increasingly advanced technology of artificial intelligence translation, there was no use in learning this language.

Five interviewees showed that their most significant problem in learning English was lack of vocabulary as their lexical knowledge, as shown in theme three. There was no environment for students to practice English outside the school in China. The participants expressed that they gradually lost interest and sense of achievement towards English when they could not recognise the words. Five students said they did not have a strong sense of self-control in English lessons and other subjects.

How students understand the learning process and use the knowledge they have received falls under the cognitive domain ([Alinier & Harwood, 2005](#)). Few students actually communicated their cognitive aims in this way. In the EFL context, students are often poorly motivated to study English because they cannot understand the lesson. When students have not mastered what they have learnt, in this case, recalling information as the basic form of the cognitive domain, this would further disrupt from creating the mental skills, thus preventing students from acquiring knowledge. [Chen et al. \(2014\)](#) found that learners with an analytic-independent cognitive style performed better and improved significantly in the delayed post-test. It is suggested that teachers solicit inquiries about goal setting and look into creating cognitive goals in order to assist students in considering the purpose and anticipated outcomes ([Piyarat](#)

& Wareesiri, 2018). Furthermore, it is advised that the level of cognitive domains could be achieved through in-class debates, tutorial activities and seminars, the use of realia, project- and problem-based learning, and so forth (Kasilingam et al., 2014).

5.2.2 *Affective domain*

From theme two, all 12 respondents had negative English learning experiences during their junior middle school. Five students said that learning English was not interesting, so their performance was not good from the start. Two of them were initially very interested in this subject, but they gradually lost interest due to the un motivating learning methods such as text recitation and word dictation. Four students indicated that they felt obliged to the peer pressure in junior high school, which also led to their demotivation in English learning. However, most students said they had gradually realised the importance of English.

According to Hoque (2016), the affective domain encompasses attitudes, values, enthusiasms, and feelings. In order to motivate students to learn, these elements under the umbrella of the affective domain must be engaged. Past studies suggest that affective domains are significant to the point that they could enhance or inhibit the learning process in general (Zayed & Al-Ghamdi, 2019). This is visible in this study, where 12 students had negative experiences during junior middle school. When they entered high school, they were still scarred from their past incidents, thus affecting their overall motivation to learn English. From the psychological perspective, 'emotional injury' or 'emotional scar' refers to a lasting effect of emotional trauma. Without the right formula of strategies to promote motivation, we could see a negative correlation with learning motivation as the outcome. As Al-Mekhlafi (2010) found in his study, motivation correlates significantly with achievement in language learning. Tridinanti (2018) also strengthened the finding by proving that students' anxiety, self-confidence and language achievement produced a correlation. Students who struggled to manage their emotions were more likely to forget what they had to say and thus struggled to rectify errors in EFL learning (Piyarat & Wareesiri, 2018), which could also be the case in this study. Therefore, receiving, responding, assessing, organising, grouping, and describing are recommended as some initiatives to improve the level of affective domain (Kasilingam et al., 2014), which would help enhance students' motivation to learn not only in English but also other subject matters as well.

5.2.3 *Social domain*

Themes four, five and six are related to the social domain. Part four deals with family support, where parents did not provide their children with the necessary support or interaction because of their busy and far-distance work. Some of the students' family relationship was not very harmonious, which had a negative effect on the students. When students do not get sufficient support or have poor relations with their families, this lessens their learning motivation (see Shao & Kang, 2022). Similarly, learning motivation and learners' behaviour have also been proven to be predictors of students' academic self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). In addition, Vatankhah and Tanbakooei (2014) discovered that social support from family members, close friends, and EFL teachers improved EFL students' motivation. This shows that family members, particularly parents, have a significant role in supporting students' learning in terms of social support.

On top of that, the overall learning atmosphere of secondary vocational schools was not supportive and ideal, as students were always found sleeping, chatting and showing other deviant behaviours in class. The majority of the participants shared that although the government has given more emphasis on vocational education, the application is still at an initial stage because the existing policy support has not emphasised the use of English elsewhere. With that, limited usage resulted in students' lack of motivation to use the language. [Azhar and Gopal \(2021\)](#) reported in their study that with a policy that emphasises English usage, effective speaking outcomes and increased motivation were found to further support the use of English.

In order to further guarantee the quality of graduates, English teachers need to further innovate with their teaching methods, improve their content knowledge, and develop teaching design and other aspects that would improve their teaching quality. [Noels et al. \(2001\)](#) found that teachers' behaviour affects students' overall motivation as well as their perceptions of competence and autonomy. In a related study, [Phan \(2010\)](#) found that participants' motivation to learn English was influenced by their instructors' encouragement as well as their pedagogical skills ([Johnson, 2017](#)). Additionally, [Abdullah & Al-Mofti \(2017\)](#) showed that goals, external social influences, and intention all play a role in motivation to learn English. Therefore, it is recommended that the social domain plays an integral part in boosting learning motivation which should be paid more attention to.

Cognitive, affective, and behavioural, including social responses, depend on a person's perceived capacity to deal with events ([Lazarus, 1966](#); [Jhangiani et al., 2022](#)). Findings from the qualitative data seem to echo most of what the quantitative results suggested in terms of the relationship between the students' motivation and their English test performance. The significant correlation between students' performance and intrinsic motivation may attribute to students' moderate degree of intrinsic motivation in learning English and their below-average test performance ($M=44.38$). Despite students' strong subjective dedication and high extrinsic motivation, family support, government policy, and learning instructions are less supportive. This may contribute to the weak correlation between extrinsic motivation and students' English test performance.

6. CONCLUSION

This study offers a statistical analysis of the relationship between English performance and the two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. The research revealed a significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and students' English performance, but no significant relationship was found between students' extrinsic motivation and English performance. The overall motivation, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, did not positively predict students' English performance. From the cognitive domain, the students in this study believed that English learning was important because it would help them get a better career, travel, and continue their studies. The limited vocabulary knowledge and sense of self-control led to unsatisfactory performance. With such extrinsic rewards, participants were found to have a high degree of motivation. In the same vein, the participants showed poor self-regulation and terrible learning habits from the affective and social domains. The unsupported and non-conducive learning environment might further affect the low

intrinsic motivation. These research results can be used to advocate more serious efforts by the stakeholders to improve the English learning quality in vocational schools, particularly in the China context.

It should also be acknowledged that there are some limitations to this research. This research only focuses on the relationship between students' intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and their mid-term scores in English subjects in the second semester of 2020-2021. Future research should focus on other types of motivation among other secondary school students aside from the vocational stream. Expanding the research into quasi-experimental studies could offer statistical evidence on how intervention could help improve vocational schools' students' learning performance and improve their learning motivation simultaneously.

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Probing into the Obstacles Faced by Internship Student teachers in Designing Lesson Plans

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Abstract

This study aims to find out the problems faced by student teachers in an internship program in designing lesson plans at schools. A lesson plan is one of the essential instructional designs that should be considered to achieve a successful teaching and learning process. For teachers, a lesson plan is a guideline that will be used in teaching to achieve learning objectives. This research used a qualitative method. The participants were selected by using purposive sampling. They were seven students of the English Education Department of Universitas Syiah Kuala who were taking an internship program. The data collection was carried out through document analysis and interviews. The results showed that all student teachers strived to design their lesson plans based on the 2013 Curriculum. There were several problems faced by the students, such as (1) formulating the indicators of competency achievement, (2) writing learning objectives, (3) finding suitable materials, (4) selecting learning methods, (5) choosing learning media and resources, (6) formulating activities, and (7) creating an assessment. The results of the interview also revealed the same. Thus, it is recommended that student teachers should receive more training, both theoretically and practically, in designing the lesson plan based on the 2013 Curriculum as required by the Ministry of Education in Indonesia.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Pengenalan Lapangan Persekolahan (PLP) or the Internship Program is one of the compulsory subjects for all students who majors in Education of various fields at universities in Indonesia. This program is when the student teachers conduct observations and analyze the problems at the schools they are assigned at, and try to provide a solution to the problems (Usman & Maruf, 2017). This program aims to have the student teachers to gain knowledge, abilities, and experience in the application of their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors that can assist the development of professional competency mastery, pedagogic, personality, and social awareness in schools (Hidayat et al., 2021). Consequently, *Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan* (FKIP) or Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Syiah Kuala (USK) in Banda Aceh, Aceh Province, Indonesia, is one of the institutions that produce professional teacher graduates. This institution is among the universities or institutions in Indonesia that has an important role in shaping and fostering prospective educators to become qualified and professional teachers. Thus, students of the English Education major who enroll in the PLP program must take some prerequisite courses as the main requirement, such as English Teaching Methodology, English Curriculum, and Instructional Plans, Language Testing at Schools, and Microteaching. Through the PLP program, it is expected that student teachers experience teaching students at different school levels, from the junior high to the senior high schools. Hence, these student teachers are given a chance to hone teaching abilities, get perspective from those with experience in the field (i.e., professional teachers), and connect theories learned at universities with classroom-based experiential learning (Becker et al., 2019).

Being professional teachers is challenging. As professional teachers, they have to master not only the theories but also the practical issues related to the teaching and learning process. They must prepare a lesson plan as a guideline in such a process. A lesson plan is essential to bridge students' activeness during a learning process (Iqbal et al., 2021; Singh, 2008). A lesson plan also influences a successful teaching and learning process (Brown, 2011). A lesson plan helps teachers arrange material, use effective time management, and choose appropriate teaching techniques (Chickering & Ehrmann, 1996; Hinkel, 2015). Thus, with a lesson plan, a teacher can predict and arrange everything they expect to do in the classroom, such as what material to teach, what basic competencies to achieve, and how to provide clear instructions during the learning process in the classroom to run successful teaching and learning for students.

However, designing a lesson plan is sometimes challenging, especially for the student teachers (Hanane, 2016; Thornbury, 1999). When creating a lesson plan, several components should be considered. These include *Kompetensi Dasar* (KD) or Basic Competency, *Indikator Pencapaian Kompetensi* (IPK) or Indicators of Competency Achievement, learning objectives, learning materials, learning methods, learning media and resources, learning steps, students' worksheet, and assessment. These are as mandated in the *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*

(Permendikbud) No. 22 Tahun 2016 (Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2016, or the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 22, year 2016). The 2013 Curriculum designed by the government becomes the standard that teachers must follow when designing a lesson plan (Manalu, 2016). Therefore, teachers should pay attention to every component required for the lesson plan.

In general, the lesson plan design used in Indonesia has some similar elements to those used in other countries. Vdovina (2013) mentions that a lesson plan should demonstrate students' critical thinking levels in their cognitive and affective domains. Gafoor and Farooque (2010) studied about the problems faced by 74 pre-service students. They mention that students' problems are related to selecting appropriate learning experiences, adjusting time for each activity, creating learning objectives as well as implementing all components in a lesson plan into the teaching and learning process. Those components are obligatory components in the lesson plan used in India. Additionally, in Canada, lesson plans should integrate general and specific objectives, timing, materials used, three steps of learning; before, during, and after activities, and evaluation (Ruiz, 2009).

There is still a limited number of research on the difficulties in preparing lesson plans faced by student teachers in the Indonesian context, especially in Aceh province. This background initiated this present study. Mulyani and Kasim (2015) studied lesson plan documents used at a private Islamic school in Aceh. In their study, interviews were conducted to investigate the teachers' problems in designing a lesson plan. The results showed that the lesson plan has met the Indonesian curriculum's criteria, such as standard process and content as required by the national curriculum. However, teachers face problems such as managing allocated time effectively, finding suitable methods and materials, using resources, and creating an assessment. Mulyani and Kasim (2015) then suggest that teachers should make an effort to understand and be able to apply the lesson plan in the teaching and learning process. One of those efforts is gaining more knowledge in seminars and workshops.

Designing a lesson plan for English subjects faced by the student teachers in the Internship Program at schools in Aceh Province has not been adequately conducted. Therefore, we intended to find out the problems faced by the student teachers in designing lesson plans in the internship program at schools. The formulated research question for this study is:

- What are the problems faced by the student teachers in designing a lesson plan in the Internship Program at schools in Aceh?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 English Curriculum in Indonesia

The term teaching can be described as a process of passing on knowledge from one person to another. Teaching is characterized as appearing or assisting someone with figuring out how to accomplish something, giving information, and causing to know or comprehend (Brown, 2000). A curriculum is needed in the teaching and learning process. According to *Undang-Undang No. 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional* (President of Republic of Indonesia, 2003) or Law No. 20 year 2003 concerning the National Education System, a curriculum is a set of plans and

arrangements regarding the objectives, content, and learning materials as well as the methods used to guide the implementation of learning to achieve the learning objectives.

Since 2003, the Indonesian government has stated some curricula to be used in formal schools, namely *Kurikulum Berbasis Kompetensi* (KBK) or Competency Based Curriculum in 2004, *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan* (KTSP) or Education Unit Level Curriculum in 2006, and *Kurikulum 2013* (K-13) or 2013 Curriculum in 2013 (Ritonga, 2018). The latest curriculum introduced by the government is *Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar* (KMB), or Independent Learning Curriculum in 2020 (Suryaman, 2020). However, the 2013 Curriculum is still used widely by schools (Widiyono et al., 2021). Implementing K-13 is expected to produce productive, creative, and innovative human beings, as explained in *Permendikbud No. 59 year 2014* (Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2014, or the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 59 year 2014). With this, the curriculum is used as a supporting component designed to carry out learning programs specified in various activities, exercises, or tasks that will be carried out in class.

Since English is treated as a foreign language in Indonesia, the goal of learning English at school is to enable students to communicate in English in oral or written form fluently and in accordance with their social contexts (Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia, 2003). In *Permendikbud No. 22 Tahun 2016* (Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2016, or the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 22 year 2016), it is stated that the lesson plan must cover the following components: identity, core competencies, basic competencies and achievement indicators, learning objectives and achievement which are formulated based on the basic competencies stated in English Syllabus, learning materials, teaching methods, learning media, learning resources, learning steps, and assessment. These steps align with the instructional design steps proposed by Dick et al. (2006).

2.2 Internship Program

Parveen and Mirza (2012) state that an internship is an educational program that combines learning with planned and performance-related experience. In addition, an internship provides students with practical experience which cannot be fully simulated in the classroom (Elarde & Chong, 2012). Thus, this program is for prospective teachers and aims to provide teaching experiences in schools.

As stated in *Peraturan Menteri Riset, Teknologi, dan Pendidikan Tinggi* (Permenristek Dikti) No. 55 Tahun 2017 (Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education, 2017, or the Regulation of the Minister of Research, Technology, and Higher Education No. 55 year 2017), *Pengenalan Lapangan Persekolahan* (PLP) or the Internship Program is a process of observation and apprenticeship carried out by the students of the Undergraduate Education Program to study aspects of learning and education management in the education unit. Before they go to the field, the students are trained in a teaching practice or Microteaching and educational professions courses. Hence, Lindqvist (2019) defines a student-teacher as a person who is still in the process of an education program to become a teacher. Student teachers are the students taking the teaching practice experience in faculties that major in education at universities.

2.3 Lesson Plan

A lesson plan is one of the learning tools that need to be prepared by teachers. It is a standardized form consisting of teachers' thoughts or scenarios of what to do in teaching a lesson (Farrell, 2002). Its function is as a guide for the teachers to be used in the classroom. A lesson plan must be well-prepared and organized (Jalongo et al., 2007). In addition, according to Coppola et al. (2004), a lesson plan is a foundation of educational structure and a core of education. For Jensen (2001), a lesson plan benefits teachers in deciding the lesson objectives, arranging the types of activities to achieve these objectives, producing learning material, and setting the time allocation.

2.3.1 *The principles of a lesson plan in Indonesia*

In accordance with *Permendikbud* No. 81A Tahun 2013 (Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2013), or Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 81A year 2013), and *Permendikbud* No. 22 in 2016 (Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2016, or the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 22 year 2016), there are several principles that a teacher should consider before designing a lesson plan:

1. A lesson plan is designed as a curriculum idea based on the syllabus.
2. Concerns learners' differences, such as intellectual interest, motivation of learning, etc. Before creating a lesson plan, a teacher must observe the students' backgrounds to create an appropriate and useful lesson plan for students.
3. Encourages students to be active participants in the class.
4. Gives feedback and follow ups on students' tasks or performance.
5. A lesson plan is designed by considering relevance and cohesiveness among core competence and basic competence, learning materials, learning activities, assessment, and learning resources as a whole learning experience.
6. The teacher can apply information of technology and communication based on situations and conditions such as newspapers or magazines. This may help students be more motivated to learn.

2.3.2 *Components of a lesson plan in Indonesia*

A lesson plan consists of several components, namely identity, *Kompetensi Inti* (KI) or Core Competency, *Kompetensi Dasar* (KD) or Basic Competency, *Indikator Pencapaian Kompetensi* (IPK) or Indicators of Competency Achievement, learning objectives, learning materials, learning methods, learning media and resources, learning steps, assessment, remedial and enrichment (Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2016).

The following explains the components of a lesson plan as adapted from 2013 Curriculum or *Kurikulum 2013* (K-13). First is the identity of the school, which includes the name of the school, subject, class/semester, learning theme, and time allocation. The second is *Kompetensi Inti* (KI) or Core Competency. It has been written on the syllabus, and student teachers must adopt it. There are four core competencies: spiritual (KI-1), social (KI-2), knowledge (KI-3), and skills (KI-4). Third is *Kompetensi Dasar* (KD) or Basic Competency. It is a manifestation of KI. Both KD and KI are usually stated in the syllabus. Fourth is *Indikator Pencapaian Kompetensi*

(IPK) or Indicators of Competency Achievement. Indicators of competency achievement are behaviors that can be measured and observed to show the achievement of certain basic competencies contained in a syllabus. These indicators use operational words that can be observed and measured, which include knowledge and skills. The next are learning objectives, media and materials used, and teaching methods that are considered important.

Teaching activities in the learning steps in a lesson plan are divided into three parts: Introductory, main, and closing activities. The implementation stages of learning include:

1. Introductory activities

In this activity, the teacher should:

- condition a pleasant learning atmosphere.
- motivate the students
- discuss the competencies that have been studied and developed previously related to those to be studied and developed.
- state the learning objectives
- convey the competencies to be achieved and their benefits in everyday life.
- deliver an outline of the material and activities to be carried out.
- convey the scope and assessment technique to be used.

2. Main activities

Main activities are steps of the learning process to achieve competence, carried out interactively, inspiringly, and interestingly. The activities should motivate students to participate actively. The steps in the main activities should relate to the method and approach used. In every activity, the teacher must pay attention to the development of students' attitudes to the basic competencies of KI-1 and KI-2, including being grateful to God, being honest, cooperative, disciplined, obeying the rules, and respecting the opinions of others.

3. Closing activities

Closing activities consist of:

- Make a summary/conclusion of the lesson.
- Reflect on the activities that have been carried out.
- Provide feedback on the learning process and results.
- Carry out an evaluation.
- Planning follow-up activities in the forms of remedial learning, enrichment, and giving the assignment to students.
- Inform the topic for the next meeting.

The next step is *Lembar Kerja Peserta Didik* (LKPD), or Students' Worksheets. LKPD is students' worksheets made by the teacher. Several learning models have been proposed to lead to student-centered teaching and learning activities. Therefore, the LKPD contains material that is designed in such a way that students can study the materials independently. Therefore, the LKPD contains materials, summaries, tasks related to the material, and indicators of competency to be achieved. According to [Hasja et al. \(2020\)](#), LKPD is a tool used to support the activities in the learning process, and it is vital to design students' worksheets since it can improve their capabilities. In addition, [Chonga et al. \(2013, as cited in Hasja et al., 2020, p. 2\)](#) mention that "the use of students' worksheets that are in accordance with the characteristics of students can improve mastery of concepts in learning material".

The last is assessment. Assessment is the last component in the syllabus, which decides the achievement of the instructional process in the class. According to [Earl \(2006\)](#), there are three types of assessment, namely assessment of learning, assessment for learning, and assessment as learning. Assessment of learning can be used to determine the level of achievement and development of students. Then, assessment for learning is designed to improve the learning carried out by teachers to students. Furthermore, assessment as learning is used to support and develop students' knowledge.

2.4 Studies on Difficulties of Designing a Lesson Plan

Creating a lesson plan might be a problem for teachers ([Cullen et al., 2013](#)). In addition, implementing the lesson plan in the classroom is another problem preventing successful teaching and learning ([Garrison & Kanuka, 2004](#)). There are several studies on the difficulties in designing a lesson plan. First is a study conducted by [Rolanda \(2019\)](#). This study aims to analyze the students' difficulties and perspectives in creating lesson plans in a Microteaching class. The samples were the English Department, batch 2015, at Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry, Indonesia, who took a Microteaching class. The study found that based on the students' perspectives, the lesson plan of microteaching class functions as a teaching guideline and teaching planning. The problems in designing lesson plans were in terms of formulating indicators and objectives, analyzing basic competency which suits the indicators, and selecting the assessment.

Second is a study conducted by [Alanazi \(2019\)](#) on fifty pre-service trainee teachers who enrolled in a teaching practice course at the College of Education and Arts Northern Border University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It aims to analyze the pre-service trainee teachers' attitudes, ideas, and problems in designing lesson plans. This study showed that pre-service teachers knew the need for lesson plans and encountered several difficulties while designing lesson plans. The study found that the participants had problems determining activities that must be adapted to the needs of students, choosing the activities, and using the appropriate learning methods in designing the lesson plans. Furthermore, [Fitriyanti \(2019\)](#) also conducted a study to learn about the problems faced by English teachers when creating lesson plans and the way to solve them. Students' conditions, learning methods, learning material, learning activities, instructional media, and evaluation were all identified as problems faced by the English teachers in this study.

Unfortunately, based on the research finding by [Nurtanto et al. \(2021\)](#), there is still confusion between vocational teachers, curriculum developers, and school leaders in implementing K-13. Their study reveals other problems related to K-13, such as different perceptions towards K-13, difficulty in creating an authentic assessment, confusion in selecting the learning method, and the lesson plan itself ([Nurtanto et al., 2021](#)). A similar problem is also found by [Putri \(2016\)](#) that, even though teachers understand the component of K-13, they find it difficult to arrange or set the assessment aspect as they believe it is too complicated. Her study also found that implementing a scientific approach in learning steps stated in K-13 creates another problem; thus, sometimes, real-life situations and plans may be different.

3. METHODS

3.1 Participants

This study takes the form qualitative, focusing on the problems faced by the student teachers in an internship program in designing a lesson plan at schools. According to [Hancock et al. \(2007\)](#), qualitative research involves explaining people's opinions, experiences, and emotions and generating subjective data. To select the participants, this study used a purposive sampling technique. Seven students from the Department of English Education, Universitas Syiah Kuala, Aceh, Indonesia, who took the Internship Program, were selected as the participants. They were chosen purposively because when this study was conducted, only seven students were taking the Internship Program in the Banda Aceh area, whereas the other students were taking the program in their hometown due to the pandemic era of COVID-19.

3.2 Instruments

We employed two research instruments to collect accurate data: document analysis and interviews. The researchers collected the lesson plans created by the participants to be analyzed thoroughly. Then, an interview was conducted with the participants to get more in-depth data. We used a semi-structured interview with 14 open-ended questions adopted and adapted from [Apriani et al. \(2020\)](#). The interview was designed to know the phenomenon based on the research problem ([Ary et al., 2006](#)), such as difficulty determining learning objectives, learning materials, and learning methods.

3.3 Technique of Data Collection

The researchers collected the data by using document analysis and interviews. The following are the procedures for the data collection.

3.3.1 Documentation

In this study, the required document was a lesson plan that had been made by students who were taking the Internship Program. The documents were in the form of a soft file. After the documents were collected, the researchers analyzed them based on the standard of lesson plans ([Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2016](#)). Seven lesson plans were collected and analyzed in this study.

3.3.2 Interviews

The interviews were conducted to get more information related to the student teachers' problems in making the lesson plan. The interviews were done in Bahasa Indonesia to create a comfortable situation so the participants could express their thoughts more flexibly. We used a voice recorder to record the interview process. The interviews lasted 10 minutes for each participant, and the results of the interviews were transcribed into a written form for further analysis.

3.4 Technique of Data Analysis

To analyze the data, the researchers used the framework developed by Miles et al. (2019). Data analysis is divided into three main stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. First, in the data condensation, the data collected were organized and developed based on themes, from learning objectives to assessment. The data is organized based on the implementation of the learning guideline curriculum, including learning objectives, learning materials, learning methods, learning sources, and assessments (Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2016). In this case, the researchers selected the data from the document analysis and the interviews. Second, the information were organized in such a way that allowed conclusion drawing in the data display. Thematic analysis was used to identify themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006) for the difficulty in designing a lesson plan, and these themes were further elaborated in in-depth explanations. Finally, in the conclusion drawing and verification stage, the researchers elaborated on the data to answer the research problems.

4. RESULTS

The results are divided into two categories which are from the document analysis and the interviews.

4.1 Results from Document Analysis

The first instrument to be analyzed is the participants' documents of the lesson plans. The students were coded as ST1-ST7. The lesson plans were analyzed based on the components of the lesson plan of the 2013 Curriculum (Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2013, 2016). The document analysis was carried out by checking the completeness of the components (see Table 1) and the suitability among the components (see Table 2).

Table 1. Checklist of components of the lesson plan.

Standard	Lesson plan						
	ST1	ST2	ST3	ST4	ST5	ST6	ST7
Identity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Core competency	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Basic competency and indicators	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Learning objectives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Learning materials	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Learning methods	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Media, tools, and sources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Learning process steps	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assessment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 1 shows that the students have completed all components of the lesson plan based on the regulation of *Permendikbud No. 81A Tahun 2013* (Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2013) and *Permendikbud No. 22 Tahun 2016* (Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia, 2016), including identity, KI, KD and indicators, learning objectives, learning materials,

learning methods, media, tools, and resources, learning process steps, and assessment. Only one student (ST2) did not write the learning method in her lesson plan. However, overall, they have successfully met the criteria set by the Ministry of Education in terms of the completeness of the components of the lesson plan that must be inscribed.

However, when an analysis of the suitability among the components was carried out, we found several problems in their lesson plans, as displayed in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Suitability among the components of the lesson plans.

Standard	Lesson plan						
	ST1	ST2	ST3	ST4	ST5	ST6	ST7
Suitability of IPK with KD	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓
Suitability of learning objectives with KD and IPK	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓
Suitability of learning materials with KD and IPK	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Suitability of learning method with its syntax	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Suitability of media, tools, and resources with learning materials	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Suitability of LKPD with IPK	✓	x	✓	x	✓	x	x
Suitability of assessment with KD and IPK	x	x	x	✓	✓	x	x

From Table 2, there were five problems faced by the participants in designing a lesson plan in terms of the suitability of indicators with basic competency, suitability of learning objectives with basic competency and indicators, suitability of learning materials with basic competency and indicators, suitability of learning method with its syntax, suitability of media, tools, and resources with learning materials, suitability of LKPD with IPK, and suitability of assessment with KD and IPK.

First, most of the participants (about 71%) faced difficulties in formulating indicators that had to suit the basic competency. From their lesson plans, there were still inconsistencies between the indicators and the basic competencies. For instance, in KD-4, there was an inconsistency between the basic competency skill and the indicator created. The operational verb used in the indicator was not in accordance with the basic competency to be achieved. For example, KD-4.4, *'Menangkap makna secara...'* (catching the meaning ...), was about reading skills, but the operational verb used in the indicator was the word *'menyalin...'* (to write). This means that the student teacher failed to create the indicator for the reading skill.

Another problem was that there were still student teachers who did not understand how to create the indicators. The operational verbs used were derived from Bloom's taxonomy. The use of operational verbs in knowledge competence (KD-3) and skills competence (KD-4) was difficult to develop by the student teachers.

Since the participants still had problems formulating the indicators, they also had problems formulating the learning objectives. Based on Table 2, the same participants (71%) who failed to create the indicators to suit the basic competency also failed to formulate the learning objectives to suit the basic competency and indicators. In KD-4, the indicators used were not yet detailed. The indicators used must be clear so that in developing the learning objectives, they are adequately described to achieve competence.

Regarding the suitability of learning materials with the indicators, only one student was unsuccessful in doing so. This means that most participants did not have a problem with this issue. The materials made by the student teachers were in accordance with the competencies to be achieved. They could create suitable materials with the indicators.

Moreover, about 57% of the participants still faced problems designing the students' worksheets consistent with the basic competency and the indicators. They failed to create a worksheet measuring the cognitive and psychomotor competencies. Finally, around 71% of the participants were still unsuccessful in creating an instrument for the assessment that suited the basic competencies and the indicators.

However, from the document analysis, it seems that the participants did not have any difficulties in choosing the learning methods as well as the approach and the model. They knew the syntax of the approach and the model. They used a scientific approach in their lesson plans. This can be seen from their lesson plans in which the syntax they wrote was correct. Moreover, they also successfully designed the media and chose the learning resources compatible with the basic competency and indicators.

4.2 Results from the Interviews

This section discusses what the student teachers thought as challenging in designing a lesson plan. To obtain more data, interviews were conducted. The results are presented in the form of several themes below.

4.2.1 *Difficulty in formulating the indicators of competency achievement*

Several participants found it difficult to develop the indicators of competency achievement, as stated by ST3. The indicators formulated should be based on basic cognitive or psychomotor competency.

- (1) I think it is a little bit difficult because we must know the indicators we will use and choose indicators that are in accordance with the learning atmosphere we will teach. (ST3)

4.2.2 *Difficulty in determining the learning objectives*

The other aspect identified as the problem in designing the lesson plan was determining the learning objectives. The student teachers had difficulties when determining the aims that their students need to achieve. The learning objective should be developed from the basic competencies and the indicators. The results also revealed that they were confused about choosing operational keywords.

From the interviews, two students expressed their difficulties in determining the learning objectives based on the basic competencies and the indicators, as shown in the following excerpts:

- (2) I feel it is difficult to create the learning objectives. It is because the learning objectives are taken from the indicator. Thus, we need to combine it with the teaching methods. (ST4)
- (3) Ya, a little bit difficult because we have to adjust to the basic competency. (ST7)

4.2.3 Difficulty in choosing suitable materials

The next problem found was related to selecting appropriate learning materials. The results found that several participants created learning materials to fulfill the competencies. However, some participants did not pay attention to the indicators that had to be achieved, instead looking at the method they would use. In developing the learning materials, the student teachers also determined the needs of the students and the indicators. They wondered whether all students could absorb the selected materials. Some participants said that not all students could receive the material taught in one meeting. They needed several meetings to ensure that students could understand well what they had taught in the classroom.

However, they agreed that they had to provide the learning materials in the lesson plan. For ST3, ST4, and ST7, creating and providing the materials were difficult because they sometimes felt confused with the suitability of the basic competencies and the indicators with the materials provided. This is as articulated by ST3:

- (4) It is hard, which means it is hard when searching the resources. The school only provides the compulsory book; we need to find complementary resources such as the internet. (ST3)

4.2.4 Difficulty in selecting suitable learning methods

The interview data revealed that they determined the method based on the indicators, the learning objectives, the learning materials, and the characteristics of the students so that the teaching-learning process could run well. Determining learning methods is not easy because educators must adapt them to the abilities and needs of students where the character and knowledge possessed by students are different. Using appropriate learning methods or approaches can make all students in the classroom learn actively so that the competencies can be achieved according to the learning goals.

The data from the interview showed that even though all of them provided the method in their lesson plan, they still faced a problem determining which method was suitable for the material in the classroom. All participants used the same approach, which is the scientific one. Conversely, not all of them used the same learning model. For instance, ST2 and ST3 used Project Based Learning, while ST6 and ST7 used Discovery Learning. The problem was that they did not know exactly whether such a model suited the material. They had to learn and read more to further understand it. This is as stated by ST4 below.

- (5) The hard thing is when determining which learning model is suitable for a learning activity. This is because we do not really understand the teaching method. I use Project Based Learning while teaching. I had to learn more about this model before I decided to write it in my lesson plan. (ST4)

4.2.5 Difficulty in choosing learning media and resources

Another problem was related to selecting or adopting learning media and resources in their lesson plan. In their opinion, this is very important to help teachers prepare themselves before entering the class. Books, journal articles, and the internet are some examples of learning resources they provided in their lesson plans. However, learning media and resources must be adjusted to the competencies and learning objectives to be achieved. In determining learning media and resources, student

teachers feel confused because they must adapt the media and resources to the learning material to be taught. If the teacher did not use appropriate learning media and resources, the learning process would be tedious, and learning materials could be conveyed to the students.

- (6) I get confuse when I have to decide on the learning media and resources for my lesson plan. They have to fit with the materials to be taught, and these materials must also fit the competencies and learning objectives. There are so many to learn.

4.2.6 Difficulty in formulating the process of learning activities

All of the participants said that it was hard for them to elaborate on the learning process and steps of activities that are relevant to the basic competency and teaching methods determined. Sometimes, they could understand which activity could be done related to English knowledge or English skills and in which learning steps (Introductory, Main, and Closing Activities) those materials must be taught. They also need to consider the students' level of ability. Below are some excerpts from the participants:

- (7) Yes, it is because there are some aspects such as cognitive, affective, and also their abilities. (ST1)
- (8) Yes, for example, in KD 3.1, there are asking information and giving a response. Then, if it is asking a question, how to do that? (ST3)
- (9) Ya, when we want to design the activities that will be done, we have to see the students' affective aspect first. Then, we have to suit the cognitive and skill aspects of the students. (ST7)

4.2.7 Difficulty in creating the assessment instruments

The last problem is related to the assessment. Based on the results of the answers given by the participants, they made an assessment technique that was adjusted to the indicators of competency achievement to be achieved. This is one of the techniques used to assess the attitudes and knowledge possessed by the students. Nevertheless, in its use, it became difficult for them because it took more time to make an assessment that was adjusted to the indicators.

From the interview, six participants provided the assessment for the students in the lesson plan, including the instruments and the scoring rubric. Conversely, one participant said that she occasionally made it. All participants believed that assessment is vital in teaching and learning. This can be used to measure the student's progress or improvement. Most of them faced problems in designing the instruments for the assessment. They said that it was hard for them to create the assessment instruments. They had to provide three kinds of instruments, namely, assessment for the affective aspect, assessment for the cognitive aspect, and assessment for the psychomotor aspect. ST4 conveyed:

- (10) I think it is quite difficult. We need to consider the assessment's suitability with the cognitive aspect in the rubric. (ST4)

5. DISCUSSION

This study aims to find out the problems faced by the student teachers in an internship program in establishing school lesson plans. The data were collected through document analysis and interviews. These instruments were used to answer the research questions.

The results found that all participants had created lesson plans based on the 2013 Curriculum. According to the data obtained from the document analysis, all participants had fulfilled the completeness of the lesson plan components. This follows the statement of [Wijaya \(2019\)](#) which states that every teacher in a school should prepare a complete and systematic lesson plan. By creating the lesson plan, it is intended that the teaching and learning process can take place interactively, inspiring, and interestingly, and it can motivate students to be active.

However, completeness is not enough. The quality of each component itself should assist it. First, the participants encountered a problem formulating the indicators that should be suitable with the basic competency. They still have a problem choosing the operational verb used in the indicators. This is in line with the findings of [Palobo et al. \(2018\)](#), who found that the teachers in Merauke, Papua, also faced difficulty in developing indicators of competency achievement. In the aspect of learning objectives, some participants had some difficulties in determining the learning objectives. They had problems determining appropriate action verbs that fulfilled the criteria of good learning objectives ([Dick et al., 2006](#)). In addition, they still found difficulties in determining the indicators developed based on the KD to be achieved as stated in the English Syllabus. Hence, learning objectives must be described in line with core competencies, basic competencies, and indicators in the lesson plans ([Abidin, 2014](#)).

In the aspect of learning materials, they developed learning materials from the learning objectives. In designing the learning materials, the student teachers paid attention to the needs and adapted them to the abilities possessed by students. This is in line with [Abidin \(2014\)](#), who says that learning materials contain written facts, concepts, principles, and procedures that are formed based on points in accordance with the formulation of indicators to be achieved. In addition, [Wijaya \(2019\)](#) argues that in identifying the material, it is necessary to consider the potential, the level of physical development, and the suitability to the needs of students.

In the learning process, using resources and media can help achieve the learning objectives to be conveyed by educators. [Wijaya \(2019\)](#) believes that learning resources can be interpreted as materials used by teachers in the learning process that are considered relevant to the competencies to be achieved. In choosing the learning media, it must be adjusted to the goals to be achieved ([Sapriyah, 2019](#)). However, it is not easy for the participants to use appropriate learning activities and steps in accordance with the teaching methods they have stated before. They also still had difficulties in selecting activities to help students achieve their learning objectives.

The next aspect is the students' worksheet or LKPD. LKPD contains a summary of the material and questions that students will work on in the learning process. [Sari and Wulandari \(2020\)](#) state that the summary of the material contained in the LKPD must be in accordance with the basic competencies to be achieved. [Prastowo \(2015\)](#) also agrees that teaching materials contain summaries, instructions, and materials that refer to the basic competencies to be achieved.

The last aspect is assessment. This activity is a part of the learning process to determine the achievement of the students' competencies. The assessment is carried out to measure the success or achievement of the students in achieving the competencies formulated in the lesson plans. This is in accordance with Wiyani (2016), that assessment is an activity carried out to obtain data from students' learning outcomes which is carried out systematically so that it becomes informative in decision making.

6. CONCLUSION

This study is proposed to answer the problems faced by the student teachers in designing a lesson plan in an Internship Program at schools. Based on the results and discussion described above, the researchers found that the student teachers had completed the components of the lesson plans in accordance with the 2013 Curriculum from the identity to assessment. However, the quality of the components is not sound enough as there are several inconsistencies among the components. They faced several difficulties in designing the components of the lesson plans. Those difficulties are in formulating the indicators of competency achievement, determining the learning objectives, choosing suitable learning materials, selecting learning methods, choosing learning media and resources, formulating the process of learning activities, and creating assessment instruments. It can be seen that the problems faced by the participants are caused by a lack of knowledge in making lesson plans. When they are required to carry out independent teaching processes at school, they face obstacles in designing and applying a lesson plan in the classroom. Therefore, the student teachers must build more capacity to design a good lesson plan. They should be involved in several workshops or do some projects about lesson plans before they are sent to school to teach the students in an internship program.

To end with, this study employed a limited number of participants (only seven female students) from a state university. Therefore, it is necessary to do future research with a more significant sample, male and female students from more universities, including state and private ones, to generalize the findings.

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Enhancing English Proficiency through Social Circle and Vocabulary among Malaysian Adult Learners

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Abstract

For second language learners, language proficiency is normally gained through formal instructions in the English as a second language classroom. However, besides the classroom, language can also be learned in a natural setting, for example, through social interactions. This study examines social interaction as an alternative approach to improving English language proficiency. A total of 93 students participated in the study. Sixty of the students were from the school of education, and 38 were from a private university. The participants took an Online English level and vocabulary test as part of data collection of this study. The data analysis was conducted using two multiple regression models in SPSS version 22. The multiple regressions yielded a correlational report between the social circle and English language proficiency among the students. Results demonstrated that the students' social circle was close

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($M=60$). These variables are not critical when accounting for social and close circles independently in a regression model. Only vocabulary was detected as a significant factor influencing the students' English proficiency. However, the interaction between the social circle and vocabulary positively contributes to English proficiency. This finding supports the social capital in which learning can be enhanced through social interactions within a social circle. Furthermore, this finding calls for teachers' and education practitioners' attention to facilitate vocabulary learning through social interactions.

Keywords: Adult learning, language learning, social context, social capital, social interaction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Would interacting in English in daily life with friends contribute to language gain among ESL learners? Recent research in ELT reported that some ESL learners showed reluctance to communicate in L2, both inside and outside classrooms (Soo & Goh, 2021; Waluyo & Bakoko, 2022). As a solution to the arising issue, we believe social interactions in a natural environment can be an alternative approach in addition to the formal classroom instructions for ESL learners to boost learning of L2. Milroy's (1987) social network theory aligns with this claim. Milroy has established a connection on how ESL learners' social circles, namely family members, friends, and peers, could either catalyze or hinder their L2 learning. Language learning can be enhanced through interactions with the target language in numerous settings (Loewen & Sato, 2018), including the natural environment. Among the language gains learners can get from interacting with their peers are vocabulary and listening comprehension. Therefore, this study argues for social interaction as an alternative approach to formal classroom instruction among undergraduate ESL students.

Studies have shown strong evidence of the positive role of social interactions toward cognitive development in L1 (Lefebvre et al., 2016; Verga & Kotz, 2013). The influence of social interactions on the development of L2, however, lacks exploration and evidence. Additionally, research has mainly included social interaction factors in immersive settings, such as a study abroad program (Fraser, 2002; Whitworth, 2006) or the immigrant group (De Wilde et al., 2020). In such situations (i.e., study abroad or an immersive program), the degree of social participation in the second language is also optimized. On the other hand, second language proficiency has been optimally studied from the aspects of school or pedagogical influence and parental or family contribution. However, the out-of-school and out-of-home factors concerning language proficiency have not been well-explored and documented. This gap warrants a scientific investigation of the role of social relationships in developing English language proficiency.

A lot of L2 instructions have benefitted from the interactions with teachers and peers in classroom settings. Collaborative learning pedagogy, for example, was intended to enhance classroom interactions. There is no doubt about the rich, positive effect of a collaborative approach toward learning achievement among language learners, dating back to Vygotsky (1978), who promoted the sociocultural theory,

which claimed that learners are social beings, and social interactions should support language learning. In addition, Swain et al. (2002) found the effects of the second language (L2) proficiency differences in pairs and patterns of interaction on L2 learning. They found a significant, positive impact of pair interaction on performance in L2 tasks.

However, learning can also occur outside of class, especially in a society where English is a second language. Malaysian children are mostly bilinguals. In Asia's melting pot, students are exposed to English as early as preschool. Besides, children also learn Arabic and Mandarin as extra courses in school. Besides the formal instruction, children growing up in Malaysia can be exposed to many other languages as the country's main population comprises three ethnic groups: Malay—speaking Malaysian language, Chinese—speaking Cantonese, and Indian—mostly speaking Tamil. English is considered a second language due to the high exposure to the language in everyday life. Therefore, language learning in Malaysia can occur in formal and informal settings. Language learning can occur in various contexts: at school, at home, or community. The context usually characterizes whether the process of learning is formal or informal. This study refers to informal learning as learning that arises from everyday activities (De Wilde et al., 2020). Language can also be learned informally through daily interactions with people speaking in the target language, in this case, English. According to Dewey et al. (2013), language proficiency fosters and can be facilitated by interaction and social relationships with others. Anchoring on this statement, this study intends to analyze the linkages between L2 learners' social circle and language proficiency.

Language learning can occur in a natural environment where learners acquire a second language through interactions in the target language. Among the language gains a learner can get through target language interactions with their peers are vocabulary and listening comprehension. Language learners have relied on vocabulary to support proficiency because a large vocabulary bank can be linked to high proficiency. Research investigating ESL learners' proficiency has established the critical role of vocabulary (Oliver & Young, 2016). More specifically, an aural vocabulary of language learners can positively contribute to listening skills (Lange & Matthews, 2020) which is a factor of proficiency. In addition, vocabulary development is associated with many factors, such as reading books for leisure (Sullivan & Brown, 2015) and interactions (Verga & Kotz, 2013). This study is particularly interested in diving into the effect of social interactions on vocabulary development.

Based on the above rationales, this study argues for social interaction as an alternative approach to formal classroom instruction among undergraduate ESL students. Specifically, we inquired two questions:

- (1) What are the roles of learners' social circle and vocabulary size on their English language proficiency?
- (2) Do the learners' social circle and vocabulary link to their language proficiency?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

To better understand the issues addressed in this study, we critically reviewed relevant literature and the social capital theory that embodies the discussion of social

interaction. In addition, the role of vocabulary and what shapes the vocabulary among language learners are also reviewed in relation to second language proficiency.

2.1 Social Circle

Interactions take place in many different forms, verbally as well as non-verbally. Besides, they can be in the form of a discussion or just a simple chit-chat between friends. Therefore, a learner's social circle plays a vital role in the interaction using the target language. Many studies have investigated the effect of immersive interactions on language proficiency among EFL speakers who have undergone a study abroad program (Kinginger, 2011; Tseng et al., 2021). However, not much research, to our knowledge, has investigated social interaction within the context of English as a second language.

A social circle in language learning refers to a group of individuals with which a language learner usually interacts. In this case, the interaction involves a form of communicative intention; that is, a sender intends to convey a message to the receiver (Verga & Kotz, 2013). For a communicative act to be effective, both the sender and receiver must understand the message intended to be delivered (de Ruiter et al., 2010). Firth and Firth (2014) called this ability mentalizing and have traced the evidence of mentalizing among infants and adults. For example, Tomasello and Carpenter (2007) reported that the infants they observed could use the caregiver's gaze direction as a cue to orient their attention; this behavior displays infants' mentalizing ability to communicate. Similarly, Newman-Norlund et al. (2009) documented that adults process their mentalizing capability through cues such as the identity of the partner they communicate with. Furthermore, language aspects, such as speaking rate and words used, also can influence the communication effectiveness in a dyad (Shockley et al., 2007). These research records showed that social interaction influences communication, especially in making meaning of a message.

For the above rationales, a social circle, in which two or more individuals interact using verbal language, can influence the language proficiency of a member of the circle. However, Verga and Kotz (2013) cautioned that the influence might not be the same in L2 learners due to the nature that L2 is learned formally through explicit formal training. Interactions could happen verbally through a discussion or chit-chat among friends. Therefore, a learner's social circle plays an essential role in the interaction in the target language. Many studies investigated the effect of immersive interactions on language proficiency among EFL speakers who have undergone a study abroad program. Social interaction is also a pedagogy implemented in the classroom in which students are assigned to interact with peers using L2. To better understand the role of a social circle in L2 acquisition, we reviewed the relevant theories below.

Social interaction is also a pedagogy implemented in the classroom in which students are assigned to interact with peers using L2. To better understand the role of a social circle in L2 acquisition, we reviewed the relevant theory in the next sections.

2.2 Social Capital Theory

Language learning beyond the classroom may be informal but not unstructured; the structure lies within the context and cues of the social interactions, called the social

structure of a learning community (Palfreyman, 2011). Different social networks exist in a learning community, such as peer groups and neighborhoods. Social networks can be best explained by the social capital theory. According to Smith et al. (2011), social capital is embedded in relationships between individuals, their attributes, and their resources. They suggested that the social capital framework includes explicit and implicit relationships among individuals. An explicit connection links one individual to another based on some purposive action (e.g., sending an email, visiting) or a well-defined relationship (e.g., being a friend of, collaborating with). Individuals linked are aware of the explicit connections among them. On the other hand, an implicit affinity connects individuals based on loosely defined affinities or inherent similarities, such as similar hobbies or shared interests. Individuals may not be aware of the similarities in attitudes and behaviors among them.

As explained by the theory's founder, Coleman (1988), social capital is defined by its function. Therefore, in this study, we positioned social capital in the context of second language learning. For this specialization, we used the two domains from the language socialization capital framework: (1) the only explicit links are between participants and their listed friends, and (2) implicit links are determined only by the topics discussed with friends (Smith et al., 2011). This study specifically focused on investigating the second domain, the influence of social capital—measured by social circles—on L2 Proficiency.

2.3 Vocabulary Knowledge

The critical role of vocabulary knowledge in language learning has rich documentation in the literature. Hence, we can find numerous formal and informal vocabulary tests for learners of different backgrounds and age groups. In addition, attempts to examine the number of words necessary to perform a particular language skill has also been explored. For instance, Nation (2006) suggested that around 8000 to 9000 words are required for reading comprehension, and about 6000 to 7000 words are necessary for listening comprehension. Indeed, vocabulary size matters for a language learner's proficiency.

Vocabulary learning in L2 has been observed in formal settings as well as in informal settings. Formally, vocabulary instructions are provided in classrooms coupled with activities such as word attack, aural input (Zhang & Graham, 2020), and multimodal approach (McLean et al., 2020). Informally, two factors have been reported to contribute to vocabulary learning in L2 positively: home language usage and incidental learning. The effect of home language use on vocabulary learning has mostly been investigated among young children, while incidental learning is mainly observed among young and adult language learners. Incidental vocabulary learning takes place through a variety of approaches. Rodgers and Webb (2020) investigated the effects of viewing 7+ hours of television on incidental vocabulary learning among 87 Japanese college students learning English as a foreign language. They suggested that students achieved significant gains in vocabulary through television viewing and frequency of word occurrence played a substantial role in the relationship. Other studies have associated significant improvement in vocabulary through listening to songs (Pavia et al., 2019), reading newspapers (Shakibaei et al., 2019), and recreational reading (Malone, 2018).

In second language learning, vocabulary knowledge is predictive of a learner's success in performing language skills. It has the most vital role in children's reading and listening comprehension (Gyllstad et al., 2015; Nation, 2006; Nation & Beglar, 2007). The Componential Model of Reading has even highlighted that the ability to recognize and make meaning of words is the main element that comprises the cognitive domain of reading (Joshi, 2019). Among adult learners, the positive benefit of vocabulary is recorded in all skills. For example, Uchihara and Harada (2018) investigated the relationship between English vocabulary knowledge and self-perceived performance on four language skills (i.e., reading, listening, writing, speaking) among undergraduate students in Japan. They found that students with larger vocabulary sizes were more confident in speaking and writing. Additionally, Hacking and Tschirner (2017), who investigated Russian college students on English as a foreign language, found that there are statistically significant lexical minimums associated with different levels of reading proficiency.

Lee and Macaro (2013) described the impact of teachers' language use, first language Korean (L1) or second language English, on vocabulary acquisition and retention in two age groups: elementary school children after just a few years of English study (n=443) and adults at university with demonstrably higher levels of proficiency (n=286). It is placed in the sense of policymakers' regular suggestions that second language teachers should optimize the use of the target language from the start of instruction. They concentrated on the impact of language use on vocabulary learning because vocabulary instruction often requires first-language use, including in a communicative classroom where English is the primary language. Their research found that young and adult learners profit from making connections with the native language, but young learners learn more than adult learners. The variations in second language proficiency levels, which often follow age differences in the second language instructed learners, are a contributing but not a deciding factor.

2.4 ESL Learning in Malaysia

In Malaysia, English is a second language. The role of ESL is described by the introduction of English early on in schools, starting from primary to universities. In addition, most universities in Malaysia use English as a means of instruction. Overall, English Proficiency in Malaysia is rated high in the region, which is 28 out of 112 (Education First, 2021). However, there has been a significant decline in the past years (i.e., 12 out of 61 in 2018).

Despite its role as a second language, English is mostly learned formally in a classroom setting. However, English language learners in Malaysia are advantaged because exposure to English is relatively high. Malaysia was ranked with high English proficiency among countries where English is not a mother tongue (Lim, 2019). For this reason, fostering English learning through social interaction is possible, and the role of the social circle could be a contributing factor for language learners, especially adult learners. Despite Malaysian students' benefits in English language learning, many still struggle to achieve the expected proficiency.

Reviewing English learning in Malaysia, studies revealed that English language teaching heavily emphasizes reading, writing, and grammar, as these aspects are tested in schools and national exams (Musa et al., 2012; Rahman, 2005). They also found that teachers tend to use the national language (i.e., Bahasa Malaysia) to facilitate

English subjects: the rationale for using the first language could be due to the low proficiency of the students or the teacher.

However, language learning in universities is quite different from in schools. For example, Sarudin et al. (2008) documented that university graduates in Malaysia demonstrate apprehension of English, and their English command is good. In more recent research, Kho-Yar et al. (2018) examined ESL undergraduates in Malaysia about their ability to interact in English. It was measured by willingness to communicate by employing a structural equation model to evaluate the role of self-efficacy, attitude, efficiency, and motivation in the students' willingness to communicate in English. The findings indicated that learners' personalities directly affected motivation and willingness to interact in English, which concluded that students with high self-efficacy tend to communicate more in English.

Despite the high Proficiency of English among university students in Malaysia, code-switching is a common practice. However, Uglu et al. (2013), investigating code-switching used by Malaysian ESL students at the tertiary level, found that code-switching can facilitate positive English communication. Code-switching takes place when students interact. This study showed the importance of peer interactions for English language learners. The question is whether the learners' social circle role can positively influence their English language gain.

3. METHODS

This study was conducted on 98 undergraduate students from the Teaching English as a second language program in two higher learning institutions in Malaysia. The levels of students vary from first-year students to seniors to control for the effect of the study period on English proficiency. Their participation in this research was entirely voluntary, and the ages of the participants ranged from 21 to 23. Sixty students were from a college of teacher training on the East Coast of Malaysia, while the other 38 were from a private university in West Malaysia. The nature of the language teacher population shows that there are only a few male English teachers compared to their female counterparts; there were only 12 males compared to 86 female participants. This extreme imbalance in the data does not allow us to compare social circles based on gender and thus could not examine the effect of gender on L2 Proficiency.

This study employed a quantitative approach in which multiple numerical data were primarily collected. In addition, data in wording were also collected but later coded and converted into numerical data. The quantitative approach was deemed suitable for correlational study, so this study aimed to examine the relationships between social relationships with English language proficiency among the students.

3.1 Data Collection

The participants were asked to follow a procedure to collect the data for the social circle and close the social circle. First, they were given one piece of A4 paper in which they were asked to list the names of their acquaintances with whom they communicate in English. This list was then counted, and the number was collected for the data of the social circle. After that, using the same list, they were asked to circle

the people they considered having a close relationship with. Then, the number of circled names was counted and collected for the data of close social circles.

To measure the students' L2 proficiency, we administered an online language test called *The Online English Level Test*, available on the British Council webpage, which takes approximately 40 minutes to complete (British Council, 2016). According to their webpage, the test measures an approximate indication of the learners' English proficiency. The content of the test covers reading, writing, speaking, and grammar.

To measure the vocabulary size of the participants, we utilized the free vocabulary test available on the internet called *testyourvocab.com* (<http://testyourvocab.com/blog/>). This website is a research-based product that allows anyone, especially language learners, to estimate how many English words they know. The test comprises three parts: the first part with a handful of words to determine the general vocabulary level, a second part with a more extensive but narrower selection of words to determine the vocabulary level with greater precision, and a final (optional) survey to collect statistical information. The tool uses an algorithm explained in detail on the website to calculate the size. The standard error for the test was reported at .0527 at a 95% confidence interval.

3.2 Data Analysis

Two multiple regression analyses were performed to analyze the data. The first regression model included all criterion factors together. The second model included all variables in the first model and quantified the effect of the interaction between social circle and vocabulary. For both models, the level of expected statistical probability was set at $p < .05$. Besides, the statistical significance was also analyzed based on the values of the F ratio and the confidence interval. These combinations of values are vital to check that the result yields a statistically significant finding. Moreover, we evaluated the R^2 value as the effect size for this study. Using Cohen's convention of R^2 as an effect size, we translate that the variance explained of 2% is small, 13% or larger is medium, and 26% or more is large (Chen et al., 2010).

4. RESULTS

The descriptive analysis results showed that, on average, the size of the student's social circle was 60, indicating that, on average, they socially know about 60 people. The close social circle size was much smaller, which was 30. This means that, on average, they have a close social relationship with 30 people. The mean score of the L2 Proficiency Test was relatively high ($M=79.102$, $SD=8.488$, with a maximum score of 96.000). On the other hand, the mean score of the Vocabulary Test was much lower than the maximum score ($M=13,224$, $SD=5204$, from the maximum score of 31.500), indicating a large variance for the test ($V=27089046$).

Model 1 was computed to address Research Question 1, examining the role of social circle, close social circle, and vocabulary knowledge on the student's English proficiency. The multiple regression (Model 1) results showed a 12.9% variance explained overall. This R^2 value indicated a model fit as it was supported by the significant results of other statistical test indicators ($F=2.871$, $p < .05$). However, only vocabulary size effect was deemed significant on L2 proficiency ($\beta=.341$, $t=2.743$,

$p < .05$, $CI = .000-.010$), leaving the social circle and close circle as non-significant factors on English proficiency among the students ($t < 1.96$, $p > .05$).

Model 2 was performed to address Research Question 2. We included the interaction effects of the social circle with vocabulary knowledge (SC*Vocab) in the regression model (Model 2). The analysis result revealed that the R^2 value increased to 18.2%, indicating a stronger model fit as supported by the significance of the statistical test indicators ($F = 3.300$, $p < .05$). In other words, this result can be translated as the interaction effect has a medium impact on the students' L2 proficiency. More importantly, the increase in R^2 of Model 2 of more than 5% is worth pursuing the explanatory and detailed discussion. See Table 1 for the regression coefficients of the dependent factors.

Table 1. Multiple Regression Coefficients for the interaction model (Model 2).

Model	Beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> -value	95% CI	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Model 1					
Social Circle	-.130	-1.017	.314	-.081	.026
Close Social Circle	.001	.005	.996	-.079	.098
Vocabulary	.341	2.743	.011	.001	.021
Model 2					
Social Circle	-.784	-2.144	.030	-.819	-.008
Close Social Circle	-.009	-.071	.994	-.099	.092
Vocabulary	.030	.143	.887	-.001	.001
SC*Vocab	.793	2.224	.016	.000	.890

*Dependent variable: L2 proficiency

The significant influence of the interaction between the social circle and vocabulary knowledge on English proficiency (Beta=.793, $t = 2.224$, $p < .05$, $CI = .000-.890$) indicated the important role of the social circle when combined with vocabulary knowledge. In other words, vocabulary knowledge is enhanced by the social circle's influence on English proficiency. Interestingly, the presence of interaction in the model overshadowed the vocabulary factor on its own. This result suggested that the effect of social circle is first detected in learners' vocabulary, which significantly impacted L2 Proficiency.

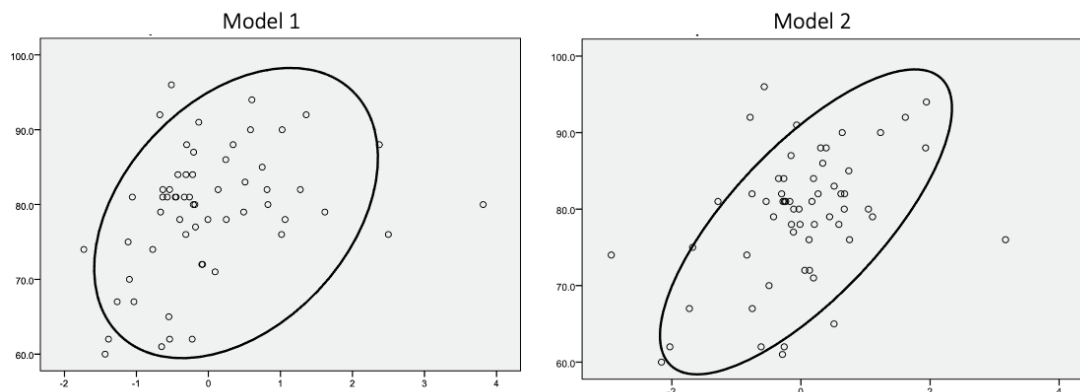


Figure 1. The scatterplots for Model 1 (no interaction) and Model 2 (with interaction).

Importantly, Model 2, in which the interaction between social circle and vocabulary was included in the analysis, showed a stronger model than Model 1 without the interaction effect, as seen in the scatterplots in Figure 1. Both graphs show a positive regression trend, but there is a difference in the dispersion of the data. The data captured by the Model 2 scatterplot are more clustered than the illustration in Model 1, in which the data are more spread out.

5. DISCUSSION

The present study has underscored the importance of understanding the role of the social circle in L2 Proficiency and vocabulary. Collectively, social circle and vocabulary accounted for 18.2% of the variance in L2 Proficiency, and, importantly, this study detected the interaction effect between social circle and vocabulary. These findings align with those from [Sundqvist and Wikström \(2015\)](#), who concluded that social interaction (in gameplay) paired with vocabulary could improve students' proficiency in writing.

In the initial model in which the interaction effect was accounted for, only vocabulary size was positively linked with L2 proficiency. However, previous research has detected a positive effect of vocabulary size on listening comprehension ([Alavi & Akbarian, 2012](#); [Laufer & Ravenhorst-Kalovski, 2010](#)), reading comprehension ([McLean et al., 2020](#); [Şen & Kuleli, 2015](#); [Zhang & Zhang, 2020](#)), and speaking ([Uchihara & Clenton, 2020](#)). The social circle, however, did not contribute to L2 Proficiency as an independent variable.

Uniquely, the social circle was detected to influence L2 proficiency when treated as an interaction variable with vocabulary knowledge. This finding supports the concept of social capital in language learning. Learning beyond the classroom is a structured process in which learners use and internalize the language with a particular purpose, that is, to interact with their counterparts ([Palfreyman, 2011](#)). Importantly, this study extended the social capital theory by highlighting vocabulary's role in enhancing the social circle's effect on language proficiency.

The finding implies that language proficiency among learners through a combination of social capital and vocabulary knowledge. In other words, having a large social circle with which learners communicate in the target language does not guarantee to contribute to their English Proficiency. However, a large social circle complemented with a large vocabulary bank may benefit learners' English language proficiency. [Lefebvre et al. \(2016\)](#) support this finding, suggesting that social interaction and cognitive and social capital positively enhance learning.

Classroom teachers have applied the social capital theory to second language teaching and pedagogy in which peer or social interaction is used to improve students' vocabulary knowledge ([Tocaimaza-Hatch & Santo, 2020](#)). Based on the findings of this study, the practice and application can be extended by creating social circles among L2 students with different levels of vocabulary knowledge. This combination of different vocabulary levels aims to enhance the language learner network among L2 students.

Besides the social capital theory, the finding of this study is also relevant to natural pedagogy (NP). Only a few studies have examined the natural settings, i.e., the social interactions outside the classroom walls, as a natural pedagogy that can also

boost vocabulary learning of L2 learners. Atkinson and Shvidko (2019) introduced the concept of NP as a tool for enacting second language learning and teaching. NP is proposed through the belief that humans have been social beings since infancy as infants learn through eye contact, facial expressions, and verbal cues. This learning pattern continues through adulthood; language can also be acquired similarly. However, little research has investigated the application of NP in second language learning. The result of the present study, the positive interaction effect of the social circle and vocabulary size towards L2 proficiency, provides a shred of initial evidence for the potential of NP in L2 learning.

Another point of result that this study highlighted was the positive linkage between social circle vocabulary size and L2 Proficiency. This finding is in line with Kashiwa and Benson (2017). They adopted an ecological perspective on second language learning among Chinese students studying abroad in Australia. They found that out-of-class language learning experiences (interactions with language agents) can enhance gains from classroom instructions.

6. CONCLUSION

This study is among the few that have included social circle as a factor in enhancing L2 proficiency. The interesting findings informed us that social interaction is important when combined with vocabulary to improve L2 proficiency. However, social interaction, on its own, does not play a significant role in improving English language proficiency among adult learners.

This study has some limitations. First, it only included the social circle and vocabulary factor and did not include interaction practices. This limitation was due to the minimal tasks we wanted to give to our participants. Voluntary participation can be maximized when participants do not have to be involved in completing multiple tasks for the research. In addition, we only included students from two institutions, one public and one private. There are many more teacher training programs in Malaysia; however, we managed to include only 98 undergraduate TESL students due to the cost and time. However, the participants' profiles justified that the data represents the population, as our participants included more female and male students and were from various levels of their study (from the first year to the final year).

For the acknowledged limitations above, we recommend future research to extend the inclusion of interaction practices factors such as the frequency of L2 exchange within the social circle. Furthermore, we highly recommend that future studies explore the nature of this research among younger learners. It will be interesting to trace the influence of social interaction among younger learners.

Finally, this finding may shed light for the practitioners and curriculum designers of English as a second language to give more attention and priority to vocabulary knowledge development among ESL students. This is because it could be a good contributor or catalyst to the language proficiency of second language learners. Social interaction plays a role in L2 development when paired with vocabulary knowledge. In other words, to enhance the effect of vocabulary on L2 development, ESL teachers need to exercise social interaction activities in teaching and learning.

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Student-Teacher Conferences and Video-Recorded Microteaching Sessions in Developing Preservice Teachers' Teaching Competences

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Abstract

The present study highlighted the importance of pre-service teachers' teaching competences in English Language Teaching (ELT). Facts show that empowering pre-service teachers is very important, but inspiring lecturers to implement a suitable teaching model takes time. Thus, this study aimed to determine how student-teacher conferences and video-recorded microteaching sessions (VRMS) affected pre-service teachers' competences. Besides, the self-reflection of the pre-service teachers after watching their own teaching performance video and the conference with the lecturer was also investigated to see their behaviors towards their teaching performances. This mixed-method study involved one group and applied three main instruments to collect data: interviews (student-teacher conferences), checklists of teacher self-evaluation forms, and teaching practicum performance tests using a scoring rubric adapted from Brown (2000). There were 20 participants who were taking the Microteaching Course at the Department of English Education, Universitas Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh, Indonesia. The study was conducted in one consecutive

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semester consisting of 16 meetings, each of which was 200 minutes long (4 credits). The results proved that student-teacher conferences and VRMS stimulated pre-service teachers' teaching competences. Pre-service teachers grew their self-reflection after watching their own teaching videos and understood their strengths and weaknesses after getting student-teacher conferences. It implies that the improvement of their teaching competences resulted from a process involving the willingness to do self-reflection and the lecturer's help in understanding what areas the pre-service teachers had to improve. The implications of the study are also presented and discussed in this paper.

Keywords: Microteaching, pre-service teacher, teaching competences, student-teacher conference, video.

1. INTRODUCTION

English pre-service teachers are students majoring in English education at a university who is prepared to be skillful English teachers. They need preparation, experience, and opportunities to develop their teaching performance (Hokor et al., 2021; Kim, 2019). In addition, Yusuf et al. (2017) claim that pre-service teachers need feedback and time to grow and self-reflect on their teaching performances, specifically in Microteaching Classes. The abilities and willingness to do self-reflection, which allows them to understand their teaching performances, should be part of their career lives. Cavanagh (2021) believes that reflection on action stimulates pre-service teachers to employ reviews on what and how they have performed in teaching practices.

Feedback provision is common in teaching-learning processes, including in English language teaching (ELT). Accordingly, recent studies have focused on feedback to develop students' English competences. For instance, several studies on feedback in writing activities were completed by a number of researchers (Budianto et al., 2020; Ruru & Sulisty, 2020; Sulisty et al., 2020). Some studies aimed to investigate which feedback outperformed others by comparing two or more feedback modes to find out which mode was more powerful in increasing students' writing competences. Other studies examined the power of feedback in increasing students' speaking skills as well as the benefits of feedback to help students understand their weaknesses and strengths (Au & Bardakçi, 2020; Khoram et al., 2020; Sakale, 2019).

Feedback provision in increasing pre-service teachers' teaching competences is still considered under-studied. A study by Cavanagh (2021) surprisingly reveal that too much feedback could be counterproductive for pre-service teachers in developing their teaching competences. Kim (2019) suggests that lecturers should motivate pre-service teachers to make efforts for their teaching performances. Thus, a question to answer is how to provide feedback to help pre-service teachers understand how to develop their teaching competences. These competencies are crucial to empower pre-service teachers with adequate knowledge before they become in-service teachers. The issues of competences are the focus of English Education Departments to prepare skillful English teachers for the future, but it is a complex process (Kim, 2019; Nue & Manara, 2022). Ismail and Jarrah (2019) claim that preparing skillful, competent, and

motivated teachers equipped with all the fundamental pedagogical and content knowledge and language proficiency has become a challenging priority in many countries. A study by Ramirez (2021) finds that competent pre-service teachers can apply a strong theoretical foundation on the diversity of learners, obtain competence grounded on authentic experiences, and develops a positive perspective towards teaching. It indicates the importance of preparing skillful, competent, and well-mannered English teachers. Thus, pre-service teachers commonly take some courses, such as English Teaching Method, Curriculum and Material Development, Language Assessment, Educational Psychology, and Micro Teaching. The last course is commonly given before the pre-service teachers take a teaching practice course at schools.

Microteaching classes are commonly intended to train pre-service teachers how to teach professionally (Hamidi & Kinay, 2021; Msimanga, 2020). A study by Mihaly et al. (2018) reveal that conference feedback is meaningful in helping pre-service teachers improve their teaching competences. However, in addition to teacher feedback in the form of a student-teacher conference, activating pre-service teachers' self-reflection on their own teaching performances is also important. Thus, the present study aimed to investigate the roles of the student-teacher conference and video-recorded microteaching sessions (VRMS) in a microteaching class. To answer the aims of the present study, the research questions were formulated as follows:

1. Do student-teacher conferences, and video-recorded Microteaching sessions affect pre-service teachers' teaching competences?
2. How do pre-service teachers behave towards their teaching performances after watching the video of their own teaching performances?

The study findings can add new bodies of knowledge dealing with the benefits of a student-teacher conference if it is empowered with VRMS. In addition, it will reveal pre-service teachers' behaviors when receiving feedback and developing their self-reflection in their trajectories to be professional teachers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Student-Teacher Conference

Feedback provision is a common treatment in English Language Teaching (ELT), aiming at helping students understand their strengths and weaknesses. Feedback is generally classified into direct-indirect feedback, written-oral, metacognitive feedback, reformulation, and conference (Budianto et al., 2020). According to Sowell (2020), the last classification is a student-teacher conference, established as a pedagogical tool in writing courses. Teachers and students typically view the student-teacher writing conference as an effective way of providing feedback. This feedback focuses on a discussion involving student-teacher conferences so that students understand the feedback given, and it enables students to ask teachers about the feedback more deeply if needed.

Mihaly et al. (2018) state that feedback conference emphasizes analyzing students' performances involving both teacher and students. Isnawati et al. (2019) claim that student-teacher conference stimulates students to be more active in teaching-learning processes and more reflective so that students develop their self-

regulated learning. [Hung and Diem \(2020\)](#) reveal that students gain meaningful advantages after being treated with student-teacher conference activities, and the students behave positively towards the conference. In short, student-teacher conferences, in the form of a classroom discussion, can be regarded as an appropriate activity in ELT since it is meant to stimulate students' competences and positive behaviors toward ELT.

2.2 The Use of Videos in English Language Teaching (ELT)

Teaching-learning processes in recent times cannot be separated from information and communication technologies (ICT) ([Amador et al., 2020](#)) due to the massive development of ICT and technology apperception owned by students and teachers. [Sari et al. \(2020\)](#) claim that one of the benefits of ICT is helping teachers in English Language classrooms. One of the technologies broadly applied in ELT is the use of videos. According to [Mcnulty and Lazarevic \(2012\)](#), videos increase students' motivation to learn. For pre-service teachers, videos have helped them understand feedback and do self-reflection ([Cavanagh, 2021](#)) by watching their own teaching performances again to analyze their strengths and weaknesses ([Blazar et al., 2018](#)).

[Mcnulty and Lazarevic \(2012\)](#) reveal that implementing videos in the classrooms enables students to make self-reflection and assessments in ELT. [Deneme \(2020\)](#) proved that video-recorded microteaching sessions (VRMS) worked well in teacher education programs. In addition, [Nagy \(2018\)](#) finds that using videos offers two possible advantages: learning outcomes and enjoyment in joining video-based activities. Thus, videos provide multiple advantages in ELT, and this evidence should motivate students and teachers to apply videos in teaching-learning activities more frequently.

2.3 Student-Teacher Conference and Video in Microteaching Courses

Microteaching courses have been developed to empower pre-service teachers with adequate opportunities to cultivate teaching performances. According to [Msimanga \(2020\)](#) and [Hamidi and Kinay \(2021\)](#), micro-teaching courses increased pre-service teachers' professional teaching skills and classroom management. Thus, to achieve these learning outcomes, pre-service teachers need to understand their processes in achieving their teaching experiences by getting feedback from lecturers. One such meaningful feedback is a student-teacher conference involving VRMS to help pre-service teachers develop their self-reflection. By getting feedback and developing their self-reflection, they can gradually understand their progress in their trajectories to pursue professionalism in teaching.

The results of self-reflection after watching the videos on their own teaching performances can be discussed with their lecturers in the form of a student-teacher conference. They conduct a conference or discussion to investigate pre-service teachers' weaknesses, strengths, and what aspects they must improve their teaching practices. Thus, the integration of VRMS and student-teacher conferences are predicted to be beneficial to cultivate English pre-service teachers' teaching performances, feeling of engagement and belonging in community learners, as well as increased confidence, better behaviors, and mastery of the practice-based skills ([Cavanagh, 2021](#); [Epstein et al., 2020](#); [Kim, 2019](#); [Laborda et al., 2020](#)). By getting

feedback and developing their self-reflection, pre-service teachers can gradually understand their progress in their trajectories to pursue professionalism in teaching.

3. METHOD

The present study applied a mixed method involving one group only. A microteaching class of 20 students from the Department of English Education, Universitas Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh, Indonesia, was selected as the participants using a clustered random sampling technique. The study was done in one consecutive semester consisting of 16 meetings, each of which was 200 minutes long (4 credits). Each student had two sessions of teaching practicums, and the student-teacher conference was conducted after the students accomplished their first teaching practicums. In addition, each participant's teaching practicum was recorded in the first session, where each student was provided 40 minutes of teaching practice. Figure 1 illustrates how the activities were implemented in the classroom.

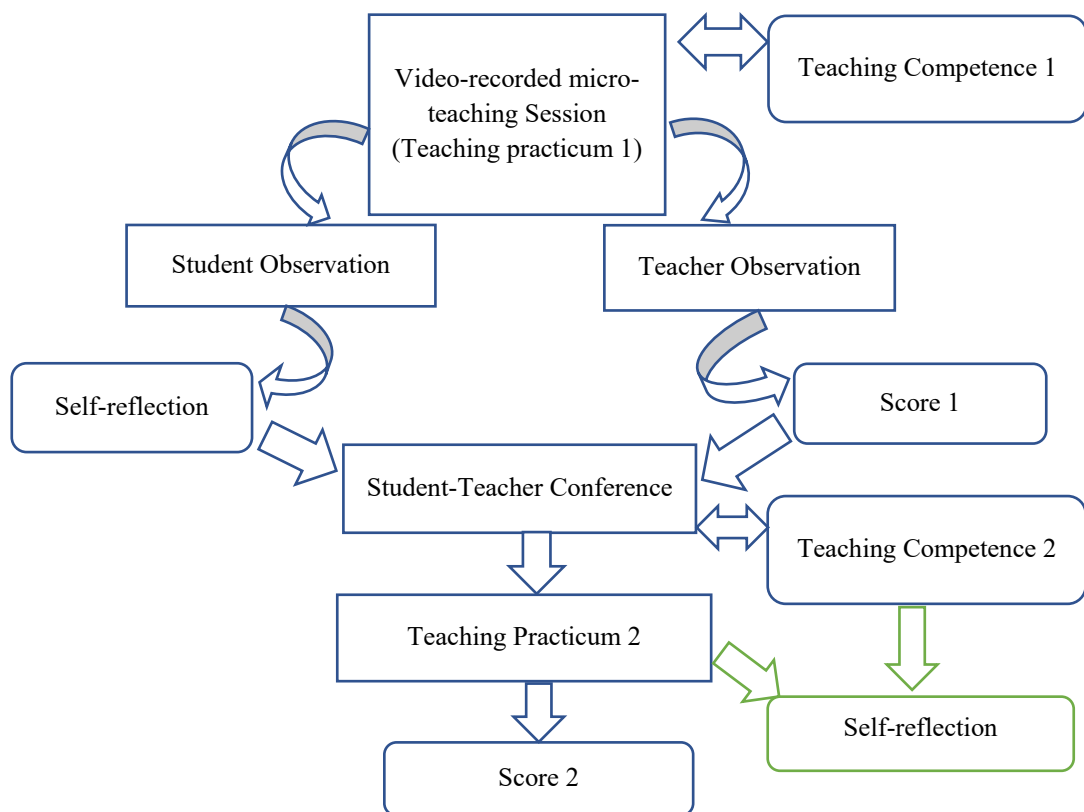


Figure 1. The implementation of student-teacher conferences and VRMS (source: the Authors).

The activities were conducted in two sessions of teaching practicum. In Session 1, they had a 40-minute video-recorded teaching practicum. A microteaching laboratory assistant responsible for operating the cameras and other recording facilities from his panel office recorded each participant's teaching practicum performances. Then, the lecturer graded the participants' teaching performance and made a student-

teacher conference. Outside the class, the pre-service teachers had to watch their own teaching performance video to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching practicum. In other words, the video was intended to help the pre-service teachers self-assess their own teaching performance. Then, they had a teaching practicum in Session 2, and the lecturer graded their teaching performances.

In order to collect the data, the researchers applied three instruments: interviews (student-teacher conferences), checklists of teacher self-evaluation forms, and teaching performance tests using a scoring rubric adapted from [Brown \(2000\)](#) to grade the pre-service teachers' teaching performances. The interview was done as a student-teacher conference after each participant completed their first teaching practicum (Session 1). The conference mainly focused on teacher feedback in detail based on each participant's teaching practicum performances in \pm 25 to 30 minutes. Then, each participant completed a checklist questionnaire to self-reflect on their teaching performance. In other words, they attempted to evaluate their own teaching performance. Then the lecturer gave scores on each participant's teaching performance. Finally, the participants also observed their teaching performance by repeatedly watching their video-recorded Microteaching session.

To investigate the effects of the student-teacher conference and VRMS, the researchers compared the scores of pre-service teachers' teaching performance in Session 1 (Score 1/pre-test) and those of Session 2 (Score 2/post-test). The two mean scores were analyzed statistically using Paired Sample t-test within SPSS. Meanwhile, the results of the student-teacher conference were described qualitatively to find out how the pre-service teachers respond towards the implementation of student-teacher conferences and VRMS in the Microteaching course, including their perceptions about the quality of their teaching performances.

4. RESULTS

This study aimed to answer the research questions focusing on implementing student-teacher conferences and VRMS in a microteaching class in increasing pre-service teachers' teaching competences and their behaviors towards implementing the course.

4.1 The Effects of Student-Teacher Conferences and VRMS on Teaching Performances

To find out the impacts of the implementation, the Paired Sample t-Test was utilized by comparing the average scores of the pre-test (Session 1) and the post-test (Session 2), as seen in Table 1.

Table 1. The pre-service teachers' scores.

		Paired Samples Statistics			
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test	45.2500	20	4.54944	1.01728
	Post-test	74.5500	20	2.37254	.53052

Table 1 continued...

		Paired Samples Test					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower		Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-test – post-test	-29.30000	2.72126	.60849	-30.57359	-28.02641	-48.152	19	.000

Table 1 highlights the results of the statistical computation on the effects of the implementation of student-teacher conferences and VRMS on the pre-service teachers' teaching competences before and after the intervention of the model. There were 20 students joining the class, and the mean score of the post-test (Session 2) was better than that of the pre-test (Session 1). It was also found that the obtained significance value was at .000, which was smaller than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant effect of the model on the pre-service teachers' teaching competences before and after the intervention. The scores were taken from the total scores of three sub-teaching performances: pre-teaching, main teaching, and post-teaching. Figure 2 shows the different average scores of three sub-teaching performances.

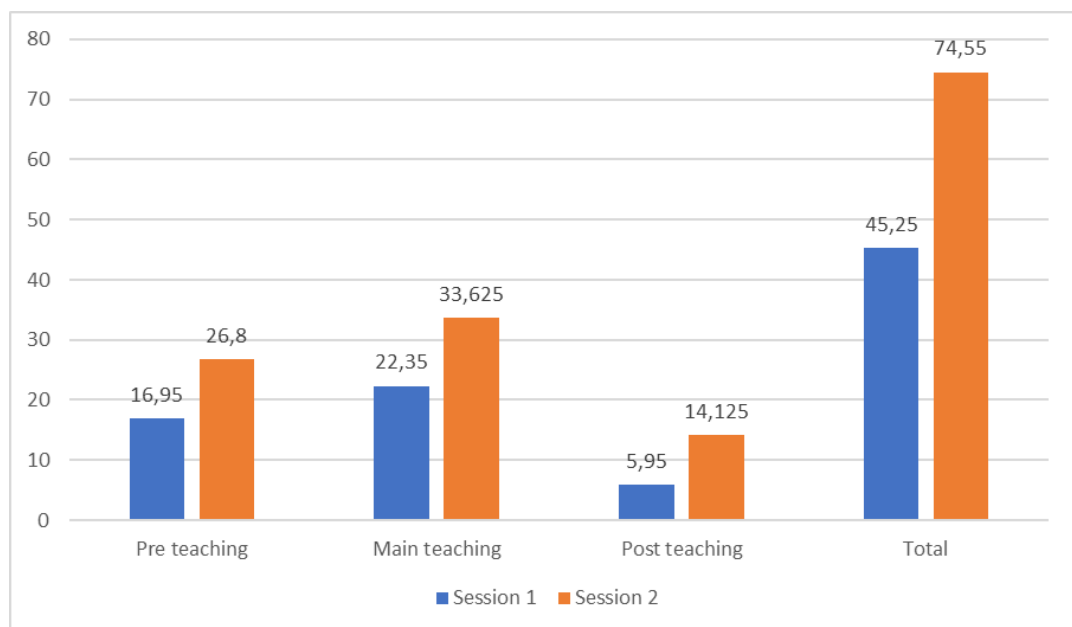


Figure 2. The average scores of Sessions 1 and 2.

Figure 2 shows that the pre-service teachers obtained better scores in Session 2 in each sub-activity of teaching performance: pre-teaching, main teaching, and post-teaching activities. In pre-teaching activities, such as making apperceptions and stimulating students' focus and background knowledge, the pre-service teachers made progress, as indicated by the improvement of the score from 16.95 to 26.80. Main teaching activities covering classroom management, interaction in the classroom, and discussion also showed better indicators, as reflected in the score of 22.35 to 33.63. Last but not least, post-teaching indicated better performance, as seen in the score from

5.95 to 14.13. Overall, the improvement of the pre-service teachers' teaching competences could be identified from the score of 45.25 to 74.55.

4.2 The Intervention of Student-Teacher Conference and Video-Recorded Microteaching Sessions in the Microteaching Course

The second issue to be investigated in the present study dealt with how student-teacher conferences and VRMS were carried out, including the behaviors of the pre-service teachers when conducting the student-teacher conference.

All pre-service teachers confessed that they still faced difficulties in implementing the planning of their teaching performance. Some participants claimed they were confused about how to raise self-confidence in their first teaching practicum. The rest admitted that teaching was not easy, so they performed unnecessary gestures or talked about other topics and failed to manage the class. During the student-teacher conference, when asked whether they were satisfied with their teaching performance, all participants claimed they were not satisfied. However, they believed they would perform better in the subsequent sessions. Participant 2 reiterated that:

- (1) "I was really shy with my performance. I was really confused about what to say and what to do. Teaching was not easy, indeed. I had planned everything, but all went blank. It might be because I was nervous?" (Participant 2)

Participant 13, in a similar vein, stated:

- (2) "My plan did not work. When I talked to my classmates who acted as students, I became more nervous and started trembling. Oh my God, I hope I will perform better next time. Amen." (Participant 13)

To investigate the most difficult part of teaching, they answered different responses, such as opening the class, delivering questions, controlling the class, and time management. They also informed that anxiety or nervousness and reservations were part of what made teaching challenging for them.

- (3) "It is hard to start the class and make students active and focused on the topic. No apperception, even though I had planned it. But I forgot to do that. The class seemed too long, and I was worried about my performance." (Participant 1)
- (4) "I tried to be confident, but I did not know how to deliver questions well to motivate students to be active." (Participant 6)
- (5) "Managing the class is not easy. Even I was confused about what to do after explaining the materials. I had prepared a video about the topic but forgot to display it. My English became miserable with very bad pronunciation, and my voice was trembling. I felt like it was a big sin for me. I hope next time I will perform a much better teaching performance. Thanks, Sir, for telling me what I must do next and motivating me to improve." (Participant 10)
- (6) "I had prepared a lesson plan well, I guessed. Yet, I was wondering why I failed to apply it. I presented the materials too fast, so I still had a lot of time in my session. Unfortunately, I could not think of what to do. Then, I ended the class too soon because I had no idea. I was so shy cos my friends laughed at me." (Participant 7)

When discussing what they had to do in the subsequent session, the lecturer encouraged them to watch their own teaching performance videos again to analyze their weaknesses, strengths, and improvement areas. Also, the lecturer motivated them by saying that any start was difficult and that it took time to grow. Having good skills in educational technology and mastering the models of teaching were part of the advice that the lecturer requested them to have.

- (7) “I need to push myself to the limit of my teaching performance by having more confidence and better preparation. Thanks, Sir; your motivation is highly appreciated. I have to maximize technologies when teaching, as you suggested.” (Participant 10)
- (8) “Well, the first session was over, and I will try to think of a teaching model that helps me teach better and make the class more active. It is time to be better. I personally love teaching and want to be a good teacher in the future. The first session has taught me a lot.” (Participant 15)

5. DISCUSSION

The results of the present study indicated that the pre-service teachers made improvements covering pre-teaching, main teaching, and post-teaching activities. The student-teacher conference and video-recorded microteaching sessions (VRMS) worked well to develop their teaching performance. The findings also depicted that the pre-service teachers needed a discussion with the lecturer in order to understand the feedback provision delivered by the lecturer, including what they had to do in the following session. It is in harmony with Yusuf et al. (2017), who claim that pre-service teachers should be given more chances to obtain feedback. The conference likely empowered the pre-service teachers to understand what was going on in the teaching practicum. Some studies support that a positive relationship between students and teachers helps students understand teacher feedback provision (Farhah et al., 2021; Karlsson, 2019; Scales et al., 2020). Other studies by Yiğitoğlu-Aptoula (2021) and Yusuf et al. (2017) find that pre-service teachers believed that teacher feedback is important in their development as teachers in the long run. The pre-service teachers also said that they changed their teaching activities after receiving the teacher’s feedback after realizing an inappropriate action in the teaching practicum.

The purposes of the student-teacher conference are not only to empower the pre-service teachers about what areas to be improved based on their ability but also to help them to be aware of their weaknesses as a result of self-reflection after having the conference and watching their own teaching performance through videos. It is in line with Yusuf et al. (2017), who suggest that course instructors support pre-service teachers in engaging in reflective thinking activities. Hamidi and Kinay (2021) state that microteaching course develops students’ teaching experiences in teaching. The self-reflection results helped the pre-service teachers develop their teaching performances, as indicated by the mean score of Session 2, which was much higher than that of Session 1. It was supported by some previous studies, such as Topdjian and Zipp (2016) and Msimanga (2020), who find that self-reflection could gear pre-service teachers’ teaching performances. Their teaching performances in Session 1 stimulated them to do much better performances in Session 2 after making self-reflection.

The videos on teaching performance played a crucial role in cultivating the pre-service teachers' self-reflection – the abilities and willingness to assess their own teaching performances so that they can be much better in teaching practices. This finding is also supported by some studies, which revealed that video is a medium to support teacher learning, as it provides an opportunity for reflection on teaching practices (Amador et al., 2020; Epstein et al., 2020). Video self-monitoring (VSM) is one type of learning strategy employed in experiential learning environments to develop critical thinking by building on direct experiences (Amaral & Fregni, 2021; Topdjian & Zipp, 2016). Mete (2020) reveal that English-language teaching videos could be employed as an effective educational tool to foster critical thinking skills. In addition, Nue and Manara (2022) find that pre-service teachers displayed a dynamic view of professional identity by showing a variety of subjective engagement, emotionalism, practice, and transformation, but they needed time to grow (Yusuf et al., 2017). It indicates that to be professional, pre-service teachers need to have critical thinking and understand their identity as future teachers, and videos helped them understand their quality in teaching. In fact, videos can add value to reflection processes in teacher education when combined with feedback (Tarantini, 2021). Nevertheless, they needed ample feedback and time to continuously self-reflective thinking to develop their teaching competences.

The present study provided some implications to be considered by lecturers teaching the Microteaching courses. First, pre-service teachers needed continuous reminders to help them develop their teaching competences. Time and appropriate activities are needed to make them understand their weaknesses, strengths, and areas to be improved. Second, the willingness and ability to self-reflect on their qualities in teaching practicum should be an integral part of their career lives. Last but not least, the presence of information and communication technologies should be integrated into teaching-learning processes, including Microteaching courses.

6. CONCLUSION

This present study focused on the effects of the student-teacher conferences and VRMS in a microteaching class on pre-service teachers' teaching competences and their behaviors toward implementing the student-teacher conference and video-recorded microteaching sessions (VRMS). The results indicated that the abilities and willingness to make a self-reflection help pre-service teachers understand their strengths, weaknesses, and areas to develop. Pre-service teachers must be reflective when developing their teaching performance, so they should be empowered with teacher feedback. The combination of student-teacher conferences and VRMS helps them be aware of their own teaching competences and motivates them to be better in teaching practicum. Accordingly, microteaching instructors play an important role in cultivating pre-service teachers' self-reflective thinking and self-confidence in teaching practicum.

The present study is limited to the conclusions and implications of a single course practice delivered to a particular group of students. For this reason, a more extensive study could be done by future researchers in different contexts or more diverse demographics, such as by considering genders or pre-service teachers'

personalities. Personality traits stimulate pre-service teachers' teaching performances and cognitions in their teaching practicum.

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Frequent Linguistic Errors in the Writing of Yemeni EFL Arabic-Speaking Learners

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Abstract

The Yemeni EFL learners are prone to share their knowledge and views regarding what and how to say. The constraints of combining this expertise have hampered learners' writing success. Those obstacles can cause learners to make errors. Error Analysis (EA) and Surface Strategy Taxonomy (SST) were used to analyze learners' linguistic errors. Error causes were also investigated. This research used a qualitative process style to use a case study approach. Ellis' five-step EA procedure was followed to analyze essay data each comprising 100-350 words or more written by 20 Yemeni EFL eighth semester Arabic-speaking learners at the Department of Education, Sana'a University, Yemen. They were purposely selected as research subjects. It was noticed that omission was the most common error detected in the learners' writings. Overall, this form of error accounted for 58.71% of 118 cases out of 201 cases. The learners' common error categories were the number marker, verb-tenses articles, prepositions, subject-verb agreements, and pronouns. This was preceded by addition (20.39%), incorrect formation (15.92%), and word order (4.97%). Intralingual transfer turned out to be the key reason that caused

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the errors in the learners' writing. Any of the interlinguistic comparisons was the cause behind the errors. In terms of verb conjugation component, inflectional morpheme, and auxiliary verb abandonment, Arabic and English have different formal definitions. Interlingual transfer and learning context also caused errors. To prevent errors from fossilizing, language instructors should provide continual corrective feedback, and learners should pursue the correct target language form.

Keywords: EFL Arabic-speaking learners' writing, error analysis, grammatical errors, linguistic errors.

1. INTRODUCTION

The contrastive existence of both the English and Arabic languages contributes to an apparent grammatical inconsistency in the English language that is challenging for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Arabic-speaking learners seeking to gain mastery of its formal frameworks. Given this linguistic challenge, learners might be more prone to making errors when writing. Hamzah (2012) argued that distinct linguistic characteristics, such as sentence structure and varied grammatical rules of the learner's native language, are contrasted to those of the target language. In other words, EFL learners find it challenging to explain their ideas of developing a comprehensible and understandable writing pattern in the target language. Polat (2018) further found that composing a sentence in their native tongue is simpler than composing one of the different language functions.

Error is a considerable divergence from the adult grammar of a native speaker (Brown, 2016). While this is real, errors significantly affect foreign language teaching. Accuracy during the learning process is almost challenging to prevent. If learners make errors, it is because they lack an understanding of the foreign language rules. There is no way to make up for errors created when studying a language, not even by the instructor or the content, and not by the learners. People cannot learn a language without making errors (Imaniar, 2018).

Many attempted to construct the building block for error category classifications. Dulay et al. (1982) supplied a taxonomy of error recognition for EFL learners that identifies linguistic errors. Additionally, there are several leading factors to errors, such as overgeneralization, first language interference, and language transfer (intralingual transfer and interlingual transfer) (Carrió-Pastor & Mestre-Mestre, 2014; Jeptarus & Ngene, 2016; Zulfikar, 2020). Moreover, one of Richards' (1971) three potential causes of error can be identified as interlingual, intralingual, or developmental errors. To ascertain the extent of an error, a more comprehensive error evaluation procedure can be used to help learners rebound from it.

According to Ellis (1989), EA results frequently reflect the linguistic errors made by L2 learners as they develop. Although the learner's language dynamics were identified through error review, this does not necessarily indicate where the learner's progress was detected (Jeptarus & Ngene, 2016). Second, it provides a solid foundation for L2 learners' psycho-linguistic errors. Although an error may be associated with a specific grammatical error form, no single error is held accountable for the entirety and development of the language learning phase. In other words,

today's quandary will not be tomorrow's or yesterday's issue. Furthermore, the error demonstrates how learners simplify their foreign language study. Ellis (2003) also proposed understanding the learner's language output in order to relate it to the 'accurate' target language. Each error will be given a grammatical definition due to this comparison.

Dulay et al. (1982) indicated four distinct methods to define when explaining language categorization errors. They are linguistic category taxonomy, surface technique taxonomy, comparative taxonomy, and communicative taxonomy. Tizazu (2014) and Widyaruli (2016) stressed that linguistic taxonomy that includes the description of terms and their associations with one another deals with classifying the defiance created by a language learner using linguistic components or a particular element of the linguistic component (phonology, syntax, grammar, semantics, lexicon, and discourse). Meanwhile, the surface structure taxonomy concentrates on how language structures are modified, thereby exposing surface-level errors in an utterance (Maniam & Rajagopal, 2016). Kafipour and Khojasteh (2012) emphasized that surface structure taxonomy addresses errors by focusing on the distinction between the altered structures of the target language utterances generated by an L2 learner and other forms of language constructions. For instance, errors created by the children native to English are used as comparative data when grading Italian EFL learners. According to Irawansyah (2017), communicative taxonomy is the final grouping. When the input is obtained, it impacts the reader or listener. Errors are distinguished depending on whether or not it impedes contact or causes miscommunicates.

Since this study's scope analyses learners' surface technique errors, it is narrowed down to this specific error. The essence of the surface strategy taxonomy stresses surface structure alterations (Dulay et al., 1982). Insights can be gained through the learner's cognitive process using a surface strategy as word order errors, omissions, and additions are common (Alhaisoni et al., 2017). Furthermore, because the Arabic language consists of different tenses and special uses of its linguistic category, which covers the grammatical structures of the language, it is a good chance to see the reasons for Yemeni EFL learners' errors while producing English. These systemic differences can include a glimpse into how Yemeni learners interpret English's linguistic structure and whether or not these differences can impede their English language learning process.

Based on the preceding context, most previous studies concentrated on error types. Few studies addressed the root causes of errors, and even fewer attempted to elaborate. Even less research has been conducted to determine the exact causes of the errors between English and Arabic. This is why the research is worthwhile and to disseminate the study's findings. The current study aims to identify the types of linguistic errors made by Yemeni university-level EFL Arabic-speaking learners, explain the source of the errors, and elaborate on the nature of the error sources at the level of the interlanguage comparison between English and systematic Arabic structures.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section discusses the foreign language learners' error and types of errors in writing.

2.1 Language Learners' Errors

Error is a deviation from native speaker adult grammar, reflecting the learner's interlanguage competence (Mursalina, 2018). The fact that learners make errors and that these errors can be observed, analyzed, and classified to reveal something about the learner's system led to a surge in error analysis.

Errors analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that identifies and describes a language learner's error. Guzmán-Muñoz (2020) stated that language learners make many errors and cannot learn without committing errors. Learners learn the correct answer by making errors, which can motivate learning. It is realized that learners' errors are a form of learning. Nearly all learners make errors when learning English because it is hard to separate errors. Errors are deviations from the truth that affects understanding and distribution. The teacher should not see them as failures but as signs of learning. If a teacher tries to prevent a learner's errors, they never learn what they do not know.

In this case, linguists differentiate between a learner's error and a mistake. According to Karim et al. (2018), a mistake refers to language system failures caused by carelessness, memory lapses, and physical condition. The error refers to learners' inability to use the system correctly.

2.2 Types of Errors in Writing

Several scholars attempted to thematize the distinct types of errors in various kinds of learners' writing (Liu & Xu, 2013; Phuket & Othman, 2015; Tasci & Aksu Ataç, 2018), while others focused on looking into the triggers of errors in learners' writing (Heydari & Bagheri, 2012; Watcharapunyawong & Usaha, 2013; Zheng & Park, 2013). Hamzah (2012) also concentrated on the general taxonomy of errors. He noticed that of the fifteen types of taxonomy errors, the learners were vulnerable to committing errors in six categories: verb category, word choice, plurality, spelling, preposition, and article. There are also more, many of which deal with subject-verb agreement, pronouns, relative clauses, possessives, copulas, and mechanics. In addition, Zawahreh (2012) analyzed the errors that 350 tenth-grade learners produced in 63 Jordanian secondary schools and noticed that for the morphology type of errors, consensus between the topic and the key verb was generally absent in the learners' written texts. Zawahreh (2012) offered an in-depth analysis and concluded that the errors arose from intrusion in the first and in-between languages. The study of Pandarangga (2014) also discovered that learners often omit verb agreement by using the simple present tense in the third singular pronouns. When the participant attempted to invent a modern language structure that contrasted with his natural language, errors resulted. He was persuaded that the subject resisted processing the target language's good rules out of a lack of incentive.

Besides, Rass (2015) shed light on the interlingual and intralingual transfer impact on Arab EFL written development. It was claimed that verbs were the predominant error form in student literature. Double-stimulating the native and target language structures occurred in the learner's cognitive domain, notwithstanding their desire to generate the target language structure, culminating in the interlingual transfer.

In addition to the above, Alhaysony (2012) performed an in-depth survey of 100 first-year female Arabic-speaking learners at the University of Ha'il, Saudi Arabia,

including an analysis of their written samples. During the study, learners made errors, with omission errors among the most prominent. This research has a mixed outcome since the errors found were both intralingual and interlingual transfer. [Brown's \(2000\)](#) analysis showed that errors that influenced only one language overtook errors that affected two languages. In short, [Brown \(2000\)](#) concluded that overgeneralizing the target language might lead to errors in learning English.

[Chen \(2004\)](#) published a report on 710 Hong Kong Chinese ESL learners in Hong Kong. Of the five common types of errors found, there are five. The conclusions from this research is that English learners always use the syntactic transfer they acquired from Chinese. That is why it triggered the run-on sentence and numerous other errors. Studies are performed in a comparable environment for this study. Such as [Huang \(2001\)](#), who analyzed the grammatical errors made by 46 English majors at a Taiwanese university. This study shows that the top six common errors are nouns, prepositions, spelling, verbs, and articles. These errors were attributable to overgeneralization, neglect of rule limitations, simplification, and L1 negative transfer. [Huang \(2006\)](#) used a web-based writing program to examine 34 Taiwanese English majors' errors. It was found that 55% of errors in that study were usage-related where EFL learners need to concentrate on subject-verb. Mechanics, grammar, and style errors were identified to be transferred from EFL learners' first language ([Huang, 2006](#)).

3. METHODS

This study used a qualitative method design to describe the data ([Silverman, 2020](#)) and a case study approach to expand and improve the already known evidence ([Stake, 2010](#)). Furthermore, language transfer and surface strategy taxonomy were also investigated in the research.

3.1 Participants

This study selected 20 Yemeni EFL eighth semester Arabic-speaking learners at the Department of Education, Sana'a University, Yemen, as participants. This represents the features of standardized purposeful sampling since it pertains to the age, culture, and profession of the chosen applicants as learners. It is also focused on considering that they have learned a variety of English grammar topics in previous semesters ([Etikan et al., 2016](#)).

3.2 Data Collection

The study data were obtained from the documentation gained from the learners' test results during the Advanced Writing subject. The test was performed to obtain appropriate data on the learners' errors. The learners' composition test each contained 100-350 words or more. The subject outlined a list of questions/statements as a framework for learners to write down their thoughts under the theme "The Value of Education". This was done to minimize the variance on the targeted subject to simplify and ease the process of finding the error pattern and its origins. Such simplification

was applied to decide how learners translate and write their words from the native language into the target language.

3.3 Data Analysis

For error analysis (EA), Ellis (1994)'s five-step method was used. The first three steps of EA examine error classification (Tizazu, 2014). First, language samples are collected from learners responding to the same task. The second step was identifying errors in learner samples (essays) deviated from the target language. To do this, samples were compared to the 'correct' L2 sentence. The third step was to classify errors using Dulay et al.'s (1982) surface strategy taxonomy.

As a result of error classification, participants' error descriptions were utilized as a baseline to explain the reasons behind their occurrences. These errors were analyzed based on language transfer and learning context (Brown, 2000; Cook, 2016; Mestre-Mestre & Carrió Pastor, 2012). Mestre-Mestre and Carrió Pastor (2012) proposed a grid model adaptation for error coding.

In estimating the number of errors and the frequency of errors, the mathematical estimation to demonstrate the error percentage is used (Sudijono, 2018):

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where:

P is the percentage of errors

F is the frequency of errors

N is the total number of samples

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Types of Errors

The omissions arise when EFL learners made errors and had trouble handling them. As can be seen in Table 1, taken as a whole, there are 201 instances of EFL learners' errors in their written activities. The average blunder is contained in omission, comprising 58.71% of 118 cases. In this regard, grammatical morphemes dominated with 81 cases compared to 37 content morphemes. This is accompanied by additional error types with 41 cases, which is 20.39%. Under this error, the three types are double labeling, regularization, and simple addition, which shared the same error scores in 14.117, and 10 cases, respectively. The error of incorrect formations explicitly shadows with 15.92% out of 100% in 32 instances, 29 of which come into the alternating form group, and the other three are classified as archi-forms. Meanwhile, misorderings are the last, with the least error cases at 4.97 %, accounting for 10 out of 201 errors in the EFL learners' writings.

Table 1. The frequency of different types of errors in each classification.

Error classifications	Number of cases	Percentage (%)
Omissions	118	58.71%
Contentive morphemes	37	

Table 1 continued...

Grammatical morphemes	81	
Additions	41	20.39%
Double marking	14	
Regularizations	17	
Simple additions	10	
Incorrect formations	32	15.92%
Archi-forms errors	3	
Alternating forms	29	
Misorderings	10	4.97%
Misplacement of objects	4	
Misplacement of adverbs	6	
Total of Errors	201	100%

4.1.1 The omissions

Ellis (1997) stated that omission is the removal of a word or grammatical element needed in an expression related to grammar. Tizazu (2014) also indicated that omission errors generally appear where a mandatory element is omitted within an ‘obligatory context’ sentence. Some items were frequently missing in specific circumstances, showing the most common reason for the omission. They are pronouns, verb tense, number markers, prepositions, subject-verb concord, and articles (Tizazu, 2014). The omission types of errors account for 58.71% of the total, with 118 cases out of 201 falling into this category. Most come in verb-tense errors (28 cases) since the EFL learners forgot the concordance aspects, neglected to note the auxiliary verbs, or ignored the presence of the main verbs, which is evident in the number of markers (39 cases). For instance, learners failed to synchronize the quantifiers with the following nouns. The second most apparent error is the wrong article choice, scoring in 18 instances.

Meanwhile, for 12 and 13 instances, all prepositions and subject-verb agreements have the same count. The pronoun causes the lowest number of errors in this classification, with just eight cases. Table 2 provides explanations of omission errors.

Table 2. Frequency of omission error types.

Omissions	EFL learners' errors	Corrections proposed	No.
Grammatical Morphemes	1. it help people gain knowledge.	1. it helps people gain knowledge	81
	2. there is some strategy	2. there are some strategies	
	3. many locality	3. many localities	
Contentive Morphemes	4. Which ^ necessary for everyone	4. which is necessary for everyone	37
	5. education ^ significant part in our life	5. education is a significant part of our life	
Total			118 (58.71%)

Omission error definition concerns a small piece of knowledge in a word that, if overlooked, might change the word's meaning and classification (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). The lack of –s marker verb agreement at the end of a verb marking the 3rd person singular or the –s number marker morpheme were accounted for most of the cases found in the learners' writing within this category.

In this respect, a concordance of subject-verb harmony is the grammatical norm for the 3rd person singular. In other words, there must be an –s marker at the end of the verb in the third person singular. The statement is incorrect if this rule is broken, as shown in (1). The sentence's subject is the word 'it'. On the other hand, the morpheme –s for the verb 'help' was left out.

When it comes to number marker consensus, most learners fail when it comes to quantifiers instead of the element of concordance. As a consequence, the statement is grammatically wrong. The grammatical rule of number is affected in sentence (2) by the absence of a plural marker which must be attached to the noun 'strategy'. The word 'many' indicates many entities concerned, rendering it a plural marker in contraction. 'Many strategies' is the right expression. The same instances of number markers occur in sentence (3). Quantifiers are used to speak about the same noun's quantities, numbers, and degrees. 'Many' is used with a plural countable noun, such as 'many tales', while 'much' is used with a singular, uncountable noun, such as 'much worry'.

Meanwhile, the next section of the omission error classification discusses the composition and usage of verbs, in which an incomplete may deduce coherent sentences or create incorrect ones. Multiple situations occur where learners overlook or ignore the vital function of helping verbs in corrections. This slight defect leads to a grammatical misunderstanding in English. The participants attempted to create a relative closure, a non-restrictive clause. A clause can be left out without modifying a sentence's original context. Thus, leaving the terms would not alter the context of the sentence. However, the sentence's unfinished implementation in (4), the helping verb, produces an ungrammatical utterance.

Not only do they fail to use the helping verb in a subordinate clause, but there are also situations when learners often missed the implication of their vacancy in a dependent clause. Sentence (5) omits the linking verb 'is'. Its absence disconnects the topic and terms. Unlike the auxiliary and main verbs, there are no ongoing actions or occurrences with other situation(s).

4.1.2 The addition errors

Lennon (1991) explains that deletion errors are when the learner eliminates the parts/parts needed for expressions to be ungrammatical. In contrast to omission, addition is defined by Dulay et al. (1982) as an object that must not be present in well-formed utterances. It could happen for many purposes, and they are: inserting in the sentence a needless lexicon that hinders the expected context, pluralization where it does not ask for, double pronouns, and tense. The last aspect is partly due to the discrepancy element between the subject and the verb or the helping verbs. Overall, 41 instances out of 201 cases are classified as addition error forms, representing 20.33% of overall error figures.

A count of 6 instances in the learners' writing inserted insignificant terms. The most popular errors result is from incorrect timing (29 cases). It may be induced by using two categories of tense markers in a sentence, such as modal and past-participle,

confusion between an auxiliary verb and the subject, or incomplete rule of application that affects the basic tense concordance function. Meanwhile, four cases and two cases adopt pluralization and pronouns. Table 3 contains further error instances from the data.

Table 3. The frequency of error types in addition errors.

Additions	EFL learners' errors	Corrections proposed	No.
Double Marking	1. we cannot imagined a life without education	1. we cannot imagine a life without education	14
	2. people they need to study	2. people need to study	
Regularization	3. education have a significant part in our life	3. education has a significant part in our life	17
	4. people gain some respects... ...	4. people gain some respect... ...	
Simple Additions	5. the some knowledge....	5. some knowledge....	10
	6. people can be more civilized.....	6. people can be more civilized.....	
Total			41 (20.39%)

In most cases, in the addition type, errors are contained in the accounted tense writings of learners. The reasons, as discussed above, may be for different reasons. In subject-verb agreement, they particularly have difficulties. It is proven by adding in a sentence two tense markers, each on the same level or two tense types.

Consider sentence (1) using two tense markers levels in a sentence. It is made of the modal 'can'. Unlike other verbs, it does not change its form; neither an infinitive nor a participle (past/present), and the verb following a modal auxiliary must appear in the basic form (infinitive). Since the word 'imagined' came after the modal 'can', no extra tense conjugation is required.

Sentence (2) is an example of how learners simultaneously duplicate a sentence by adding two pronouns or subjects. Simply because of using two subjects in one sentence without using a comma (,) or conjunction, such as 'or' and 'and'. Contrary to tense, learners perform only a relatively limited amount of additional complexity in the pronoun aspects. They tend to incorporate an extra tense marker, normally resulting in a difference between an auxiliary verb and the subject.

The subject of sentence (3) is a singular noun ('education'), so 'has' is the required auxiliary verb in the third-person singular conjugation. This deviation from the standard application of the quantifier rule and number agreements caused learners' own set of problems.

An exception to the quantifier rule can be seen in sentence (4). Since 'respect' is used to denote both singular and plural in this sentence, the morpheme -s should not be attached to the end of the expression, even though it is preceded by a quantifier ('some').

In sentence (5) of context-dependent, the writer was attempting to inform the readers about several additional applications in knowledge. Many EFL learners'

addition errors are due to simple insertion, adding a redundant feature, or a term that has no connection to the utterance. So, ‘some’ is the correct form to be used in this sentence.

Afterward, in sentence (6), the learners added ‘to’ after the modal verb ‘can’. The modal verb is separated from the bare infinitive ‘be’ by this kind of addition. When these two words are combined, incorrect grammatical utterances result in incorrect English collocation.

4.1.3 Incorrect formations

Incorrect formations address misuse of morpheme structure. Archi-forms and alternating forms are two kinds of defects found in the learners’ writing. The former deals with using one class member to represent those of the same class as the product of the failure to discriminate (Dulay et al., 1982; Tizazu, 2014). In the meantime, the latter insists on misusing words in an utterance. Overall, 32 of 201 instances are classified as error forms, representing 15.92% of the total errors (see Table 4). Except for three cases that occur in the archi-forms group, all 29 cases are classified as alternating types. Table 4 shows some error illustrations.

Table 4. The frequency of error types in incorrect formation errors.

Incorrect formations	EFL learners’ errors	Corrections proposed	No.
Alternating Forms	1.strategies may be made....	1.strategies should be made....	29
	2. on the 20th century	2. in the 20th century	
Archi-Forms	3.in fridays	3.on Fridays	3
	4.life could be disastrous....	4.life can be disastrous....	
	5.these view.....	... 5.these views.....	
Total			32 (15.92%)

The alternating mode category of error that focuses on misusing words in an utterance is called misformation. Since the participants are EFL learners, preventing errors about a suitable lexicon option is impossible because English is not their first language, and therefore, errors are likely to occur (Agustinasari et al., 2022; Mashoor & Abdullah, 2020). One is for an exemption, and the other situations come under the criteria of what forms of fitting words to use in sentences. Learners faced this aspect’s burden when they made some errors. In terms of grammatical errors, learners encounter some difficulties due to incorrect use of time prepositions such as between ‘at’, ‘on’, and ‘in’. Sentence (2) uses ‘on’ for portions of the day, months, seasons, years, decades, and centuries. However, EFL learners use ‘in’ or ‘at’ in their writing exercises. Similar conditions prevailed while using ‘on’ or ‘at’. EFL learners also absorb an erroneous ‘on’ preposition in sentence (3), usually used for days, including weekdays, times, special events, and holidays.

Besides prepositions, the effort by EFL learners to produce sentences dependent on the unsuitable option of the term often happens inside the modal range. Both ‘can’

and ‘could’ can be used to convey possibility (sentence (4)), but the certainty and connotation vary slightly. It may indicate that something is probable but not definite, while it can be used to create general conclusions on what can be executed. Although sentence (1) is true, the error arose primarily due to word choice. ‘May’ is used to refer to situations that can happen. However, ‘should’ denotes things that should or must happen.

A curious consequence of incorrect archi-form forming (sentence (5)) comes to light because only three learners seem to have an issue with it. This standard discusses the reliability of learners in using one class member to portray those in the same class as a function of their failure to distinguish it. In this situation, EFL learners still use the same demonstrative ‘these’ when associated with plural or singular nouns.

4.1.4 Misordering errors

The last form of surface taxonomy error is called misorderings. These forms of errors relate to the incorrect positioning of morphemes in utterances (Dulay et al., 1982; Tizazu, 2014). That may be adverb misplacements, subject misplacements, etc. This classification has only ten instances, representing 4.97% of all cases. Both groups tend to share the same number of defects, four for object misplacement and six for adverb misplacement. Table 5 provides instances of misorderings. The number of errors detected is only 10, and it can be perceived that learners seldom have trouble with these kinds of errors.

Table 5. The frequency of error types in misordering errors.

Misorderings	EFL learners' errors	Corrections proposed	No.
Misplacement of Objects	1.people can knowledge gain....	1.people can gain knowledge	4
Misplacement of Adverbs	2.the average of education usually is not the same.....	2.the average of education is not usually the same.....	6
Total			10 (4.97%)

Incorrect placements in an utterance of a morpheme or a set of morphemes are misorder errors. Looking at both sentences above (Table 5), they have incorrect object placement (‘knowledge’) and an adverb of frequency (‘usually’). Grammatically, the object must follow the verb, and the frequency adverb must come after ‘to be’. The EFL learners in this study ignored this grammatical rule when writing. In such a case, they rendered written errors, the word-for-word translation of native language surface structure.

4.2 Sources of Errors

The key explanation for the cause of the error is the intralingual transfer, as seen in Table 6, which shows 220 cases, more than half of the cases (72.36%). The second highest frequency of learner error causes is interlingual transfer. The total number of interlingual transfer cases contained in the essays were 56, around 18.42% number of errors. Meanwhile, interference from the learners’ language is not the sole cause of errors.

Table 6. Rate of frequency on the error source.

Criterion	Classifications	Case	No. (%)
Interlingual Transfer	Transfer of the Structures	56 (100%)	56 (18.42%)
Intralingual Transfer	Omissions	118 (100%)	220(72.36%)
	Additions	41 (100%)	
	Incorrect Formations	32 (100%)	
	Misorderings	10 (100%)	
	Incomplete Rule Applications	19 (100%)	
	Context of Learning	Generalizations	
	Simplifications	3 (100%)	
Total		304 (100%)	

Learners can make errors in the target language as they do not know it very well and have trouble using it. Richards (2015) noted that intralingual interference refers to things created by learners that represent not the structure of the mother tongue but generalization based on partial target-language exposure. Brown (2000) observed that the predominance of interlingual transfer marks the early phases of language learning, but after the learners have started to absorb parts of the new system, more and more generalization in the target language is manifested.

Carrió-Pastor and Mestre-Mestre (2014) also stressed the observable fact that intralingual transfer is deemed normal when the second language learners attempt to extract the rules from the target language data to which they were introduced. In other terms, they are learning processes. During this time, they begin to establish hypotheses that may lead to their mother tongue, neither their native language nor the L2. If learners begin to absorb parts of a new structure, an increasingly intralingual transfer occurs (Brown, 2000). As this process continues, learners begin to devise new utterances dependent on the knowledge they experience (Brown, 2000) before actually being capable of constructing ‘true’ sentences. This explanation is based on the fact that learners have considerable difficulties in coping with the complexities of English grammar rules compared to, for example, spelling or vocabulary (Ciesielkiewicz & Marquez, 2015).

The second highest frequency of learner error causes is interlingual transfer. Interference, language transfer, and cross-linguistic interference are often called inter-linguistic errors. Such errors arise when the learner’s rules, systems, or patterns interfere with or prevent them, to some degree, from acquiring second-language rules and patterns (Burhansyah, 2019; Corder, 1981; Yule, 2020). Lado (1964) and Fromkin et al. (2018) stated that interference (negative transfer) is the mother tongue (L1) effect on target language performance (L2). Chelli (2014) characterized interlingual errors as the product of language transfer induced by first-language learners. Richards (2015) indicated that if foreign language learners create errors in the target language through the influence of their mother tongue, it is considered interlingual. As reported by Brown (2000), most of the errors of second language learners derive mainly from the learner’s belief that second language types are identical to the native language. This means that the EFL learners’ native language at this stage plays a limited role in writing in the target language, although it cannot be forgotten (Bataneh, 2005). Take into account that, firstly, Yemeni EFL learners have studied the language since their youth, and, secondly, the interlingual transfer takes second place after the intralingual transfer. The former attempts to demonstrate that the learners have been used to the

new language system for a number of years, that they are comfortable with it, and that they have been learning it for some time.

This leads to the second argument, which reminds us that the learners are currently developing and manipulating the data of their target language. In brief, the learners' errors are mostly the result of how learners use these data to "correctly design" L2 rather than interfere. This frequency and accuracy rate of intralingual transfer was deduced by [Can \(2018\)](#) as the basis that interlingual transfer infrequently occurred during the advanced stage of learning. [Rostami Abusaeedi and Boroomand \(2015\)](#) share this viewpoint, claiming that learners' errors are caused mainly by incomplete learning of the target language (intralingual transfer). This supports the idea that EFL learners prefer to think and compose an utterance in their native language before delivering it in the target language ([Sermsook et al., 2017](#)).

4.2.1 Interlingual transfer

a. Literal translation

Taking into consideration the errors of Arabic language interference, the most common errors of interlingual translation are the literal translation of Arabic words into English. The first noteworthy trend in literal translation standards is an exact syntactic equivalence concerned with lexical interference. [Al-Khresheh \(2010\)](#) stressed that literal translation errors occur because learners convert word-by-word their first-language sentences or idiomatic expressions into the target language. According to [Richards \(2015\)](#), transferring errors cause interlingual errors. [Touchie \(1986\)](#) and [Shiva and Navidinia \(2021\)](#) proposed that interlingual errors are primarily caused by mother-tongue interference. [Dailidénaitè and Volyneec \(2013\)](#) indicated that lexical interference is normal, though difficult, trend in written development and causes more damage than accurate translation when translating one's native languages into target languages.

b. Substitution in prepositions

Preposition errors accounted for omission and addition in the data analysis. There are some cases where prepositions are used outside these two classifications ([Phuket & Othman, 2015](#)). Prepositions are utilized in many languages, despite linguistic variations. The same preposition might have different meanings in various languages. These perception differences in both languages allow learners to interpret the translation as they did in their L1, therefore, the substitution. [Alshammari \(2017\)](#) assumed that the obstacles to comprehending proper application were attributable to one's language and dialect variations. [Hermet and Désilets \(2009\)](#) agreed that preposition errors occur primarily due to misunderstandings in the second language. For example, frequently use a preposition such as 'in' in situations where it should be 'at'.

4.2.2 Intralingual transfer

Unlike interlingual errors, which are caused by input from the first language, intralingual errors are caused by the target language. L2 learners either have inadequate

knowledge of language constructs or a faulty understanding of certain grammatical principles during the acquisition period (Al-Khresheh, 2016; Fareed et al., 2016). In other words, learners are still developing to acquire L2. This study found interlingual errors in omission, incorrect formations, misorderings, incomplete rules, applications, and addition. It may be argued that omission can result from the simplification of learners and lack of awareness of proper language forms, while additions can result from the overgeneralization of rules (Farooq, 1998). As learners lacked specific morphemes or suffixes in word formation, they either overlooked or ignored the rules in word formations – (as in ‘three styles’ and ‘several season ago’) or in phrase structures ‘it is new book’, and ‘they more than friend to me’. However, this error can also be caused by interlingual influences since there is no plural mode in the learners’ L1 by adding ‘-s’ or ‘-es’ at the end of nouns, and ‘to be’ is not found.

The data in Table 6 indicate that omission was the source of most errors that occurred during the intralingual transfer. It typically centers on eliminating auxiliary verbs (Al-Khresheh, 2016) and modifying how a verb is employed in the present and the past tense. Consequently, learners frequently leave off the third-person marker found at the end of the verb, both in the past (with the suffix –ed) and in the present (with the suffix –s). The unending form can be generalized for use by any individual. Overgeneralization is possible, given that Arabic is very dissimilar to English in terms of the grammatical component represented by the inflectional morpheme aspect.

She opens the book => **I** open the book => **They** open the book

The reality is that the Arabic language does not have a conjugation verb, at least not in the same way that the English language does. Under this definition, any structure deviation incidence represents some degree of growth. For instance, using passive voice in English. Many EFL learners struggle with this English grammatical aspect. Often the transformation from active to passive requires two entirely different features. Other times, only in nuisance for any little elements that learners unintentionally missed or inserted it in the sentence. This implementation pattern may have arisen from inadequate and poor knowledge of the target language and carelessness (Sermsook et al., 2017). Heydari and Bagheri (2012) indicated that this additional element symbolizes a situation in which a grammatical scheme is unsuccessfully implemented. Simply put, learners do not use a completely defined structure in their sentences. Owing to this difficulty, learners are more likely to stop using passive voice in their productions.

4.2.3 Context of learning

A sequence appearing concurrently is generalization. Learners prefer to practice one-rule definition by extending one linguistic system to the other structures used in the same class group. Take, for instance, subject-verb agreement and number markers. Learners ignore the tense marker –s singular at the end of the verb. This faulty comprehension of distinction and the ability to go beyond the information (Cook, 2016) represent a change in how to utilize a verb in the present and past. Learners also seem to omit the third-person marker at the end of the verb in the past (–ed) and present (–s). The endless form is generalized for all. It may be identified with

overgeneralization, as the Arabic language contrasts English in terms of its grammatical components in the aspect of inflectional morphemes.

Mahmoud (2000) emphasized that EFL Arabic-speaking learners apply overgeneralization rules in their learning process. Learners draw the linguistic system of their mother tongue to help them formulate an L2 sentence based on their L1 guidelines. The dominance of the linguistic structure of the mother tongue as the fundamental feature of interlingual transfer is unquestionably inevitable, particularly as learners' exposure to the target language is restricted only in the formal sense of classroom instruction. Not to mention the fact that the learning process is only available for a few hours per week.

5. CONCLUSION

Yemeni EFL learners were likely to omit items or elements to be included in the standard English structure. Sometimes, the dynamic number marker discrepancy follows in dealing with singular/plural nouns/verbs number of the agreement. In part, it can be correlated with overgeneralization, as the Arabic language differs from English despite its grammatical component in the aspect of inflectional morphemes and the fact that the Arabic language has no conjugation verb like English.

In accordance with the cause of errors, intralingual transfer was the key reason to the Yemeni EFL learners. The verdict of normality on this view was observed and judged based on the fact that the learners struggle to construct correct sentences in the target language and resulted in errors. The majority of intralingual transfer was caused by omission. The learners generally strived with using English tenses due to the difference in verb conjugation in Arabic and English. Moreover, there were instances where the grammatical system was unsuccessfully enforced, which sometimes occurred while the learners were working with passive voice in which the rule's ambiguity bonded to the output inaccuracy. Consequently, they aimed to avoid writing in this structured style.

Literal translation and replaced preposition use were widely justified as the factors behind the interlingual transition. The Yemeni EFL learners also translated Arabic words into English word by word and this act commended the structure of transferring the linguistic scheme of their mother tongue to English utterances. In addition, literal translation usually resulted from preposition substitution. It happened when a preposition was used for literal translation and form transfer, regardless of how it was appropriately used in the target language.

Meanwhile, in the learning sense, the Yemeni EFL learners attempted to generalize and extend one linguistic system to all other structures that contain, for example, the absence of the tense marker –s at the end of the verb for the 3rd person singular. In this case, the researchers suggest that teachers solve the problem by giving explicit and implicit corrective feedback and remedial teaching. To minimize errors, the study implicates that a longitudinal study on the composition of EFL Arabic-speaking Yemeni EFL learners should be carried out using a mixed method that includes looking at the learners' writing strategies and classroom activities. Action research in the classroom where a certain treatment can also be given to help learners improve their writing skills and make fewer errors.

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Need Analysis for Digital Instructional Materials of the Translation Theory Course in Indonesia

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Abstract

The essential role of translation in intercultural communication leads to the inclusion of translation as one of the courses in universities worldwide, including Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU), Indonesia. However, little research has been conducted on the development of instructional translation materials. This study aimed to determine the need for digital instructional materials for the Translation Theory course administered in USU's English Literature Study Program. The need analysis in this research was conducted using a survey method. The participants were the seventh-semester students who had taken the courses on translation, the translation lecturers, and the professional translators. The data were collected using questionnaires and interviews. These instruments were developed based on the document analysis of the previous instructional materials used by the lecturers in teaching the Translation Theory course. The data were analyzed and interpreted using a 4-Point Likert Scale. The results indicated that the instructional materials for a Translation Theory course need to include clear objectives and approaches, topics guiding them to translation theory mastery, and exercises that cover both translation theory and practice. In addition, the results indicate that the participants need the material resources and exercises in a digital form. Although this study was conducted in the context of USU, the findings may be applied as the basis for developing translation courses in other

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universities in Indonesia, and other countries that treat English as a Foreign Language in their education systems.

Keywords: Digital exercises, digital materials, instructional materials, need analysis, Translation Theory.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

In a global environment, translation serves as the medium that bridges intercultural communication (Köksal & Yürük, 2020; Rosa, 2021) or information sharing. Considering the essential role of translation in information sharing, the English Literature Study Program of Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU), Indonesia, has included translation as one of the compulsory courses in its curriculum. This course is offered in three semesters with different course objectives. Translation I aimed at providing the students with basic theories of translation and translation exercises, while Translation II aimed at introducing the students to professionalism in translation. Finally, Translation III aims to introduce the students to the world of translation business (Program Studi Sastra Inggris USU, 2019).

One of the important points in administering such translation courses is the presence of instructional materials based on which the courses are planned and implemented. Therefore, instructional materials need to be evaluated and developed regularly. Instructional materials development is aimed mainly at making certain adaptations in the latest instructional materials to fit the current prevalent conditions (Gujjar & Malik, 2007), influenced by technology or market needs. However, based on our search of various online and offline reading sources, little attention has been given to research on translation instructional materials development. Previous studies have addressed the translation teaching models (Gavrilenko, 2018; Gorozhanov et al., 2018), translation as the technique in teaching EFL (Payne & Contreras, 2019), principles in developing translation course materials (Li, 2019), use of authentic materials in teaching translation (Kuşçu & Ünlü, 2015; Zheng, 2017), and use of ICT in teaching translation (Azizinezhad & Hashemi, 2011; Sikora & Walczyński, 2015).

Azizinezhad and Hashemi (2011) did a study on teaching translation, but their study only focused on finding the advantages and difficulties of using blogs in teaching and learning translation. A similar study was conducted by Sikora and Walczyński (2015), who also focused on using ICT-related media in teaching translation, and Kuşçu and Ünlü (2015), who focused on using authentic materials in teaching translation. Although Li (2019) conducted a study on translation material development, his study focused on the principles of material development. He did not design the instructional materials based on the proposed principles. These previous studies allow further studies to explore other aspects of teaching translation, including developing instructional materials for translation courses. The findings in the previous studies contribute a lot to further studies in designing translation instructional materials.

In the context of translation courses administered at USU, Sofyan et al. (2019) developed online-based course materials for translation as a profession. Furthermore,

Sofyan et al. (2021) developed course materials on translator training, emphasizing translation internship. These previous studies left the gap that can be completed by this present study, i.e., developing course materials on Translation Theory (Translation I). Translation I course plays an essential role in achieving the main objective of the translation courses since it is the first time the students are exposed to translation studies. Therefore, the instructional materials need to be well-designed. One of the stages in instructional materials development is the need analysis. This study focuses on the need analysis for the digital instructional materials of a Translation Theory course.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

The instructional materials of a Translation Theory course offered to the English Literature Study Program students at USU have not been developed for years. Besides, the latest instructional materials were in printed form. Some research reported the students' preference to read printed materials (Dilevko & Gottlieb, 2002; Minnich et al., 2015). However, many previous studies found that university students prefer digital or online materials to printed ones (Cumaoglu et al., 2013; Larhmaid, 2018). Therefore, a study on developing instructional materials for a Translation Theory course in digital form is required. The problem in this paper is formulated into the following questions:

1. What are the course objectives and approaches needed in developing the digital instructional materials of a Translation Theory course?
2. What are the topics needed in developing the digital instructional materials for a Translation Theory course?
3. What exercises are needed to develop the translation theory course's digital instructional materials?
4. How are the digital instructional materials of a Translation Theory course designed?

Although this study was conducted in the context of USU, the findings may be applied as the basis for developing translation courses in other universities in Indonesia, and other countries that treat English as a Foreign Language in their education systems.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Translation as a Discipline

Translation used to be an activity that facilitated communication involving at least two different languages. However, translation is an everyday communication activity and a discipline in its development. This is possible since translation is not merely transferring the meaning from one language to another different language. Previous studies have revealed that the ability to speak in more than one language (bilingualism and multilingualism) does not guarantee successful translation (Kolawole, 2012; Presas, 2000), but bilinguals and multilinguals have greater chances to become translators. In addition, translation is just like linguistics as a discipline, complementing each other (Pym et al., 2013). Translation needs to be learned since no one learns all languages. Learning translation makes a translator acquire certain

competencies, including linguistic competence, cultural competence, translation competence (Asiri & Metwally, 2020; Madkour, 2018), and analytical competence (Ibraheem, 2021).

The growth of translation as a discipline is indicated by the massive publication of books and scientific articles during the 1970s and 1980s (Venuti, 2012). Translation as a discipline became very clear when Holmes (1972) proposed a mapping theory of translation studies. In a broad category, translation studies are both pure and applied. Pure translation studies are descriptive and theoretical, while applied translation studies are concerned with translation training, translation aids, translation policy, and translation criticism. Furthermore, descriptive translation studies are divided into product-oriented, process-oriented, and function-oriented (Toury, 2013). This proposed translation mapping remains the basis for conducting studies on translation. In its further development, research in translation has collaborated with other disciplines (Gentzler, 2014).

Moreover, translation has become a course and study program in many universities worldwide. As a subject or course in a university, translation certainly needs a curriculum based on which its instructional materials need to be developed. Therefore, systematic and careful studies on instructional materials development of translation are required.

2.2 Instructional Materials Development

Instructional materials are all materials (information, tools, and texts) that are systematically arranged, displaying a complete figure of competencies that will be mastered by students and used in the learning process with the aim of planning and reviewing learning implementation (Andi, 2011). Instructional materials are a key component in almost all learning programs (Mazgon & Stefanc, 2012). The results of the previous studies confirmed the effects of instructional materials on the students' academic achievements (Abubakar, 2020; Effiong & Igiri, 2015; Olayinka, 2016).

In developing instructional materials, especially in learning language, the previous literature suggested several principles, including (i) the materials should have a clear relationship with the applicable curriculum, (ii) the materials should be authentic concerning the text and tasks, (iii) the materials should provide a stimulus for interaction, (iv) the materials should provide opportunities for learners to focus on the formal aspects of the language, (v) the materials should encourage learners to develop learning skills, and (vi) the materials should encourage learners to apply their learning skills in the world outside the classroom (Ahmed, 2017; Nunan, 1988; Richards & Schmidt, 2011).

Moreover, Li (2019) proposed seven principles in developing instructional of a translation and interpreting course: (i) authenticity, i.e., using authentic texts; (ii) diversity, i.e., using texts reflecting various real working situations; (iii) continuity in subject matter, i.e., reducing knowledge-related variables; (iv) simplification, i.e., reducing language input variables; (v) scaffolding, i.e., involving variables that decrease task difficulty; (vi) building, i.e., sequencing the involvement of variables in material development; and (vii) motivating, i.e., introducing variables that encourage students to encounter difficulties.

One of the essential steps in developing instructional materials is needs analysis. According to Jolly and Bolitho (2011), needs analysis serves as the medium for

identifying and exploring the teacher and learners' needs and problems in learning in terms of language, skills, and other learning barriers. This suggests that needs analysis is the initial stage of instructional materials development.

2.3 Digital Instructional Materials

Digital instructional materials are becoming more dominant in today's learning process, motivated by technological advancement. As a support or supplement instruction, digital instructional materials should include textbooks, curriculum guides, descriptions of tasks, and instructional software (Remillard & Heck, 2014). In addition, digital instructional materials include videos, content presentations, animations, educational games, online articles, and educational materials from traditional print texts that have been scanned and uploaded (Rice & Ortiz, 2021).

Many studies have reported the advantages of using digital instructional materials, including increasing individual interactivity, being accessible to all students (throwing away discriminative treatment to students with disabilities), facilitating limitless place and time of learning, and providing more resources (Choppin & Borys, 2017; Larhmaid, 2018; Singer & Alexander, 2017). Moreover, many studies have confirmed the contribution of digital instructional materials to the student's learning motivation, variety of learning resources, and positive atmosphere of the teaching and learning process (Giller & Barker, 2006; Yang et al., 2014).

However, the problem may arise when teachers cannot produce their own digital instructional materials. As a result, they depend on online digital materials with certain limitations, such as limited access to only one or two pages of an article and the non-physicality of the text (Larhmaid, 2018; Mangan, 2010). Such materials are called ready-made instructional materials (Manurung, 2017), which are seldom designed to meet learners' actual needs because they are not designed based on their needs. Therefore, using digital instructional materials will become much more effective and efficient if teachers can arrange and produce multimedia teaching aids by themselves (Lin, 2013) because the materials will be close to teachers' and students' actual needs.

3. METHODS

3.1 Research method

The need analysis in this research was conducted using a survey method. This method was motivated by the previous literature confirming that surveying was the method most frequently used in conducting need analysis (Altschuld & Witkin, 2000; Sava, 2012).

3.2 Participants

This study consisted of three groups of participants, including the seventh-semester students in the 2021-2022 academic year at Universitas Sumatera Utara, Indonesia, who had taken the courses on translation, the translation lecturers, and the professional translators.

3.2.1 Students

A number of 68 seventh-semester students in the academic year 2021-2022 in the English Literature Study Program at Universitas Sumatera Utara were selected as the participants. They were chosen because they had taken all three courses on translation, i.e., Translation Theory, Translation as a Profession, and Translation Internship.

3.2.2 Translation lecturers

Six translation lecturers were taken as the participants taught translation classes in the English Literature Study Program of Universitas Sumatera Utara. They were selected as the participants because they had good knowledge of translation and had designed instructional materials for translation courses.

3.2.3 Professional translators

A number of 40 professional translators selected as the participants of this research were those meeting the following criteria: (i) having more than five years of experience as a professional translator, (ii) having a formal education background in translation studies, and (iii) being a member of the Association of Indonesian Translator. Furthermore, they were selected because they had knowledge of translation and had been engaged in the professional practice of translation. In addition, they were also considered as the stakeholders as they employed translators.

3.3 Instruments

The instruments used in this research were a questionnaire and an interview. The items in the questionnaire were developed based on the document analysis of the previous instructional materials used by the lecturers in teaching a Translation Theory course. The questionnaire was a closed-ended questionnaire with four options of degrees of importance: Not at all important (NAI), Not important (NI), Important (I), and Very important (VI). The decision to use four options was intended to obtain more reliable data (Chang, 1994; Taherdoost, 2019). The items of the questionnaire were validated using content validity so that the items measured the content they were intended to measure (Creswell, 2013). The validation was based on the review of the previous instructional materials used by the lecturers in teaching a Translation Theory course and expert opinion. The interview was a semi-structured interview constructed based on the questionnaire's items. The interview guide was developed based on the participant's responses, as suggested by Harris and Brown (2010), who called it 'uptake questions'. Using the participant's responses as the basis for developing the interview guide provided more in-depth insights into the participants' attitudes, thoughts, and actions (Kendall, 2008).

3.4 Procedure of Data Collection

The questionnaires were distributed online via Google Forms. The links to the Google Forms were sent to all the participants via electronic mail. A number of 68

students, six translation lecturers, and 40 professional translators sent their responses. Similar to the questionnaire administration, the interviews were conducted online using WhatsApp and Zoom Cloud Meetings. The interviews were conducted mainly for data triangulation purposes. A total of 12 participants (four participants from each of the groups of participants) were interviewed. The number of participants involved in the interview represented more than 10% of the total participants.

3.5 Technique of Data Analysis

The data were analyzed and interpreted using a 4-Point Likert Scale. The VI level was worth 4, the I level was worth 3, the NI level was worth 2, and the NAI level was worth 1. The sum of all levels became the total score of every item in the questionnaire. Then the total scores were ranked to determine the items' degree of importance (from the highest to the lowest degree of importance). The results of the questionnaires were then compared with the results of the interviews to formulate the research findings.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Course Objectives and Approaches

Course objectives and approaches need to be included in the instructional materials. They serve as the guide to compiling the materials in the syllabus. The data collected from the students indicate that the description of the techniques for presenting ideas, the description of the general objective of the course, and the description of the scope of the instructional materials are the three points that need to be included in the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course (see Table 1). They see that the given instructional materials lack these points.

Table 1. Students' need of course objectives and approaches (students).

No.	Items evaluated	NAI	NI	I	VI	Score
1	Description of the techniques in presenting ideas	0	2	27	39	241
2	Description of the general objective of the course	0	3	30	35	236
3	Description of the scope of the instructional materials	0	4	30	34	234
4	Conformity between the learning objectives in the teaching materials and the objectives to be achieved by the course, study program, and institution	0	3	34	31	232
5	Description of the specific learning objectives for each learning unit	0	3	39	26	227
6	Description of the student's level of participation	0	8	31	29	225
7	Conformity between the approach used in teaching materials and the approach adopted by the institution	1	3	38	26	225
8	Explanation of the learning approach adopted	0	4	42	22	222
9	Description of the prerequisite level of the student's proficiency	1	9	38	20	213

Notes: NAI = not at all important, NI = not important, I = important, VI = very important

The results of the questionnaire displayed in Table 1 indicate that description of the techniques in presenting ideas is the most critical information to be included in the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course, according to the students. This

is supported by the interview results indicating that the students often encountered problems presenting their ideas since the previous instructional materials did not contain such a description. The other important information the students need includes descriptions of the course's general objective and the instructional materials' scope. Again, the interview results confirm that such descriptions are found in the previous instructional materials; however, according to some students, the general objective of the course is too broad.

The results also show the students' need for conformity between the learning objectives in the teaching materials and the goals to be achieved by the course, study program, and institution. The interview results have confirmed the results of the questionnaires. The other vital information to be included in the instructional materials is the description of the specific learning objectives for each learning unit. In addition, the results of the interviews indicate that the students need a specific goal to support the course's general purpose.

The results of the questionnaires from the translation lecturers are in Table 2.

Table 2. Students' need for course objectives and approaches (translation lecturers).

No	Items evaluated	NAI	NI	I	VI	Score
1	Description of the general objective of the course	0	0	1	5	23
2	Description of the scope of the instructional materials	0	0	1	5	23
3	Description of the specific learning objectives for each learning unit	0	0	2	4	22
4	Explanation of the learning approach adopted	0	0	3	3	21
5	Description of the techniques in presenting ideas	0	0	4	2	20
6	Conformity between the learning objectives in the teaching materials and the objectives to be achieved by the course, study program, and institution	0	0	4	2	20
7	Description of the prerequisite level of the student's proficiency	0	1	4	1	18
8	Description of the student's level of participation	0	1	5	0	17
9	Conformity between the approach used in teaching materials and the approach adopted by the institution	0	2	4	0	16

Based on the results displayed in Table 2, the lecturers' top three responses conform to the students' top five responses. According to the translation lecturers, descriptions of the general objective of the course, the scope of the instructional materials, and the specific learning objectives for each learning unit are the most important information to be included in the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course. These results are supported by the interview results, indicating that these three descriptions are the main requirements in designing any instructional materials. Furthermore, the results show that explaining the learning approach is crucial in the instructional materials. The other important information is the description of the technique for presenting ideas, and the interview results indicate that this description is not found in the previous instructional materials.

Then, the questionnaire results from the professional translators are in Table 3. The results in Table 3 show that the professional translators' top three responses align with the lecturers' top three responses. This strengthens the results of the interview with the lecturers, arguing that descriptions of the specific learning objectives for each learning unit, the general objective of the course, and the scope of the instructional materials are three pieces of information that need to be included in the instructional

materials. In addition, the results of the interviews with professional translators reveal that the instructional materials are only useful with the presence of such descriptions. In addition, conformity between the learning objectives in the teaching materials and the goals to be achieved by the course, study program, and institution are also important in designing the instructional materials.

Table 3. Students' need for course objectives and approaches (professional translators).

No	Items evaluated	NAI	NI	I	VI	Score
1	Description of the specific learning objectives for each learning unit	0	0	10	30	150
2	Description of the general objective of the course	0	1	16	23	142
3	Description of the scope of the instructional materials	0	1	18	21	140
4	Conformity between the learning objectives in the teaching materials and the objectives to be achieved by the course, study program, and institution	0	1	19	20	139
5	Description of the techniques in presenting ideas	0	1	21	18	137
6	Explanation of the learning approach adopted	0	3	18	19	136
7	Description of the prerequisite level of the students' proficiency	0	5	17	18	133
8	Description of the students' level of participation	0	3	21	16	133
9	Conformity between the approach used in teaching materials and the approach adopted by the institution	0	8	18	14	126

When the responses from the participants are compiled, the top five pieces of information that need to be included in the instructional materials are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. Students' need for course objectives and approaches (all participants).

No	Students	Lecturers	Translators
1	Description of the techniques in presenting ideas	Description of the general objective of the course	Description of the specific learning objectives for each learning unit
2	Description of the general objective of the course	Description of the scope of the instructional materials	Description of the general objective of the course
3	Description of the scope of the instructional materials	Description of the specific learning objectives for each learning unit	Description of the scope of the instructional materials
4	Conformity between the learning objectives in the teaching materials and the objectives to be achieved by the course, study program, and institution	Explanation of the learning approach adopted	Conformity between the learning objectives in the teaching materials and the objectives to be achieved by the course, study program, and institution
5	Description of the specific learning objectives for each learning unit	Description of the techniques in presenting ideas	Description of the techniques in presenting ideas

The results in Table 4 show that the description of the course's general objective is the information needed to be included in the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course. The translation lecturers consider such a description the most important information in the instructional materials, while the students and the professional translators put it as the second most important information. The second most important

information to be included in the instructional materials is the description of the scope of the instructional materials. Again, the lecturers consider such a description the second most important information, while the students and professional translators agree to put it as the third most important information.

Furthermore, a description of the specific learning objectives for each learning unit is the third most important piece of information to be included in the instructional materials. The professional translators consider such a description the most important information to be included in the instructional materials, the lecturers put it in the third, and the students put it in the fifth most important information. The fourth important piece of information to be included in the instructional materials is a description of the techniques for presenting ideas. The students consider such a description the most important information, while the lecturers and professional translators put it as the fifth most important information. Although the information relating to conformity between the learning objectives in the teaching materials and the objectives to be achieved by the course, study program, and institution is not included in the top five important information according to the lecturers, the students and the professional translators consider it as the fourth most important information.

Thus, based on the results of the questionnaire, the top five pieces of information that need to be included in the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course are: i) a description of the general objective of the course, ii) a description of the scope of the instructional materials, iii) description of the specific learning objectives for each learning unit, iv) description of the techniques in presenting ideas, and v) conformity between the learning objectives in the teaching materials and the objectives to be achieved by the course, study program, and institution.

4.2 Topics

Topics are the focused materials that are discussed in one semester. However, the academic regulation applicable in Universitas Sumatera Utara regulates that the courses are structured as a 16-week semester. Consequently, the analysis results display the top sixteen topics needed by the participants to be included in the instructional materials, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Students' need for topics of a Translation Theory course.

No	Students	Lecturers	Translators
1	Translation process	Translation as a decision process	Translation process
2	Translation procedures	Translation process	Translation and culture
3	Translation strategies	Translation and culture	Self-correction and self-editing
4	Meaning and translation	Meaning and translation	Meaning and translation
5	Translation errors	Translation errors	Translation errors
6	Approaches in Translation	Self-correction and self-editing	Analysis of the intention of a text
7	Problems in translating factual written texts	Analysis of connotations and denotations	Translation, globalization, and localization
8	Analysis of text styles	Translation procedures	Translator competencies
9	Problems in translating literary texts	Translation strategies	Cat tools
10	Translator competencies	Machine translation and a human translator	Translation strategies

Table 5 continued...

11	Translation and culture	Translator competencies	Problems in translating factual written texts
12	Self-correction and self-editing	Translation quality assessment	Translation as a profession
13	Translation models	Subjectivity and relativity in translation	Analysis of text styles
14	Translating subtitles	Terminology management	Translation quality assessment
15	Translation as a profession	Research in Translation	Certification in translation
16	Analysis of the intention of a text	Trends in the translation industry	Analysis of connotations and denotations

The results displayed in Table 5 are the topics that need to be included in the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course based on their degree of importance. The translation process is the topic with the highest degree of importance because both the students and professional translators agree to consider it the most important, and the lecturers consider it the second most important topic. The topic of translation and culture is also considered an important topic to be included in the instructional materials as it occupies the second most important topic according to the professional translators, the third according to the lecturers, and the eleventh according to the students. The other topic with a high degree of importance is meaning and translation. All the participants agree to consider it the fourth most important topic in a Translation Theory course. The topic of translation errors is selected as the next important topic because all the participants agreed to consider it the fifth most important topic in a Translation Theory course. Furthermore, translation strategies are also considered an important topic in a Translation Theory course because it is one of the top 16 important topics according to all the participants. The next important topic is self-correction and self-editing, as it is in the top 16 topics according to all the participants. Finally, the other important topic is translator competencies because all the participants agree to choose it as one of the top 16 important topics.

The other topics are also considered important, although selected only by two groups of participants. The lecturers and the students agree to include translation procedures as an important topic in a Translation Theory course. The professional translators and the students decide to consider the importance of having the topics on problems in translating factual written texts, analysis on text styles, translation as a profession, and analysis on the intention of a text in the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course. Meanwhile, the lecturers and the professional translators agree to consider the need to include the topics on analysis of connotations and denotations and translation quality assessment in the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course. Moreover, the other topic considered necessary is translation as a decision process. Although it is not considered an important topic by two groups of participants (the students and the professional translators), it is regarded as the most important topic by the translation lecturers. The topic of problems in translating literary texts is included to complete the list of important topics in the instructional materials on Translation Theory. Its inclusion is motivated by two reasons. First, it is selected by the students. Second, it is related to translation errors and problems in translating factual texts, the two topics considered important by all the participants.

Thus, based on the results of the questionnaire, the topics with a high level of importance to be included in the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course offered to the students are: 1) translation process, 2) translation and culture, 3) meaning and translation, 4) translation errors, 5) translation strategies, 6) self-correction and self-editing, 7) translator competencies, 8) translation procedures, 9) problems in translating factual written texts, 10) analysis on text styles, 11) translation as a profession, 12) analysis on the intention of a text in the instructional materials, 13) analysis on connotations and denotations, 14) translation quality assessment, 15) translation as a decision process, and 16) problems in translating literary texts.

4.3 Exercises

Exercises are included in the survey as they serve as the tool to evaluate the students' progress on the materials given to them. The results of the data analysis concerning the kinds of exercises needed by the students are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6. Students' need for exercises in a Translation Theory course.

No	Students	Lecturers	Translators
1	Translating generic texts	Analyzing translated texts	Translating generic texts
2	Understanding the theories in translation	Editing translated texts	Translating specific texts
3	Analyzing translated texts	Proofreading translated texts	Editing translated texts
4	Translating using CAT tools	Understanding the theories in translation	Proofreading translated texts
5	Translating specific texts	Translating generic texts	Understanding the theories in translation

The results in Table 6 are the top five kinds of exercises needed by the participants in the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course. The three groups of participants give a few different responses. Translating generic text is the most desirable type of exercise as it is the most important type of exercise based on the students' and professional translators' responses. However, it is the fifth important exercise based on the translation lecturers' responses. The second necessary type of exercise needed by all the participants is understanding the theories in translation. It is found in the top five important types of exercises based on the responses from each group of participants.

Furthermore, the exercise on analyzing translated texts is the third important exercise needed by the participants. It is the most important type of exercise according to the translation lecturers and the third important type according to the students' responses. The next important type of exercise is editing translated texts. Based on the translation lecturers' responses, it is the second most important type of exercise. Meanwhile, based on the professional translators' responses, it is the third important type of exercise. Moreover, according to the participants, proofreading translated texts completes the top five most desirable exercises. It serves the third and fourth important types of exercises based on the responses of the translation lecturers and professional translators, respectively.

Based on the results of data analysis, the most desirable types of exercises to be included in the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course are exercises on (i) translating generic text, (ii) understanding the theories in translation, (iii) analyzing

translated texts, (iv) editing translated texts, and (v) proofreading translated texts. Therefore, these types of exercises need to be given priority in developing the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course.

4.4 Designs

The design in this context is related to how the contents of the instructional materials are packaged. The data analysis results concerning the design of the instructional materials for a Translation Theory course are displayed in Table 7.

Table 7. Design of the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course.

No	Students	Lecturers	Translators
1	The instructional materials are delivered digitally in the form of power-point presentations	The instructional materials are delivered digitally in the form of interactive multimedia-based instructional materials	The exercises are delivered digitally in the form of power-point presentations
2	The instructional materials are delivered digitally in the form of interactive multimedia-based instructional materials	The exercises are delivered orally in the form of audio-visual recordings	The exercises are delivered orally in the form of audio-visual recordings
3	The exercises are delivered in the form of interactive multimedia-based exercises	The exercises are delivered digitally in the form of power-point presentations	The instructional materials are delivered digitally in the form of interactive multimedia-based instructional materials
4	The exercises are delivered digitally in the form of power-point presentations	The instructional materials are delivered orally in the form of audio-visual recordings	The exercises are delivered in the form of interactive multimedia-based exercises
5	The instructional materials are delivered orally in the form of audio-visual recordings.	The instructional materials are delivered orally in the form of audio recordings.	The instructional materials are delivered orally in the form of audio-visual recordings.

The results displayed in Table 7 indicate the participants' need for digital instructional materials. All participants agree that the materials and exercises, together with the other contents of the instructional materials, should be designed digitally. The use of multimedia-based materials and exercises, audio-visual recordings, and digital power-point presentations provides directions to how the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course are digitalized.

5. DISCUSSION

The need to include information on course objectives and approaches in the instructional materials confirms the theory concerning the contents and the principles of instructional materials mentioned in previous literature (Ahmed, 2017; Nunan, 1988; Richards & Schmidt, 2011). Such information serves as the basis for listing the topics in the instructional materials and the basis for implementing the teaching and learning process. One of the interesting findings is the need to consider conformity

between the learning objectives in the teaching materials and the objectives to be achieved by the course, study program, and institution in developing the instructional materials. This information is not reflected in the previously developed instructional materials of translation courses given to the USU's English Literature Study Program students (Sofyan & Tarigan, 2019; Sofyan et al., 2021). Such information is the main factor distinguishing the developed instructional materials from ready-made ones (Manurung, 2017).

Furthermore, the other interesting finding of this study is the need to include the description of the techniques in presenting ideas in the instructional materials. Instructional materials should cover not only kinds of topics and exercises but also key instructions in implementing the teaching and learning process. This finding supports Remillard and Heck (2014), who argue that instructional materials include the resources that organize and support instruction, including textbooks, tasks, and supplementary resources.

In terms of topics, the findings of this study indicate that the Translation Theory course should cover translation as a process and translation as a product. These findings are consistent with the translation studies mapping proposed by Holmes in 1972 (Touy, 2013). Translation as a process emphasizes that a good translation product results from a good translation process. Besides, the findings also indicate that the instructional materials should present the competencies needed by a translator, including linguistic competence, cultural competence, and translation competence. These competencies have been confirmed to contribute to translation quality (Asiri & Metwally, 2020; Madkour, 2018). In addition, the findings also suggest the need for analytical competence in translation (Ibraheem, 2021), such as analyzing the text style, specific text types, and errors. This analytical competence helps a translator, particularly in the process of decision-making.

Moreover, in terms of the exercises, this study's findings indicate the need to practice translating generic text; in other words, the students should not be guided to a certain type of text when they are first introduced to a translation course. Instead, they are supposed to focus on meaning transfer instead of thinking about the generic structure or lexicogrammatical features of the text while translating. These findings are consistent with the principles of developing instructional of a translation and interpreting course, i.e., using authentic texts and texts reflecting various real working situations (Li, 2019). However, these findings contradict the ideas proposed by Puchała (2011), who argues that, in translating a text, a text type is one of the basic factors enabling the translator to recognize the function and purpose of the text as well as the author's intention. The different status of translators mainly causes the difference. This present study took student translators or inexperienced translators as the participants, while Puchała (2011) focuses on experienced translators. Besides, the findings also suggest the exercises addressed to confirm the students' understanding of translation theories, and such an understanding helps develop the students' translation skills.

Finally, the findings of this study reveal the need for digitalizing the instructional materials of the Translation Theory course. These findings support the ideas of ICT involvement in instructional materials as suggested in the previous studies (Azizinezhad & Hashemi, 2011; Gujjar & Malik, 2007; Sikora & Walczyński, 2015). All the materials, exercises, and learning instructions are expected to be designed in a digital form. Using digital instructional materials allows a flexible learning process as

it can be done anywhere and anytime. These findings are in line with the previous research findings reporting that, in addition to allowing the limitless place and time of learning, digital materials provide an opportunity to access a much more variety of learning resources (Choppin & Borys, 2017; Larhmaid, 2018; Singer & Alexander, 2017). Besides, digital instructional materials allow a more communicative and interactive learning process through multimodal content or audio-visual instructional materials.

6. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study have confirmed the need for digital or digitalized instructional materials for the Translation Theory course offered to the English Literature Study Program students at Universitas Sumatera Utara. All the contents of the instructional materials, including the course descriptions, objectives, topics, exercises, and learning instructions, need to be prepared in digital form.

The specific objectives need to align with the goals to be achieved by the course, study program, and institution. Besides, the learning instructions also need to be specified to avoid getting unexpected responses from the students. The instructional materials' topics must cover translation theories and practices to enhance the students' translation competency. In addition to linguistic, cultural, and translation competencies, the instructional materials need to include analytical competence. The exercises evaluate the student's understanding of translation theories and practices by emphasizing translating generic texts.

This research is just a small study conducted only at USU, one of the public universities in Indonesia; nevertheless, the findings may be applied as the basis for developing translation courses in other universities. Therefore, it is suggested to do a similar study in different universities that administer translation courses in their curriculum. The findings of this study become the considerations for translation lecturers, particularly in USU, in developing the instructional materials of a Translation Theory course.

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Trends in the Use of Commissives in the Informal Judicial System of *Sulha*

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Abstract

This article investigates the trends in using commissive speech in Sulha proceedings in Jordan. Sulha focuses on a dispute-resolution system in Arab society that uses the Bedouin Arabic dialect as the primary language of communication. Qualitative and quantitative research designs involving descriptive and survey instruments were used in this study. The data for the study were collected as audio recordings of some incidents taken from Sulha samples. Some of the data are from interviews with Sulha participants and the synthesis of archived disputes related to cases previously handled by Sulha. The data analysis was done according to the scope of Speech Act theory to show the trends adopted in the Sulha tribunals in making commitments by different participants in solving disputes. This study finds that the informal legal setting in the Sulha tribunals determines the patterns exhibited by commissive speech acts and their frequencies during the Sulha proceedings. A number of eight commissive speech acts are realised in the Sulha proceedings: promise, swear, vow, threat, guarantee, warning, acceptance, and offer. The eight commissive speech acts are realised either explicitly or implicitly. The results further reveal some of the commissive speech acts can elicit other commissives, and a number of commissives can also be resultant forces of other speech acts, such as the acts of directives. The finding of this study is expected to help understand how forms of language used in the Sulha enhance the adoption and discharge of commitment during the Sulha proceedings.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The enactment of law depends on language, given that the performance of legal duty is achievable through proper language use (Danet, 1980; Fiorito, 2006). A language becomes appropriately used when it performs its intended purpose (Austin, 1962). One of the main factors contributing to a language's performance of its intended purpose is contextualising its operation (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). Therefore, for the performance of a legal action, a language needs to operate within a legal setting which may be defined by factors (felicity conditions) such as rules of evidence, power manifestation, and discrimination among users of the languages in such settings (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). A specific pattern in using a speech act is established through the constraints of felicity conditions in a particular setting. It is worth noting that trials in legal and judicial systems follow generic patterns divided into different phases. Those stages are distinguished by a distinctive usage of language (Kiguru et al., 2016). According to Kiguru (2014), this uniqueness creates some differential patterning of speech acts in conversation. The regular employment of these patterns makes it a habit as far as language use is concerned in enacting legal acts. The habitual employment of these patterns to enact law forms a trend specific to the legal context in question.

The existing literature shows two main classes of legal systems: the formal legal system and the informal (see Danet, 1980; Furr & Al-Serhan, 2008; Kiguru, 2014). These systems, particularly the formal ones, have attracted the attention of a number of linguists, including Danet (1980) and Kiguru (2014), to linguistically attest oriented forces that enable the operation of rules of law by the statutes upon which the systems operate. There needs to be more research on linguistic forces within the setting of informal legal systems, *Sulha* included. *Sulha* focuses on a dispute-resolution system in Arab society that uses the Bedouin Arabic dialect as the primary language of communication.

With regard to *Sulha* legal system, the focus has been given to its structure, its value to the communities that use it, and the conventions under which it operates (See Furr & Al-Serhan, 2008). From the research by Furr and Al-Serhan (2008) on the *Sulha* system, it is established in this study that the concepts of linguistics in the operation of the *Sulha* legal system have not been given a study, thus calling for a study like the current study, which is linguistically based. Scanty research has also been achieved on speech acts in the Arabic culture (Abdulrahman, 2012). Consequently, it is hoped that the current study fills a gap in speech acts in cultural understanding, especially the commissives, which are understood and utilised in Arabic, particularly in the Bedouin community. To fill this study gap, the study hoped to answer the following questions:

1. How are commissive illocutionary acts used to enact legal forces in the *Sulha* tribunals?
2. How do these acts pattern in their performance of the legal forces during the *Sulha* tribunals?

The answers to the two research questions are expected to give insight into the effect of discourse forms in enacting a commissive illocutionary act by a speech in an

institutionalised informal legal setting. This implication is grounded on Kiguru's (2014) argument that success in any judicial activity depends not only on participants' utilisation of linguistic resources for achieving an intended meaning but also on how an action is performed by speech to enable a participant to get a certain commitment. Moreover, the outcome of the current study is wished to improve the functionality of the process among the Bedouins, improve its effectiveness among its participants and learn commissive acts that can be used to enhance the suitable use of language in the *Sulha* process.

2. LITERATURE REVIRE

2.1 Legal Texts

Legal texts are understood to adopt and discharge obligations and commitments. Such texts, according to Fiorito (2006), are called performatives. Depending on the speaker's intention, these performatives can come in the form of offers, swears, acceptance, and pledges. Language of offer and acceptance has been reported to be common in legal settings as means of commitment by participants (Bayern, 2015; Tiersma, 1986). Tiersma (1986) and Kiguru (2014) claim that offering and acceptance as samples of commissive address acts cannot be an issue of expression or manifesting the intention. Yet, they can be acts that force the participant to a particular way of behaviour (Kissine, 2013; Tiersma, 1986). Therefore, the speaker has to try to persuade the hearer that when saying something, the speaker is obligating him/herself to a certain proposal in the future. Tiersma (1986) adds that offering and acceptance fulfil their performative function by involving particular principles ruled by formal legal regulations.

Abdel-Jawad (2000) looks at the phenomenon of swearing in Jordanian Arabic. According to him, it is all about oath-taking devoid of tabooed words and profane expressions for reviling others or expressing anger. According to him, swearing is a speech act when the speaker limits himself to certain physical or judicial acts. To be particular, Abdel-Jawad (2000) adds that in Jordanian society, God's name, Allah, or one of the godly features must be invoked to satisfy the act. Other things included in the swearing are holy books, prophets, significant people, relatives, holy areas, creatures, moral values or times (Abdel-Jawad, 2000). All these, according to Abdel-Jawad (2000), are included in the swearing to make the act more performative.

Swearing in the Jordanian community also serves communicative functions like emphasising, offering, invitation, suggesting, promising and pledging, requesting, apologising and complaining, and praising and blaming (Abdel-Jawad, 2000). According to Abdel-Jawad (2000), all these communicative functions affect the Jordanian values of honour, chastity, dignity, and honesty, considered ideal in dictating swearing behaviour. These findings on swearing, as used in Jordan, are significant for related studies as they create a vivid environment on the process of commitment by participants in the tribunal dispute-resolution system, such as *Sulha*, as inherent in their life.

Enactment brings into force some social facts known as norms that are satisfied through the utterance of linguistic material (Marmor, 2011). These facts are meant to guide behaviour; because they are used to tell what must or must not be made (Marmor,

2011). Linguistic resources which enact forces that improve the performatives of these norms happen directly or indirectly. Allott and Shaer (2017), in their study of illocutionary force of legal discourses, notice that illocutionary directive acts are either direct or indirect, showing that provisions do not need to contain the linguistic items that make for direct directives (Allott & Shaer, 2017). From the observation of Allott and Shaer (2017), a legal text can perform an intended speech act with or without performative verbs; hence direct or indirect speech acts.

According to Hatch (1992), the legal discourse that does not consist of a performative verb utters speech act implicitly. The legal discourse is rich in implicit performatives (Pavličková, 2005). In different legal documents, explicit speech acts of commitments, permission, order, prohibition, and promise are expressed by modal verbs (Pavličková, 2005; Hatch, 1992). Within a legal setting, Hatch (1992) discusses that a number of occasions exist when a legal discourse does not consist of performative verbs for the intended speech acts. However, this legal discourse still expresses the act it is used for. The performativeness of the discourse in such occasions is improved by appropriate conventions where the discourse is used (Hatch, 1992).

The use of some of these speech acts is culture-based. This is attested in West African and Western culture by Egner (2006) using the act of promising. According to her findings, there are contrasts in the conduct of promise between West African and Western cultures. This is explained by the performative of some languages in Africa. For example, what most Westerners consider 'untrue promising' can be a respectful strategy in the West African context (Egner, 2006). She also discovers that a 'nonbinding' promise is employed in some African languages for being polite in ending a certain discourse, unlike in Western cultures.

2.2 Overview of *Sulha*

Sulha focuses on an arbitration mechanism to facilitate dispute resolution in Arab society in which an Arabic dialect, Bedouin, is used as the language for communication (Furr & Al-Serhan, 2008; Suwaed, 2015). The *Sulha* mechanism is used when a serious crime is committed in Bedouin society. The peace agreement after the crime or dispute follows a resolution process called *Sulh* (Furr & Al-Serhan, 2008). As Furr and Al-Serhan (2008) observed, the *Sulha* process involves a commitment by the participants towards acceptance of outcomes, and giving true and reliable pieces of information pertaining to the case. This informs the current study on the relevance of the commissive speech act in the *Sulha* system, as it is associated with commitment performance.

The traditional restorative justice actions, such as in *Sulha*, have grown rapidly worldwide. For example, in India and Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago and Nepal, a traditional restorative justice movement referred to as *Panchayats* was created as an alternative dispute resolution mechanism. Mitra (2001) observe that the litigants in Himachal Pradesh in India noted a positive response regarding the role of the informal judicial system. The *Panchayats* system is almost like the informal legal system of *Jirgas* in Afghanistan, which was also used to settle disputes amongst the Pashtun people in Afghanistan and tribal regions in Pakistan (Mitra, 2001). The *Panchayats* traditionally consisted of wise and respected elders chosen and accepted by the local community. These assemblies settled disputes between people and villages (Mitra, 2001). The *Panchayats* system is updated via the Indian government to inspire

governance at local levels (Mitra, 2001). This reformation has been due to the overwhelming number of suits pending before the civil and criminal courts (state justice system). The restructuring follows the discovery by the government of India that *Panchayats* were a speedier and inexpensive mechanism of justice delivery for those living in country zones that might not have access to courts (Mitra, 2001).

Regarding the previous studies on the commissive speech act, there is only one paper about the procedures of those acts on the *Sulha* proceeding by Alidmat and Ayassrah (2019). Their study discusses commissive speech acts of offering and acceptance in the *Sulha* tribunals and their commissive inferences. This opens a study gap in the operation of other commissive speech acts in the *Sulha* tribunals and the patterns formed by these acts in the adoption and discharge of commitments in the *Sulha* tribunals.

2.2 Speech Act Theory

Austin (1962) links language to actions. Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) highlight the communicative aspects of language. The two insist on a language's functionality rather than a structural form, and the structural form should count if they affect functionality. However, although syntactic structures in speech are essential, they would not be enough to get the right message (Abood, 2016). Hence, the issuing of utterances is the performance of actions, i.e., speech acts.

The speech act theory was further developed by Searle (1969). Searle (1969) echoes Austin's view of speech acts by arguing that all utterances are instruments for performing intended meanings. Since then, the theory has been given detailed views in relation to language use. For instance, the theory is identified as the process of classifying the ways of using languages by humans that have been classified by scholars and linguists (Aitchison, 1987).

Mey (1993) has defined speech act as an issue occurring in our life, which can change the present state of activities. Grundy (2000), on the other hand, looks at speech act theory in terms of performative. According to him, speech act theory analyses language in terms of performative, that is, the aspect of work in the field of language and non-serial power associated with speech. Abood (2016) further says that speech acts differ from one culture to another in several ways that can lead to communication problems. Abood (2016), therefore, suggests that the diversity of speech acts needs to be understood to avoid problems in communication in any given setting. Kasper and Rose (2002) summarise that the study of speech acts includes exploring cultures and comparing speech acts among them instead of comparing different cultures themselves. Linking speech acts to culture is important to determine the performative of various speech acts under conventions dictated by culture.

The research on speech acts has become important in the pragmatic theory since it is through the pragmatic theory that various types of acts are identified (Kiguru, 2014). Identification of these acts is deemed necessary because it is through the acts that a speaker's intended meaning via utterance is realised (Cutting & Fordyce, 2020; Searle, 1976; Yule, 1996). This may clarify the diversity of speech acts and why they must be included in studying meaning in language communication.

Undoubtedly, a main development in the speech act theory is identifying and assorting the speech acts, each of which realises different discourse functions (Abood, 2016). According to Austin (1962), five categories of speech acts exist: expositives,

exercitives, commissives, verdictives and behavitives, with each enacting particular forces in language use. Other than language forces, some speech acts can be identified by taking into account the felicity condition under which they operate (Abood, 2016).

Focusing on the main reason why the speech act theory was brought into place, Abood (2016) argues that this theory comes as a result of what is called by Austin (1962) a descriptive fallacy. Austin (1962) defends his stand using declarative sentences, which according to him, must be classified as either true or false, particularly when these sentences describe facts.

The study of speech act theory in various settings has been comprehensively covered. In a study of speech acts in a Christian wedding, Embugushiki (2010) finds that not all speech acts can be used to perform wedding vows but only commissive and declaration. From Embugushiki's (2010) point of view, it is evident that speech acts of discourse are dictated by the environment under which the discourse is used.

3. METHODS

The current study used a descriptive research design using a qualitative approach. To obtain qualitative data, the researcher used interviews and audio recordings. For clarity and convenience purposes, the interviews were self-administered by the researcher.

3.1 Data

The target group for the interviews was *Sulha* officials, who were subjected to open-ended questions. These questions concerned the officials' use of commissive speech acts to adopt and discharge commitment during *Sulha* proceedings. The open-ended questions yielded responses that were multiple in character. These responses were input into the data editor using Excel software to provide a summary and trends in commissive speech acts in *Sulha* proceedings. Four informants, two judges and two Jaha leaders, were purposively sampled from the convenient eight judges and eight Jaha that had handled four conveniently sampled *Sulha* cases. The sampling of the *Sulha* officials was guided by the number of years the informants had served in the *Sulha* system and the number of cases they had handled as *Sulha* leaders. The researchers, therefore, picked the judges and the Jaha that had handled the highest number of cases and had served the longest in the *Sulha* system. To establish these traits (number of years and cases the interviewee had participated in the *Sulha* tribunals), the researchers consulted the clerks who had the records of every judge and Jaha. This resulted in two judges and two Jaha being chosen for interviews.

These four informants were first briefed on the objective the study, what was to achieve through the interviews, the purpose of the interviews, and the purpose of the study as a whole. For ethics, the informants were assured of the confidentiality of the information they would provide and that the information was purposely for the benefit of this study. These interviews were held in enclosed places by using a recorder as a means of data collecting to record the verbal interactions between the interviewer and the interviewees. The researchers also used a pen and notebook to take notes on what transpired in the interview that could give answers to the two research questions.

In addition, the data were also collected using audio-recording and note-taking from four *Sulha* trials, each containing sessions of defence, complaint, hearing, and judgment. The choice of the four trials was based on the accessibility of the trials. In terms of data collection procedure, the data were first obtained by audio-recording of *Sulha* proceedings conducted in Bedouin. Audio-recorded data were then transcribed, after which the English equivalents of the transcriptions were identified. It is from the English equivalents that commissive speech acts were purposively sampled, focusing on their sub-categories.

In addition to primary data, the researcher visited Tribal Consultant Department in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, where documentary corpora on previous *Sulha* trials are stored. In this case, the researcher requested the documented *Sulha* proceedings between 2017 and 2019. This is justified by the fact that the proceedings between 2017 and 2019 also exist in audio-recorded versions (oral corpus), and before 2017, no recorded evidence is available to be relied on. Table 1 shows the number of audio-recorded the *Sulha* tribunals from 2017 to date.

Table 1. Number of *Sulhas* in 2017, 2018, and 2019 (source: Tribal Consultant Department in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan).

Year	Number of the <i>Sulha</i> tribunals
2017	27
2018	25
2019	17
Total	69

The study used stratified random sampling, where the trials were first separated into mutually exclusive sets of six *Sulha* cases at the individual level and six *Sulha* cases at the community level. Three simple random samples were then withdrawn from each of the two sets across the three years. That was done by assigning a random number for each set. This gave a total of six trials, equivalent to 10% (seven *Sulhas*) out of the total of 69 trials. As debated by [Bartlett et al. \(2001\)](#), 10% of a research population should be considered enough to answer research questions. The data obtained from the six randomly selected samples attest to the uniformity in the commissive speech acts applied in *Sulha* trials since the discourses used by *Sulha* participants, according to [Furr and Al-Serhan \(2008\)](#), are governed by the same customs and procedures. These customs and procedures are classified as felicity conditions, given that they have to be satisfied by a discourse in order for the discourse to perform its intended purpose ([Austin, 1962](#); [Searle, 1969](#)).

3.2 Analysis

Data gathered and categorised for the quantitative approach, were analysed statistically. Using statistical analyses, the frequencies of occurrence of each commissive speech act in the *Sulha* tribunals were counted, and their percentages were tabulated. This approach was used to find the frequency of the eight commissive speech acts in the *Sulha* tribunals.

In the analysis and explanation of the obtained data through recording and from the corpora preserved in the Department of Tribal Affairs, the researchers classified the texts from the recorded and documented texts into categories based on the significant themes they address, hence thematic analysis. To conduct this analysis, the

audio recordings were transcribed, and the written discourse strands were then coded for commissive features. A computer software, Nvivo 12 Mac, was then used to analyse the coded commissive features. As Rossman and Rallis (2003) described, thematic analysis is derived from familiarity with the data that comes from categorisation through coding. The study approached thematic analysis using an inductive way, in which the data content directed the coding and theme development.

Other than the inductive approach, the researchers also applied a constructionist way. Based on Rossman and Rallis's (2003) view on the constructionist approach, the researchers focused on how commitment is created by the data that had been collected. Coding was expected to reduce lots of data into small chunks of commissive meanings – not every piece of text was coded, but commissive texts were. The coded data were then placed into themes of promise, acceptance, warning, offer, vow, guarantee, threat, and swear.

4. RESULTS

According to the findings of this study, there are eight commissive speech acts used in the *Sulha* tribunals to adopt and discharge commitment during trials. The analysis outcomes of the distribution of the eight commissive speech acts in the *Sulha* tribunals are summarised in Table 2. The eight speech acts are promise, swear, vow, threat, guarantee, acceptance, warning and offer. Included in Table 2 are the frequencies and percentages of these eight commissive speech acts.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage of commissive speech act used in the *Sulha* tribunals.

Commissives	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Promise	21	27.6
Acceptance	18	23.6
Warning	13	17.1
Offer	7	9.2
Vow	6	7.9
Guarantee	4	5.3
Threat	3	5.3
Swear	4	3.9
Total	76	99.9

As shown in Table 2, it can be concluded that the commissive speech act of promise is the most frequently used in the adoption and discharge of commitment in the *Sulha* tribunals, with swear being the least frequently used.

As discussed in the preceding section, *Sulha* is an informal legal system that operates on Bedouin cultural norms that require all *Sulha* participants to behave in a required way. It is these norms that make commissive acts felicitous. For example, once a *Sulha* participant is found guilty, he is obliged to offer material compensation to the complainant and pay the judge a given amount of fees. The complainant has to assure the tribunal verbally of the compensation and fees. Consider Excerpt (1).

Excerpt (1) Participant A : Guarantor will be representing both guarantees of fees and attendance.

Participant B : Guarantor, do you accept that?

Guarantor : Yes, I do, and I guarantee in my name and the name of my tribe.

As shown in Excerpt (1), the guarantor's acceptance to pay fees and be available during the case satisfies felicity conditions that the *Sulha* system creates. Also noted in the excerpt that these offers are usually made at the initial stages of *Sulha* cases, thus creating a commissive act of promise. The example also demonstrates that whenever a speaker inquires about the status of the commissive speech act of acceptance in a *Sulha* proceeding, a commissive speech act of promise is used to satisfy the enquiry. This shows that a commissive speech act can be a result of another commissive speech act; that is, a commissive speech act has the effect of instigating the occurrence of another commissive speech act. This happens unpremeditatedly during the *Sulha* proceedings.

It is a trend in the *Sulha* tribunals that a speech act of directive can initiate the commissive speech act of guarantee. For instance, in Excerpt (1), the guarantor offers to guarantee a defendant under a directive from participant A. Therefore, here, commissive speech acts can result in a conversation under felicity conditions created by other speech act acts that are non-commissive.

Evident in the *Sulha* tribunal is that some of these commissive acts are known to trigger others. This is common with the commissives of promise, acceptance, and offer. Consider Excerpt (2).

Excerpt (2) Prosecutor : I determined a guarantor for you to secure everything for you, and I am in charge of this situation, and if I evidence this claim, I will be the winner, and if I do not have evidence, I will be the loser, and all of that is guaranteed by the guarantor.

Litigant : I won't be arbitrary; I will accept the judgment of the attendees.

As demonstrated in Excerpt (2), the promise that the prosecutor makes of accepting the outcome of the case triggers the commissive act of acceptance by the litigant, who also puts it open his readiness to accept the outcome. As a result of the successful performance of the commissive speech act of promise, the act of acceptance is experienced by the litigant.

In Table 2, the commissive act of promise is the highest represented in the *Sulha* tribunals, followed by acceptance, warning, and offer, coming fourth with threat the least represented. Within the evaluated categories of commissive speech acts in the *Sulha* tribunals, differences in their distribution within a *Sulha* tribunal are relevant in this study. The higher use of promise and acceptance in the *Sulha* tribunals is attributed to the fact that *Sulha* is an informal legal system whose main purpose is to restore peace among the Bedouins. Therefore, any participants in such tribunals are expected to accept the outcomes of tribunals and give promise towards the restoration of peace (Furr & Al-Serhan, 2008). One way such promises are made is through a material offer which has to be verbally confirmed by a participant in the presence of a judge and witnesses hence the occurrence of offer as a commissive act in the *Sulha* tribunals.

Other commissive acts, such as threats, are registered the least. Threats are qualified as unfavourable promises (Grant, 1949; Wray et al., 2016). Based on this observation, it can be concluded that the threat is somehow peace threatening commissive act, which explains its low registration in the peace-building judicial system, *Sulha*. Threat is a commissive discourse act whose illocutionary goal is to illustrate a future outcome for the recipient under a particular situation to promote the hearer, not to make this state true (Salgueiro, 2010; Searle, 1969). Following this, it

can be argued that threat is a fear-instilling act hence its infrequent use in the *Sulha* tribunals.

The power of the *Sulha* participants is also known to decide on the patterns adopted in the use of commissive speech acts in the *Sulha* tribunals. Some of these commissives, such as judges, are conditioned by the participants' powers. These powers are considered social obligations in such tradition-driven judicial systems as *Sulha*. Consider the dialogue in Excerpt (3).

- Excerpt (3) Judge : How do I sentence without fees? Peace be upon the Prophet; I will take fees from the loser, and the rest will be sent to you, but after the issue. Are there any mistakes in that?
- Public : No, there are not.
- Judge : How much is that?
- One of the public : Two thousand Dinars.
- Judge : I want my fees from the distressed party.
- Distressed party : I may not have enough cash, but I have 500 Dinars. You may postpone the judgement or wait.
- Judge : You should have brought the money in advance.
- Distressed party : This is what I have.

In Excerpt (3), the judge uses powers vested in him by the *Sulha* system to give directives, which is an illocutionary force. He directs the distressed party to pay him fees before the case proceeds. This directive is satisfied by the promise made by the participant.

Promise and offer have been looked at as acts that almost perform the same roles. On the other hand, there is a variance between promises and offers in terms of the likely placing of these acts compared to other illocutionary acts or in terms of the speaker's faith, which the listener hopes or is willing that the speaker does some acts by making some offers, the speaker promises to afford the responsibility for doing the future acts that benefit the hearer (Edmondson, 1981; Ad-Darraji, et al., 2012). Following Edmondson's observation on the act of offering, it is only registered in the *Sulha* tribunals in cases that result in a hearer's material benefit, as shown in the pleading in Excerpt (4).

- Excerpt (4) Prosecutor : The guarantor will be representing both guarantees of fees and attendance.
- Plaintiff : Do you admit this?
- Guarantor : Yes, I do, and I guarantee in my name and the name of my entire tribe.

As seen in Excerpt (4), the prosecutor's directive induces an offer by the guarantor of fees and attendance. The guarantor affirms this verbally. In this case, the hearer, the plaintiff, materially benefits.

Unlike speech acts like directives expected in settings like a socially constrained one like *Sulha*, commissives in *Sulha* are likely to be made in an indirect mode than the direct one. This is shown in Excerpt (5).

- Excerpt (5) Judge : Dear attendees, now everything is clear for us. I am not here for nothing; I want some fees; I want two thousand Dinars from each party.
- One of the public : Fees?
- Judge : How could the one judge without fees? Peace be upon the Prophet; I shall only take fees from the loser party.
- Losing party : I have 500 Dinars.

As evident in Excerpt (5), the judge warns the losing party, “I am not here for nothing”. This warning is implicitly made without a performative clause, “I warn you...”. In this case, the equivalent wording of warning suffices for the hearer to deduce the illocution intended by the speaker, hence his acceptance to pay 500 Dinars, though smaller than what the judge wants.

Also noticed in the *Sulha* tribunal is that some commissive speech acts are defined by the positions of those who use them, a condition referred to by Searle (1969) as a preparatory condition. This is as shown in Excerpt (6).

Excerpt (6) Judge : Would you please sit down?
 Defendant: Okay.
 Judge : Please, sit down.

Based on the choice of words, for example, the use of the word “please” by the judge makes the directive appears as a request but because of the position that the judge occupies causes the interpretation of the utterance by the hearer (defendant) as an order. This triggers a commissive speech act of promise marked by the word “okay” used by the hearer to show respect to the judge.

5. DISCUSSION

The use of speech acts in enacting legal actions has been studied in the formal legal system. From the findings of these studies, enacting these acts’ legal actions depends on the situation created by felicity conditions that are well defined and stated. However, the operation of speech acts, particularly the commissive ones in informal legal systems, has been given a scanty look, and this study is interested in demonstrating using a case study of *Sulha*. This study has shown that *Sulha* participants use eight commissive speech acts to adopt and discharge commitment which the traditions, according to Furr and Al-Serhan (2008), subject every person participating in any *Sulha* tribunals to show. The eight commissive speech acts are promise, acceptance, warning, offer, vow, guarantee, threat, and swear. As Furr and Al-Serhan (2008) observe, the tribunal was formed to solve disputes. Therefore, every person within the society where the *Sulha* takes its course is expected to abide by its laid traditions; some of these traditions include material compensation of a complainant by the defendant. Compensation usually comes after the complainant verbally accepts their disobedience and promises to do as per the judge’s decision. This explains the highest frequency of speech acts of promise and acceptance in the *Sulha* tribunals.

Many judicial decisions are commissive because they obligate the legal parties who are already acting to abide to or perform future acts (Stahn, 2020). In this study, *Sulha* as one of the law-protecting force in Jordan, warnings and threats from officials to other participants are also expected to avoid repeats of unlawful conduct by members of the society. These are, in turn, followed by vows from members found guilty. Vows are part of the promising commissive speech act (Gea & Johan, 2020). Through vows, the guilty make a solemn promise never to show misconduct in the future. Just as in a formal legal setting, there are cases when one cannot defend himself/herself. This calls for a guarantor who, through verbal communication, assures the distressed party and informs the tribunal of their availability to guarantee the

distressed party. If a participant loses the case, he will be obliged to give an offer in the form of money. This is usually done verbally for the tribunal to have it in records. From the discussion, these commissive speech acts form predictable patterns, as some commissive speech acts have to be triggered by others in enacting legal actions by these acts (Al-Bantany, 2013).

The present study provides evidence that the frequency of a commissive speech act in a *Sulha* tribunal is determined by the hierarchies of the participants using them in the *Sulha*. In this case, the least occurring commissives, such as threats, are mostly used by judges as they are considered powerful in such tribunals. Power impacts the linguistic actions of people (Al-Bantany, 2013), and people do not have equal control in interactions due of power imbalances (Cutting, 2002). Because of the powers vested in the judges, their threats to other participants are taken positively with a promise from defendants and plaintiffs that they are ready to obey the law and judgments. The finding also reveals the important role power plays in enhancing the performative of commissive speech acts participants use in *Sulha* proceedings. For instance, threats are made by the higher power dimension (Gusthini et al., 2018); the commissive speech act of threat may not be performative if issued by an ordinary participant in a *Sulha* proceeding.

6. CONCLUSION

The present paper has examined the trends used in adopting and discharging commitments in the *Sulha* tribunals using commissive speech acts. It is established in this study that the *Sulha* tribunals work within social constraints (norms), in which case every participant is expected to show commitment towards the norm. In a set-up such as *Sulha*, participants are expected to always make promises to abide by the law and accept outcomes or judgments of cases. This explains the highest frequencies of promise and acceptance compared to other commissive acts in the *Sulha* tribunals. Forms of commissive speech act in the *Sulha* tribunals, their content and intentions, as constructed by speakers, are reconstructed in the mind of the hearers, thus making them perform their commissive roles.

Also established in this study is that some of these commissives are conditioned by the powers of the participants, such as judges who, according to the social obligations of the Bedouins, must be accorded due respect. The speaker must follow the acceptable customs of the community, which, with the speech, will be helpful. Following the *Sulha* tribunals as a culture-governed judicial system relies on the Bedouin traditions, which provide felicity conditions. It is from these conditions that language performs the speech acts of commitment.

This study focuses on the *Sulha* tribunals, the traditional Arab dispute resolution in Jordanian society. These findings may not be generalised to other Arab societies with different backgrounds and contexts. While, the findings of the current study are limited to only the Jordanians, however, the findings can be used as a basis to conduct a similar research with different types of speech acts in different contexts with different sample populations on other similar traditional dispute resolutions in other parts of the world.

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APPENDIX

Arabic Original Examples

المثال الاول:

ابو سيف: (مخاطبا طراد المسلط) عندك يا ابو اكرم؟
طراد المسلط: عندي, عندي وعند كل بني صخر انا اكفل باسم بني صخر كلهم؟
ابو سيف: يوم اني اروح من عند القاضي ابيض وش الي يفك رزقتي؟

المثال الثاني:

ابو ممدوح: يارجل انا حطيتك كفيل وانت اليوم جاي في الي لي حسبتها عليك وانت مالك حجه, ان ثبتها عليك
القول قولي ان ما ثبتها عليك انا الخسران بوجه طراد المسلط اعطيك الرزقه.
ابو سيف: انا مالي حجه!!
ابو ممدوح: وحد الله, انا في ادعائيه اقول مالك حجه, عقب ما تسمع حجتني يمكن يصيرلك حجه تستحج.
ابو سيف: (مستهزئا) ياساتر, ياساتر, ياساتر. انا ما عندي حجه!!
ابو ممدوح: انا من عندي ما اجيب شي, الي يحكم فيه الغانمين انا قابل فيه.

المثال الثالث:

القاضي: يا غانمين الطرفين والحضور. الان بينت السالفه على ايش. وانا كمان مش قاد ببلاش انا ودي اترزق
الله. ودي من كل واحد الفين دينار الفين اثنين من كل واحد
احد الحظور: رزقه؟
القاضي: (مستغريا) انا بسولف بيش طبعا بسولف بالرزقه. صلوا على النبي انا ودي اخذ بس رزقة المفلوج
والباقي اردهن عليكو لكن عقب ما تصفى الامور, في غلط في الكلام هذا يا غانمين
الجمهور: لا ابد
القاضي: (استلم مبلغ من ابو ممدوح, صاحب الدعوة) هذول قديش؟
الجمهور: عدهن



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A Contrastive Analysis of Morphological and Syntactic Aspects of English and Indonesian Adjectives

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Abstract

This study's main focus was describing adjectives' characteristics in English and Indonesian. It examined the similarities and differences in the features of adjectives in the two languages through a parallel comparison using the contrastive analysis approach. Data were collected from linguistics books from both languages. The results indicated that similarities and differences are found almost in all aspects of adjectives in both languages when analysed from the viewpoint of their classifications according to their forms, formations, meanings, and positions. At the morphological level, the reduplication form found and shared in Indonesian is not found in English. The habits of using Indonesian reduplication adjectives, which denote something done repeatedly and used for emphasis, tend to make Indonesian learners apply this rule to English. Both languages use different systems in terms of affixation as the formation of adjectives. English adjectives only have two kinds of affixes, namely prefix and suffix, while Indonesian ones have four kinds of affixes such as prefix, infix, confix, and suffix. The differences between native and foreign languages in forms, formations, meanings, and positions cause learning and teaching process difficulties. By knowing and understanding similarities and especially differences, teachers and students can solve the problems of learning and teaching English adjectives since these differences are the fundamental aspects of the problems faced by

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Indonesian native speakers when studying the target language. Consequently, having a good understanding of this critical aspect of the English language can reduce problems of learning and teaching English to Indonesian native speakers.

Keywords: Adjectives, contrastive analysis, English, Indonesian language.

1. INTRODUCTION

English, as an international language, is the most important and compulsory language at every level of the study program, from the beginning to university levels, either for admission or graduation (Manan & Azizah, 2016; Manan et al., 2020). Therefore, almost all non-English speaking countries in the world have placed the English language as part of every sphere of an essential requirement to be mastered by their people both in seeking jobs and positions. This has made every job seeker and position placement to not deny learning and mastering English as part of their daily concern (Warschauer, 2000).

However, mastering English as a foreign language is not an easy effort. A student from non-English speaking countries will face various obstacles in mastering English. One of the many factors is caused by the different systems available between English and the learners' native language (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). This existing difference in the characteristics and system between the first language and the English language, for instance, needs serious attention in finding out some ways to deal with and, as some linguists say, needs to be put into account; it also became a significant problem in translating from English to other languages, such as to Indonesian language (Ulum, 2016). For example, the difficulties in translating Indonesian adjectives into English lay in the existence of repetitive-affixed adjectives in Indonesia, such as '*kemerahmerahan*', which was translated as 'reddish' in English.

To solve the problems that may arise from the two languages, a parallel comparison between the learners' mother tongue and a foreign language being learned is quite helpful in finding out the similarities and differences between both languages. The differences between both languages are the major problems and obstacles that English foreign language students face, while the similarities make them more accessible (Johnson, 2017). In other words, if the two systems of two different languages are different, learning them by speakers of the other language will be difficult. The facts show that new learners of a second and foreign language will be influenced by their native language systems (Yusuf, et al., 2021). They often try to apply their mother tongue to a foreign language system (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017).

The mastery of language features and characteristics is essential in mastering a foreign language, in this case, English. This means that; knowing the differences and similarities between the learners' native language, Indonesian, and the target language, English, thus, helps in understanding the way of transmitting one to another (Apriyanti et al., 2017). This notion was also experienced by the authors personally, who have been lecturing English for more than 30 years.

Regarding Indonesian native speakers, it is needless to say that mastering English as a foreign language inevitably raises various problems morphologically,

phonologically, syntactically, and other related matters to the English language aspects (Mohammed, 2018; Sundari, 2018). This is because both English and Indonesian language have different systems and characteristics almost in every linguistic aspect and part within the two languages.

Learning English as a foreign language, Indonesian native speakers may face several problems. One is interference or the influence of the native language systems when learning a new language. This also can be seen from the characteristics of adjectives according to their forms, formations, meanings, and positions which are different from the English ones (Sneddon et al., 2012). In the context of forms, Indonesian commonly uses reduplicative adjectives, which are not found in English. For instance, English and Indonesian use different systems to form derivational adjectives. From the viewpoint of meaning aspects, English and Indonesian have different concepts. In terms of positions, Indonesian adjectives may function as the predicate of a sentence with no linking verbs, as in English. Besides, Indonesian also has an adjective as a predicative inversion in which it may directly act as the predicate of a sentence. At the same time, in English, this kind of construction needs a specific rule to apply.

Based on the above description, an ample understanding of English and Indonesian adjectives' characteristics, similarities, and diversities will help an Indonesian native English speaker study English. Thus, the teaching of adjectives may influence the success of teaching English (Swan & Smith, 2001). Furthermore, it is undeniable that translating adjectives from the Indonesian language into English and vice versa became a standard error in such cases (Arsiwela, 2019; Cahyani et al., 2015; Sari, 2019); it indicates that adjectives required specific attention, both from learners and teachers in Indonesia, in learning English. Accordingly, this study critically examines all the scopes of adjectives, such as forms, formations, meanings, and positions, by comparing them side by side using the Contrastive Analysis (CA) approach.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In terms of analysis of two different languages, such as contrasting English and Indonesian adjectives, which are focused on finding out their differences and similarities as the main point of this study, it is inevitably avoidable to hold on to theoretical linguistic aspects which are used as the review tool to support the scientific result of this research. Toward this end, this research adopts the Contrastive Analysis (CA) theory as its primary approach.

2.1 Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

In the sphere of applied linguistics, various theoretical approaches have been well-known in the second language acquisition research in the linguistic world, such as Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH), Errors Analysis (EA), Transfer Analysis (TA), and Interlanguage (IL) (Richards, 2015). These approaches to second language acquisition share the same concern and constitute evolutionary phases of the linguistic methods used to detect and describe the phenomenon of the performance of second and foreign language learners.

Nevertheless, contrastive analysis theory is used as the focus of this study, which deals with analysing and examining the characteristics of adjectives according to their forms, formations, meanings, and positions in English and Indonesian. It is a linguistic approach dealing with comparative linguistics study to reveal the similarities and differences between two or more languages (Obudikianga & Naomi, 2022). Davies (2005, p. 28) mentions, “contrastive analysis hypothesis is one of the theories of the second language acquisition concerning with the study of two systems and characteristics of languages between first language and target language”. Correspondingly, Raji (2012) and Al-Sobhi (2019) clarify that contrastive linguistics, which is part of a sub-discipline of linguistics, mainly focuses on comparing two or more languages or subsystems of languages to determine both the differences and similarities within the two languages. The basic assumption of contrastive analysis is based on the view that the careful and scientific comparison between the learners’ first language and the target language will reveal similarities and differences between them and thus produce efficient language teaching materials.

Furthermore, contrastive analysis provides a means to compare and find similarities and differences between the two languages so that the exchange of meaning can be done accurately (Gass et al., 2020). This analysis method is needed to explain and describe the similarities and differences between the structures within the two languages. To a great extent, the differences in the characteristics of two different languages make second and foreign-language learners confused and unable to use a target language appropriately. As a result, contrastive analysis is applicable to highlight the difficulties and ease of second language learners by comparing the learners’ first language and the target language (Auni & Manan, 2022). By this approach, we can find out what features are similar or different in the language analysis and the main interferences of the first language toward the foreign language that may occur. Consequently, “errors made by language learners can be predicted by teachers and linguists” (Brown, 2000, p. 208).

This points out that the results of comparing or contrasting two language systems, such as between English and Indonesian adjectives according to their forms, formations, meanings, and positions as the main concerns of this research, may be used as references to determine the area of difficulties faced by language learners and at the same time may be used to identify some challenges faced by language teachers in their teaching and learning programs of the target language.

2.2 Factor and Source of Errors

Several factors promote interference, which is considered a significant source of errors in the linguistics sphere of learning a foreign language by non-native speakers. Commonly, errors are caused by the differences between the first and the second language. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis depicts that interference occurs where structures in the first language that are different from those in the second language produce errors reflecting the structure of the first language. Such errors are said to be the result of the influence of learners’ first-language habits on second-language production (Derakhshan & Karimi, 2015). Jeptarus and Ngen (2016) say that errors result from interference in learning a second language from the habits of the first language. Because of the difference in the system, especially grammar, the students will transfer their first language into a foreign language using their mother tongue.

Interference is the deviation of the target language due to the learners' familiarity with more than one language (Aljumah, 2020).

Additionally, Oldin (1989, as cited in Linarsih et al., 2020) explain that there are two types of errors that learners may commit as the result of interference, namely negative transfer and positive transfer. This view depicts that negative transfer reflects those instances of transfer that bring about the error because old habitual behaviour is different from that of being learned. This transfer is called interference. Conversely, the positive transfer is the correct utterance because the first and second languages have the same structure.

2.2.1 Interference or interlingual transfer

In the sphere of linguistic acquisition of the second and foreign language, the well-formed first-language habits of the learners, to a great extent, interfere with the learning of the target language. This brings about some main obstacles for a learner to master another language due to the differences between the learner's native language and the target language. Selinker and Gass (2008, as cited in Al-Sobhi, 2019) depict that a language learner must learn the differences and ignore similar linguistic features between the two languages since these aspects are not the difficulties faced by the learners.

Non-native speakers learning a second or foreign language will face a significant phenomenon of difficulties where their native language will significantly influence their second or foreign language (Johnson, 2017). This commonly occurs due to the interference of the first language systems with the learning process of the target language (Al-Khresheh, 2016). This is because the only language system within their minds is that of their mother tongue, and they are not yet familiar with the new systems. In other words, the old habit influences using the first language when contacting another language with different characteristics and systems. As most believe, interference or interlingual transfer has a negative denotation (Mahmud, 2017; Rasulova, 2021; Richards, 2015). This means that the more the native and the target language differences, the more mistakes and errors will occur (Al-Sobhi, 2019; Derakhshan & Karimi, 2015). In terms of its effects, the phenomenon of the interference or interlingual transfer occurs on many aspects of the target language morphologically, phonologically, syntactically, and on other small related parts of the language such as word forms, word formations, and word order of the target language (Richards, 2015).

2.2.2 Intralingual transfer

In language acquisition of a foreign language, intralingual transfer plays a vital role as the source of error. Intralingual transfer (within the target language) has been a significant error factor (Heydari & Bagheri, 2012; Salmani Nodoushan, 2018). This points out that interference with the learners' native language is not solely the cause for them to commit the errors. Intralingual errors result from faulty learning of the target language rather than mother tongue interference. Brown (2000, p. 264) depicts that:

Principles of language learning and teaching that...Intra-lingual transfer (within the target language itself) is a major factor in second language learning. The early stages of language learning are characterized by a predominance or interference (interlingual transfer). However, once learners have begun to acquire part of the new system, more and more intra-lingual transfer-generalization within the target language is manifested. (Brown, 2000, p. 264)

In other words, a critical factor as the cause of these intralingual errors is insufficient knowledge of the learners when facing a new and more complex morpheme or structure within the target language. As a result, they tend to generalize one rule to others within the target language.

2.3 Nature of Adjectives in English and Indonesian

In English, adjectives refer to the words used to describe nouns or pronouns (Page, 2011) and provide further descriptions of nouns, pronouns or noun phrases, as in ‘a little boy’, ‘a big house’, etc. Furthermore, they may include the present and past participles when used as ordinary adjectives to modify a noun or noun phrase (Qadha & Al-Wasy, 2022). Furthermore, “adjectives describe or modify—that is, they limit or restrict the meaning of—nouns and pronouns. They may name qualities of all kinds: ‘huge’, ‘red’, ‘angry’, ‘tremendous’, ‘unique’, ‘rare’, etc.” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). The following are characteristics of adjectives in English.

- Adjectives may freely occur in attributive positions or can premodify a noun, such as ‘happy children’, ‘a bad boy’, and others.
- Adjectives may freely occur in predicative or subject complement, as in ‘the man seems old,’ or as object complement, as in ‘he thought the painting ugly’.
- Adjectives can be premodified by the intensifier ‘very’ as in ‘I am very happy’.
- Adjectives can take comparative and superlative forms, as in ‘happy – happier – happiest’.

In the Indonesian language, the adjective is *kata sifat* or *ajektiva*. It modifies the condition of a noun, gives more information about a noun itself (Chaer, 2002), or gives a specific description of a noun in a sentence (Alwi et al., 2003). The following are characteristics of adjectives in the Indonesian language (Chaer, 2002).

- Adjectives a lexemes that can be modified using comparative and superlative adverbs, as in ‘lebih besar, paling besar’ [bigger, biggest].
- Intensifier as *amat* [very], *sangat* [extremely], *benar-benar* [really], *sekali* [very] and *terlalu* [extremely or too] can be used as modified adjectives.
- Adjectives may be negated using *tidak* as in ‘tidak besar’ [not big].
- Adjectives has repetitive form as in ‘*mangga itu besar-besar*’ [the mangoes are big].
- An affix such as ‘*se-nya*’ may be attached to an adjective as in ‘*sebesar-besarnya*’ [as big as].

3. METHOD

The study used the qualitative descriptive method by exploring and describing the existing phenomenon as a result of a comparative study in two different languages

through bibliographic research. Through contrastive analysis (CA), this study compared English and Indonesian to identify their similarities and differences. CA has frequently been used in practical and educational settings and its goal is to give language learners better descriptions and instructional resources to a language they are learning (Johansson, 2008). In this way, this study was able to draw the aspects of similarities and dissimilarities, which revealed the predicted problems encountered by Indonesian native speakers in understanding English adjectives. Through this process, the differences were highlighted as a part of the procedure to explain the occurrences of problems since many linguists believe those differences should be considered problems of teaching and learning.

The primary sources used to develop this research were English and Indonesian grammar books, dictionaries, journals, and other references related to the focus of this study. The variables selected were English and Indonesian adjectives according to their forms, formations, meanings, and positions which were thoroughly analysed and examined through a comparative and contrastive study. In this way, the differences and similarities in the various aspects of adjectives in both languages are highlighted and depicted through their respective examples (Auni & Manan, 2022). As a result, the characteristics and features of adjectives in English and Indonesian can be revealed to see their phenomenon in both languages.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Comparative Nature between Adjectives in English and Indonesian

The definition of adjectives in English or Indonesian is similar because both languages conclude that an adjective is a word used to modify or describe a noun, pronoun, or other substantive (Börjars & Burridge, 2019; Herring, 2016; Moeliono et al., 2017). Both languages use the same characteristics; that is, adjectives may be modified by intensive and qualifying words such as ‘more’ [*lebih*], ‘quite’ [*agak*] ‘extremely’ [*amat*], or ‘very’ [*sangat*]. However, morphologically, there is a dissimilarity in which English adjectives use suffixes *-er* and *-est* and the addition of ‘more’ and ‘most’ to adjectives of more than two syllables in comparative and superlative degrees (Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002), while the Indonesian language uses words like *lebih* [more] for a comparative degree or *paling* [most] or prefix *ter-* to the base adjectives for showing superlative degree and can be enlarged by *se +* reduplication of base form + *nya* (Chaer, 2009, p. 162).

- (1) English language
e.g., good – better – best
happy – happier – happiest
beautiful – more beautiful – the most beautiful
- (2) Indonesian language
e.g., *baik* – *lebih baik* – *paling baik* or *terbaik* – *sebaik-baiknya*
[good – better – best]
bahagia – *lebih bahagia* – *paling bahagia* or *terbahagia* – *sebahagia-bahagia*
[happy-happier-happiest].
cantik – *lebih cantik* – *paling cantik* or *tercantik* – *secantik-cantik*
[beautiful-more beautiful-most beautiful]

4.2 Classification of Adjectives According to Forms

In classifying adjectives according to their forms, similarities and dissimilarities are found in English and Indonesian. The number of classifications is different. English has two forms, namely simple or base and compound forms (Elliott, 2020; McCarthy, 2002), while Indonesian has three forms base, compound, and reduplication words (Moeliono et al., 2017).

4.2.1 English and Indonesian simple or base adjectives

Both languages use the same concept when dealing with simple or base adjectives. Jackson (2013) says that a base is a morpheme in a word with the principal meaning. Elliott (2020) mentions that a simple adjective is a word that functions as an adjectival. MacNeilage and Davis (2000) write that a base word does not change its original form. From these points of view, a simple or base adjective is a word originally an adjective by its nature.

- (3) English language:
e.g., happy, brave, easy, sad (simple)
- (4) Indonesian language:
e.g., *bahagia, berani, mudah, sedih* (simple)

4.2.2 English and Indonesian compound adjectives

English and Indonesian languages share the same concept about compound adjectives. A compound adjective consists of two parts, each of which can function as separate words. Sometimes, the parts of the compound adjectives are joined by a hyphen (McCarthy, 2002). This can also be related to the views of Indonesian grammarians. Mulyadi et al. (2016) say that compound words are combinations of two or more words that have a new meaning. Further, Suparni (2002) clarifies that a phrase or compound word is syntax construction, formed from smaller free forms as elements of a sentence.

- (5) English language:
e.g., homesick, sunfast, waterproof, cocksure (compound)
- (6) Indonesian language:
e.g., *indah permai* [pretty for scenery], *ringan tangan* [helpful], *lemah lembut* [gentle], *hancur lebur* [destroyed into pieces] (compound)

From the examples in (5) and (6), it can be analysed that in English, compound adjectives may be formed from the combinations of adjectives with adjectives and with other word classes such as nouns, verbs, and adverbs. Meanwhile, in Indonesian, compound adjectives are only formed from adjectives themselves, not from other word classes.

- (7) English language:
An adjective preceded by a noun
e.g., homesick, sunfast, court-martial, cocksure, air-minded, air-sick, ice-cold, gluten-free

- (8) Indonesian language
e.g., (non-existent)
- (9) English language:
An adjective preceded by a verb
e.g., hold-tight, open-wide, slam-shut, lie-quiete, break-loose, stand-still
- (10) Indonesian language
e.g., (non-existent)
- (11) English language:
An adjective preceded by an adverb
e.g., hard-bitten, overdue, overgrown, over-shot, overblown
- (12) Indonesian language
e.g., (non-existent)
- (13) English language:
An adjective preceded by another adjective
e.g., absent-minded, ill-tempered, far-sighted

In terms of a compound adjective formed by combining two adjectives, English and Indonesian are different. Three groups may be distinguished in English, and every group has its own characteristic rule (McCarthy, 2002). First, the compound expresses a combination of two qualities; the two elements are, therefore, coordinated: ‘bitter-sweet’, ‘brown-grey’, and ‘dead-alive’. Second, a particular case of this is the combination of two adjectives, the former of which end in –o: ‘Franco-German’, ‘Anglo-Saxon’. Last, the first adjective, semi-adverbial, qualifies the second and is, therefore, subordinate to it: ‘dark-blue’, ‘red-hot’, ‘reddish-brown’, ‘Roman-Catholic’ (hence also ‘Anglo-Catholic’, which as regards its form belongs to the second group). Meanwhile, compound adjectives are formed in the Indonesian language by combining two adjectives closely related in meaning (Suparni, 2002).

- (14) Indonesian language
e.g., *muda-belia* [young], *ringan tangan* [helpful], *lemah lembut* [gentle], *indah permai* [beautiful (for scenery)], *tua renta* [very old], *hancur lebur* [destroyed]

4.2.3 Reduplication adjectives

As depicted previously, the Indonesian language has reduplication adjectives, formed by repetition, either complete or partial, of a base word, with or without changing the phoneme. In connection to this case, a reduplication is a changing form, either entirely or partially, with a variation of phoneme or not. Further, repetition may occur entirely or partially but does not change the word class when the word is repeated (Chaer, 2008; Suparni, 2002). In short, if the word is an adjective, it remains an adjective after reduplication.

- (15) English language
e.g., (non-existent)
- (16) Indonesian language
e.g., *hitam-hitam* [black], *pandai-pandai* [smart], *compang-camping* [tattered], *besar-besar* [big], *terang-terang* [bright], *kuat-kuat* [strong], *tegap-begap* [sturdy], etc.

4.3 Formations of Adjectives

4.3.1 The uses of affixation

According to Ballard (2001), affixation is a process of forming a new word by adding a bound morpheme that may be placed before or after the stem or root. In English, only two kinds of affixes are used to form adjectives: prefixes of negative meanings and derivational suffixes. While in Indonesian, there are four kinds of affixes: prefixes, infixes, suffixes, and confixes to form new words (Damariswara, 2018).

English adjectives can be formed from adjectives themselves into negative meanings (McCarthy, 2002), by the addition of the following prefixes: *dis-*, *un-*, *in-*, *ir-*, *im-*, and *non-*, while Indonesian adjectives can be formed from adjectives themselves by addition of prefixes, *ter-*, *se-*, *ber-*; infixes *-em-*, *-el-*; suffixes, *-an*, *-nya*, and confixes, *se-nya*, and *ke-an* (Suparni, 2002).

From the explanations above, it is clear that the Indonesian language does not have negative prefixes at all (Auni & Manan, 2022). To express negative, the Indonesian language usually uses 'not' [*tak* or *tidak*] for all. Meanwhile, English does not have any other affixes used to form adjectives from adjectives themselves, except with the prefixes above. To make them more precise, below are some examples.

(17) English language:

Adjectives stems with prefixes *dis-*, *in-*, *im-*, *ir-*, *un-*, *non-*

e.g., *honest* – *dishonest*, *loyal* – *disloyal*, *valid* – *invalid*, *possible* – *impossible*, *regular* – *irregular*, *afraid* – *unafraid*, *wise* – *unwise*, *alcoholic* – *non-alcoholic*, *essential* – *nonessential*

(18) Indonesian language:

Non-existent of negative prefixes. For an equivalent, see the following examples:

e.g., *jujur* – *tidak/tak jujur* [honest – not/ dishonest], *setia* – *tidak/tak setia* [loyal – not/disloyal], *valid* – *tidak/tak valid* [valid – not/invalid], *mungkin* – *tidak/tak mungkin* [possible – not/impossible], *beraturan* – *tidak/tak beraturan* [regular – not/irregular], *takut* – *tidak/tak takut* [afraid – not/unafraid], *bijaksana* – *tidak/tak bijaksana* [wise – not/unwise], *beralkohol* – *tidak/tak beralkohol* [alcoholic – not/non-alcoholic], *penting* – *tidak/tak penting* [essential – not/nonessential]

(19) Indonesian language:

Adjectives with prefixes *ter-*, *se-* and *ber-*

e.g., *tinggi* – *tertinggi* [tall – tallest], *besar* – *terbesar* [big – biggest], *luas* – *terluas* [large – largest]

besar – *sebesar* [big – as big as], *putih* – *seputih* [white – as white as], *pandai* – *sepandai* [clever – as clever as]

sedih – *bersedih* [sad], *dukacita* – *berdukacita* [grief], *putih mata* – *berputih mata* [being embarrassed or resentful]

(20) Indonesian language:

Adjectives with infixes *-em-*, and *-el-*

e.g., *kuning* – *kemuning* [yellow], *getar* – *gemetar* [trembled/shaky], *gilang* – *gemilang* [bright and brilliant]

getar – *geletar* [trembled/shaky], *gembung* – *gelembung* [bloated, bubble]

(21) Indonesian language:

Adjectives with suffixes *-an*, *-nya*

e.g., *luas* – *luasan* [large], *kecil* – *kecilan* [small], *besar* – *besaran* [big]

rajin – *rajinnya* [diligent], *sedih* – *sedihnya* [grief], *pandai* – *pandainya* [clever]

The word *-nya* has two functions in Indonesian words: as the third singular person and as a suffix. In the examples above, the word *-nya* is a suffix.

(22) Indonesian language:

Adjectives with confixes *se-nya*, and *ke-an*

e.g., *tinggi* – *setinggi-tingginya* [high – as high], *jauh* – *sejauh-jauhnya* [far – as far]

dingin – *keinginkan* [cold], *merah* – *kemerah-merahan* [red – reddish]

From the examples above, it is clear that in the formation of adjectives from adjectives themselves, English uses only one kind of affix, namely negative prefixes, while the Indonesian language, besides having no negative affixes, uses four kinds of affixes such as prefixes, infixes, suffix, and confix.

4.3.2 Derivational adjectives

English and Indonesian language adjectives can be formed by adding various affixes to verbs and nouns.

a. Adjectives with underlying verb forms

Most English adjectives derived from verbs use various suffixes such as *-able*, *-ible*, *-ent*, *-ant*, *-ing*, *-ed*, *-ive*, *-tive*, *-ative*, *-itive*, and miscellaneous pairs of affixes such as a prefix *a-* and suffixes, *-tory*, *-ful*, *-ary*, *-ery*, *-ous*, *-some*. Meanwhile, Indonesian adjectives derived from verbs use only two kinds of affixes: the prefix *ter-* and the confix *ke-an*.

(23) English language

e.g., *favour* – *favourable*, *sense* – *sensible*, *excel* – *excellent*, *observe* – *observant*, *disappoint* – *disappointing*, *crowd* – *crowded*, *curve* – *curved*, *select* – *selective*, *create* – *creative*, *sense* – *sensitive*, *imagine* – *imaginative*, *wake* – *awake*, *live* – *alive*, *satisfy* – *satisfactory*, *quarrel* – *quarrelsome*, *forget* – *forgetful*, *imagine* – *imaginary*, *slip* – *slippery*, *continue* – *continuous*

(24) Indonesian language

e.g., *buka* – *terbuka* [open, opened], *tidur* – *tertudur* [sleep, asleep], *makan* – *termakan* [eat, eaten accidentally], *panggil* – *terpanggil* [call-called]

lupa – *kelupaan* [forget-forgetful], *tidur* – *ketiduran* [sleep-asleep]

From the examples above, both the English and Indonesian languages refer to different affixes in forming adjectives from verbs. English adjectives may be formed utilizing various suffixes and a prefix to the base form of verbs, while in the Indonesian language, they are formed by adding a prefix and a confix.

b. Adjectives with underlying noun forms

Both English and Indonesian have the features of forming adjectives from nouns. In this respect, English uses one kind of affix, which is composed of various suffixes such as *-y*, *-ly*, *-ful*, *-less*, *-ous*, *-ious*, *-al*, *-tal*, *-tial*, *-etic*, *-ic*, *-atic*, *-ish*, *-like*, *-ed*, *-en* (Adams, 2016), while Swan and Smith (2001) list the following suffixes: *-able*, *-al*, *-centric*, *-ed*, *-ful*, *-ic*, *-ical*, *-ish*, *-ive*, *-like*, *-less*, *-ly*, *-ous*, *-proof*, *-ward*, *-y* and others such as, *-ar*, *-ary*, *-ery*, *-esque*, *-istic*, and *-wide*. Meanwhile, Indonesian

uses three kinds of affixes: *ber-*, and suffixes *-i*, *-wi*, *-ah*, and the confix *ke-an* (Alwi et al., 2003).

(25) English language

e.g., wind – windy, dirt – dirty, sand – sandy; time – timely, love – lovely; wonder – wonderful, law – lawful; end – endless, home – homeless; fame – famous, danger – dangerous; space – spacious; monument – monumental, horizon – horizontal, influence – influential; sympathy sympathetic, artist – artistic, system – systematic; child – childish, man – mannish; life – lifelike, war – warlike; salary – salaried, horn – horned; gold – golden, wool – woolen; element – elementary, circle – circular, family – familiar, fortune – fortunate, satisfaction – satisfactory

(26) Indonesian language:

With prefix, *ber-*

e.g., *angin* – *berangin* [win – windy], *batu* – *berbatu* [stone – stony], *bulu* – *berbulu* [hair – hairy], *air* – *berair* [water-watery], *pasir* – *berpasir* [sand-sandy]

(27) Indonesian language:

With confix, *ke-an*

e.g., *barat* – *kebarat-baratan* [west – westernized], *anak* – *kekanak-kanakan* [child-childish], *dunia* – *keduniaan* [world-worldly]

(28) Indonesian language:

With suffixes *-i*, *-wi*, and *-ah*

e.g., *insan* – *insani* [human – humane], *alam* – *alami* [nature – natural]
manusia – *manusiawi* [human – humane], *surga* – *surgawi* [heaven – heavenly]
alam – *alamiah* [nature – natural], *ilmu* – *ilmiah* [science – scientific]

From the examples above, it is clear that most English adjectives, which are derived from nouns, are formed by the addition of suffixes. While in Indonesian, besides the addition of suffixes, adjectives are formed by adding a prefix or a confix. In other words, the last two kinds of affixes are not found or used to form English noun-derived adjectives.

4.4 Classification of Adjectives According to Meaning

English grammarians have different points of view in classifying adjectives according to their meanings. Page (2011, p. 42) mentions two classes of adjectives: “descriptive and limiting,” while Rossiter (2020, p. 128) proposes “determining and descriptive”. Even though some English grammarians sometimes use different terms in adjectives, as mentioned, the scopes they discuss are the same. Therefore, English adjectives can be divided into descriptive and limiting. Descriptive adjectives modify nouns or pronouns by describing them or expressing their qualities. Limiting adjectives modify nouns or pronouns by restricting them rather than describing their qualities or traits. In other words, a limiting adjective, without expressing any idea of kind or condition, limits the application of the idea expressed by the noun to one or more individuals of the class or parts of a whole. Limiting adjectives include demonstrative, interrogative, qualifying, possessive, articles, proper, and numerals.

Meanwhile, the Indonesian language is not so clear whether they may be divided into what has been stated above because most Indonesian grammarians do not explain them clearly. To depict this, a famous Indonesian grammarian, Chaer (2008), concludes that the word class of adjectives is seen clearly in Western and Arabic

languages because of its specific position following the noun it follows. However, in general, the meaning of adjectives in the Indonesian language refers to quality, quantity, and limitation. An adjective is a word to answer the question ‘how’ or ‘in what state’ a noun is. The following explains descriptive and limiting adjectives.

4.4.1 Descriptive adjectives

Descriptive adjectives can be used to express the size, colour, or shape of a person, a thing, an animal, or a place. They provide more information about a noun by describing or modifying it. In other words, descriptive adjectives are those words that can be used to name a quality, feature, or characteristic of the thing modified.

(29) English language

e.g., The fat boy showed up on the show stage.

The thin girl is my younger sister.

(30) Indonesian language

e.g., Anak gemuk itu muncul di panggung pertunjukkan [The fat boy showed up on the show stage].

Gadis kurus itu adalah adik perempuan saya [The thin girl is my younger sister].

4.4.2 Limiting adjectives

Unlike descriptive adjectives, which cannot be classified, the limiting ones can be divided into groups, and other words cannot precede this kind of adjectives. They mostly give substantive meanings which show the quantity or number. In other words, the limiting adjectives do not function to describe the nouns but rather give limitations to the nouns they modify. These adjectives include demonstrative, interrogative, qualifying, possessive, articles, proper, and numeral.

(31) English language

e.g., That book is his. (Demonstrative)

Which book is yours? (Interrogative)

A few students study English grammar. (Qualifying)

Your pens are expensive. John's mother lives in Ohio. (Possessive)

The selves of the books can easily be found in the main library. (Article)

American car is quite rare in my town. (Proper)

Three beautiful paintings are sold in the exhibition. (Numeral)

(32) Indonesian language

e.g., Buku itu dia punya [That book is his]. (Demonstrative)

Buku mana yang kamu punya [Which book is yours]? (Interrogative)

Beberapa mahasiswa belajar grammar bahasa Inggris [A few students study English grammar]. (Qualifying)

Pulpen-pulpenmu mahal. Ibu si John tinggal di Ohio [Your pens are expensive. John's mother lives in Ohio]. (Possessive)

Rak-rak buku tersebut dengan mudah dapat ditemukan di pustaka induk [The selves of the books can easily be found in the main library]. (Article)

Mobil Amerika agak jarang di kota saya [American car is quite rare in my town]. (Proper)

Tiga lukisan cantik dijual di pameran [Three beautiful paintings are sold in the exhibition]. (Numeral)

4.5 Classification of Adjectives According to Positions

The different points can also be traced in adjectives' positions in English and Indonesian. English adjectives may be classified into four classifications, attributive, predicative (Herring, 2016; Huddleston & Pullum, 2002), appositive and factitive (Fithriani, 2011). An appositive adjective is an adjective that follows a noun it modifies. A factitive adjective is used after a certain verb and its direct object. Meanwhile, the positions of Indonesian adjectives commonly found in Indonesian books are attributive, predicative, and predicative inversion.

Two similar terms are found in both languages: attributive and predicative. The appositive and factitive are only found in English. Meanwhile, the predicative inversion is only found in Indonesian.

4.5.1 Attributive adjectives

The position of attributive adjectives is different in both languages. In English, these adjectives stand before the nouns they qualify or between a determiner and a noun (Hendriani & Kasuma, 2009). While in the Indonesian language, they stand after the nouns they qualify. Some dissimilarities can be described in the following examples.

(33) English language

e.g., blackboards – a small boy – a good-looking girl – smart ladies

(34) Indonesian language

e.g., *papan hitam* [blackboards] – *anak kecil* [a small boy] – *seorang gadis cantik* [a good-looking girl] – *gadis-gadis pandai* [smart ladies]

4.5.2 Predicative adjectives

The English predicative adjectives must stand after the linking verbs such as 'be', 'seem', 'become', 'feel', 'look', etc. (Swan & Walter, 2011, p. 175) since adjectives in English cannot stand or function as predicates of sentences. Meanwhile, Indonesian "predicative adjectives can stand directly as predicates of sentences without any other words as in English" (Moeliono et al., 2017, p. 204). To see their differences, below are the illustrations of predicative adjectives used both in English and Indonesian.

(35) English language

e.g., You are diligent.
She looks angry.
My mother was busy.
The fish tastes delicious.

(36) Indonesian Language

e.g., *Kamu pandai* [You are diligent].
Dia marah [She looks angry].
Ibuku sibuk [My mother was busy].
Ikan itu enak [The fish tastes delicious].

4.5.3 Predicative inversion adjectives

Another difference that can be seen clearly in the position of English and Indonesian adjectives is that the Indonesian adjectives can be placed in front of the subjects of sentences. However, they function as predicates of sentences (Chaer, 2009). For sure, this system in which an adjective stands directly as a predicate in front of a subject is not found in English. In English, such construction needs its particular rule, as in ‘so beautiful was that lady I decided to marry her’. In this regard, the inversion has an emphasis function in English. To make it more straightforward, below are some examples of the position of adjectives in both languages.

(37) English language
e.g., (non-existent)

(38) Indonesian language	
e.g., <u>Cemas</u> <u>adiknya</u> .	(<u>His brother is anxious</u>)
P S	S P C
<u>Marah</u> <u>dia</u> .	(<u>He is angry</u>)
P S	S P C
<u>Malukah</u> <u>kamu</u> ?	(<u>Are you ashamed?</u>)
P S	P S C

4.5.4 Appositive adjectives

English appositive adjectives may stand after the nouns they qualify by specific rules (Fithriani, 2011). In other words, an appositive adjective usually follows its noun. This kind of position is similar to that of attributive adjectives in Indonesian.

(39) English language
e.g., chapter five
postmaster general
paragraph three

(40) Indonesian language
e.g., bab lima [chapter five]
postmaster umum [postmaster general]
paragraf tiga [paragraph three]

4.5.5 Factitive adjectives

This position of English adjectives seems similar to that of attributive adjectives in the Indonesian language. However, the dissimilarity between these two languages is that in English, this kind of adjective stands after certain verbs and their objects as an object complement. Van Valin (2001) clarifies that a modifier that follows a verb and its direct object is an adjective referring to the object rather than the action of the verb. Meanwhile, in Indonesian, this position of adjectives is seemingly placed as an attributive adjective; however, it is usually used without certainty or certain verbs, as in English. In order to see this matter, some examples of them are depicted below.

(41) English Language
e.g., The storm has made me uneasy.
All his friends considered him intelligent.

The man dug the hole deep.

(42) Indonesian language

e.g., *Badai itu telah membuat saya susah* [The storm has made me uneasy].

Semua temannya menganggap dia pandai [All his friends considered him intelligent].

Orang laki-laki itu menggali lobang dalam [The man dug the hole deep].

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Morphological Aspect

Even though the nature and characteristics of adjectives between English and Indonesian are almost similar, there are differences in the morphological and syntactical system of adjectives in the two languages. In the morphological system, English had comparative forms, either regular or irregular forms (Carstairs-McCarthy, 2002), e.g., good – better – best and beautiful – more beautiful – most beautiful. These systems are not known in Indonesian structure (Chaer, 2009). On the contrary, the Indonesian language uses adverbs as intensifiers, such as *lebih* [more] for the comparative form and *paling* [most] for the superlative form, such as in *baik* [good] – *lebih baik* [better] – *paling baik* [best]. Here, through the contrastive analysis, it could be inferred that the Indonesian language has a more straightforward way of forming comparative and superlative adjectives.

The following difference in morphological level was the existence of a reduplicative form of the adjective in the Indonesian language, as in the example of *hitam-hitam* (Chaer, 2008; Suparni, 2002). Such a form does not exist in English. Furthermore, the complexity is amplified by adding affixes for a reduplicative form of the adjective, as in *kehitam-hitaman*. Such form does not exist in English, either, yet English has a specific word to express the equivalent meaning, namely ‘blackish’.

Furthermore, a set of prefixes, –dis, un–, ir–, in–, im– and –non, which usually evokes a negative meaning and is used for certain English adjectives, is not found in the Indonesian language (Auni & Manan, 2022). For instance, the prefix dis– is not used with the word ‘possible’, or the prefix un– may not be used with the word ‘honest’, and so forth. In contrast, stating negation in the Indonesian language usually uses ‘not’ [*tidak* or *tak*].

Additionally, many suffixes with various meanings are used to form English adjectives from verbs or nouns (Adams, 2016; Swan & Smith, 2001). These kinds of suffix systems used in various ways are not found in Indonesian. The difficulties in mastering this kind of English adjectives can be seen clearly as many different suffixes are used for certain words. Besides, some similar suffixes are used to form English adjectives either from verbs or from nouns, such as –ful, –ed, –ing, and –ous. Another difficulty Indonesian speakers face is forming adjectives from other word classes, verbs and nouns. Both languages use different kinds of affixes. English uses suffixes (e.g., *hairy*, *interesting*, *closed*), while the Indonesian language uses prefixes, confixes, and suffixes (e.g., *berbatu* [stony], *kekanakan* [childish], *duniawi* [worldly]).

Moreover, in English, according to their meanings, adjectives can be classified clearly into two descriptive and limiting (Rossiter, 2020), but In Indonesian, this aspect of adjectives is not clearly defined. Besides, limiting adjectives in English are divided into several sub-divisions, and every sub-division has several words with their own

characteristics in the English language. For fuller information about this problem, it is well to remember that some English words are not known in the Indonesian language, such as ‘mother’s’, ‘any’, ‘much’, ‘a lot of’, and ‘a few’. In Indonesian, expressing ‘any’, ‘much’, and ‘a lot’ uses the word *banyak* [many] in all statements, and ‘a few’ or ‘few’ uses the word *beberapa* [some]. The phrase ‘*milik ibu*’ [mother’s] is used for possessive.

Based on the comparison of the positions of English and Indonesian adjectives, it is clear that learning English attributive positions is very difficult for Indonesian speakers because these adjectives’ positions in both languages differ.

5.2 Syntactical Aspect

At the syntactical level, the difference lies in the position of adjectives in a phrase. In English, an adjective stands before the noun; it qualifies or is between a determiner and a noun (Hendriani & Kasuma, 2009). Whereas in the Indonesian language, it stands after the noun it qualifies, for example, ‘a black board’ [*sebuah papan tulis hitam*], ‘a large beautiful garden’ [*sepetak kebun luas nan indah*], ‘a stupid narrow-minded boy’ [*seorang anak bodoh yang berpikiran sempit*]. This clearly shows that both languages use contrary positions of this kind of adjective.

In English, syntactically, predicative adjectives must stand after linking verbs (Swan & Walter, 2011). In contrast, in the Indonesian language, they stand directly as predicates of sentences (Moeliono et al., 2017), as in ‘he is happy’ [*dia bahagia*] and ‘his child gets hungry’ [*anaknya lapar*]. Moreover, in English, linking verbs play a critical role in connection with adjectives, and their use depends on time or tenses when something happens. Meanwhile, Indonesian does not recognize this system. For instance, ‘I am happy’, ‘I was happy’, and ‘I will be happy’ indicate a different period of time. At the same time, the Indonesian language is straightforward without any linking verbs, showing the time something is done. In other words, the Indonesian language does not recognize verb conjugations showing tenses. Therefore, this is also one of the serious problems in learning English by Indonesian speakers.

In Indonesian structure, it is commonly found that adjectives precede the subject of sentences, and they directly stand as predicates (Chaer, 2009). This case will cause difficulty for Indonesian speakers studying English because it is not encountered in such a way in English sentence structure. To meet this way, English uses a particular rule that must be applied, such as ‘so + adjective + linking verbs + S that ...’, such as ‘so strong is the wind that we could not go out’, ‘so beautiful was the girl that nobody could talk of anything’, or ‘so delicious was Acehnese food that visitors could eat every day’. However, in Indonesian, this is quite simple in that an adjective may be placed directly in front of the subject and functions directly as a sentence predicate. For example, ‘cemas ibunya’ [his/her mother is anxious], ‘sengsara hidupnya’ [His/her life is grief], and ‘sakitkah engkau?’ [are you sick?].

In addition to the position, English appositive adjectives are quite similar to Indonesian ones under the term attributive (Fithriani, 2011; Hendriani & Kasuma, 2009). Nevertheless, there are some difficulties faced by Indonesian speakers in learning this position because the English appositive adjectives have special rules in English, such as in set phrases coming from old French (e.g., ‘the body politic’, ‘postmaster general’), with a unit of space or time (e.g., ‘a ruler twelve inches long’, ‘two months ago’), place or time words that usually function as adverbs (e.g., ‘the sky

above', 'the day after'), cardinal numbers used for identifying or naming (e.g., 'line four', 'chapter five'), and the adjective 'enough' (e.g., 'I have time enough' or 'I have enough time'). Thus, it is clear that this kind of English adjective makes Indonesian speakers uneasy about studying them. In other words, they must know all the rules of this adjective.

Even though the position of factitive adjectives is also similar to the term attributive adjective in the Indonesian language (Fithriani, 2011; Hendriani & Kasuma, 2009), trouble is also found by Indonesian native speakers in mastering this position of English adjectives. Indonesian speakers must know and memorize certain verbs and their objects in English sentences. It means that several verbs need to be paid into the account by English learners, such as 'the teacher made me uneasy,' 'the news drove the man insane,' and 'she painted the picture red'.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the contrastive analysis, there are some different features of adjectives in the Indonesian language and English, which may be the source of errors and problems for Indonesian native speakers when learning English. The first lies on the morphological level. The reduplication form found and shared in Indonesian is not found in English. The habits of using Indonesian reduplication adjectives, which denote something done repeatedly and used for emphasis, tend to make Indonesian learners apply this rule to English. Further, both languages use different systems in terms of affixation as the formation of adjectives. English adjectives only have two kinds of affixes, namely prefix and suffix, while Indonesian ones have four kinds of affixes such as prefix, infix, confix, and suffix.

Furthermore, the differences also exist at a syntactical level. Firstly, two similar terms are found in both languages, attributive and predicative adjectives, with very different uses. Secondly, there is a predicative inversion of an adjective directly acting as a predicate in Indonesian, whereas it is not in English. English uses a specific rule to reach this inverted construction. Thirdly, there is another position in English, namely factitive, which has its characteristics and certainties. The factitive is equivalent to attributive in Indonesian but does not have its particular characteristics and certainties as in the case of the English ones. In English, for instance, the factitive adjectives usually stand after certain verbs and their objects as their object complement. From analysing the data and results as depicted above, it can be concluded that the differences between native and foreign languages, in terms of forms, formations, meanings, and positions, can cause difficulty in the teaching and learning process. Hence, the result of this study may be used for further investigation of errors in translating from Indonesian to English and vice versa, particularly in the case of adjective use in both languages. The result also may be used in arranging lessons on the adjective for learners from both languages.

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English-Language Media Discourse in the Era of Digitalisation: Special Mission and Functional Potential

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Abstract

The article addresses the problem of the functional potential of the present-day English-language media discourse and its role in English-speaking societies and other countries where English does not have official national status. The purpose of the research is to holistically understand key functions that the English language media discourse is performing in the 21st century. The theoretical framework of this study includes mutually influencing and complementary research doctrines of Halliday's systemic functional approach, Stuart Hall's cultural studies approach, and the pragmatic approach of Jeff Verschuren. The findings are based on qualitative and quantitative analyses of scientific works dedicated to the English-language media discourse and a massive media discourse corpus of leading English-language print and online media resources. Overall, the research has proved that the English-language media discourse may perform seven key pragmatic functions (political and economic function,

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educational function, environmental protection and sustainable development function, integration function, innovative function, cultural diplomacy function, and the social function of sport), which help promote a 'missionary' world of democracy and sustainability, affordable education and breakthrough innovations, multiculturalism, national identity and race-free ideology, healthy sport and well-being. Moreover, it is proved that modern English-language media discourse acts as a single holistic information management system whose goal is to become a global influencer and mediator navigating between English-speaking nations and non-English world communities.

Keywords: English-language media discourse, functional potential, innovation, multiculturalism, sustainable development.

1. INTRODUCTION

The German sociologist Luhmann (2000, p. 98) once mentioned that “everything we know about our society, or even about the world in which we live, we know through the media”. The same idea is reflected in the works of a Russian researcher in journalism and media language, Zasursky (2012), who also characterised information as the most important resource for human development. Moreover, Zasursky (2012) drew attention to the reality of the modern era, in which there are global media “one way or another serving the whole world and all countries to a large extent” (Zasursky, 2012, p. 103). The Russian political scientist Lebedeva (2009) emphasised that today’s global media had become new actors in international relations, primarily focused on ‘the English-speaking audience scattered around the world’. This statement of the Russian researcher can be correlated with the modern English-language media discourse, whose characteristics and functionality extend far beyond the boundaries of the sphere of influence of English-speaking countries. Objectively, the English-language media discourse of the current digitalisation era—which is characterised by technology that accelerates the pace and breadth of knowledge exchange within the economy and society (Shepherd, 2003)—may be regarded as a crucial source for recent news, social and cultural trends, new educational paradigms, scientific breakthroughs, and the current political, economic, and environmental challenges that humanity is facing.

Thus, an English-language media discourse at the beginning of the 21st century, including print press and electronic media resources, social media, and various digital platforms for posting, sharing, and discussing a variety of information content, is one of the most influential linguistic and extra-linguistic phenomena of our time (Cotter, 2001; Crystal, 2012; Hall, 1994). Its influence correlates with such lexical units as change, dominance, and power. In this regard, technological innovations, which primarily take place in the English-speaking world, correspondingly make its media discourse space play a pioneering role in many life spheres and guarantee a dominant and powerful position on a global scale. In the theory of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2013; Fowler, 2013; Habermas, 2015), media discourse space becomes the substance that determines social changes in society as “implicit and transparent structural relations of dominance, discrimination, power, and control, expressed in

language” (Wodak, 2011, p. 286), which, according to Habermas (2015), is also a means of domination and social power.

Referring to the concepts of ‘dominance,’ ‘language,’ and ‘English-speaking media discourse,’ the first associations arise with such English-speaking countries as the United States of America (USA) and Great Britain. The USA is the most extensive information powerhouse and a ‘huge information factory’. Its information locomotive is the daily American media publication of *The New York Times* (Zasursky, 2012). On the other hand, there is also the British international business newspaper, *The Financial Times*, which, in terms of economic analysis, may be the most important media outlet in the modern world (Zasursky, 2012). At the same time, along with these media, influential English-speaking media sources capable of presenting high-quality information and acting with an understanding of the current level of the world and society development, examples of other respectable international English-speaking media (not always owned by English-speaking countries) can be cited. They are an English-language version of the Chinese newspaper *People’s Daily Online*, the Japanese national daily of *The Mainichi*, and *The Times of India*, one of the most widely read and respected newspapers in India. Therefore, considering the international status of the modern English language (lingua franca) and English-language media resources, it is logical to assume that the English-language media discourse is also acquiring a supranational level of dominance and social influence, actively demonstrating the entire broad palette of its functional potential.

In this regard, the present paper aims to evaluate a systematic and holistic understanding of the key functions that modern English-language media discourse can perform in the 21st century, in the era of multiple innovative processes and the rapid development of information technologies. In addition, the Belgian linguist and pragmatist Jess Verschuren once stated that the structural and functional properties of the process of news reporting lack sufficient description in the tradition of a free press (Cotter, 2001). This statement can be understood as the necessity to analyse thoroughly the English-language media discourse space as a symbolic representation of a democratic institution of the Western world. Thus, the relevance of this research is based on the need to evaluate the present-day English-language media discourse as a role model for the construction and functioning of other media language domains. Its functional potential may become the ‘voice’ that raises important social issues on a global scale. The language of the English media discourse should be observed in correlation with the present-day media of other nations and states. This can help us better understand the globally appealing world of the new media environment, which is actively shaping human consciousness in the modern era of digitalisation.

Within the framework of the presented study, several questions arise correspondingly.

1. What are the key functions that modern English-language media discourse performs? How do they realise their integral action in the media-discourse space of the English-speaking society?
2. Are there geographical differences in implementing the functional potential of the English-language media discourse?
3. How and to what extent can the impact of the functional potential of the English-language media discourse be spread on the media discourse space of other linguistic dominions?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Without first taking into account the fundamental ideas underlying a certain phenomenon, which are crucial for its qualitative interpretation, the study of the functional potential of that phenomenon will be incomplete. In this case, we discuss the meaning of the potential of the English-language media discourse and the success of their implementation at the local and global levels of its functioning through the use of the terms ‘functional,’ ‘functionalism,’ and ‘potential’.

2.1 The Concepts of ‘Functional’ and ‘Functionalism’ as a Mirror of Human Social Life

The first lexeme, ‘functional’, means ‘useful’, ‘efficient’, and ‘effective’ (Macmillan, n.d.a). ‘Functional’ is used in opposition to formal so far as it considers language as “a practical means of expressing meaning rather than as an abstract set of relations” (Flowerdew, 2013, p. 11; Neddar, 2017, p. 58). The positive connotations inherent in the meaning of this concept transfer these properties to the object of reality, whose functional characteristics need to be analysed. According to Halliday (2009), this functionality lies in distinct aspects of its interpretation as text, system, structure, and, consequently, discourse. Applying this approach to our research, that is, to the English-language media discourse, it is necessary to focus on analysing the efficacy of its media reality and consider media functionalism as an instrument of power and influence.

The notion of ‘functionalism’ associated with the attribute ‘functional’ is multifaceted, multidimensional, and requires deeper consideration (Macmillan, n.d.b). The evolutionary theory of Charles Darwin became the theoretical basis of functionalism, the meaning of which was expanded beyond the descriptions of the laws of life of organisms and extended to the area of human social life (Vekilova, 2005). In the philosophy of consciousness, functionalism is understood as the theory of consciousness, according to which mental states are determined not by their internal structure but by the roles they play in the system, part of which they become (i.e., part of the English-language media discourse system).

The American philosopher and psychologist William James (1842-1910) was the most famous representative of functionalism. He identified the concepts of “functionalism” and “result,” calling it “... truth which gives the result” (Vekilova, 2005, p. 104). The social basis of functionalism in psychological science is a mental state which can be defined in terms of causal relationships (for example, ‘how’ and ‘why’) that exist between this mental state, environmental conditions, body behaviour, and other states of mind (Beck & Grayot, 2021). The functionalism approach is similar to the analysis of information processes, which allowed it to become the philosophical basis of the computational theory of mind.

In linguistics, ‘functionalism’ is understood as a set of schools and directions that have arisen as one of the branches of structural linguistics, characterised by predominant attention to language functioning as a means of communication (Butler, 2005). In addition, a similar approach, primarily associated with the Prague school of linguists of the 1930s (Kartsevsky, 2000), concerns the functions performed by the language, primarily from the cognition point of view (related to information), expressions (indicating mood) and connotations (influencing). These three postulates

have something in common with the philosophy of Habermas (2015), who emphasised that the task of functionalism was to ensure the unity of reason in the diversity of its aspects and the connection of expert cultures with everyday communication (Furs, 2000).

With a functionalist view of language, they are often distracted from the existence of ethical motives for its use, putting forward goals in the first place, namely: integration, acceptance, and grouping of interests. One cannot but agree with the statement of Demyankov (2000) that the role of functionalism in language allows achieving one's goals (hidden or open), acting on a person through persuasion, advertising, influence on the worldview, propaganda, and many other various effects. Summarising the above ideas on the concept of 'functionalism,' we note that this phenomenon has become the most important feature of linguistics at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, contributing to the study of linguistic and extra-linguistic phenomena and entities not only as systems but also as functioning intellectual and emotional processes that help a person to systematise and perceive the modern digital world and fully experience its multifunctional potential.

2.2 The Concept of 'Potential' in the Modern English-Language Media Discourse

Moving on to the concept of 'potential', we focus on the etymology of this lexeme and its meaning. In a broad sense, 'potential' means the total of all available opportunities in any area or sphere. The word comes from the Latin *potentialis*, 'powerful'. From *potentia* 'strength, power', then from *potēns* 'mighty', from *posse* 'to be able', from the adjective *potis* 'mighty, mighty' + *esse* 'to be', and goes back to the Proto-Indo-European *es-* 'to be' (Harper, n.d.b). The most popular synonyms for the lexeme 'potential' are such concepts as 'resource', 'opportunity', 'being', 'circle', 'set', 'internal reserves', 'presence', and other words. This entire synonymous range is effectively implemented in the potential of modern English-language media and their media discourse space, turning the latter into the leading digital influencer of the present time in the global world of information, streaming, and analytics (Ershov, 2019).

One of the most striking concepts of modernity, which has a rich internal reserve, is the definition of 'media man' (*homo mediatius*), introduced into scientific and everyday use by the Russian philologist, journalist, and sociologist Elena Vartanova (Abaev & Ezhikhina, 2015). The transformation of a modern person into a 'media man' is becoming the most important feature of the digital society of the third millennium and is largely shaped by the structure and "content of the media as a product of the media industry consumed in the processes of mass and social communication, as well as the communication relations and interests of the individual" (Vartanova, 2011, p. 201). In agreement with the author's definition of a new type of person in the 21st century, it is important to note that, in many ways, the structure and content of modern media publications around the world were formed according to the patterns and templates established by the English-language media industry (bolstered by technological capabilities of Google, YouTube, social media and other digital applications). Therefore, it is logical to make the assumption that in the formation of a media man, there is a merit of both the English-language media and the English-language media discourse, whose functional potential also allowed the evolutionary

nature of man to move forward synchronously with the development of innovative technologies on the planet.

Thus, taking into account the active involvement of the English-language media discourse in many different social processes happening both on the territory of the English-speaking countries and in other language dominions, it seems important to analyse, evaluate and summarise the functional potential, capabilities, and resources of the English-speaking media discourse, which are fully implemented not only within the modern English-speaking society but also spread to other civilised states in the international geopolitical context.

3. METHODS

3.1 Sample

The identification and analysis of the strategically important functionalities of the English-language media discourse and their subsequent holistic and systematic description required a detailed study of a significant corpus of English-language media discourses belonging not only to the native English-speaking countries but also to other countries in which English is either the second state language or is officially recognised at the state level of a particular country. Thus, this study is based on a qualitative and quantitative analysis of media discourses of leading English-language media publications and digital platforms in the UK, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, as well as India, Pakistan, South Africa, developing countries of Southeast Asia, China and Japan (e.g., *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Voice of America*, *NBC News*, *CNN*, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *Toronto Star*, *BBC*, *Financial Times*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age*, *The Australian*, *The Irish Times*, *The Times of India*, *Daily Times*, *60 Minutes Australia*), and social media of Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, YouTube. A total of 350,000 printable characters (no spaces) were analysed, and 67 hours of video content posted on the aforementioned English-language media platforms devoted to various social issues were reviewed and analysed.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The research used the following mutually influencing and complementary research doctrines: Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach, which describes the text and context dynamics, social changes in language, and multimodal discourse (Gebhard & Accurso, 2020); Stuart Hall's (1994) culturological approach based on familiarising the audience with the 'consistent code' of the dominant culture (in this case, the culture of the English-language media discourse); as well as the pragmatic approach of Jeff Verschueren (1999), focused on the cognitive, social and cultural analysis of language and communication.

We conducted content analysis (Bell, 2002), narrative analysis (Labov, 2013), and conversation analysis (Sacks, 2004) of the English-language media material. We processed it in a specialised computer program for the textual information analysis QDA Minor. This procedure made it possible to establish the most significant thematic clusters in the modern media discourse of English-speaking countries, which, like

electromagnetic waves, spread in the global media space and are capable of exerting both direct and indirect effects on the recipient—a native speaker of the English language and the English-speaking mentality, as well as on representatives of other mental and ideological cultures. Identifying thematic clusters has also become possible thanks to the English-language Google search engine, which effectively demonstrates the search volume of queries on various topics. One should mention that the need for thematic analysis (TA) as a qualitative research data processing is also mentioned by the Australian psychologist Virginia Braun and her colleague from the United Kingdom, Victoria Clark, who jointly developed their own author's model for classifying objects according to the thematic principle. They both suppose that "TA is a method for systematically identifying, organising, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a dataset. Through focusing on meaning across a dataset, TA allows the researcher to see and make sense of collective or shared meanings and experiences" (Braun & Clark, 2012, pp. 57-71).

It is possible to track the most important topics being discussed in English-speaking society at a given moment using statistical indicators of the number of thematic queries that form in the English-language media space. As a result, evaluating the functional potential of the English-language media discourse space and its additional prognostic properties is also possible.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A qualitative theoretical analysis and generalisation of scientific works devoted to the problem of the functioning of the English-language media discourse in the digital era (Demyankov, 2000; Machin & Leeuwen, 2007; Vartanova, 2011; Zasursky, 2012); the study and generalisation of statistical data (see Table 1) indicate that the English-language media discourse can be considered as an effective tool for highlighting political and economic problems in English-speaking countries and on the international arena, a vital mediator of environmental policy for sustainable development in the world, and an active source of fight promotion against the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus pandemic. English-language media discourse is also a powerful global educational resource advancing the ideas of multiculturalism, national identity, and combating racial prejudices. It is an active and influential promoter of modern science, innovation, and space exploration. Moreover, finally, the English-language media discourse is one of the most widespread broadcasters and promoters of the sports, entertainment, and show business industries.

The next sub-sections discuss the findings to the three research questions posed in this study.

4.1 Key Functions of the Modern English-Language Media Discourse

We conducted discourse and content analysis of the information dedicated to the themes mentioned in Table 1. We managed to identify the correlation between the thematic clusters that are interconnected in one way or another and work together. It means that the representation of one thematic issue in the media discourse space covers directly or indirectly another relevant problem in the present-day English-speaking

states and the rest of the world. The practical examples in this research provided good evidence of how these iconic clusters can exert a specific influence on each other.

Table 1. Strategically significant thematic clusters of modern English-language media discourse functioning¹.

No.	Name of the thematic cluster	Query statistics in the English-speaking space of the search engine Google
1	Politics	2 770 000 000
2	Economy	1 660 000 000
3	Environmental protection and sustainable development	1 376 000 000* ²
4	Covid 19 pandemic and vaccination	1 180 000 000*
5	Sport	10 360 000 000
6	Multiculturalism, racism, and national identity	1 030 600 000*
7	Education	4 980 000 000
8	Science, innovations, and space exploration	4 892 000 000*
9	Show business and entertainment industry	7 990 000 000*

Source: Google search engine data.

We singled out seven essential functions carried out by the modern English-language media discourse space (see Figure 1), which should be the focus of a particular research object due to their social demand and interest for multiple debates and confrontations on a local and global scale of the information perception.

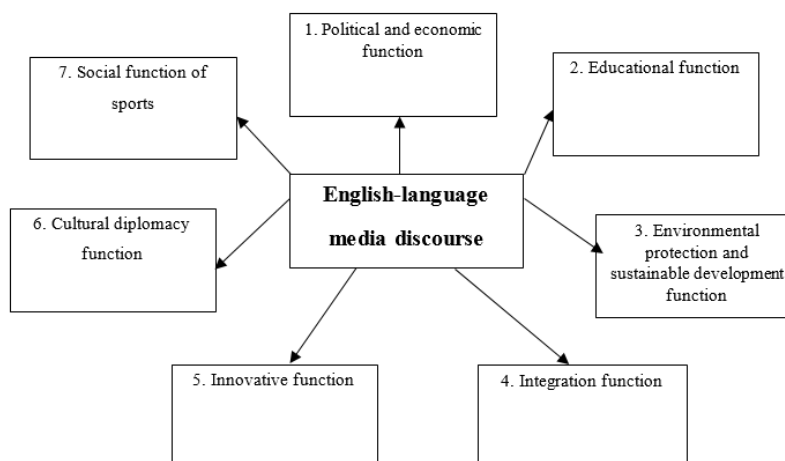


Figure 1. Key functions of modern English-language media discourse.

The functions that help construct modern reality represented through the present-day English-language media discourse are the following ones: political and economic function, educational function, environmental protection and sustainable development function, integration function, innovative function, cultural diplomacy function, and the social function of sport. We would like to demonstrate how these crucial functions work independently and all together when promoting some information in the media discourse space. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on a brief characteristic of each of

¹ as of 2021

² *- total number of requests for the given topics

them as well as present argumentative examples from the English-language media discourse that may prove the essence of their nature and character.

4.1.1 *Politics and economics*

The first is the ‘political and economic’ function of the English-language media discourse, shows that its virtual picture of political and economic reality is a new symbolic type of media reality that affects the political and ideological consciousness of citizens and their perception of the economic situation of the modern era. It is especially true about the American media discourse, which is perceived as a special ideological and even ‘missionary’ project to dominate the world space, which is actively declared by the American media themselves. For example

- (1) ...as the British taught the Americans over a century ago, whoever controls the infrastructure of empire runs the world. (Mitrovich, 2021, para. 2)

Imperial infrastructure means:

- (2) ...the global infrastructure in trade, finance, and technology. (Mitrovich, 2021, para. 12)

Based on the definition in (2), imperial infrastructure is a well-developed global trade, financial and technological framework. This idea is confirmed in the joint scientific work ‘Global Media Discourse’ by British researchers of modern media technologies (Machin & Leeuwen, 2007). According to these scientists, the global dominance of the English-language media discourse is part of the economic and ideological project of the USA (Machin & Leeuwen, 2007). The American news, film, and advertising industries are creating media templates that can successfully adapt to local cultures in different regions. In addition, economic prosperity and global media culture are considered to go hand in hand and cannot be considered in isolation (Machin & Leeuwen, 2007).

The American economist, sociologist, publicist, and futurologist of the 20th century, Thorstein Veblen, associated the economic success of a particular society with its educational basis, which is also firmly integrated into the media system of the state. The researcher viewed the role of the media as a symbiosis of the educational system and a commercial enterprise, built into the capitalist economic system and influencing the society’s perception, knowledge, and preferences about economic processes taking place in it (Grisold & Theine, 2020). The key idea of Thorstein Veblen’s message is understanding the media discourse as an instrument of establishing awareness about education and the economy as two sides of the same coin. Education influences the state’s economic sector, while the country’s economic development defines its potential education system, including an ideological model in society. Overall, the English-language media discourse may successfully inform the global society on the relevant economic issues that need discussing and looking for reasonable solutions at the present moment and in the future. Therefore, the economic coverage of the English-language media discourse is worth mentioning, as it considers the role of capitalism in the modern era, the problem of inequality in society, the policy of income redistribution, and the phenomenon of meritocracy. We dwell on the characteristics of the last two phenomena in more detail.

Tax policy and the income redistribution policy are the cornerstones of all public discussions in the English-language media discourse space, covering almost all continents where English is the state language of the nation. Hence, in the English-language media discourse, there are many phrases dedicated to tax policy both in English-speaking and other countries: ‘the powerful suppressing effect of taxation’, ‘to overhaul tax policy’, ‘tax incentives’, ‘tax reform’, ‘tax cut’, ‘tax burden’, the ‘Soak the Rich’ tax era’, ‘R&D tax credits’.

As for the second socio-political phenomenon - meritocracy (literally ‘power of the worthy’, from Latin *meritus* ‘worthy’ + Old Greek *κράτος* ‘power, the government’), it is characterised by the principle of management, according to which the leading posts should be occupied by the most capable people, regardless of their social origin and financial wealth (Harper, n.d.a). The origins of meritocracy come from the era of the French Revolution, when the famous Declaration of the Rights of the Man and the Citizen (August 26, 1789) was proclaimed, stating that everyone should have equal opportunities and absolutely any professional activity should be available to a talented individual. Despite the positive idea of creating initial conditions for objectively gifted and hardworking people so that in the future they have a chance to occupy a high social position in conditions of free competition, a minimum percentage of the population of such English-speaking countries as, for example, Great Britain or the United States, can still take advantage of these opportunities.

- (3) Britain, which continues to cling to a dual system of a free state and expensive public schools, is a case in point. Eton or Rugby, whose annual fees easily exceed \$ 30,000, cater to only 7% of the country’s student population. Those students secure half of the places available at top UK universities, Oxford and Cambridge. ... In the United States, 38 elite colleges now have more students from the top 1% of the population than from the bottom 60%. At Harvard, the average parental income is \$ 450,000. (Jucca, 2021, para. 6)

Thus, meritocracy is criticised and ostracised in the 21st century English-language media discourse. It is believed that the state should change this system by redistributing taxes and reforming educational policy from a more elitist to a more democratic one. The emergence of a massive variety of educational platforms, including relatively inexpensive training courses from the most famous universities in the world in the English-language media space, is an explicit confirmation of this fact.

4.1.2 Education

Characterising the second important function of modern English-language media discourse is education. It should be noted that to preserve and promote capitalist ideology and democratic values, modern English-language media discourse uses a strategically significant educational resource, which also represents a significant educational potential in the media discourse space of English-speaking countries. We emphasise that in the English-language media discourse, a large amount of information content devoted to education appears every second. The educational function can be considered a key parameter in media content design. Its motto is ‘flexibility is the key’ to knowledge (Schultz, 2021).

Moreover, the English-language media discourse is trying to promote the optimistic idea that the digital revolution in the educational environment, accelerated

by the COVID-19 pandemic, is an opportunity to look at the educational process in a new and creative way:

- (4) ...to embrace the digital communication advances of the 21st century to deliver online education differently, in more creative ways. (Schultz, 2021, para. 7).

Besides, it is a good chance to cut educational costs amid a protracted economic crisis:

- (5) ...to cut the soaring costs of tuition. (Schultz, 2021, para. 8)

Some solutions to this educational challenge which is metaphorically titled The Gordian knot, are being discussed in the English-language media discourse across the world. For example, the media edition of *The Economist* mentions the adoption of ‘a sweeping debt-forgiveness plan’ for students from low-income families in the USA (“Biden spends”, 2022).

The popular British newspaper, *The Guardian*, raises the problem of additional funding into the educational sector:

- (6) ...to compensate for the rising costs and challenges’ that the education section is facing today. (Weale, 2022)

Times of India, which is one of the most influential media editions in India, also says that:

- (7) India’s tuition pandemic needs a cure. (Bhagat, 2021)

The Australian media edition *Sydney Morning Herald* raises the questions of bad underfunding of public schools and mentions that:

- (8) Countries with better-performing education systems than ours have few if any private schools. (“Educational choice”, 2022, para. 7)

Overall, it is clear from the examples above that the idea to reform the education system and make it more affordable and qualitative to the majority of people on the planet is an international challenge and is widely publicised in the current English media discourse space.

4.1.3 Environmental protection and sustainable development

The third significant function of modern English-language media discourse is the function of environmental protection and sustainable development. Climate change is the second key challenge of the modern English-language media discourse, ahead of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, which is also actively covered by the English-language media in various thematic blocks. For example:

- (9) ... experts declared that climate change is a far greater threat than the coronavirus. All the attention that needs to be given to fight this disease must not distract us from the need to defeat climate change (Rice, 2020, para. 2)

The same idea is confirmed by a study conducted by the Russian linguist T. A. Filippova, dedicated to analysing environmental information content in the English-language media. In particular, the researcher found that environmental topics are prevalent in the English-language media, and it can be noted that their popularity is increasing every year.

- (10) Environmental issues concern not only journalists working in the above media but also ordinary citizens who actively comment on published articles and news sections. (Filippova, 2018, p. 97)

In addition, when discussing environmental problems in the English-language media discourse, attention is drawn to the leading discursive strategy of creating global responsibility for some environmental problems such as the greenhouse effect, climate change, plastic pollution of the oceans, deforestation, and other negative consequences of human activity affecting the ecological state of our planet. Thus, in the modern English-language media discourse, there is a shift in emphasis in debating and suggesting ways of resolving matters related to the sustainable development of both independent states and the planet as a whole from the national to the international level of problems presentation (Filippova, 2018). That is why in most English-language media publications (The Guardian, BBC, CNN, Toronto Star, The Independent), the ecological topic is placed in a separate heading, 'Environment,' which is very important for understanding the degree of environmental consciousness of the English-speaking and world community.

The SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus pandemic that broke out in early 2020, which was first reported in China and then spread throughout the planet, also significantly impacted the formation of the functional potential of the English-language media discourse within national and international borders. It is essential to mention the partially positive impact of the epidemic on the state of the environment, which was actively covered by English-language media resources. For example, the UK's nationwide public broadcaster, the BBC, has posted a large number of video footage on the Internet dedicated to the impact of COVID-19 on climate change (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Presentation of video material on the BBC media platform dedicated to the partially positive effect of the coronavirus pandemic on the environment (Auer, 2020).

Such video plots evoke active responses and discussions on the Internet from ordinary media audiences and in the media discourse space of other countries, for example, in Russia. One of the participants in the video discussion mentioned environmental problem left the following comment.

- (11) One of the easiest ways to reduce emissions is to stop releasing new products you don't need every 5 minutes, like iPhones, and upcycle the old stuff. I drive a 20-year-old car. A standard new car will consume 1000 gallons of gasoline in energy to manufacture before it reaches the showroom. (Ksdogg, 2021).

Below is an excerpt from a publication on the impact of the lockdown on improving the environmental situation in the Russian Federation, taken from the Russian media publication, *Argumenty i Fakty*.

- (12) It seemed that the spring lockdown, with the suspension of many production facilities and the cancellation of air traffic, gave nature a respite. But it turned out that this year: in the world's greenhouse gas emissions have reached their maximum, and in the Russian Federation, they have broken the record for the level of atmospheric pollution. (Pisarenko, 2020, para. 2).

The British researcher Tony Thorne has mentioned that more than 1000 new words (non-specialised and specialised terminology) were created during the pandemic (Roig-Marin, 2021). In addition to this fact, the scientist notes that the outbreak of coronavirus infection contributed to the emergence and popularisation by the English-language media discourse of a new linguistic field, Emergency Linguistics (“#CORONASPEAK”, para. 6). Its main goal is to integrate language services into the emergency response system to natural disasters. Moreover, according to the scientist, not only qualified medical professionals should participate in the fight against COVID-19, but also representatives of the linguistic industry, including through the media discourse space.

- (13) ‘From the experience of China, we see that linguists need to be involved at all levels; they need to be at the forefront of helping healthcare staff interact with patients, families, and government officials to help convey meaningful, clear, and truthful information,’ said Thorne. (“#CORONASPEAK”, 2020, para. 7).

The example in (13) demonstrates the English-language media's desire to promote the idea of unification and integration at various levels of communication between people—representatives of different nations—and, in particular, for the sustainable development of the planet as well as its collective security on a global scale.

4.1.4 Integration

The fourth function of the modern English-language media discourse is implemented in the so-called ‘integration’ function, which contributes to the unification, equality, and coexistence of different peoples, cultures, and subcultures within the English-speaking space and the intention to overcome the critical assessment of national, racial and gender stereotypes. The integration component of the English-language media discourse seeks to resist such emerging social trends as ‘systemic racism,’ ‘aversive racism,’ and ‘pervasive racism.’ A bright example of such

resistance can be seen in the official speech of New Zealand Minister, Jacinda Arden, who addressed the nation and the world community with words of apology for the discriminatory immigration policy of the New Zealand authorities towards the Pacific communities of Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Fiji in the 1970s:

- (14) Today, I stand on behalf of the New Zealand Government to offer a formal and unreserved apology to Pacific communities for the discriminatory implementation of the immigration laws of the 1970s that led to events of the Dawn Raids. (Triponel, 2021, para. 10)

This is an official statement, but it is incredibly emotional:

- (15) We recognise that no gestures can mend that hurt (Triponel, 2021, para. 14)

It was broadcasted in media discourse space in New Zealand and also actively hosted and discussed on other English-language media platforms (BBC, CNN, and media discourses in Australia, Ireland, the European Union, and other countries).

4.1.5 Innovation

The main postulate, which can also be found in the English-language media discourse about the phenomenon of multiculturalism and the coexistence of individuals with diverse life values, attitudes, and national mentality, is to assess and analyse their personal views towards other cultures to understand what exactly their comprehension and attitude towards the existence of various societies, cultures, and subcultures will say about them and their nationality (Jarrett, 2017). One such community in which one can assess the diverse spectrum of human potential, especially in its scientific and innovative aspects, is the conferences. Modern English-language media discourse can be described as one of the brightest promoters of global conferences, where people, and experts from different countries, who speak different languages, meet to discuss in English—the language of international communication—topical global issues of modern society, science, and innovation.

- (16) Conferences are a rich environment to connect with people. (Silverberg, 2021, para. 3)

Taking into account the innovations that periodically occur in the English-language media discourse itself, e.g., the expansion of information channels, changes in the format of representation of news content, and the constant upgrade of applications necessary for the normal functioning of media platforms, it can be assumed that the modern English-language media discourse can effectively implement the fifth, an innovative function, successfully acting as an intermediary in the transmission of cultural codes and the retransmission of the values of the digital society of the 21st century. The same point of view is supported by American researchers of new media Emmanuel Vaast and Elizabeth Davidson, stressing the vital role media discourse can play as an engine of technological progress. According to scientists, media discourse is an important trigger in promoting and popularising various innovations and new information technologies (Vaast & Davidson, 2008). Moreover, it acts as the source of the emergence of a new type of media actors—technical bloggers—who discuss technology-related issues and create extraordinary Internet communities in which everyone can take part in discussions on technical innovations,

breakthrough information technologies, and other various events dedicated to the era of digitalisation. For example, one of the most notable innovative events of 2021 was the broadcast of the so-called ‘space odyssey’ by the American billionaire entrepreneur, Jeff Bezos, and British businessman and founder of the Virgin Group, Richard Branson.

- (17) In the Cold War, the space race was a contest between two superpowers battling for global domination. Today it is a battle between rival businessmen. Or, to put it less kindly, an appendage-swinging contest between egotistical billionaires: namely Bezos, Virgin Group founder Richard Branson and Tesla chief executive Elon Musk. (Knott, 2021, para. 11)

The high functional significance of such an event for the English-language media discourse space also lies in the fact that it was the English-speaking businessmen, representatives of the Anglo-Saxon business culture, which is widely known worldwide, who made the first private flights to the border with space, reaching the so-called Karman line. This event can be considered a successful personification of the phenomenon of ‘soft power’ (Nye, 2013) in promoting the values of modern Anglo-Saxon civilisation, part of which is those, as mentioned earlier, innovative technical events and its extraordinary participants.

4.1.6 Cultural diplomacy

Referring to the discourse of ‘soft power,’ we note that this phenomenon functions simultaneously with another important concept, characterised as cultural diplomacy, which is especially relevant when considering the functional potential of the English-language media discourse. In this case, we are talking about the influence and authority of the English-speaking entertainment industry on the world stage, including music and film show business, and its promotion through the media discourse space.

The embodiment of the power of Anglo-Saxon show business is primarily Hollywood, located in the USA, and the British Broadcasting Corporation ‘BBC’, based in the UK. The media products created by these reputable cultural, commercial, and entertainment institutions enjoy success, and great popularity not only within their national borders but are also actively promoted and accepted in other countries and on all inhabited continents. Such symbols of Anglo-Saxon media culture as Harry Potter, James Bond, Avatar, singer Adele, Doctor House, the Friends TV series, and many other heroes and heroines gained unprecedented popularity not only in their homeland but also in foreign environments, serving as triggers for the creation of local cultural media products and the emergence of national celebrities who embody the modern era. Thus, the sixth ‘function of cultural diplomacy’, which is actively performed by the English-language media discourse, corresponds to the classical principle:

- (18) If a country has a wonderful culture and ideological system, then other countries will strive to imitate it... Therefore, it does not need to use its hard power, which is expensive and less effective. (Flew, 2016, p. 283)

4.1.7 Sports

The same principle works for the popularisation of sports and events of local and international format and importance in the English-language media discourse. In our

opinion, the seventh function of the English-language media discourse, ‘the social function of sports’, encompasses the sum of all the previous functional characteristics analysed in this article: political and economic, environmental, educational, innovative, integration and cultural, since sports communication directly correlates with the most various spheres of human activity.

(19) ... talking about sports is talking about our culture. (Blaine & Boyle, 2005, p. 465)

Referring to the concept of ‘culture’, it is important to pay attention to the international status of the English language, which naturally integrates sports culture into the English-language media discourse space. After all, the word ‘sport’ comes from English, and the official language of all major international sports events (for example, the Olympic Games and world championships) is necessarily English (both officially and informally).

The governments of the English-speaking countries, in turn, seek to use sport as a tool that unites the nation and national identity. At the same time, international sports organisations rely on an ‘interstate worldview’ to maintain their continued success (Goldblatt, 2018). Accordingly, the English-language media discourse is being transformed into a kind of communicative ‘checkpoint’, which echoes information content dedicated to a variety of sports events that attract the attention of the audience to the world of professional and amateur sports and involve a variety of psychological factors and technical resources used to inform, entertain, generate interest and opinions of the media audience. According to a British researcher, Roger Levermore:

(20) [sport]...forms concepts—ideas about the nation, national identity, a national state and intergovernmental agencies that create a ‘global (cross-cultural) worldview,’ as well as the image of how the political world is cartographically, socially and politically divided into competing states. (Budd & Levermore, 2004, pp. 16-30)

The Spanish researcher of sports politics in the modern media, Bertoli (2017), argued that the ideas of nationalism associated with international sports events, such as the World Cup, increase the aggressive character of the state. The reason for this behaviour at the state level lies in the existing attitude that well-planned and organised competitions can resemble symbolic warfare, which can cause a feeling of aggression and conflict between the countries (Boyle & Haynes, 2009). However, military battles are always replaced by peace treaties, and severe sports competitions end up recognising the victory of the strongest athletes. There is the tendency of the first quarter of the 21st century to seek problem-solving through soft power and diplomacy, which is actively supported in the English-language media discourse. Moreover, we agree with the argument of the British researchers, Raymond Boyle and Richard Haynes, who mention that the success of sports competitions and their competent presentation in the media discourse space can increase the authority and competitiveness of the state unobtrusively and peacefully (Boyle & Haynes, 2009).

In general, the modern sport has become a strategically important part of world culture, economy, politics, education, innovation, and media space. It contributes to the formation of positive societal changes, and this must always be remembered and timely promote constructive sports discourse through modern media resources. This task, in our opinion, is successfully handled by the English-language media discourse, which always fixes the paradigmatic changes in the sports field and the promotion of the ideology of friendly sports and a healthy lifestyle in modern society.

4.2 Geographical Differences in Implementing the Functional Potential of the English-Language Media Discourse

The results of our study have proved that the English-language media discourse of the 21st century is a complex information system built on the active use of various digital technologies of the third millennium and consists of many internal contradictions (Sukhodolov & Kuznetsova, 2017) that form and ensure its integrity, dynamism, and functionalism. The functional potential of the modern English-language media discourse seeks to promote democratic ideals which emphasise that freedom is the choice of every person to coexist in a world focused on sustainable development and a healthy, sporty lifestyle; multicultural tolerance and lack of misinformation comparable to slavery:

(21) ...never be a slave to wrong information. (“Let’s work”, 2021)

In a world that promotes a capitalist, competitive system as a natural, corresponding to human psychology and ideology, as well as the transition to a new, innovative digital format for obtaining knowledge, professional self-determination and adaptation to virtual reality as a new form of human civilisation in the 21st century.

Our research has also investigated the degree of the potential functional impact of the English-language media discourse on the media discourse space of countries in which there is another state and national language (for example, the Russian Federation). Having studied the information content and the methods of its presentation in the Russian-language media discourse, one can see a close similarity between the format of news presentation and other information blocks in the English-language and Russian-language media discourses. One of the most typical examples is the format of the program Evening Urgant (Vecherniy Urgant) with its permanent TV presenter, Ivan Urgant, on the first channel of Russian television (“Ivan, divan”, 2012) and the American television program Late Night Show (Evening show with David Letterman) with TV presenter, David Letterman, on the American TV channel NBC. Moreover, the Russian TV show by Ivan Urgant is filmed with Letterman’s blessing (Schultz, 2021). As a result, there is evidence to suggest that the role of modern English-language media discourse is to promote certain ‘universal’ formats for presenting media content in the information field of other states.

4.3 The Impact of the Functional Potential of the English-Language Media Discourse

Modern English-language media discourse is a whole cultural layer, reflecting the ideals of ‘soft power’ and confidently promoting the basic English-language values reflected in the entire spectrum of its functional potential. Due to it, the English-language media discourse seeks to find objective and realistic answers to the following rhetorical questions:

(22) How should we live and work together? What are the optimal ways we can organise society to enhance freedom and well-being and avoid scorching the planet? (Schultz, 2021)

That is, how humanity can live and work further, as well as what are the optimal ways of organising the life of society, contributing to the spread of freedom, prosperity,

and sustainable development. Economic success and global media culture are interrelated and cannot be viewed separately (Machin & Leeuwen, 2007). Perhaps, this is precisely the main contradiction in the existence of the English-language media discourse space itself. The fact is, its ‘missionary’ desire to popularise democratic values in the world is simultaneously combined with the interests of the Anglo-Saxon bloc and its two prominent representatives—Great Britain and the United States (Zasursky, 2012). A similar contradiction runs through all the functions of the English-language media discourse, be it politics, economics, education, sustainable development or sports, mass culture, and innovation.

5. CONCLUSION

Our work has concluded that the functional potential of the modern English-language media discourse is a set of functions-possibilities, interconnected and mutually influencing each other and on objects (subjects) of reality, directly and indirectly in contact with the English-language media discourse space. The functional potential of the English-language media discourse is an integral, dynamic system for processing and presenting information content, somewhat reminiscent of ‘missionary’ work at the local level of information presented and on an international scale.

The findings of this study have indicated seven basic functions of English-language media discourse: political and economic function, educational function, environmental protection and sustainable development function, integration and innovative function, cultural diplomacy function, and the social function of sport. These functions make it possible to generate a development vector for the English-speaking society and the entire world community, considering the vast geography of the English-language media discourse activity. Besides, the geographical distribution and influence of modern English-language media discourse make this phenomenon work as a single holistic information management system. That is, there is the so-called ‘centre’ (in the representation of media outlets in the United States and Great Britain) and the ‘periphery,’ which can include media publications of other states - commonwealths, partners, and satellites (e.g., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India) in the English-language media discourse space. It is important to pay attention to the fact of the close relationship between the centre and the periphery.

Therefore, the circulation of news content is according to the same principle. In the English-language media discourse, information from the centre spreads to its periphery and maintains constant communication and transformation (if necessary). Despite some differences in the information representation caused by the specificity of each English-language region or state, it is evident that the present-day English-language media discourse acts as a ‘single living organism’ with standard functions and goals. It is also evident that its primary ambition is to become a global influencer and mediator navigating between English-speaking nations and non-English world communities. This becomes the key objective of the English-language media discourse space in the era of digitalisation, which can be achieved due to the monopoly on most of the digital technologies and services produced and patented in the leading English-speaking countries.

We suppose that the English-language media discourse of our time may be described as an unusual psychological communicative tool. It can make qualitative and

quantitative changes in the consciousness of English-speaking individuals for whom English is their native language and representatives of other national cultures interacting with the English-speaking media discourse space for different reasons. Therefore, a logical question arises whether it is possible to consider the English-language media discourse with its rich functional potential as a mental weapon of the digital age, which can fire at any moment of international and interethnic conflict. The answer is more positive rather than negative. After all, its influential and missionary technologies resemble the purposeful Christianization of pagan states and gentiles in the Middle Ages.

Consequently, this paper's main investigations and conclusions can serve as a basis for new scientific discussions. They should be devoted to the problems of sensitivity and resistance of a non-native speaker's consciousness to the 'viral' influence of the English-language media discourse, as well as ways and methods of overcoming its dominant effect through the soft power in the 21st century, in the digital era netocracy and artificial intelligence.

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Vowel Adaptations of Indonesian Loanwords into Dialects of Acehese: Reinforcing Acehese Identity

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Abstract

Acehnese, like other regional languages throughout Indonesia, is in constant and intense contact with Bahasa Indonesia, a lingua franca of Indonesia. Not surprisingly, many Indonesian loanwords are flooding into Acehese. There are some interesting sound changes affecting both consonants and vowels, phonotactics, and stress. This paper explores the vowel changes occurring in Indonesian loanwords when used within dialects of Acehese. A list of 285 well-established loanwords was compiled and recorded from native speakers of each of the four main Acehese dialects (North Aceh, Pidie, Greater Aceh, and West Aceh). The informants were lecturers or postgraduate students and fluent bilingual speakers of both a selected Acehese dialect and Indonesian. Phonemic transcriptions were compared with their Indonesian correspondences. The results of this study show that the behaviour of the vowels in this list of Indonesian loanwords is not a simple case of phonological assimilation, as usually occurs in loanword phonology, but rather often exhibits phonological dissimilation and must be an expression of Acehese identity. In particular, the high back unrounded vowel /u/ is a salient Acehese vowel not found in Indonesian. A wide range of Indonesian vowels is frequently replaced by this vowel, resulting in the loanwords sounding

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distinctively Acehese. The conditions when such changes occur are discussed in the paper.

Keywords: Acehese, language contact, loanword, phonology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Malay language, rather than Bahasa Indonesia, may have been the primary source of some or perhaps many of the Acehese loanwords under investigation in this study. Long-term contact with Malay dates back to as early as 1340 and can be traced back to the Sriwijaya Kingdom, as evidenced by the stone inscription found in Pasai, North Aceh, which was written in Malay in 1380 (Teeuw, 1959). This gravestone was similar to the inscriptions appearing elsewhere within the Sriwijaya Kingdom (Sneddon, 2003). Malay has functioned as a court and administrative language in the region based on evidence that it was the language of the Sumatran empire of Sriwijaya (9th to 14th centuries) (Adelaar, 2009; Adisaputera et al., 2015; Maryanto, 2009). The language has also been used in medieval Malay states, including Malacca. The traditions of using Malay as the court language was diffused far and wide, and much smaller successor states such as Johor-Riau (Malaysia), Kelantan (Malaysia), and Aceh (Indonesia) were inspired to adopt these traditions (Adisaputera et al., 2015).

Acehnese is an Austronesian language spoken in the northwestern part of Indonesia (Mustafa, 2022) by around 3.5 million speakers (Lewis, 2009). According to Yusuf (2013), the language has four main dialects, i.e. Greater Aceh dialect, Pidie dialect, North Aceh dialect, and West Aceh dialect. The Greater Aceh dialect is spoken in the Aceh Besar Regency, located in the centre part of Aceh. The Pidie dialect is used in Pidie and Pidie Jaya Regencies, which is about 100 km from Aceh Besar Regency. North Aceh dialect is spoken in three regencies in Aceh, i.e. East Aceh, North Aceh, and Bireuen. Finally, the West Aceh dialect is spoken in four western regencies, including Aceh Jaya, West Aceh, Nagan Raya, and South Aceh. In more recent historical times, Acehese has also been in intense contact with another Malay-based language, Jamee, brought to Aceh by Minangkabau refugees fleeing from the Padri civil wars in West Sumatra in the early nineteenth century (Balai Bahasa Banda Aceh, 2012). Sharing the Islamic religion, they were welcomed as guests to Aceh, hence the name *jamèe*, which means ‘guest’ in Acehese. There are now approximately 60,000 speakers of Jamee permanently residing in some parts of Aceh, especially in West Aceh. Furthermore, Arabic is a foreign language that greatly influences and has direct contact with the Acehese language and Indonesian/Malay (Zulfadli, 2014).

The contact with Malay-based languages intensified after the Indonesian independence in 1945, due to the adoption of Bahasa Indonesia, which is originally Malay, as the national language. The contact with Bahasa Indonesia is enhanced by the active role of the central government in promoting it as the official language to be used in schools, in courtrooms, and at official events by speakers in the Aceh Province (Yusuf, 2013). Anderbeck (2010, p. 98) has expressed her concern about the stability of vernacular languages in Indonesia, such as the Jambi Malay language, by arguing that “many minority languages in Indonesia are at risk with respect to the powerfully dominant standard Indonesian”.

Bahasa Indonesia, as Indonesia's national and official language, has inevitably come into contact with local languages throughout the country, and Aceh is no exception. Bahasa Indonesia became the official language in Aceh when the province became a part of Indonesia in 1950 (Reid, 2005; Yusuf, 2013). The central government has designated Bahasa Indonesia as the language of allegiance to the republic. The Indonesian armed forces rigorously enforced its use during its occupation of many regions of Aceh, especially urban areas, during the war waged by *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (GAM) [Free Aceh Movement] in its bid for independence prior to 2004. The central government has urged Indonesians to use good Bahasa Indonesia in order to promote national unity (see Arka, 2013). Further, it has mandated Bahasa Indonesia as the official language for use in schools, government offices, and other formal places or situations throughout Indonesia (Maryanto, 2009).

As a result of the mass introduction of Bahasa Indonesia in the Acehnese-speaking community and the central role it played, people began to feel more comfortable using it than the local language (Al-Auwal, 2017; Amery & Aziz, 2020; Aziz & Amery, 2016). It is used as the instructional language in all academic institutions in Aceh. The teachers in schools were encouraged to use Bahasa Indonesia and not Acehnese in the classrooms. It is also used in official speeches. With the weight of the state behind it, Acehnese people of all dialect backgrounds have inevitably been in intense contact with Bahasa Indonesia. Most are extremely proficient speakers even though they still speak their own variety of Acehnese daily. However, there are worrying signs of an imminent language shift to Bahasa Indonesia, which is being adopted as the primary language by the younger generations, especially in urban areas (Aziz et al., 2022). Most young parents now habitually speak Bahasa Indonesia to their children (Al-Auwal, 2022).

This intense contact with a language of considerable authority and prestige has triggered the Acehnese speakers to borrow many words from the national language, and some of these have displaced the original words in Acehnese (Zulfadli, 2014). Yet, the Acehnese people pronounce the very same words one way when speaking Indonesian and in a different way when speaking Acehnese. Some examples of these words, as appeared in Yusuf et al. (2022a), are *maksud* /maksud/ 'to mean', *tinggal* /tiŋgal/ 'to live', and *pulpen* /pɔlpɛn/ 'pen', which are pronounced as *makeusud* /ma.ku.sud/, *tinggai* /tiŋgai/ and *polpɛn* /pɔlpɛn/ when speaking Acehnese.

That the lexicon of the Acehnese language has been influenced heavily by these three languages (Indonesian/Malay, Jamee and Arabic) (Zulfadli, 2014) is therefore not surprising. This influence is spread across all four dialects of Acehnese, i.e. North Aceh (the defacto standard), West Aceh, Greater Aceh, and Pidie (Asyik, 1987). These four dialects have been in contact with Indonesian and Arabic with more or less the same intensity except in the large commercial centres, the seat of government and administrative centres, etc. (i.e., Banda Aceh or other district capitals). However, the Acehnese spoken along the western coast of the province, especially in South Aceh and some small parts of West Aceh, has had much stronger influence from the Malay-like Jamee language as they are in frequent contact with these speakers. Although this phenomenon has been in place for a long time, comprehensive and thorough studies have not addressed this issue, including vowel correspondences between Acehnese and Bahasa Indonesia. Previous studies focused more on Arabic loanwords in Acehnese (Al-Harbi, 1991; Firdaus, 2011). Therefore, this research investigates the integration of long-established Indonesian loanwords in the four dialects of Acehnese (Greater

Aceh, Pidie, North Aceh, and West Aceh dialects), focusing on vowels to answer the following research question:

- How are the vowels of words of Malay/Indonesian origins changed when they are used as loanwords in the various dialects of Acehese?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Language Contact and Borrowing

Language contact may occur through immediate contact between people and through indirect contact via signage, labels, books, movies or other mass media. An appropriate social circumstance and history of social relations may also lead to language contact (Mithun, 2014). The contact may occur at language borders or as a result of migration, trade, colonisation, military invasion, forced relocation, urbanisation, etc. When speakers of different languages interact very closely, it is typical for the languages to influence each other differently. These phenomena are responsible for much of the world's vast linguistic diversity.

The most obvious outcomes of language contact are borrowing and interference (Weinreich, 1979), borrowing and shift-induced interference (Thomason, 2001), matter replication and pattern replication (Matras, 2002; Matras & Sakel, 2007), and language maintenance, language shift, language creation (Winford, 2003). In other words, the interaction between two or more languages or varieties can result in a variety of phenomena, such as the creation of new languages (e.g. pidgins, creoles, koinés and mixed languages), strata influence, language shift, semantic change, syntactic change, borrowing of vocabulary and so on. In fact, no aspect of language is immune from the effects of language contact. When languages come into contact, they tend to take words from one another and make them part of their own vocabulary. The borrowing process is claimed to be an unavoidable contact-induced change phenomenon (Alvanoudi, 2017).

Even though the term borrowing is based on a strange metaphor (after all, the donor language does not expect to receive its words back), and the term transfer or transference (e.g. Clyne, 2004) would be preferable, in this study, the term borrowing is maintained. Borrowing refers to 'incorporating foreign elements into the speakers' native language (Thomason & Kaufman, 1988). Epps (2014, p. 580) points out that "the source of the loan is likely to represent the source of the concept". When words are borrowed, some adaptation is needed in order to meet the linguistic characteristics of the recipient language. Some non-native phonemes from the donor language, for example, usually need to be adjusted to the sound system of the recipient language, or the phonological patterns are modified according to the phonological rules of the recipient language. Sometimes, the modification and adaptation of the phonological system of loanwords may be aberrant and seem not to fit either the donor or recipient language. To further complicate matters, according to Epps (2014, p. 586), "a loan may be passed along several languages via a borrowing chain, and therefore cannot be taken as evidence of direct contact among all the groups concerned".

Languages normally borrow words out of 'need'. When a new concept or item is acquired by contact with another group, the need for a word to go along with it arises, and often the word is borrowed along with the concept, which is why many

languages have similar words for ‘coffee’ and ‘tobacco’, for example (Campbell, 2013). New words and concepts are often associated with the introduction of new technologies (e.g. ‘printer’, ‘sonar’, ‘computer’), foods (e.g. ‘pizza’, ‘sushi’), religions (e.g. ‘zen’, ‘imam’), cultural practices (e.g. ‘bonsai’) and so on. The borrowing in question is adopted because the recipient language needs the words due to the limitations of existing vocabulary within these lexical fields. The loanwords are therefore used to fill gaps in the recipient language.

At times, languages also borrow words from other languages to be used alongside existing words that have exactly the same or similar meanings. Why should speakers use a word from another language if they have a perfectly good word for the same concept in their own language? This phenomenon is typically driven by ‘prestige’. The donor language may be associated with a higher status, which can result in borrowing despite the lack of a ‘need’ for it. In other words, speakers in the recipient language adopt such new words in order to be associated with the prestige of the donor language. Australian Indigenous languages often borrow replacement vocabulary when a word becomes temporarily taboo due to the death of a person with that name or a name sounding similar to the word, which then becomes taboo for a period of months or even several years. This even prompted the borrowing of the first person pronoun ‘me’ from English when *ngayulu* ‘I’ became taboo in Ngaanyatjarra (Dixon, 1980).

In addition to the higher prestige ascribed to the other language and the need in the recipient language, there could be other diverse motivations for lexical borrowing. Some culture-specific vocabulary is more likely to be borrowed (Haspelmath & Tadmor, 2009; Hock & Joseph, 1996) rather than other basic concepts. Grammatical function words such as prepositions, articles, etc., which are inherent and usually expressed and used daily by speakers in a speech community, are more resistant to borrowing.

2.2 The Process of Language Borrowing

The process of a loanword entering the recipient language is complex. Initially, the loanword is used as a code switch (Poplack et al., 1988). Then, it is repeated over time until it spreads into the recipient language community. This gradual process involves integrating linguistic and social forms of foreign items into a well-established ‘bona fide’ loanword (Poplack et al., 2020; Poplack & Dion, 2012). Loanwords might be introduced by bilinguals or monolinguals with limited access to the L2 (Calabrese & Wetzels, 2009). This could happen orally, as when monolinguals hear words in the media or while travelling (Cohen, 2009) or see words written on many products. In other words, loanwords may be borrowed through oral speech by immediate contact between the people and in written form by indirect contact through other media. Oral borrowings occurred chiefly in the early periods of history (through trade). They are usually short and have undergone more changes. Written borrowings preserve their spelling and sometimes pronunciation. They are often rather long and literary. Sometimes borrowed words may develop aberrant pronunciations relative to the source language due to pronouncing the written word according to the recipient language conventions.

In addition, another case of borrowing shows the case of underapplication. McCarthy (2004) suggests that the shape of borrowed words is not as expected. The

normal application suggests that a certain phoneme X is expected to change to the phoneme Y. However, it unexpectedly changes to a different phoneme Z. In the case of borrowing, and this phenomenon is shown by excessive changes of phonemes from a donor language to certain phonemes in the recipient language. However, the donor phonemes already exist within that language. The following examples, adapted from [Sah and Jaafar \(2021\)](#), are examples of English and Malay loanwords within Bugis.

(a)	honey	/hʌnī:/	wani	/wanī/	English
(b)	besi	/bəsi/	bassi	/bassi/	Malay
(c)	rebah	/rəbah/	rebba	/rəbba/	Malay
(d)	gula	/gula/	golla	/golla/	Malay
(e)	laki	/laki/	lakai	/lakai/	Malay
(f)	lupa	/lupa/	lupai	/lupai/	Malay

In Bugis, high and low front /i/ and /a/ are frequently found in a final open syllable of a word, such as in (a) - (d). Therefore, it is expected that *laki* ‘man’ and *lupa* ‘to forget’ in (e) and (f) would be borrowed without any sound change because the vowels have the exact match in the recipient language. However, the change does occur, where both /a/ and /i/ change to /ai/, suggesting that /ai/ is the identity of Bugis. The same case of language identity has also been found in Iraqw, a Cushitic language spoken in northern Tanzania, where the consonant /l/ in Swahili, the national language of Tanzania, changes to /r/ when it is borrowed in Iraqw, although both languages have /l/ ([Mous & Qorro, 2009](#)). In Iraqw, the word for ‘flute’ is *filiimbi*, borrowed from Swahili *firimbi*.

2.3 Acehese and Bahasa Indonesia Vowel System

Acehese and Bahasa Indonesia both belong to the Malayo-Chamic branch of the Austronesian language family ([Abtahian et al., 2016](#); [Yusuf et al., 2022b](#)). However, Acehese phonology is much more complex than Bahasa Indonesia phonology, and there is considerable diversity across dialects of Acehese. As most of the Indonesian population speak Bahasa Indonesia as a second language, there is considerable variation at the phonetic level depending on the substrate language of the speaker.

Bahasa Indonesia and Acehese have quite different vowel phoneme inventories. Compared to Bahasa Indonesia, which only has six vowel phonemes plus three diphthongs ([Echols & Shadily, 1989](#)), Acehese has a much more complex vowel inventory with ten vowel qualities, oral and nasal vowels and many diphthongs ([Durie, 1985](#)). North Acehese has ten oral monophthong vowels, seven nasal monophthongs, 12 oral diphthongs, many of them involving schwa as the second element, and five nasal diphthongs ([Asyik, 1987](#)), whilst West Acehese has considerably fewer diphthongs ([Zulfadli, 2014](#)). The Acehese vowel system, irrespective of the dialect, possesses all the Indonesian monophthongs and two of the three Indonesian diphthongs. The Indonesian front and back mid vowels have two easily identifiable allophones. The front-mid vowel /e/ has an allophone [ɛ] in closed syllables. Likewise, the back mid vowel /o/ has an allophone [ɔ] in closed syllables. Whilst these two vowels [ɛ] and [ɔ] are merely allophones in Indonesian, they are separate phonemes in Acehese (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). The Acehese nasal vowels and nasal diphthong

phonemes seem not to be involved in loanword phonology, so they are not discussed further in this paper.

Acehnese				Indonesian		
i	ɯ	u	High	i		u
e	ə	o	High-mid	e	ə	o
ɛ	ʌ	ɔ	Low-mid	ɛ		ɔ
	a		Low		a	

Figure 1. North Acehnese oral monophthong vowels (Asyik, 1987) and Indonesian monophthongs, including prominent allophones (van Zanten & van Heuven, 1984)

Acehnese				Indonesian		
iə	ɯə	uə	High			
	əi	oi	High-mid			oi
ɛə	ʌə	ɔə	Low-mid			
	ʌi	ɔi				au
	ai		Low		ai	

Figure 2. Oral diphthong vowels of North Acehnese (Asyik, 1987) and Indonesian (van Zanten & van Heuven, 1984)

2.4 The Present Study

Borrowing is a universal phenomenon which occurs in all of the world's languages, and in all cases, borrowed words are phonologically integrated into recipient languages. In the Acehnese language, Rizka (2017) has previously addressed this case and presented the types of language borrowing. However, the integration of loanwords into Acehnese was excluded from the study. Firdaus (2011) addressed Acehnese loan words from Arabic and discovered some phonological processes involved, but the conditions of these processes still needed to be addressed. Another related study was conducted by Iskandar et al. (2020), who established a phonemic correspondence between Acehnese and Bahasa Indonesia, which can be used as a basis to analyse language borrowing between both languages. Based on the previous studies, the motivation of phonemic changes as a process of lexical integration remains under-researched. In addition, these changes might not apply across the dialects of Acehnese since each dialect has its own identity. Therefore, the present study, which focuses on vowels, is intended to analyse the integration of Bahasa Indonesia loanwords in the four dialects of Acehnese, namely the Greater Aceh dialect, Pidie dialect, North Aceh dialect, and West Aceh dialect.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Research Design

This qualitative research explores the integration of Indonesian loanwords in four different dialects of Acehnese, including North Acehnese, Pidie, Greater Acehnese, and West Acehnese.

3.2 Research Informants

The data were obtained from four native speakers of Acehese, each drawn from a different dialect background. The informants were selected by considering their language knowledge and were deemed representative of the dialect spoken. Their language knowledge was determined by their nativeness of the target Acehese dialect. They speak the dialect fluently and have not left the dialect-speaking area until they completely acquire the language. Although they were also fluent in Bahasa Indonesia, they learnt this language much later after acquiring Acehese. They were all lecturers or postgraduate students at Universitas Syiah Kuala, a state university in Banda Aceh. Appointments were made with the informants individually before interviews were carried out. They were also asked to give and sign their consent prior to the interviews.

3.3 Data Collection and Instrument

The instruments used for this research was a list consisting of 285 loanwords from Bahasa Indonesia. Because of the lack of research into Bahasa Indonesia loanwords in Acehese, the research instrument was constructed by the researchers based on well-established Malay/Indonesian loanwords most commonly found in contemporary Acehese. Suspected cognates were not included in the list. In addition, as a point of comparison, a brief exploratory study was made of a supplementary list of 54 loanwords of English origins, most relating to recently developed technologies, which are well-known and used frequently. Examples include *komputer* ‘computer’, *sken* ‘scan’, *aplod* ‘upload’ and *bej* ‘bank’.

For the data collection, the language informants were asked to read aloud the pre-prepared list as they would be pronounced in their dialect of Acehese. As each informant only speaks one dialect, instruction on dialect selection was unnecessary. Therefore, they were only asked to read the words on the list naturally. The language informants were recorded while reading the list’s words in a quiet environment. The informants were instructed to read both Acehese and Bahasa Indonesia versions for the additional list of loanwords of English origin. Because the analysis involved auditory techniques, the informants were asked to repeat the words several times. The researchers used a Tascam DR-100 recording device, commonly used in phonetics research.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data were then analysed using an auditory technique. The authors listened carefully to the recording without using computer software, and phonemic transcriptions were compared with their Indonesian correspondences. The analysis was conducted using a qualitative analysis approach proposed by Miles et al. (2014), i.e. a) data condensation, b) data display, and c) conclusion or verification. In data condensation, vowels were grouped based on their correspondences, and the number of occurrences was recorded. In data display, the vowel changes in each correspondence were presented in figures with different colours to mark the manner and degree of integration. In this research, a conclusion was drawn about the patterns of vowel integration into the four dialects of Acehese, presented in the result section

based on the type of changes following a grounded theory approach recommended by Budasi et al. (2021).

4. RESULTS

Whilst most Acehnese are fluent bilinguals in Acehnese and Bahasa Indonesia when they utter these loanwords within their Acehnese, they are pronounced in quite different ways from when spoken within Bahasa Indonesia. Whilst some of the differences in pronunciation are due to the assimilation of these words into Acehnese's sound system, most differences result from the replacement of sounds that already occur within Acehnese. Differences in pronunciation due to assimilation mostly concern consonants, which have been reported and discussed in another paper to complement this one (Aziz et al., 2022).

A comparison of the Indonesian vowels in this sample of 285 loanwords reveals a staggering 76 different vowel correspondences. There are 59 different vowel changes; five epenthetic vowels were introduced, and four were deleted. There are instances of the preservation of the original Indonesian vowels in all cases except for the diphthong /ai/, whilst the diphthong /au/ is preserved in just one instance and only for the Pidie dialect. There are no instances of Bahasa Indonesia /ui/ in the data set. A few of these vowel changes are highly productive. For instance, there are 56 instances of $i > e$ and 54 instances of $\text{ə} > u$. However, many vowel changes are one-offs or limited to a few words. Because Acehnese already has all the vowels of Bahasa Indonesia except for the diphthong /au/, few of these vowel changes are instances of assimilation. This result is summarised in Table 1, and the complete list is presented in the Appendix.

Table 1. Summary of the findings.

Indonesian vowels	No of vowel correspondence in Acehnese	Number of occurrences				
		All dialects	NA	WA	GA	P
a	14	230	191	192	191	214
e	3	6	5	5	5	6
ə	6	123	70	69	69	83
ɛ	4	17	11	11	11	12
i	13	133	104	103	104	107
o	5	52	36	37	37	44
u	10	140	113	112	112	124
ɔ	0	0	0	0	0	0
ai	6	8	6	6	6	7
au	10	10	5	6	6	8
∅	5	15	9	13	10	9
Total	71	719	541	541	541	605

Note:

NA = North Acehnese

WA = West Acehnese

GA = Greater Acehnese

P = Pidie

Vowel changes include lowering, raising, fronting, backing, diphthongisation, deletion, addition (epenthesis) and some are governed by phonotactic constraints

(restricted to closed or open syllables, final or initial syllables). Most of the vowels, though not all, in the first syllable of Indonesian loanwords are unchanged. It is the final syllable that is most affected. The changes can be grouped into some patterns, i.e. monophthongs, diphthongs, changes in both directions, epenthetic vowels, deleted vowels, one-off vowel changes, diphthongisation, and syllable deletions. In addition, the changes occurring in words in the supplementary list are provided separately.

4.1 Monophthongs

The six Bahasa Indonesia monophthongs are all involved in various phonological changes. Lowering the high vowels /i/ and /u/ in the final syllable is almost regular though there are a handful of exceptions, often restricted to one or two dialects. Interestingly, these changes also go in the opposite direction. However, their distribution is somewhat different. High vowels in the final syllable and predominantly in closed final syllables are lowered (/i/ > /e/ (56 examples), /i/ > /ɛ/ (nine instances); /u/ > /o/ (53 instances), /u/ > /ɔ/ (three instances)). There are just three examples of lowering of /i/ > /e/, three examples of /u/ > /o/, and one example of /u/ > /ɔ/ in a final open syllable, and there is just one example (*listrik* > *lestre?*) of lowering of i > e in the first syllable of a disyllabic word, occurring only in the North Aceh dialect. The words where the final high vowel in an open syllable is lowered in this way are all words which we might imagine have been in Acehese for a long time, namely *padi* ‘harvested rice’, *baru* ‘new’, *lembu* ‘cattle’, *pintu* ‘door’ and *cucu* ‘grandchild’. There are 14 examples (out of 47) where /i/ in a final closed syllable is retained, but this is usually restricted to one or two dialects. Only *ketik* ‘tick’ and *kumis* ‘moustache’ retain the /i/ vowel across all dialects. Similarly, there are only six out of 58 words where /u/ is retained in the final syllable, and none of these examples applies to all dialects.

There are 17 instances where this sound change goes in the opposite direction (/o/ > /u/). Out of these 17 instances, all but one occurs in the penultimate syllable. The one exception is *polisi* ‘police’, where /o/ in the first syllable of a trisyllabic word is replaced by /u/, but this only occurs in the West Aceh dialect. In the other dialects, /o/ in *polisi* ‘police’ remains /o/. It seems impossible to predict whether the /o/ will be raised to /u/ as there are almost as many as 13 examples where /o/ in the penultimate syllable remains /o/ (in similar environments) or in several instances penultimate /o/ > /ɔ/ or /u/. In the three instances where /o/ > /u/, this is always in the penultimate syllable. Two instances are restricted to the Pidie dialect, whereas for *korban* > *kuərbun* (Pidie), *kuurbuən* (North Acehese), *kuurbun* (West Acehese and Greater Acehese) ‘sacrifice’, /o/ > /u/ in all dialects. It might be a case of vowel harmony in this particular word as the same vowel /u/ persists across all syllables in the word. Corresponding raising of /e/ > /i/ or /ɛ/ > /i/ do occur, but rarely, only in /lem/ > /lim/ ‘glue’ (Pidie dialect only), whilst *merah* > *mirah* ‘red’ (Pidie, North Acehese, West Acehese), *perak* > *pirak* ‘silver’ (Pidie and West Acehese).

Schwa is often raised to the high back unrounded vowel /u/. This occurs more often in the West Aceh dialect (55 out of 58 instances) and least in the Greater Aceh dialect (32 out of 58 instances). But schwa also often remains schwa (43 instances in total). It remains schwa in all dialects in just four words; *gergaji* ‘saw’, *Jerman* ‘German’, *jernih* ‘clear’ and *terjun* ‘jump down’. Whilst /ə/ to /u/ is a frequently occurring sound change, it is impossible to predict. For instance, schwa is preserved

in *menantu* ‘in law’ but replaced by *u* in *menasah* ‘praying room’, *menurut* ‘according to’, etc. in all dialects even though these three words have the same *me-* verbal prefix.

The low vowel /a/ is also replaced by the high back unrounded vowel /u/ in a fair number of words (26 in all). This change occurs in a final closed syllable with just three exceptions: *jahat* ‘bad’ (/a/ is replaced in both syllables in Pidie and North Aceh), *maksud* ‘to mean’ (Pidie only) and *masjid* ‘mosque’ (North Aceh, West Aceh and Greater Aceh). There are also many instances where /a/ in a final closed syllable is unchanged across all dialects in similar phonetic environments. There are nine instances where /a/ > /uə/ in a final closed syllable in some dialects, but always where /a/ > /u/ in the remaining dialects. This diphthongisation only occurs preceding the consonants /s/, /r/, /l/ and /ŋ/. The final /s/, /r/ and /l/ are deleted (Aziz et al., 2022), providing a phonetic motivation. Moreover, there are many examples where the final vowel preceding /ŋ/ is not replaced with /u/ and one example where the /u/ does not diphthongise in any dialect. Actually, two Bahasa Indonesia homophones in the data set behave differently.

Compare:

- *pasang* ‘pair, set’ > *pasan* (North Acehnese), *paSan* (Pidie and West Acehnese), *paθan* (Pidie and Greater Acehnese)
- *pasang* ‘rise’ (of the tide) > *pasuŋ* (Pidie), *paθuŋ* (Greater Acehnese), *pasuəŋ* (North Acehnese) and *pasuəŋ* (West Acehnese)

So in the case of *pasang* ‘pair, set’, the vowels are unchanged, but in *pasang* ‘rise’, the final vowel is replaced by *u* in all dialects, which diphthongises in the North Aceh and West Aceh dialects. So quite clearly, there is something other than phonological constraints operating here. When diphthongisation /a/ > /uə/ occurs, it always occurs in all nine instances in the North Aceh dialect, on three occasions in the Pidie dialect and just once in West Acehnese.

There is just one case in a final open syllable, where /a/ is replaced by /ɤ/ in *raya* ‘great’, but many examples include *kebaya* ‘traditional Javanese female blouse’ where both the /a/ vowels are unchanged. Furthermore, the raising of schwa to *i* in an unstressed first syllable (five instances) is associated with a stress shift to the first syllable in polysyllabic words, as in *se’kolah* ‘school’ > *sikula*.

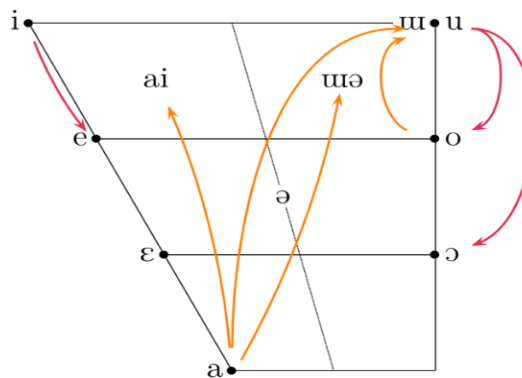


Figure 3. Frequently occurring substitutions for Indonesian monophthongs (red line: from high to mid vowels, orange line: from low/mid to high vowels).

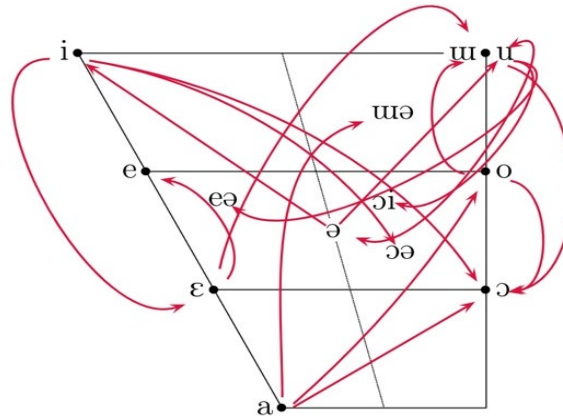


Figure 4. Substitutions for Indonesian monophthongs occurring between three and nine times.

4.2 Changes Occurring in Both Directions

The lowering of /u/ > /o/ and raising of /o/ > /u/ has already been discussed. Whilst /i/ is often lowered to /e/ (56 instances) or /ε/ (nine instances), changes in the opposite direction are rare. The mid vowel /e/ is raised just once in *lem* ‘glue’ but only in the Pidie dialect, whilst /ε/ is raised more often, /ε/ > /i/ occurs in *merah* ‘red’ (in Pidie North Aceh and West Aceh dialects) and *perak* ‘silver’ (in the Pidie and West Aceh dialects). The high back vowel /u/ is lowered to schwa in five instances, whilst schwa is raised to /u/ in six instances.

4.3 Epenthetic Vowels

There are 13 instances in the data set where an epenthetic vowel is introduced. Epenthesis concerning vowels only occurs within a consonant cluster and most often within the West Aceh dialect, where it occurs in all 13 instances. Epenthetic vowels are always central or back vowels, with insertion of /u/ being the most common (in ten of the 13 instances). An epenthetic schwa occurs twice, whilst the epenthetic /u/, /o/ and /ɔ/ occur just once and then only in one or two dialects. While an epenthetic /u/ is inserted in *Jerman* ‘German’ and *jernih* ‘clear’ in all dialects, it never occurs in *cermin* ‘mirror’ in a very similar phonetic environment. Epenthesis most often occurs in clusters where the first element is a liquid.

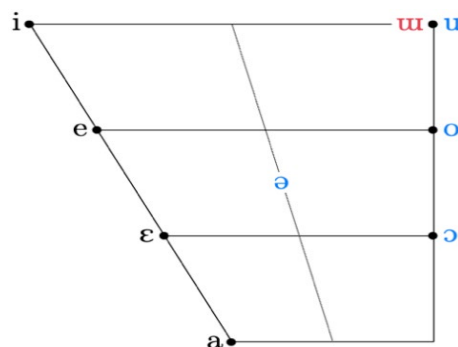


Figure 5. Frequently occurring epenthetic vowels (red font: frequent; blue font: only once or twice in the data set).

4.4 Deleted Vowels

There are 17 cases where Indonesian vowels are deleted. Most of these instances concern schwa in the unstressed penultimate syllable (eight cases) and mostly preceding a liquid. There are another two instances where schwa in the penultimate syllable is deleted, and in both these cases, it is unstressed in Bahasa Indonesia: *karena* ‘because’ and *sejahtera* ‘prosperous’. There are five instances where /a/ is deleted, but three are regular sound changes where /a/ > Ø/#C_h is in every instance in the data set. The remaining four examples are sporadic:

- penultimate /a/ > /Ø/ in *tentara* ‘army’ (all dialects)
- penultimate /e/ > /Ø/ in *gelang* ‘bangle’, *gerak* ‘movement’ (all dialects)
- penultimate /u/ > /Ø/ in the second syllable of *kerudung* ‘veil’ (Pidie only)

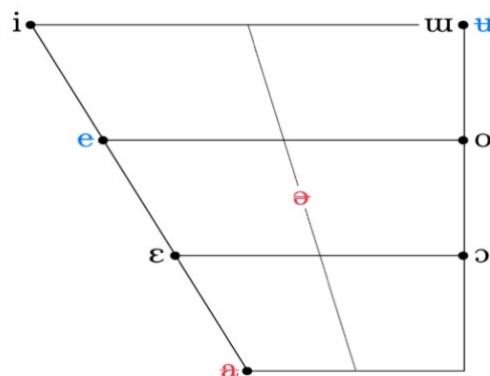


Figure 6. Deleted Indonesian monophthongs (red font: frequently deleted; blue font: sometimes deleted).

4.5 Other One-off Vowel Changes

A large number of vowel changes are one-off changes occurring in just one word in the data set. Most of these one-off vowel changes occur between vowels shared by both Bahasa Indonesia and Acehnese and are not phonologically motivated. Substitution of /i/ for /a/ in *menantu* ‘in law’ occurs in the speech of all five consultants yet does not occur in *menasah* ‘praying room’ or any other word in the data set. Similarly, /a/ > /u/ in *imam* ‘Islamic leader’ in all dialects, though this vowel substitution is not found in *hitam* ‘black’, *kolam* ‘pool’ or other m-final words. Whilst these two vowel changes occur in all dialects, many of the one-off vowel replacements are restricted to just one or maybe a few dialects. For instance, the high front vowel is lowered to schwa once (and only in West Acehnese).

As seen from the diagram in Figure 7, many of these one-off substitutions involve the replacement of /i/ and /a/. Still, most of the other vowels also participate in occasional one-off substitutions.

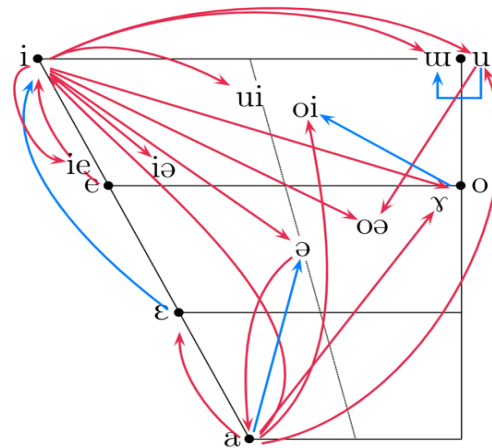


Figure 7. Substitutions for Indonesian monophthongs occurring only once or twice (red font: occurring only once, blue font: occurring twice).

4.6 Diphthongisation

All six Indonesian monophthongs undergo diphthongisation, though many of these changes are restricted to North Acehese. The strongest diphthongisation processes are associated with the deletion of final consonants:

- /u/ > /oi/ _/s/, /l/; /s/, /l/ > /Ø/ _#
- /o/ > /oi/ _/s//, /l/; /s/, /l/ > /Ø/ _#
- /a/ > /ai/ _/s/, /l/; /s/, /l/ > /Ø/ (in Pidie and North Acehese dialects only)
- /a/ > /oi/ _/s/# (in just one word in the Pidie dialect only)

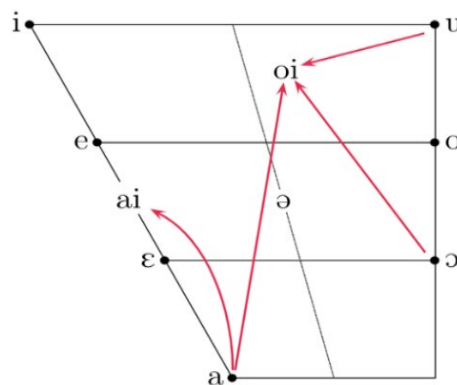


Figure 8. Diphthongisation in Indonesian loanwords in Acehese associated with the deletion of final consonants.

The /a/ > /ai/ rule applies in all cases before *l*, except in the word *misal* ‘example’ in the Pidie, North Aceh and West Aceh dialects. This rule only applies 50% of the time in the Greater Aceh dialect in our study. The /a/ > /ai/ rule applies most of the time in the Pidie and North Aceh dialects, but there are exceptions in *luas* ‘extensive’ where /s/ is replaced by /h/. However, the /a/ vowel does not diphthongise in *lemas* ‘weak’ where the /a/ vowel is replaced by /o/ in North Aceh and Greater Aceh, by /ə/ in West Aceh and by the diphthong /oi/ in Pidie. There is just one instance of a /r/-final word where /a/ in the last syllable is diphthongised (*pasar* > *pasai* ‘market’). However, there are nine /r/ final words following /a/, which seem not to be subject to diphthongisation, and there are also /r/ final words following /u/ and /o/, which are not

subject to diphthongisation either. So *pasar* ‘market’ is probably best regarded as a one-off aberration.

The vowels /i/, /u/ and /a/ undergo diphthongisation to a diphthong where the second element is a schwa. However, in almost all cases, this type of diphthongisation is restricted to the North Aceh dialect. These include:

- /i/ > /iə/ _# (only in North Aceh dialect)
- /i/ > /oə/ _# (occurs in just one word in North Aceh dialect)
- /i/ > /iə/ _r#; /r/ > /Ø/ (occurs only in North Aceh dialect)
- /u/ > /eə/ _# (occurs in 5 words in the North Aceh dialect and three words in the Pidie dialect)
- /u/ > /εə/ _# (only in North Aceh dialect)
- /u/ > /oə/ _r#; /r/ > Ø (occurs in just one word in North Aceh and Pidie dialect)
- /a/ > /uə/ _C# (only in North Aceh dialect)

In almost all cases, these instances of diphthongisation are restricted to North Aceh dialect; in every case, the same vowel change attested in all words is subject to this change in the other dialects without diphthongisation.

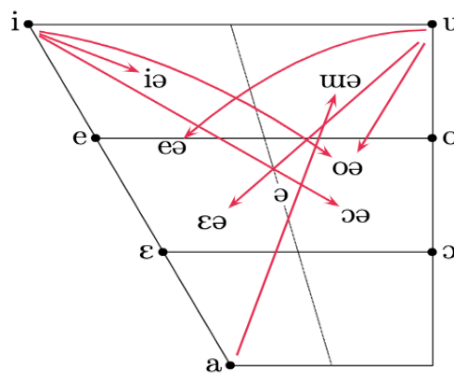


Figure 9. Diphthongisation in Indonesian loanwords in Acehese where the final element is schwa.

4.7 Bahasa Indonesia Diphthongs

Bahasa Indonesia has three diphthongs: /au/, /ai/, and /ui/. Acehese has many more diphthongs, the precise number depending on the dialect. North Acehese has 12 oral diphthongs (Asyik, 1987), with the second vowel being either /ə/ or /i/. As a result, Acehese does not have Bahasa Indonesia /au/ diphthong. In our data, there are four instances of Bahasa Indonesia loanwords with the diphthong /au/ and six instances of /ai/ but no instances of /ui/ in the data set.

As expected, there are various substitutions for the diphthong /au/. On some occasions, /au/ is replaced by monophthongs /o/ (as in *jauh* ‘far’), /e/ in *bau* ‘smell; odour’, and /u/ in *kerbau* ‘buffalo’. In the North Aceh and Pidie dialects, the diphthong /au/ in *bau* and *kerbau* is replaced by the diphthongs /eə/ and /uə/, respectively. *Jauh* ‘far’ employs a different set of sequences *Jəʔoh* (Pidie), *Juʔoh* (north Aceh) and *Jiʔoh* (West Aceh and Greater Aceh). The diphthong /au/ in *kaum* is replaced by the vowel sequence /ao/ in all dialects. As the vowel sequence /ao/ is the closest in Acehese to the Bahasa Indonesia diphthong /au/, this is a simple case of phonological assimilation.

The /ai/ diphthong, which is shared by both languages, is replaced by /e/ (in *seprai* ‘bedsheet’, *balai* ‘public hall, office’, *kedai* ‘shop, café’ and *pegawai*

‘government official’) and by /eʔ/ in *pakai* ‘to use, wear’. In North Acehese, the diphthong in *balai* is replaced by the diphthong /eə/. The diphthong ai in *lain* is replaced by the sequence aʔe as in *laʔen* (all dialects). Whilst the Indonesian diphthong /ai/ is always replaced, we saw previously that this very same diphthong is introduced following the deletion of the final /s/.

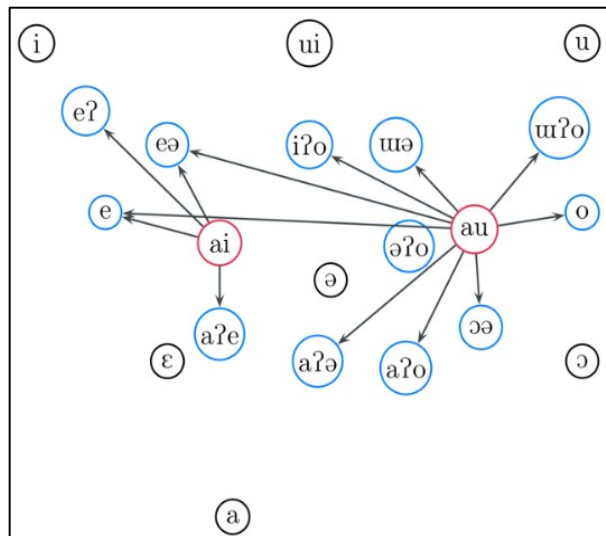


Figure 10. Acehese correspondences to Indonesian diphthongs.

4.8 Syllable Deletion and Other Abbreviations

There are several sporadic examples of deletion of an entire syllable or even more. In the West Aceh dialect, *cabut* ‘to pull out’ is abbreviated to *bət* through the deletion of the first syllable and the final vowel /u/ is replaced by a schwa. In the Pidie dialect, *lemari* ‘cupboard’ is abbreviated to *mari*, again involving deletion of the first syllable. One of the words for ‘bicycle’ in Indonesian is *kereta angin* (lit. carriage + wind, i.e. ‘wind carriage’). It is abbreviated in a variety of ways by the different speakers: *taʔen* (Pidie), *itaʔen* (Pidie and North Aceh), *guxitan aʔen* (Greater Aceh) and *gabi* (West Aceh) where the final syllable of the first word is deleted, and the second word is omitted entirely.

4.9 Supplementary List of 54 Recent English/Bahasa Indonesia Loanwords

Some of the recent English/Bahasa Indonesia loanwords in our supplementary list were fully assimilated into the Acehese sound system, and others were partially or unassimilated. Some minor variation was found between speakers of different dialects of Acehese, but none of the radical vowel substitutions seen in the main list of 285 Indonesian loanwords, such as low vowels replaced by high vowels or front vowels replaced by back vowels, were encountered. The distinctive Acehese high back unrounded vowel /u/ was not seen in any of these 54 recent English/Bahasa Indonesia loanwords. The sound changes seen within the supplementary list of English loanwords were simply a result of phonological assimilation. English has many vowels not found in Acehese, and it is only natural that these be replaced by the closest Acehese vowel as they become more entrenched within Acehese.

Interestingly, only a minority of these English loanwords are used in Bahasa Indonesia, which often uses an Indigenous word instead. For instance, where Acehnese uses *mos* ~ *mɔs* ‘computer mouse’, Bahasa Indonesia has used *tetikus* being partial reduplication of *tikus* ‘mouse, rat’ as found in Bahasa Indonesia’s most comprehensive dictionary, although this word has already become archaic, having been replaced by the borrowed word from English. Thus, many English words in the supplementary list may have come into Acehnese directly from English, whereas others may have come via Bahasa Indonesia.

5. DISCUSSION

Due to assimilation, some sound changes occur when Bahasa Indonesia loanwords come into Acehnese. This is certainly true in the case of the uvular rhotic that replaces the trill or rolled /r/ in West Acehnese and Greater Acehnese. Speakers of both dialects pronounce the alveolar trill /r/ as a uvular rhotic, and the alveolar trill is absent in both dialects (Yusuf et al., 2022a). Therefore, this is a regular sound change. Most sound changes due to assimilation seem to involve consonants and are discussed in detail in a companion paper (Aziz et al., 2022). They are not discussed here further due to length constraints. The only clear instance of assimilation within the vowels is the replacement of the Bahasa Indonesia diphthong /au/ with the closest Acehnese vowel sequence /ao/. Several other sound changes are in response to phonotactic constraints imposed by the Acehnese language, which is called normalised borrowing and is found in previous studies (Cook, 2018; Hafez, 1996; Kim, 2009).

However, most changes evident in the data have no phonological motivation, unlike in most previous studies, which show that the changes derive from the phonological rules of the target language (Chang, 2012; Hamdi, 2017). In the case of Acehnese, the changes are sociophonetic in nature. It has also been found that certain vowel correspondences between Indonesian and the four Acehnese dialects occur very often. A number of 13 out of 76 vowel correspondences have frequencies above ten in the data set. Many different possible sources may account for the variation inherent in this data set.

1. The data set contains a number of unassimilated or partially-assimilated forms. All the Acehnese consultants are academics or postgraduate students and urban dwellers who are fluent Indonesian speakers and regularly speak Bahasa Indonesia for a range of purposes. Had the data been collected in rural areas from informants who speak Acehnese most of the time, it may have been more consistent with regard to the degree to which the loanwords exhibit distinctive Acehnese phonological features.
2. Acehnese has been in contact with Malay for many years, as evidenced by the letter written in Malay that Sultan Iskandar Muda sent to King James I of England in 1615 (Gallop, 2011). Loanwords may have entered at different times when different sound laws were operable.
3. *Imum* ‘Islamic leader’ is clearly a loanword, but we would expect *imam*, so what is the source of the vowel u in the second syllable? Was *imum* borrowed via Bahasa Indonesia, or did it come into Acehnese directly from Arabic? If it was first encountered in written form, usually the vowels of Arabic are not written, only the consonants and a reader is obliged to supply the vowels if it is to be read aloud. A

number of other Islamic terms of Arabic origin may also have been borrowed directly from Arabic, as found by [Firdaus \(2011\)](#). *Sikin* ‘knife’, for example, was borrowed into Acehese from Arabic *sikinun* (سِكِين) /sikinun/ rather than *pisau* ‘knife’ from Bahasa Indonesia. Another word borrowed directly from Arabic into Acehese is *musala*, which in Arabic is *mushalla* (مُصَلَّى), ‘praying mat’. Indonesian also borrows this word from the language where it appears as *musholla* ~ *musolla* ~ *musalla*, but with a different meaning, ‘the praying building or room’, which is not the same as the original Arabic word. Acehese, however, adopts the original meaning, which proves that Acehese borrowed the word directly from Arabic even though the Indonesian word is as close, if not closer, phonologically to the original Arabic word. This example proves the hypothesis that some Arabic words were likely to have been borrowed into Acehese directly. This is supported by the fact that Aceh has been known as *Serambi Mekkah* (Veranda of Mecca), reflecting the role played by Aceh as the first and main gateway through which Islam was introduced into the Indonesian archipelago ([Donner, 2016](#)).

4. Some one-off changes may be the result of original mishearing. The speakers might have caught the sound differently when they heard the original words from Bahasa Indonesia. This common phenomenon occurs during the adaptation of sounds, as proposed in the acoustic approximation model ([Calabrese, 2009](#)).
5. Some variability is due to pre-existing dialect differences within the Acehese language. For example, *keh* /keh/ ‘pocket’ in North Acehese is *baluem* /baluəm/ in Pidie and Greater Acehese and *ipok* /ʔipoʔ/ in West Acehese.
6. There is some widely accepted variation in the pronunciation of Bahasa Indonesia words within Bahasa Indonesia itself. For example, *masjid* ~ *mesjid* ‘mosque’; *karena* ~ *ka’rena* ~ *karna* ‘because’.

While we can account for some of the changes with well-motivated phonological explanations, we are left with the inescapable conclusion that most phoneme substitutions and additions involving vowels are sociophonetic. In particular, the introduction of the phoneme /u/ and diphthongs involving schwa are not motivated by phonology. The phoneme /u/ seems to serve as a badge of Acehese identity. Regardless of the method of elicitation, decontextualised in this case, we can still conclude that the use of /u/ signals Acehese identity. The substitution of the vowel /u/ for other vowels in Bahasa Indonesia is not conditioned because Acehese already has exact correspondences and is frequently found in the same context. For example, *korban* /kɔrban/ ‘sacrifice’ changes to *keureubeuen* /kuɾubɯən/ (/ɔ/ → /u/), while /ɔ/ is found in the same environment in Acehese, such as *koh* /kɔh/ ‘to cut. This identity is emphasised by the insertion of this vowel /u/ (/kuɾubɯən/), not other vowels, to avoid coda /r/. This vowel is not found in Bahasa Indonesia or most other local languages in Indonesia ([Perwitasari, 2019](#)).

There are numerous other sporadic changes which are unmotivated. Another change, this time affecting consonants, is the occasional sporadic epenthetic /h/ following a stop which serves to produce the distinctive Acehese /ph/, /bh/, /th/, /jh/, /kh/ and /rh/ consonant clusters (see [Aziz et al., 2022](#) for further details) also seems not to be phonologically motivated but serves to make a statement of identity, as found in Iraqw ([Mous & Qorro, 2009](#)). Thus, the result is distinctive and perhaps unique to a few languages because it is rarely found in other languages throughout the world.

6. CONCLUSION

The most prominent finding to emerge from this study is that very often, the vowels of Bahasa Indonesia loanwords underwent various sound changes as they were adopted into Acehnese. Acehnese already has all the vowels of Bahasa Indonesia except for the diphthong /au/. Yet, when it adopts Bahasa Indonesia loanwords, various vowel substitutions are made, often involving the replacement of Bahasa Indonesia /i/, /a/ and /ə/ with the back unrounded vowel /u/ as well as other vowel changes. An epenthetic back unrounded vowel /u/ is also inserted to break up consonant clusters as per Acehnese phonotactic rules or constraints. It also seems that different dialects of Acehnese behave differently in regard to these vowel substitutions. It would appear that the sound changes described here belong to a particular period prior to 2004, as these sound changes appear no longer operable. The current flood of English/Bahasa Indonesia loanwords, many of them relating to new technologies, are unaffected.

As an implication, the results of this study have provided a base to determine phonological constraints in Acehnese. These constraints can be used to analyse rankings of constraints in Acehnese using Optimality Theory. Therefore, a further study can analyse borrowing in Acehnese from Bahasa Indonesia and other languages using Optimality Theory analysis, as conducted by [Sah and Jaafar \(2021\)](#), to analyse Bugis borrowing of words from certain other languages. In addition, other operations in Acehnese, such as reduplication and assimilation, can be analysed using Optimality Theory.

The results of this study are subject to certain limitations. This investigation focused on sound changes in relation to the vowels in Bahasa Indonesia/Malay loanwords. Consonant changes and adaptations have also been investigated (see [Aziz et al., 2022](#)). In addition, this study focused on well-established genuine loanwords from Bahasa Indonesia and tried to exclude lexical cognates. However, it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between cognates and borrowings in genetically related languages such as Bahasa Indonesia and Acehnese. Further detailed research should focus on cognates to complete the picture of the complex relationship between Acehnese and Indonesian.

There is also a need to further study the nature of the variability encountered in this investigation. An empirical study of these 285 loanwords is needed that takes into account a range of variables, including dialect background, rural versus urban, formality, age, gender, occupation and level of education attained. This should determine the degree to which the changes in pronunciation of these loanwords in Acehnese relative to the source language seen here in our study are fixed and normative. However, the investigation carried out here in this paper clearly establishes that the majority of these sound changes are not the result of phonological assimilation but rather seem to be an act of Acehnese identity at a period in history when Aceh was trying to establish itself as an independent state.

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The Analysis of Semiotic Signs Appearing on the Names of Acehese Online Newspapers

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Abstract

This study was carried out to analyze semiotic signs appearing on the names of Acehese online newspapers. The method used in this research was qualitative by using content analysis, and the technique used for this research was documentation. The instrument used to collect the data for this research was a checklist by reviewing the names of Acehese online newspapers: Aceh Redaksi, Kabar Aceh, Aceh TerUpdate, Aceh Info, Aceh WorldTime, and Acehzone_id. The data was analyzed using the sign theory of icons, indices, and symbols. The result of the analysis found that the signs which appeared on the names of Acehese online newspapers and the meaning which appeared on them were related to the history of Aceh. They have the same characteristics in the use of colors: red, white, and black. These are the hues used on Aceh's flag, which serves to represent the identity of the Acehese. Since the newspaper organizations were also part of the Aceh community, Acehese online newspapers also had the same culture. Thus, using the flag colors strengthened their identity and signified their origin. White is a symbol of purity, honesty, and kindness, meanwhile black refers to a warning and grief to the heroes, and finally, red symbolizes courage and heroism. The representation of the flag and people, in general, revealed the Acehese desire to have a distinct identity

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from other Indonesian ethnicities in the 38 provinces of this country. Such portrayal was designed to create a distinct identity within the diversity of Indonesia.

Keywords: Acehese, Charles Peirce theory, online newspapers, semiotics, sign.

1. INTRODUCTION

Humans distinguish themselves using language, which consists of signs or symbols, to understand everything in their lives. Mooij (2010) stated that signs, symbols, packages, colors, and letters are essential parts of humans' memory as the association network. Hershberger (2014, p. 101) added, "a sign is anything that represents something to someone in some way. It addresses someone, that is, it makes an analogous, or maybe a more developed sign in that person's mind". Language is the expression of ideas that are transformed into words. Words are combined into sentences, which form ideas into thoughts. Humans use language to express themselves. Language functions as a communication tool, a means to deliver ideas, express feelings, and a form of emotional release. A sign, a code, or any communication system approved by a community is a language. Communication is a part of human activity. Human socialization depends on communication. Verbal and non-verbal communication are just two of the many types of communication. Nonverbal communication conveys ideas more effectively than verbal communication through gestures, eye contact, or other types of body language. Chase and Shamo (2013) stated that "effective communication requires a solid understanding of the process by which humans attempt to communicate. Communication models help us to visualize the process". The function of communication is to deliver and get information.

Moreover, various media can be used to get information, such as online newspapers. Takinawa (2017) affirmed that newspapers had provided news to the reading public for decades, reminding them of major events of the day. In Aceh province, Indonesia, there are many online newspapers such as Aceh Redaksi, Kabar Aceh, Aceh TerUpdate, Aceh Info, Aceh WorldTime, and Acehzone_id, which aim to provide information to society. In addition, newspapers are known for their signs and symbols. When readers see a particular newspaper sign or symbol, they know what newspaper they are reading. Most of the time, signs and symbols appearing in newspapers represent the identity of the newspapers. The online newspapers in Aceh also have their criteria for creating symbols and signs representing meanings. A semiotic analysis can be conducted to understand the meanings.

This study used a semiotic analysis to determine the significance of the signs used on the names of Acehese online newspapers based on the explanation provided above. One kind of multimodal text is a sign. Many studies have been conducted regarding the semiotic analysis of different multimodal texts. Serafani (2010), for example, used the three analytical processes from the perceptual, structural, and ideological viewpoints to comprehend the multimodal texts and how these views broaden readers' interpretative repertoires from Anthony Browne's picture book, *Piggybook*, as an illustration. It was found that readers improve their ability to interpret

multimodal texts by broadening their interpretative viewpoints by concentrating on the visual, linguistic, and design elements (Serafani, 2010).

Hasanah (2010) examined a semiotic analysis of the images on the *Dagadu* t-shirts. The study looked into the significance of the writing on *Dagadu* t-shirts and learned their linguistic symbols. She then made a connection between it and linguistics, and visual symbols. She used a descriptive qualitative analysis strategy to illustrate the signs on the *Dagadu* item's t-shirt. The author employed a semiotic theory, particularly within the outline of social semiotic representation, and centered on the aspect of flag questions such as Peirce's (1931, as cited in Danesi, 2004) semiotic models. From the analysis, there was a connection between the linguistic and pictorial images in the *Dagadu* design. Both characteristics are endeavored to advise the gathering of people around culture in Yogyakarta. Another study by Henny (2014) investigated the signs of political advertisements in the presidential election campaign of Indonesia in 2014, also based on Peirce's theory. Indonesia had two pairs of candidates running for president and vice president in 2014. This research analyzed the signs of advertisements that become their branding using semiotics analysis. Icon, index, and symbol were used based on Peirce's theory.

In Banda Aceh, Zulita and Muthalib (2020) observed shop signs using multimodal analysis. This research aimed to discover the connotation and denotation of shop signs in Banda Aceh. A qualitative approach was used to conduct the research under critical discourse analysis. The subject of this research was the shop signs in Banda Aceh and all the texts, figures, and symbols in the signs were the object of this research. The data analysis was carried out by using coding analysis and three-step analysis. This research found that the shop signs are mostly shop names, figures, and philosophical symbols. Based on connotation analysis, many meanings of the shop signs were culturally interpreted. Then, concerning visuality, the use of shop signs' color depended on the shop type.

Regarding the presence of semiotic signs in many parts of human activities, it can be concluded that everything in life has meaning. Previous studies have covered the analysis of semiotic signs on various media such as movies (e.g., Ammer, 2021; Zamora, 2008), posters (e.g., Teo, 2004; Yang & Hsu, 2015), advertisements (e.g., Ananda et al., 2019; El-Nawawy & Elmasry, 2016; Mcilwain, 2007; Subiakto, 2019), shop signs (e.g., Izadi & Parvaresh, 2016; Nikolaou, 2017), and even t-shirt designs (e.g., Hasanah, 2010; Henny, 2014). Nevertheless, semiotic analysis studies on the signs of online newspapers are limited found in the literature. To date, most previous studies focused on the semiotic analysis of other sections of a newspaper, such as the political cartoon section (e.g., Felicia, 2021; Mwetulundila & Kangira, 2015), cartoon section (e.g., Chikaipa, 2019; Waqar et al., 2020), and announcement section (e.g., Oladejo, 2021). Therefore, it is paramount also to understand the meaning of signs which always appear in online newspapers, especially the ones that receive less attention from semiotic researchers like the Acehnese online newspapers. Therefore, concerning the significance of a commercial exhibit in the public signs in Aceh, especially in the names of Acehnese online newspapers, this study is aimed to do a semiotic analysis to find out the messages in the online newspapers' signs. Thus, we posed this question for our research:

- What are the semiotic signs that are used on the names of the Acehnese online newspaper?

- What are the meanings of the signs which are realized on the names of an Acehese online newspaper?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Semiotics

Humans are constantly engaged in using and interpreting signs, such as gestures, talking, writing, reading, and watching TV programs. Therefore, human intellectual and social life is based on the production, use, and exchange of signs. The primary task of semiotics is to identify, document, and classify the main types of signs and how they are used (Danesi 2004). Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles S. Peirce are the founders of semiotic theory and practice (Danesi 2004). Their ideas as the basic framework for describing and classifying signs, as well as for applying semiotics. Ratna (2009) defined semiotics as an area of research dedicated to the existence, varieties, and uses of signs. This field is often called semiology, and both names are taken from a Greek word meaning proof. It is the analysis of all patterned communication systems, both linguistics, and non-linguistics (Harvey, 2023). It requires learning how meaning is produced and interpreted. Eco (1979) and Sebeok (2001) stated that semiotics was a sign for ‘everything’ that, on the grounds of a previously established social convention, can be taken as something standing for something else. Semiotics involves studying not only what we refer to as ‘signs’ in everyday speech but anything that ‘stands for’ something else. In a semiotic sense, signs take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures, and objects. Contemporary semioticians study sign not in isolation but as part of semiotic ‘sign systems’ (such as a medium or genre). They study how meanings are made and how reality is represented.

2.2 Charles Peirce’s Theory of Sign

Charles Peirce called the sign a representamen and the concept, things, and idea, to which it refers the object (Danesi, 2004). He called the meaning from a sign as the interpretant. These three dimensions are viewed as triadic, as shown in Figure 1.

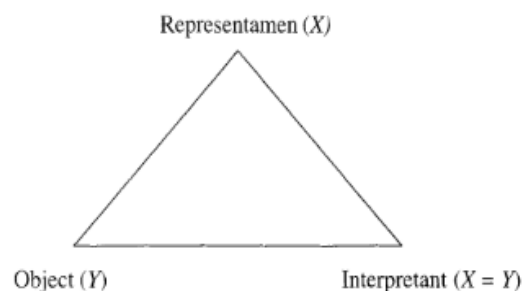


Figure 1. Peirce’s concept of sign (1931 as cited in Danesi, 2004, p. 26).

A sign, representamen, is the Primary component that stands in such a veritable triadic connection to the Second component, called its Object, as to be able to decide the Third element, called its Interpretant, to accept the same triadic connection to its

Object which stands itself to the same Object. According to Peirce (1931, as cited in [Danesi, 2004](#)), a sign may be referred to as an icon, an index, or a symbol, depending on its object. An icon may be a sign that refers to the uncertainty of whether a certain object exists and does so only through idealized depictions of its process. For illustration, a picture of president Soekarno implies the picture is an icon of president Soekarno. An index is a sign which alludes to the Object that it indicates by ethicalness of being indeed affected by that Object. For a case, smoke is an index of fire. A symbol could be a sign which alludes to the object that it indicates by ideals of law, as a rule, an affiliation of shared thoughts, which works to cause the Symbol to be interpreted as alluding to that Object, such as traffic lights and national flags.

3. METHODS

This research used a descriptive qualitative method and documentation technique to collect data from online sources—the data were collected through some steps. The first step was downloading the picture of Acehnese online newspapers' names from the sites on the internet; the second step was observing semiotic signs from the names of Acehnese online newspapers. Third, by observing the signs, messages realized in the names of Acehnese online newspapers can be interpreted.

A checklist served as the research's primary tool. The researchers marked the signs on the names of Acehnese online newspapers using note-taking sheets. Then, the data were analyzed based on Charles Peirce's theory of signs. The subject of this research was the names of Acehnese online newspapers. In this regard, they were: Aceh Redaksi, Kabar Aceh, Aceh TerUpdate, Aceh Info, Aceh WorldTime, and Acehzone_id, and the object of this research was semiotic signs which include icons, index, and symbol.

According to [Yin \(2011\)](#), there are five steps in analyzing data: compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. The first step was compiling, which means compiling the database. The researchers began by compiling and sorting the field notes and data collected from Aceh Redaksi, Kabar Aceh, Aceh TerUpdate, Aceh Info, Aceh WorldTime, and Acehzone_id. The second step was disassembling the data to break down the compiled data into smaller units such as icons, indices, and symbols. The third step was reassembling; it aimed to group the data based on the theory of sign (Peirce, 1931, as cited in [Danesi, 2004](#)) and the theory of multimodal texts ([Serafini, 2010](#)). Next, the fourth step was reassembling. After categorizing the data into different groupings and sequences, the researcher wrote a narrative about the data that became the key analytic portion to recompile the database or reassemble the data differently. These were the interpreting steps. All findings about the meaning of the semiotic signs in the Acehnese newspapers were written at this step. The last step was concluding, in which the researcher concluded the findings.

4. RESULTS

In an attempt to answer the research questions about the semiotic signs used on the names of Acehnese online newspapers and the meanings of the signs, the following results are provided.

4.1 Datum 1

Figure 1 shows the name and symbol of the Acehese online newspaper, Aceh Redaksi. Figure 1 has an icon showing the combination of the letters A and R. The letter A seems incomplete, and R is standing next to A. The letters A and R stand side by side and are located in the center of the figure. The phrase 'Aceh Redaksi' is located under the A and R letters. This symbol is relatively easy to remember because the figure only consists of two words.

Additionally, in terms of index view, the focus point is on the color of the figure. The background of the name Aceh Redaksi is white. White means pure, like the color of cotton. It gives a message that Aceh Redaksi tries to show the reader that it serves the truth in their news.



Figure 1. Aceh Redaksi.

The letters A and R are then written in red and black. Red denotes spirit, similar to the color of fire, while black signifies strength and authority. The newspaper's name, Aceh Redaksi, is also written in letters beneath the AR symbol in red and black. The symbol's meaning is conveyed by the use of these two colors. According to the symbolism, the phrase 'Aceh Redaksi' emphasizes a certain aspect of the situation. One of Indonesia's provinces, 'Aceh' is situated on the northernmost tip of Sumatra Island. Then, 'redaksi' means an agency or institution of mass media responsible for gathering, composing, and editing to broadcasting or printing the news. According to [Santana \(2005\)](#), 'redaksi' is a structure and mechanism in mass media, including electronic and printed media. The duty of 'redaksi' is to determine whether a particular event consisted of valuable news. In conclusion, the use of this name in Acehese online newspapers was to provide accurate news of the current situation in Aceh to the readers.

4.2 Datum 2

Figure 2 shows the name and symbol of the Acehese online newspaper, Kabar Aceh. [Montoya and Vandehey \(2008\)](#) define personal branding as a clear, strong, and persuasive public image. The icon in Figure 2 shows a white crown in the center of the figure. Then, the phrase 'Kabar Aceh' is written under the white crown. The use of a crown in this figure is interesting. The crown symbolizes power, immortality, glory, and prosperity. The Crown does not differentiate between women and men, and it has the power to command everyone. As stated by [Hamilton \(2012\)](#), the crown represents genuine religious and political freedom. The index view focuses on the color of Kabar Aceh's name. It uses two colors; they are white and black. The shape is round with the dominant color of black. A crown is drawn using the white color, and the phrase 'Kabar Aceh' under the crown is also written in white. White means innocent; this pure color

is usually used in personal branding because it gives the impression of balance, neutrality, and elegance.



Figure 2. Kabar Aceh.

Then, the color of Kabar Aceh's background is black. Black is often used in personal branding. If it is used as the base color, personal branding will look attractive. This color also means strength, authority, courage, and grace. According to the symbol view, the only word in this personal branding is Kabar Aceh. 'Aceh' is the name of the place, while '*kabar*' means to report. According to the Dictionary of Bahasa Indonesia (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, n.d.), '*kabar*' refers to the reports of current events. It can be concluded that the phrase 'Kabar Aceh' in this online newspaper has a special meaning. It aims to serve the latest news to the readers, not only the events currently happening in Aceh but also in Indonesia and overseas, such as the news about coronavirus disease and the Acehnese new rules. This news serves the readers at the time it is reported.

4.3 Datum 3

Figure 3 shows the name and symbol of the Acehnese online newspaper, Aceh TerUpdate. A camera is displayed as the icon in Figure 3. In this image, the camera is being used to signify that the information is ready to be captured and also serves as a symbol of news because the camera is associated with the information-gathering process. It is impossible to gather current news without a camera. There is the phrase 'Aceh TerUpdate' inside the camera lens. While the word 'TerUpdate' is written in red, the word Aceh is written in capital letters and black. The letters e, r, p, d, a, t, and e are mostly written in small fonts, but the letters 'T' in the first word and 'U' in the middle of the word are capitalized. Next, the color of Aceh TerUpdate's name appeared as the figure's index. This personal branding's name uses many colors, such as black, red, and white. The dominant color is black.



Figure 3. Aceh TerUpdate.

The figure of the camera consists of two colors; there are white in the camera lens and black in the body part. Then, the phrase 'Aceh TerUpdate' also consists of two colors, black and red. Black is connected with power, elegance, and formality.

Meanwhile, white means safety, purity, and cleanliness. It has a positive connotation and represented faith and purity. In advertising, white is related to coolness and cleanness because it is the color of clouds and pure water. Then, the last is red. Red means passion; it is known as a warm color because it refers to the color of fire. Fire is a symbol of energy that burns anything around it quickly. As stated by [Hawan \(2018\)](#), according to the concept of color meaning by [Wierzbicka \(1996\)](#), black is linked to power, elegance, formality, death, evil, and mystery. White, on the other hand, connotes brightness, goodness, innocence, purity, and virginity. It is widely regarded as the color of perfection. White is the color associated with safety, purity, and cleanliness. White, in contrast to the black, usually has a positive connotation. While red is connected with tires, it is regarded as a warm hue. It is worth mentioning that tire engines and other tire-related equipment are frequently painted red, as were fire extinguishers, and that red is commonly employed as a symbol of danger and warning.

The figure has a symbol that focuses on the names of this personal branding. The name of this Acehese online newspaper is Aceh TerUpdate. ‘Aceh’ refers to Acehese. The word ‘*terupdate*’ is a combination of the Indonesian prefix *ter-* and the English word, update. The prefix *ter-* in Indonesian has a function to express passive verbs that cannot be changed into active verbs (intransitive verbs). The prefix *ter-* means to declare a condition. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary ([Hornby, 2013](#)), ‘update’ means making something more modern or giving someone the most recent information about something. Therefore ‘*terupdate*’ means the news provided in this online newspaper is current events happening in this world. In conclusion, Aceh TerUpdate, as an online media focused on news, provides the latest information to the readers about events happening in the world, especially in Aceh.

4.4 Datum 4

Figure 4 shows the name and symbol of the Acehese online newspaper, Aceh Info. Figure 4 has an icon that shows a red flower that is constructed from red dots which are not connected to each other. The flower is exceptional because it is formed by using tiny dots to big dots. It has a specific meaning. The use of red flowers, which came from tiny to big dots, symbolizes the distribution of information. Tiny dots indicates the information from the small circle eventually spread to the larger areas. In other words, the information originating from Aceh Info newspaper would be read by readers from the rural to urban areas in Aceh. There are also two phrases in the figure, ‘Aceh info’, and ‘media network’.



Figure 4. Aceh Info.

For Figure 4, the index view focuses on the color of this Acehese online newspaper’s name. There are three colors in the figure: white, red, and black. White

means pure, red is spirit and passion, and black symbolizes strength and creativity. It can be concluded that using these three colors aims to persuade the readers that Aceh Info is a platform that serves trusted information. According to the symbol view, the phrase ‘Aceh info’ can be seen in this personal branding in a large font and ‘media network’ in a small font. ‘Aceh’ denotes that this online publication is owned by the Acehnese. Then, ‘info’ refers to the information. As we know, this platform is an online newspaper that serves information about the current situations in the world to the Acehnese every day. Last, ‘media network’ means an integrated digital marketing platform managed by a creative and target-oriented person.

4.5 Datum 5

Figure 5 shows the name and symbol of the Acehnese online newspaper, Aceh World Time. The icon of Figure 5 shows a large map of Aceh in red, and there is a black line inside the map. Usually, people use blue color to draw a map, but this map is special. It does not only use the color of the Aceh flag but also seems to include a part of the flag in its figure which established its branding. Then, there are also the letters ‘AWT’ written in white color and ‘Aceh World Time’ which are written in black color. The index view focuses on the color used in personal branding. There are three colors in the figure: white, red, and black. The dominant color is red because this personal branding uses the Aceh flag. Red symbolizes courage, white means elegance, and black is a standard color used in many personal brandings. The use of these three colors aims to attract the readers.



Figure 5. Aceh World Time.

According to the symbol view, there are two groups of words in the figure. The first is the abbreviation of ‘AWT’, written in big font, from ‘Aceh World Time’. This abbreviation is written in white color. AWT abbreviation consists of three letters, there are A, W, and T. W and T are combined as a letter. Then the second is Aceh World Time written in capital black. This phrase is located at the bottom of the figure. Aceh refers to the province located on the northern tip of Sumatra island in Indonesia, while the ‘world’ means a place on this earth, and ‘time’ is the specific object. Aceh World Time used this name to state that this newspaper belongs to Acehnese which provides much information from the world at an unspecified time.

4.6 Datum 6

Figure 6 shows the name and symbol of the Acehnese online newspaper, Acehzone_id. Figure 6 has an icon that shows an Aceh map surrounded by a circular clock. There was the phrase ‘Atjeh zone’ inside the map written in white. The Aceh

map is used to state that this online newspaper belongs to Acehese and the clock signifies that they are ready to serve information to the readers at any time, including morning, afternoon, and night. In terms of index view, the focus point is on the color of the figure. There are three colors in the figure: white, red, and black. The color of the Aceh map is red as representative of the Aceh color. Then, there is the phrase 'Atjeh zone' inside the map which was written in white to make readers aware of the name of this online newspaper. White is a contrasting color meaning elegance and purity and is always considered good. The founder of Acehzone_id also used white as the background of the Aceh map's color. This is because the white color is a balanced color to make the Aceh map look more visible.



Figure 6. Acehzone_id.

The map is surrounded by a clock consisting of the hours and minutes sign, all painted black. This aims to state that this online newspaper is always ready to update. Finally, based on the symbol view, 'Atjeh zone' emphasizes Aceh as the newspaper's zone of operation. Aceh was previously spelled Atjeh. Both have the same meaning, referring to a place located on the northern tip of Sumatra island. Originally known as Aceh Darussalam, Aceh was later renamed Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam to reflect its unique regional status. It was again renamed to 'Aceh' in 2009. Thus, 'Atjeh' was the previously preferred spelling of Aceh, and 'zone' means the area of this place. The region of Aceh is described by this word.

5. DISCUSSION

Aceh is one of the 38 provinces in Indonesia that has a long and unique history. [Barron and Burke \(2008\)](#) said Aceh had a long story of fighting for freedom. For around 30 years, the separatist rebellion in Aceh led by the Free Aceh Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* or abbreviated as GAM) had been struggling for Aceh's independence war which ended with the signing of the Helsinki MoU ([Ronnie, 2016](#)).

Aceh was then granted a special authority to provide self-governance within the Indonesian state adopted in the Helsinki MoU, granted in 2006 to the Aceh Governance Statute ([Basri, 2014](#)). The agreement also stipulated that Aceh has the right to have its laws and regulation (*Qanun*), to set up Aceh-based political parties and a leader (*Wali Nanggroe*) organization, and to use regional symbols, including a flag, crest, and hymn. In 2013, the governor of Aceh signed the Aceh provincial flag, the same flag raised by the Free Aceh Movement. The central government of Aceh and the government of Indonesia then opposed the introduction of the GAM flag as Aceh's provincial flag ([Mukti et al., 2020](#)). As it violates the law for barring separatist flags, the central government warned the Aceh administration about adopting the GAM flag.

In comparison, following the signing of the 2005 peace agreement between GAM and the Indonesian government in Helsinki, the Aceh administration declined to change the flag, as it cannot be reviewed as a separatist flag (Ali et al., 2008; Awaludin, 2008). Since the flag may be referred to as an identity for Aceh, many online newspapers used the colors of the Aceh flag as their branding, such as red, white, and black.

Nurrahmi (2008) investigated how Serambi Indonesia, one of Aceh's most influential newspapers, uses symbolic language in its coverage of the Aceh flag to give meaning to a collective identity inside Acehnese society, as a flag is seen as an identity symbol. It was found that Serambi Indonesia used flag analogies, nationalist exemplars, middle-ground catchphrases, and ethnocentric portrayals to give a conciliatory representation of the Acehnese political identity. Serambi Indonesia is located in the coverage of the subject of Aceh's provincial flag, which resulted in a reassuring image for Acehnese in the media. Indonesia recognizes Aceh as an Indonesian region while keeping the specialty and uniqueness of Aceh distinct from other Indonesian provinces in Indonesia. Aceh's past was an example of the province's uniqueness and specialization concerning the rest of Indonesia. Furthermore, the representation of the flag and people, in general, revealed the Acehnese desire to have a distinct identity from other Indonesian provinces (Nurrahmi, 2008). Such portrayal, on the other hand, was designed to create a distinct identity within Indonesia.

According to Hasan (2016), there were some meanings in the color of the Acehnese flag. Black referred to a warning and grief to the heroes of the Free Aceh Movement who had been martyred on the battlefield during the Dutch and Japanese colonialism, and now during the colonial era of a new form which is called Indonesian neo-colonialism. Then, white was a symbol of purity, honesty, and kindness. It aimed to show that Acehnese is friendly citizens willing to cooperate sincerely with other nations to create and preserve conciliation and security on the earth, especially in Aceh. The last was red color. This color symbolized courage and heroism, which referred to the feeling of courage to defend the right path for the nation, its citizens, and Islam.

In the Acehnese local media, as well as in the Indonesian national media, the representation of the provincial flag of Aceh was prevalent. Schneeberger (2009) defined that media representation provides an identity that determines the distinctions of one identity from another. In this case, Acehnese online newspapers, such as Aceh Redaksi, Kabar Aceh, Aceh TerUpdate, Aceh Info, Aceh WorldTime, and Acehzone_id, all of them used the word Aceh and the color of the Acehnese flag as an identity of their online newspapers.

6. CONCLUSION

The authors conclude that these Acehnese online newspapers have the same characteristics in the use of colors based on the research findings and discussion of semiotic signs appearing on the names of Acehnese online newspapers (i.e., red, white, and black). These are the hues used on Aceh's flag, which serves to represent the identity of Acehnese within Indonesia. Since the newspaper organizations are also part of the Aceh community, Acehnese online newspapers also have the same culture. Thus, using the flag colors strengthens their identity and signified their origin.

The study is limited only to analyzing the semiotic signs appearing on the names of Acehnese online newspapers. However, semiotic signs also appear in other fields

of Acehese studies such as novel covers, videos, and others. Therefore, it is recommended that other researchers conduct more studies about semiotic signs related to those aspects, especially in Aceh, to further understand their rapport of identity within the diversity of Indonesia.

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Acehnese Parents' Attitudes and Their Implications in the Intergenerational Transmission of the Heritage Language

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Abstract

This study aims to find out the Acehnese parents' attitudes toward their heritage language, Acehnese, and its implication for the intergenerational transmission of the Acehnese language in the family domain among Acehnese parents residing in two suburbs of Lhokseumawe city in Aceh Province, Indonesia. This qualitative study collected data from semi-structured interviews with 20 female parents who are from endogamy families and Acehnese native speakers. The results of the study underlined three significant issues. First, the parents' attitudes toward higher educational degree graduates toward their heritage language are negative, and have low self-esteem to speak their heritage language which gradually resulted in a language shift among female parents. However, the parents with lower educational degrees are more confident to speak Acehnese with a strong sense of belonging to their heritage language. Second, a discrepancy is found between the parents' declaration and their practices in using Acehnese as a mother tongue in their homes because of educational pressures and negative attitudes of the parents. Last, the traditional pattern of intergenerational transmission of Acehnese has been disturbed in the home domains, and this resulted in the Acehnese language being under threat. Consequently, the ability of Acehnese children in speaking Acehnese deteriorates. This study suggests that the important status of Acehnese needs to be recognized as equally important as

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Indonesian by strengthening the local content policy and immersion approach in schools. Revising the language planning and policy to improve awareness of the values of Acehnese needs to be done.

Keywords: Acehnese, heritage language, language maintenance, parents' attitude, language shift.

1. INTRODUCTION

Aceh Province is located in the western part of Sumatra island, Indonesia. There are 13 local languages found in the province, namely, Bahasa Aceh, Aneuk Jamee, Singkil, Gayo, Alas, Tamiang, Kluet, Devayan, Sigulai, Pakpak, Haloban, Lekon, and Nias (Pillai & Yusuf, 2012). Acehnese language has the largest number of speakers in this province among other local languages, which is about 3 million speakers (Lewis, 2009). One of the regions with a large number of Acehnese speakers is Lhokseumawe city. Acehnese is generally used as a spoken language in daily activities. It is one of the Indonesian heritage languages that functions as an identity marker for the Acehnese people and culture (Amery, 2019).

Due to the regulation that Indonesian is the national language in educational institutions and governmental offices, and in other formal events, Indonesian is dominantly used in all of these domains. Thus, the status of Acehnese as a heritage language used in the non-formal domain, such as the home domain, has been disturbed. It is a phenomenon today that parents dominantly speak Indonesian at home to their children. Therefore, these parents have gradually stopped speaking Acehnese as the first language to their children because they consider that Indonesian is much more focal to master than their local language (Alamsyah et al., 2011; Aziz et al., 2021; Yusuf, e al., 2022).

Dating back to twenty years ago, the Acehnese children were actively speaking Acehnese because their parents spoke Acehnese as the dominant language at home. In fact, it can be said that during that time, Acehnese children learned the Indonesian language from their surroundings outside of the home, or when they entered school (Idaryani & Fidyati, 2022; Muhammad, 2013). However, this pattern nowadays has rapidly changed among the Acehnese family. Ewing (2014) postulated how this pattern has been disturbed and influences the intergenerational process of the heritage language at home. He highlighted the significance of language use in a family domain for heritage language preservation for the future generation, and the robust domain for the children to acquire their heritage language at home.

Furthermore, the use of Indonesian in a family domain is increasingly common among highly educated people. The more education they have, the more they are exposed to Indonesian, and the speakers are expected to use more Indonesian (Abtahian & Quinn, 2017; Al-Auwal, 2017; Idaryani & Fidyati, 2022). In addition, among those who live in urban areas such as Banda Aceh, many children in these families speak Indonesian as their mother tongue instead of the local language(s) (Alamsyah et al., 2011).

Subsequently, it is a trend today that Acehnese parents are reluctant to use their local language and prefer the Indonesian language to their children at home (Aziz et al., 2021; Muhammad, 2013; Yusuf, e al., 2022). One of the reasons is that the parents

are concerned about their children having a lack of ability in speaking Indonesian when they enter school (Alamsyah et al., 2011). Consequently, many young children are only able to speak little Acehese or even not at all. Ismail et al., (2021) in their study in Lhokseumawe city have warned that many children have lost the ability to speak Acehese rapidly because parents prefer speaking the Indonesian language to their children. A similar finding was also found by Aziz, et.al. (2021) that Acehese children in Bireuen city also speak little Acehese. Aziz and Amery (2016) pointed out that parents' attitudes on more favor of speaking Indonesian to their children lead to the Acehese language being in an unsafe position although the language has the most speakers than other local languages in Aceh (Cohn & Abtahian, 2017; Ravindranath, & Cohn, 2014). It can be lost if the robust transmission process of the language does not occur properly in the family domain (Ravindranath & Cohn, 2014).

One of the factors of language extinction is that the language keeps losing its domain (Ansori, 2019; Aziz & Amery, 2016; Ewing, 2014), particularly in the family domain which becomes the crucial domain for language preservation. After all, the indicator of language loss is when the number of young generation speaking the language is getting smaller (Al-Auwal, 2017; Aziz & Amery, 2016; Ewing, 2014; Setiawan, 2020). Therefore, there is an indication that the existence of the Acehese language begins to be threatened and endangered (Iskandar et al., 2018) because its role and functions have been taken away by the Indonesian language for all internal purposes (Amery, 2019).

Several previous studies have been conducted on the use of the Acehese language among young Acehese (Al-Auwal, 2017; Alamsyah et al., 2011; Aziz et al., 2021), the use of Acehese in intermarriage families (Aziz et al., 2016; Ulfa, 2018), and the attitudes on the use of Acehese among young parents in the home (Aziz et al., 2020; Yusuf et al., 2022). Hence, it is crucial to understand parents' attitudes toward their heritage language in the process of transmitting their heritage language to their children in their homes as a mother tongue. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by studying the Acehese family from the endogamy married model and highlight the issues of Acehese language transmission among children as a mother tongue by their female parents in the home domain. This study chose only female parents (i.e., mothers) as the participants because early literacy outcomes for young children have been connected to mothers' language input in terms of optimal vocabulary (Hoff, 2003; Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2014). In view of that, the study aims to focus on two issues:

1. What are female parents' attitudes on the Acehese language as a heritage language and as a means of communication?
2. What are the parents' attitudes on the intergenerational transmission of Acehese in the home domain that influence the maintenance of Acehese as a heritage?

This is a sociolinguistic study. Sociolinguistics is the study between language and society which focuses on the relationship between language use and the social structure within the society where the language users reside (Spolky, 1998). Therefore, this study is expected to contribute theoretical and practical knowledge on the use of the Acehese language at home by parents as a mother tongue to their children. This study can also provide a future reference for researchers who are interested in this field. It is also expected that this study contributes evidence on the status and the existence of the Acehese language as a heritage language among the Acehese people.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociolinguistics studies language together with human cultural phenomena. In the case of this present study, it focuses on the reasons why a particular group of community shifts to another language or maintains their old language, and questions why the particular language remains important and keeps preserving it, or otherwise (Spolsky, 1998). Language shift is the situation that a community changes its heritage language to speak the other language and abandon its heritage language (Fishman, 1964). Likewise, Holmes and Wilson (2017) described that people gradually shift from one language to the other over a certain period, and language shifts may happen differently among individuals and different groups. Thus, when a language shift happens, the function of the language is replaced in all domains by the other language. As the language usage by speakers keeps shrinking in all domains, the speakers of the dying language are less proficient in their language which finally leads to language loss or language death. In the Acehnese context, this gradually happens among the massive use of the Indonesian language in almost all formal and non-formal domains which takes over the functions of Acehnese as the heritage language (Amery, 2019).

Many theories have been developed to discuss the issues of language maintenance. Ostler (2011) defined language maintenance as the survival of a language that might be expected to be endangered. He further describes that one of the concerns on language threat is the lack of awareness of adults and the older generation on the changing of the young generation on linguistic behavior and linguistic loyalty. However, parents who are aware of this situation would maintain it, promote it, and further use it with their children, especially if the condition of their heritage language is critical or under a threat (Schwartz, 2008).

The co-existence between the heritage language and the other language's presence and attraction has failed to focus on the values of the heritage language. Likewise, language shift happens when a certain language is not maintained and the speakers of the particular language shift to other favored languages. Ostler (2011) later described that the process of language transmission to children may be interrupted when they are exposed to other languages due to the demand for the other languages. Most of the time, the other languages are superior and more favored. This is because the favored language is considered more prestigious and is associated with a wealthier and more powerful group of speakers. Ostler (2011) suggested that language teaching in schools most of the time can threaten the survival of local languages and replace the usage of the local language in all domains. In the Indonesian context, Indonesian as a formal language used for teaching in schools has contributed to the negative impact on the existence of local languages in Indonesia because Indonesian is considered the language for the educated and middle to higher classes people. In other words, Aziz and Amery (2016, p. 104) once called that the Indonesian language has become the "killer language" of the existing languages in Indonesia, especially Acehnese.

2.1 Parents' Attitudes and Language Shift

Parents' language attitudes to their heritage language are crucial for language maintenance because it plays a very important role in ensuring that indigenous languages are passed on to their children. Furthermore, Ajzen (2005) defined attitude as a way people respond to an object, person, institution, or event favorably or

unfavorably. Ajzen (2005) further elaborated types of responses of attitude objects into three categories: cognitive responses, affective responses, and conative responses. Cognitive responses reflect the perceptions or thoughts of the attitude object. In terms of verbal nature, the cognitive responses are expressions of beliefs of the attitude object. Affective responses are regarding an individual's evaluation and feeling of the attitude object. Meanwhile, conative responses are the reflections of the individual's actions respective to the attitude object. Similarly, language attitude is also defined as favorable and unfavorable feelings towards a particular language that can indicate the status of that language within society (Baker, 1992). Furthermore, Crystal (2011) described language attitude as the negative or positive feeling people have of their language or toward other languages. In other words, language attitude is someone's values of a certain language. In line with this, Setiawan (2013) explained that language attitudes are related to the subjective vitality possessed by an individual or community which determines the language's survival in the future. Setiawan (2013) said that positive attitudes of speakers of their heritage language (HL) can result in heritage language survival however negative attitudes may lead to a heritage language shift.

Parents have a crucial responsibility to transmit a specific language to their children, and they are the ones who should introduce and later teach that language to their children (Kadir, 2021) because parents are the main source of language input for the children (Ewing, 2014; Kadir, 2021; Kurniasih, 2005). Many studies have been done to see the influence of parents' attitudes on heritage language maintenance. A study conducted by Kurniasih (2005) on a Javanese family in Yogyakarta shows that parents' attitude toward the frequent use of Indonesian in the family domain among family members has given significant contributions to the process of language shift. Zhu et al. (2020) found in the study of six Chinese parents' attitudes residing in America in passing down their Chinese heritage language to their children. They point out that there is a discrepancy between parents' attitude and their effort to support their heritage language for their children. Parents show less effort in supporting their children in using their heritage language. Although parents consider HL important for their children, they put less effort to use heritage language with their children. Parents read or watch in Chinese with their children less than once a week compared to English which is two or more than three times per week. The study also reveals that with a higher educational background, parents are doing less effort in encouraging their children to learn Chinese.

However, the study conducted by Bayram and Wright (2018) on 16 Turkish parents residing in Germany shows that there was clear consistency among Turkish parents on the use of the Turkish language with their children at home in daily life such as watching TV channels in Turkish on daily basis and read magazines and newspapers in Turkish. The parents also have Turkish relatives residing in Germany who still actively speak Turkish with them. The parents are strict about speaking Turkish as a primary language in their homes unless when necessary, such as when a guest or visitor to their home is not speaking Turkish. The consistency of Turkish parents lets their rich opportunity to their children to use their parents' heritage language in their homes although the children live in a mainstream German-speaking environment. However, Bayram and Wright (2018) underlined that those parents faced the challenge of speaking Turkish as a heritage language in Germany with their children within the mainstream education system. Parents complained about a lack of support from the German government in accommodating the Turkish language which

can affect the future of Turkish as a heritage language in Germany. Another study conducted by [Muliawati and Yusnida \(2022\)](#) on 50 Acehnese parents residing in Banda Aceh city, Indonesia, also shows the parents' positive attitude and their consistent effort in promoting their heritage language to their children at home.

Nevertheless, although speakers have a positive attitude to their vernacular languages, it is not a guarantee that the language is maintained because the positive attitude of the speaker does not guarantee that the speaker keeps using the language. The study conducted by [Romanowski \(2021\)](#) on immigrant parents from Poland residing in Melbourne confirmed that having a positive attitude of Polish parents toward their heritage language does not guarantee the process of heritage language maintenance. He highlights the discrepancies between parents' declaration and their actual practices. The parents did not put their effort to support their children in the process of heritage language acquisition. He further postulated the crucial influence of parents' educational background in deciding on what language their children will be raised in. Similar findings were also found in the Acehnese context ([Aziz et al., 2021](#); [Fakhrurrazi, 2016](#); [Yusuf et al., 2022](#)), and some other previous studies in different language contexts ([Gupta, 2020](#); [Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015](#); [Romanowski, 2021](#)).

2.2 Intergenerational Transmission of Heritage Language in the Family Domain

Acehnese children today who are being raised with Indonesian as their first language hastens the status of the Acehnese language in danger. Therefore, the next generation of Acehnese language speakers will not use it, especially in the city areas of Aceh Province, such as in Bireuen ([Aziz et al. \(2021\)](#)), Langsa ([Al-Auwal, 2017](#); [Fakhrurrazi, 2016](#); [Ismail et al., 2021](#); [Ulfa, 2018](#)), Banda Aceh ([Aziz et al., 2020](#); [Muhammad, 2013](#); [Muliawati & Yusnida, 2022](#); [Yusuf et al., 2022](#)), and Lhokseumawe ([Idaryani & Fidyati, 2021](#); [Idaryani & Fidyati, 2022](#)). These studies conclude that young Acehnese speakers today have lesser ability and fluency in speaking Acehnese, and some cannot even speak it. Their studies also confirmed that parents are becoming more dominant in speaking Indonesian to their children. [Idaryani and Fidyati \(2022\)](#), for instance, confirmed that parents tend to raise their children with only Indonesian as their first language at home in Lhokseumawe city. Therefore, the number of Acehnese children who speak Acehnese will eventually decrease ([Ismail et al., 2021](#)).

The robust process of Acehnese intergenerational transmission among Acehnese parents in the family domain today is under threat because the classic pattern of passing down of Acehnese as a heritage language in the Acehnese family domain has been disturbed. Traditionally, Acehnese learned their heritage language in their homes from their parents and started learning Indonesian as a second language (L2) at school. Consequently, the forceful intergenerational transmission of the heritage language in the home domains leads to a language shift from their heritage language to Indonesian. [Muhammad \(2013\)](#) describes that nowadays Acehnese children have switched to the pattern of learning a second language (Indonesian) which consequently resulted in a deteriorating ability of Acehnese children in speaking Acehnese ([Ismail et al., 2021](#)).

In addition, [Kurniasih \(2005\)](#) and [Candra and Nurmaida \(2018\)](#) confirm the parents' roles in transmitting their heritage languages to their children have faded away even though it is strongly crucial for language maintenance in the home domain

(Ewing, 2014). Moreover, it has a big influence on their children's language development because a home domain has a very influential role in heritage language preservation compared to the role of other formal institutions for heritage language preservation (Canagarajah, 2008).

3. METHOD

This research employed a qualitative design to explore the issue of Acehnese parents' attitudes toward their heritage language and the implications in the intergenerational transmission of the Acehnese language to their children. Qualitative research aims to explore and comprehend the meaning of an individual or group toward social or human problems (Creswell, 2014). According to Hale and Napier (2013) in qualitative methods, the researcher needs to explore, interpret and describe the quality and characteristics of the concept. Therefore, qualitative design is used in this study because the data are primarily presented in the form of words obtained from the in-depth interview excerpts as primary data.

The study was conducted in two suburbs namely Desa Blang Punteuet and Desa Jambo Timu, Lhokseumawe city, Aceh Province, Indonesia. The community in those suburbs is less multicultural compared to the community in the area of Lhokseumawe CBD (Central Business District). Desa Blang Punteuet is located along with the national highway while another suburb is located in a coastal area of Lhokseumawe city and it is quite far from the main highway route of Medan-Banda Aceh.

3.1 Participants

There are 20 female parents involved in this study. The female parents were selected in this study because gender plays a significant role in the intergenerational transmission of a language in the family (Kurniasih, 2005; Nurani, 2015). Kurniasih (2005) further added that in the Indonesian context, generally speaking, a family is still in a conservative style that a mother has a significant role as a caregiver to her children while a father plays a role as a breadwinner. Therefore, female parents have more opportunities to interact with their children in their home at an early young age which contributes to the language choice and language attitude of the children on their female parents' use at home.

The participants were 10 parents from Desa Jambo Timu and 10 other parents from Desa Blang Punteuet village. The participants are Acehnese native speakers and have children aged from 2 years old to 16 years old. All participants were born, raised, and lived in Lhokseumawe. All parents from these two different suburbs were selected by using purposive sampling based on their educational level and endogamy. A number of 9 participants graduated from higher educational institutions and are labeled as PH1 to PH9, and the rest 11 participants graduated from elementary school to senior high school, and are labeled as PH10 to PH20. The respondents were coded as follows:

- PH (participant with higher education)
- PN (participant with lower education)
- PHs (more than one participant with higher education)
- PNs (more than one participant with lower education)

3.2 Instruments

The instrument of this research was the interviews. In collecting data, the researchers first visited the participants' houses one by one and acknowledged the participants if they could participate in this study. Secondly, after the agreements were acquired, the researchers started the interview and the sessions were recorded by using a voice recorder from the smartphone with consent from the participants. The interviews were conducted in the afternoon because all the participants were quite busy in the morning. Each interview lasted from 10 to 30 minutes. The interviews were conducted in the Acehnese language. The questions of interview started with probing questions that finally led to the main question 'Do you think that speaking Acehnese among Acehnese people is important?' Some questions in the interview were sometimes elaborated to construe between the previous statement and the last statement of some participants to seek their consistent responses throughout the interviews. Therefore, one question may be longer for one participant but may be shorter for another participant.

3.3 Procedure

All the interviews were conducted in the participants' houses. In addition, an audio recorder was used for recording all the conversations during the interview session. The recorded data were then transcribed and analyzed in the three steps analysis adopted from [Miles et al. \(2014\)](#): data condensation, data display, and conclusion or verification. The data were distilled by removing the unnecessary responses or information from the interviews, and the researchers selected and focused on the crucial points for the data display in the form of narrative texts. After that, the recording data were transcribed into narrative descriptive and coded. Coding data is a process of classifying and dividing the passage of the text to highlight the set of meaningful description and important data categories that represents the large themes of data ([Creswell, 2012](#)). Afterward, the codes were determined based on how often they emerged in the data. The transcripts of the data were re-read to search for the crucial points or themes related to the research questions and the aims of the study.

The conclusion or verification steps allow the researchers to conclude the attitudes of Acehnese parents on Acehnese language and the issue of language shift among parents and their implications in passing down their heritage language as a mother tongue to their children. The final steps of the analysis were making verification and conclusions. In this step, the data were compared, identified, and ordered in several ways; the frequency, the chronology, and the importance to adjust the assumptions of the researchers and other results of the study ([Miles et al., 2014](#)).

4. RESULTS

4.1 Parents' Attitudes on Acehnese Language as a Heritage Language and as a Means of Communication

The result of the interviews shows that all participants regardless of their educational background acknowledged that their first language is Acehnese, and

Indonesian is their second language, and all of them are fluent in speaking both languages. The detailed responses of participants on their heritage language usage are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. The participants' attitudes toward Acehnese.

Attitude	Respondents	
	PNs*	PHs**
The awareness of the importance of heritage language as a means of communication, identity, and culture	All PNs have poor awareness	All PHs have poor awareness
Language usage based on the educational background in non-formal domains	Speaking Acehnese both in 'cool' and not 'cool' places	Not speaking Acehnese in 'cool' places and otherwise
Consistency in using Acehnese	Inconsistent	Consistent
The self-esteem of Acehnese usage	Strong	Weak
Acehnese intertwined into Indonesian	Positive	Negative

*PNs (more than one participant with lower education)

**PHs (more than one participant with higher education)

All participants responded positively that Acehnese is an important language as their heritage language was inherited from their ancestors. However, the participants were not able to express their reasons why it was important as their heritage language. One PH confessed that it was important as long as they live along with the Acehnese community, and one PN said they, as the Acehnese, had to use the Acehnese language in a speech community because Acehnese is the language of their ancestors.

- (1) Excerpt 1-PH4: "Acehnese is our language, so it is important to speak Acehnese as long as we still live in Aceh, we live around Acehnese neighborhood, if not, then we should not speak Acehnese anymore".
- (2) Excerpt 2-PN1: "Yes, we have to speak our own language among Acehnese because that is our ancestor's language".

However, a striking finding is that in practice, not all participants spoke the Acehnese language dominantly within the Acehnese community, all PHs used their heritage language in non-formal places that they considered not 'cool' places such as in traditional markets and street food stalls, but they preferred speaking the Indonesian language in 'cool' places such as in shopping centers and cafes although some of them were with Acehnese interlocutors. On the contrary, all PNs consistently spoke both Acehnese either in 'cool' or in 'not cool' places.

- (3) Excerpt 3-PH1: "I would rather begin speaking Indonesian in a mall or cafe because I am afraid that if I speak Acehnese, my addressee is not Acehnese (i.e., can't speak it)".

Three PNs admitted that they kept speaking Acehnese even though their interlocutors keep responding in the Indonesian language, and two PHs declared that they would switch the Acehnese language to Indonesian if their Acehnese interlocutors kept responding in Indonesian, either in a formal or non-formal domain, although they knew very well that their interlocutors could speak Acehnese fluently. They felt insecure and were not confident if they kept speaking Acehnese while their Acehnese interlocutors did not respond in the same language. The participants considered that it

was not appropriate to keep speaking Acehnese if their interlocutors were reluctant to respond in the Acehnese language.

Furthermore, PH1 and PH3 admitted that they were not confident if they spoke Indonesian intertwined with Acehnese. They considered it not appropriate and sounded 'funny' when they spoke Indonesian intertwined with their heritage language. They were more confident to speak Indonesian. On the contrary, all PNs acknowledged that was not a serious issue and still felt confident if they spoke Indonesian intertwined with the Acehnese, and it was natural because they were Acehnese people.

- (4) Excerpt 4-PH3: "I think it sounds funny if you speak Indonesian but is still intertwined with Acehnese, for me it seems the speaker is an unsophisticated country person, ha...ha...must speak Indonesian without Acehnese sounds (in them)".

4.2 The Implications of Parents' Attitudes in the Intergenerational Transmission of Acehnese Language in the Home Domain

The results of the study are complex that the majority of participants—PHs and PNs—declared that the Indonesian language was their first preference for their children in their homes, and Acehnese was the second language to speak to their children. The reasons for the participants varied. PH1 stated that she wanted to eliminate the Acehnese language from her children because she was worried that her children might be bullied as she once experienced with her peers at school. She was bullied when speaking Indonesian mixed with influencing sounds from her Acehnese.

Meanwhile, a majority of PHs found it fine if their children spoke Indonesian with sounds from the Acehnese language. However, three PNs did not support their children in speaking Indonesian with Acehnese sounds. Furthermore, four PNs prioritized Indonesian as a mother tongue for their children because they were worried about the capability of the Indonesian language of their children in school. In the meantime, the other PNs spoke Acehnese as a mother tongue to their children without worrying about their children's difficulties in Indonesian at school.

- (5) Excerpt 5-PN1: "I always speak Acehnese to my son. He will be able to speak Indonesian later when he starts going to school, no need to worry about it".
- (6) Excerpt 6-PN2: "I speak Acehnese as a first language to my children, they can learn Indonesian by themselves when watching TV".

PN1 and PN2 believed that their children could learn Indonesian from their environment (outside of the house) because of the abundant resources available in Indonesian. The detailed responses of participants on the language used as a mother tongue in their homes are illustrated in Table 2.

Furthermore, all participants agreed that parents were the best agents for their children to learn their heritage language so it was favorable that their children learned the Acehnese language from their parents at home. However, two PHs claimed that they spoke about 20% of Acehnese or less to their children and expect their children to learn Acehnese outside of the house. Almost all PHs and PNs declared that they spoke Acehnese with their husbands, and only two PHs and one PNs admitted that they kept speaking Indonesian with their husbands because they wanted their children to learn Indonesian. One other PH admitted that although she was eager to speak

Indonesian with her husband, he consistently rejects speaking in Indonesian to her and held on to the Acehese language at home.

Table 2. The language usage by participants to their children in the home domain.

Language usage	PNs	PHs
Children speaking Acehese and Indonesia:		
• Positive response	All	
• Negative response		All
The reasons for inconsistency in speaking Acehese with their children:		
• Educational pressure	4	
• Negative attitude to heritage language		All
Participants' first language to children in the home domain:		
• Acehese as a mother tongue	7	
• Indonesian as a mother tongue	4	9

5. DISCUSSION

Although all parents could speak Acehese and admitted that Acehese was important as their heritage language, most of them were not aware that Acehese as a heritage language was important to reflect their characteristics as the Acehese people and it is a unique identity marker for Acehese people (Amery, 2019). Any heritage language is a significant identity for the group of speakers within the global society today (Gupta, 2020). Nonetheless, the parents did not acknowledge the benefit of their heritage language which shapes the multicultural community of Indonesia and is part of the Indonesian cultural wealth.

Furthermore, the lack of awareness of parents to preserve their heritage language by speaking it in the non-formal domains resulted in some parents shifting from the Acehese to the Indonesian language, particularly those with higher educational backgrounds. Due to their negative attitude, this raises the worst scenario for the Acehese language to be under a serious threat. Consequently, it may further result in heritage language loss among Acehese female parents in the future. This loss may happen not only among the young Acehese generation as suggested in some previous studies (Al-Auwal, 2017; Aziz, et al., 2021; Ismail et al., 2021) but also among Acehese parents (Idaryani & Fidyati, 2021). This means a loss of one of the Acehese identity markers within the global community. This is contrary to the study found by Gupta (2020) that parents are well aware of their distinct identity as a self-rooted identity amidst the global era that is recognized with their heritage language.

Consequently, if Acehese parents, as the robust agents for language preservation, start shifting to Indonesian, they have put their heritage language under threat because it is likely they will no longer speak their heritage language to their children. Parents keenly promote their heritage language and consistently use it with their children if they are aware of the condition of their heritage language that is critical or under a threat (Schwartz, 2008). This situation is alarming because Acehese parents start abandoning their heritage language in non-formal domains where the Indonesian language is not necessarily to be used (Amery, 2019; Ansori, 2019). Indonesian language slowly takes the function of the Acehese in the speech community in non-formal domains and serves all communication purposes among the Acehese community.

The negative attitude of PHs stigmatizing the Acehnese speakers speaking Indonesian intertwined with Acehnese and started shifting to the Indonesian language in the 'cool' domains has impacted the use of Acehnese as a mother tongue to their children in their homes. The parents felt reluctant to speak Acehnese to their children and considered that Acehnese has a lower status, less important, and less prestigious compared to Indonesian to their children. The worst phenomenon is that they even tried to neutralize the sounds of Acehnese (i.e., dialects) of their children while speaking Indonesian by dominating Indonesian as a means of communication in their homes. It is reflected in the attitude of the parents who kept speaking Indonesian with their spouses so that their children can be exposed intensively to the Indonesian language and eliminate or procrastinate the exposure to the Acehnese language as long as possible to neutralize the Acehnese dialect while their children spoke Indonesian. This is in line with what has been stated by [Ostler \(2011\)](#) that a community may underestimate their heritage language because of sustained pressure on the sense of security and self-esteem in their language. This sustained pressure happens to Acehnese parents because Indonesian is considered a sign of success and prestige language.

In addition, parents were inconsistent between what they declared and what they practiced. Acehnese parents felt embarrassed to speak their heritage language in 'cool' places and they wanted their Indonesian language to be free of influences from their Acehnese dialect(s) because they associate people who speak Acehnese as unsophisticated country people, low class, and less educated. This is in line with the results of some previous studies ([Alamsyah et al., 2011](#); [Aziz & Amery, 2016](#); [Aziz et al., 2021](#)) that Acehnese people only use Acehnese to their close friends or close relative, and speak Acehnese with people considered from lower social backgrounds. On the contrary, Indonesian is associated with a high-class community that is spoken by educated people; it is a prestigious language that is used in 'cool' places. This finding is in line with the study of [Alamsyah et al. \(2011\)](#) and [Al-Auwal \(2017\)](#).

However, PNs who had a positive attitude to their heritage language has strong self-esteem in speaking it, and kept speaking their heritage language in the non-formal domain and to their children as a mother tongue. This positive attitude can guarantee the robust intergenerational transmission of Acehnese in the family domain because the traditional pattern of passing down the heritage language is not disturbed. However, because of educational pressure and the strong position of the Indonesian language as a medium of instruction at all educational levels, it has resulted in educational pressure for some Acehnese parents. Although some parents have a positive attitude toward their heritage language, the concern about the language barrier with their children has caused the parents to be reluctant to speak their heritage language as a mother tongue to their children. This is in line with the work done by [Alamsyah et al. \(2011\)](#) that one of the parents' reasons to choose Indonesian as a mother tongue for their children is because of educational pressure. [Abtahian and Quinn \(2017\)](#) stated that linguistics insecurity may lead to language shift when a person is punished to speak their heritage language. Likewise, Acehnese mothers in this study felt inconvenient to speak their heritage language because of their worries about the language barrier that may happen to their children.

Although the participants agreed that Acehnese is important to be spoken in the family and the home is the best place for their children to learn Acehnese, there were discrepancies between the parents' belief and their effort in promoting and preserving

Acehnese to their children. The parents spoke very little Acehnese to their children and expected the children to learn their heritage language outside of their homes. This is what has been concerned by [Anderbeck \(2012\)](#) that, nowadays, parents heavily rely on the environment for their children to learn their heritage language. Consequently, less intention of parents to speak Acehnese to their children has put the position of this language to be unsafe because Acehnese children are not able to speak it fluently as what has been found in several previous studies ([Fakhrurrazi, 2016](#); [Gupta, 2020](#); [Ismail et al., 2021](#); [Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015](#); [Romanowski, 2021](#); [Zhu et al., 2020](#)).

[Ewing \(2014\)](#) has also acknowledged that today, the traditional pattern of learning the heritage language has been disturbed among children because they no longer learn their heritage language from their parents in their homes. Nonetheless, the issues of negative attitudes and educational pressure among parents have disturbed the traditional pattern suggested by [Ewing \(2014\)](#) in learning the heritage language by Acehnese children. Therefore, this study is in line with [Yusuf et.al. \(2022\)](#) that most parents preferred speaking Indonesian to their children as a mother tongue. Consequently, many Acehnese children no longer learn their heritage language from their homes. This scenario has led to the loss of Acehnese competence among children that potentially put Acehnese as one of the moribund languages in Indonesia. Therefore, not only parents are crucial for Acehnese language maintenance, but also educational institutions to maintain the Acehnese language and make it in a safe position.

Indonesian spoken as a mother tongue by the majority of parents to their children has resulted in a language threat toward Acehnese. A mother as a caregiver in the family, and family as a significant place for Acehnese language maintenance no longer speaks Acehnese to their children when the children do not yet have their own social life and interaction outside of the house, and their daily communication is still dominant with their parents. Thus, much work needs to be done and all parties must be involved before it is too late to mend the oversight.

6. CONCLUSION

The results of the study reveal the following issues: parents' negative attitudes toward their heritage language are strongly influenced by their higher educational background, and they have shifted from speaking Acehnese in the non-formal domain to the Indonesian language. On contrary, parents with lower educational backgrounds have stronger self-esteem to use their heritage language in the speech community in the non-formal domain without feeling intimidated. However, there is a discrepancy between the parents' declaration and their practice in passing down their heritage language to their children. Although some parents have strong self-esteem in their heritage language and consider that to be important for their children, and the family domain is the best place for their children to learn their heritage language, however, they do not speak or pass it to their children as a mother tongue because of the educational pressure.

Although the worst scenario of the Acehnese language threat is not yet visible to many Acehnese people, however, serious acts by the educational institution in Aceh should be made to raise awareness among parents of how important Acehnese is as a heritage language to be preserved for their children. Therefore, the important status of

Acehnese has to be recognized as equally important as Indonesian by strengthening the local content policy and immersion approach in schools. Thus, it is suggested that the Acehnese government should be concerned with the classical pattern of the intergenerational transmission process of Acehnese in homes. Revising the language planning and language policy to improve the awareness of Acehnese parents on the values of Acehnese as their heritage language needs to be done.

The limitation of this research lies in the number of participants, the few numbers are not enough to generalize the findings to represent the issue of language shift among all of the Acehnese parents in the province. Further investigation on language shift among Acehnese children needs to be addressed intensively in the wider region and with a larger number of parents, young Acehnese, and educational parties involved in the study.

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Principles of Politeness Used and Violated by Acehese-Speaking *Khatibs* in Their Friday Prayer Sermons

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Abstract

This research focused on the politeness of the preachers (henceforth, Khatibs) in delivering sermons. The objective was to find out how politeness principles were applied in the Acehese language sermons delivered by the Khatibs in Friday prayer processions in Aceh Besar, Indonesia. The data for this research was 15 Friday sermons given at seven sub-districts in Aceh Besar. This study used naturally occurring data from the Friday sermons collected over two months by recording them at 15 mosques within the area of Aceh Besar. Data were transcribed and analyzed using Grice's maxim theory. The results showed that out of the six politeness maxims, only two maxims, the sympathy maxim, and the tact maxim were found and identified to be applied in the Friday prayer sermons. The sympathy maxim was dominantly used by the Khatibs with 52 occurrences or 68.4% of data, while the tact maxim was found to be used in 24 occurrences or 31.6% of data. Meanwhile, the approbation maxim, the agreement maxim, the modesty maxim, and the generosity maxim were not found in the data. This might be attributed to the nature of the discourse of the sermons as one-way dialogues. It can be concluded that Friday prayers only used the sympathy maxim and tact maxim of

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politeness because of the one-way communication of Friday sermons. The reasons for the absence of the other four politeness maxims are contextually discussed in this paper.

Keywords: Acehese language, Friday sermons, politeness principles.

1. INTRODUCTION

Politeness strategies in discourse are a part of pragmatic studies. According to Yule (1996), pragmatics examines speakers' meaning according to contexts and the social distance determining the participant's involvement in specific conversations. Speakers construct politeness to the audience as a form of respect to the listeners, such as in sermons (monologues) or to the interlocutors (i.e., speech partner(s) or a dialogue).

Politeness is essentially a matter of taking into account the feelings of others as to how they should be treated in communication, including behaving in a manner that demonstrates appropriate concern for interlocutors' social status and their social relationships (Brown, 2015). From Fraser's (1990) point of view, there are four principles of politeness: the social-norm perspective, conversational maxim, conversational contract, and social indexing. Chaer (2010) asserts that the language rules to acquire politeness in conversations include formality, hesitancy, and equality. In addition, Brown and Levinson (1987) reveal that the categories of politeness can be reviewed based on the negative and positive faces and Leech's (1983) cost/benefit scale. Fraser (1990) further adds that the application of politeness language categories must be under the conversational contract.

As Indonesia is a multilingual, multiethnic, and multicultural country, every group of speakers uses their mother tongue as their daily language. As a national language, Bahasa Indonesia is used in formal contexts and situations. In Aceh, Acehese and other vernacular languages have the most significant number of speakers. Considering that most native Acehese is Muslims, it is expected that Acehese sermons, announcements, and lectures in semi-formal contexts are conveyed in Acehese because many of the religious discussions are delivered in the native language. Moreover, the self-identification of religion through language is more complex and cannot be understood in complicated ways (Bhimji, 2005). Therefore, in most cases, the Acehese language is considered more appropriate for expressing religious discussions among the Acehese people.

Nevertheless, there have been incidents where Acehese *Khatibs* (preachers) were being brought down from their lecterns or platforms during the sermons of Friday prayers. Friday prayers, or congregational prayers, or the *jumu'ah* in Arabic, are a prayer that Muslims hold every Friday during the afternoon instead of the *Dzuhur* prayer typically held during that time on other days. A Friday prayer is half the *Dzuhur* prayer, preceded by a *khutbah* (a sermon) and followed by a congregational prayer led by the *Imam* (the prayer leader). The occasions where Acehese *Khatibs* were being protested and brought down by the *jama'ah* (or worshippers attending the Friday prayers) were reported in several Aceh districts, such as Pidie, Pidie Jaya, and Banda Aceh. One of the instances was when a *Khatib* at Abu Beureueh Mosque in Pidie was forced to step down by one outspoken prayer congregation member (audience) in the

middle of the sermon because the Khatib spoke at length about issues central to views that divides two sects of Islam in Aceh (Muhammadiyah and Ahlussunnah), and the majority of members showed their support for the action of the member (Kabar Aceh, 2012). In 2017, a similar incident took place at Al Makmur Mosque. Other cases are also reported by Miswar (2022) who views these phenomena as a contestation of religious authority. These incidents were, partly or entirely, motivated by controversial content delivered by the Khatibs by tapping into topics sensitive to political views. Mosques are deemed sacred venues, and thus, sensitive issues can disrupt the peace of the people attending the Friday prayers.

These incidents, from the pragmatics point of view, can be deemed to have been caused by the Khatibs' violation of the politeness principles in communication. Violation of politeness principles can cause potential conflicts both in conversational dynamics and one-way communication such as in speeches and sermons. In conversations, Davies (2007) states that it is a norm in communication to deliver information by using politeness, effectiveness, and humor to please listeners or interlocutors to prevent misunderstandings and resentment between the speakers and listeners, thus effective communication is achieved. Kádár and Haugh (2013) said that the politeness of a speaker is interpersonal rhetoric that is influenced by knowledge and relationship with the audience. In one way-communication speech events, such as in religious sermons, overlooking politeness principles can be a source of resentment from the audience. Mansoor (2018) said an *Imam* who does not make strategic use of politeness elements may risk the efficacy of his sermon. Principles of politeness need to be observed both in giving speeches and having conversations with others.

Therefore, it is essential to observe principles of politeness, especially when speaking in front of large audiences. This is in line with several researchers who have investigated the politeness in Khatibs' sermons in Indonesia where researchers reside and in other countries where Muslim communities settle. A study by Wahidah and Wijaya (2017) on the politeness of Religion (as a school subject) teachers teaching at the Yogyakarta Ibnul Qoyyim Putra Islamic Boarding School identified violations of principles of politeness using Leech's (1983) theory. Violations of the politeness principle came about when the teachers discussed issues in the maxim of an award. For example, the teacher gave instructions to a student to read the text of a related subject matter. However, these instructions tended to be less polite because the teacher used short command sentences which were regarded as rude. These violations posed negative impressions on the students toward the teachers.

Nevertheless, when the Khatibs deliver their sermons by following the principles of politeness, they will positively influence the congregation to follow their sermons attentively. It is as found by Avineri and Avni (2016) on the politeness principles employed by Catholic Church clerics to spread religious preaching and they succeeded by doing it that way. In addition, Herniti et al. (2016) state that politeness in multicultural preaching is a must to achieve the purpose of preaching. Listeners appraise speech infringements by Khatibs, and the congregation can follow the style of speech since, in general, Khatibs are usually role models to the congregation.

As stated earlier, this research is concerned with the principles of politeness used and violated by Khatibs in their Friday prayer sermons in the Greater Aceh District, Aceh, Indonesia. Considering the incidents of Khatibs who delivered their sermons by provoking their audience's resentment, the researchers believed that there is a need to study this state of affairs. Speaking politely in official forums, especially on Friday

sermons, should be put into practice by the Khatibs. The audience that performs Friday prayers consists of worshippers of different ages, from young to old. The researchers would like to investigate the use of politeness principles and whether these Khatibs violate them. Because the language used in religious rituals is different from everyday language and has its characteristic variations, such as *shalawat* (a prayer for the prophet) and *shahadat* (an Islamic oath), it is interesting to examine and understand how the Khatibs use politeness in their sermon to convey their messages and at the same time to pinpoint when they commonly use vile language and violate the principle of politeness in a sermon, at what context, and the reason behind the use of those languages. Furthermore, only a few studies have discussed and published this issue, especially in the context of Acehese, and therefore this research intends to fill in this gap. Consequently, “communication plays a crucial role in human life, and politeness is important in speech communication” (Song, 2012, p. 135).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Politeness Principles

Leech (1983) introduced the Politeness Principles (PP) theory, similar to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory, in which he classifies the politeness principle as a series of maxims to explain how politeness operates in conversational exchanges. He defines politeness as behaviors between participants that show feelings of comity. For Leech (1983), “politeness is about strategic conflict avoidance and showing regard for others” (Terkourafi, 2015, p. 957). Leech (1983) divided the politeness principle into six maxims: tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy. The first and second ones form a pair, as do the third and the fourth whereas both the fifth and the sixth. These maxims vary among cultures; the meaning may be considered polite in one culture but may be strange or downright rude in another. Leech (1983) argued that negative politeness is more critical than positive politeness.

The principle of politeness is associated with two participants of the conversation, i.e., self and other. The self is the speaker, the other person is the hearer, and the third person is being discussed by the speaker and the hearer (Wijana, 1996). Maxim is a linguistic rule in verbal interactions that govern actions, language usage, and interpretations of the actions and utterances (Leech, 1983; Widya, 2017). In addition, the maxim is also referred to as a pragmatic form based on cooperative and politeness principles. These maxims suggest people express their beliefs politely and avoid impolite speech.

There are four maxims involving two-pole scales in politeness principles, namely cost-benefit and praise-dispraise (Leech, 1983). These four maxims are the tact maxim, the generosity maxim, the approbation maxim, and the modesty maxim. The other two maxims (the agreement maxim and the sympathy maxim) involve scales of only one pole, the scale of agreement and the scale of sympathy (Widya, 2017). Although both scales are related, each maxim is distinctly different because it has a different rating scale. The maxims of the Politeness Principle tend to go in pairs as (1) Tact maxim (in impositives and commissives): (a) minimize the cost to other; [(b) maximize the benefit to other]; (2) Generosity maxim (in impositives and commissives): (a) minimize benefit to self; [(b) maximize cost to self]; (3)

Approbation maxim (in expressives and assertives): (a) minimize dispraise of other; [(b) maximize praise of other]; (4) Modesty maxim (in expressives and assertives): (a) minimize praise of self; [(b) maximize dispraise of self]; (5) Agreement maxim (in assertives): (a) minimize disagreement between self and other; [(b) maximize agreement between self and other]; and (6) Sympathy maxim (in assertives): (a) minimize antipathy between self and other; [(b) maximize sympathy between self and other] (Leech, 1983, p. 132).

2.1.1 *The tact maxim*

It is considered the essential maxim since it focuses more on the other than the self (Firdaus & Simatupang, 2022; Wijana, 1996). In this maxim, the participants are supposed to keep the principle always to minimize the expression of beliefs that imply cost to others and maximize benefit in communicating. It is used in directives/impossitives and commissives. A directive means an utterance used to command something directly or indirectly, such as requesting, advising, ordering, etc. (i.e., ‘Could I interrupt you for a second?’); while a commissive means an utterance used to declare a promise or offer something (i.e., ‘If I could clarify this then’). The person who holds and performs the tact maxim can be regarded as a polite person (Widya, 2017).

2.1.2 *The generosity maxim*

The generosity maxim requires the speaker to minimize benefit and maximize cost to self (Firdaus & Simatupang, 2022; Rachmawati & Al Arif, 2020). It is used in directives and commissives like offers, invitations, and promises as in the tact maxim, but it is self-centered to show other-oriented expressing positive politeness. Unlike the tact maxim, the generosity maxim focuses on the speaker, and others should be put first instead of the self. In this maxim, the speech participants are expected to respect each other. Respect for others will happen if people can minimize benefit to self and maximize cost to self, for example, ‘You relax and let me do the dishes’, ‘You must come and have dinner with us’ (Leech, 1983).

2.1.3 *The approbation maxim*

In this maxim, the speaker has to minimize the expression of beliefs that express dispraise of others and maximize praise/approval of others (Rachmawati & Al Arif, 2020; Wijana, 1996). It is used in expressives and assertives. The expressive is an utterance used to describe the speaker’s psychological attitude toward a situation, such as thanking, congratulating, welcoming, apologizing, praising, etc. The assertive is an utterance commonly used to declare the truth proposition, such as giving opinions, comments, suggestions, complaints, etc. At this maxim, a compliment will be greatly appreciated; the speech utterances that are reproaches, ridicule, or even insults will not be appreciated. The operation of this maxim is relatively apparent: all things are equal, and we prefer to praise others. The first part of the maxim avoids disagreement; the second part intends to make other people feel good by showing solidarity (Leech, 1983).

2.1.4 *The modesty maxim*

This maxim requires the speaker to minimize self-praise and maximize dispraise of self (Firdaus & Simatupang, 2022; Wijana, 1996). It is also applicable in expressive and assertive utterances like self-devaluation as in the approbation maxim. In other words, praise yourself as little as possible and dispraise yourself as much as possible. Modesty is possibly a more complex maxim than the others since the quality maxim can sometimes be violated in observing it. For example, ‘Oh, I’m so stupid’, and ‘I didn’t make a note of our lecture! Did you?’ (Leech, 1983).

2.1.5 *The agreement maxim*

The speaker needs to minimize disagreement between self and others in agreement maxim and maximize agreement between self and others (Rachmawati & Al Arif, 2020; Widya, 2017). It is expressed in representatives that require the speaker to reduce the disagreement between himself and the speaker and increase the agreement between the two parties. Making a disagreement between one speaker and another is not often because the hearer should totally or partially show agreement with the speaker. If the speakers show disagreement, their speech would be impolite. It is in line with Brown and Levinson’s (1987) positive politeness strategies of ‘seek agreement’ and ‘avoid disagreement’, to which they attach great importance. However, it is not being claimed that people avoid disagreement. It is observed that they are much more direct in expressing agreement than disagreement. For example, ‘I don’t want my daughter to do this; I want her to do that’, ‘Yes, but ma’am, I thought we resolved this already on your last visit’ (Leech, 1983).

2.1.6 *The sympathy maxim*

In the sympathy maxim, the interlocutors are expected to maximize the attitude of sympathy between one party and another (Firdaus & Simatupang, 2022; Rachmawati & Al Arif, 2020). The attitude of antipathy will be regarded as a disrespectful attitude. It is also expressed through representatives. It includes a small group of speech acts such as congratulation, commiseration, and expressing condolences to attend to the hearer’s interests, wants, and needs. For example, suppose one lost somebody, and the hearer felt sorry. In that case, he is showing sympathy to the speaker, and the utterances would employ the sympathy maxim (i.e., ‘I was sorry to hear about your father’). Briefly, reduce the antipathy between yourself, and increase the amount of sympathy between yourself and others (Leech, 1983).

2.2 **Islamic Friday Sermon**

In Islamic tradition, the Friday sermon, or *khutbah*, serves as one of the primary formal occasions for public preaching (Hashem, 2010). It is conducted before every Friday prayer for Muslims to hear. The Friday sermon has rules that must be applied by the Khatib so that the implementation of Friday is valid and Allah (the one and only God in Islam) accepts the worship. The terms and pillars that characterize the validity of this sermon must be carried out (Muhyiddin, 2013, pp. 302-303). The conditions for the Friday sermon are as follows (Muhyiddin, 2013):

1. The sermon is done before the Friday prayer.
2. Intention.
3. In Arabic. If you are unable to speak Arabic, you are required to read only verses in Arabic.
4. The sermon is done on time.
5. Both sermons are spoken aloud.
6. The first and second sermons are carried out successively.
7. Deliver the two sermons by standing up if you can.
8. Sit between two sermons with a moment of silence.
9. The Khatib is clean from ritual impurity and covers the private parts during his two sermons.
10. Khatib is a person who is obliged to Friday prayers.

The pillars of the sermon are as follows (Muhyiddin, 2013):

1. Praise Allah.
2. *Shalawat* to Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) in his two sermons.
3. Willing with piety in both sermons.
4. Read a verse of the Quran in one of the two sermons.
5. Pray for the believers, especially in the second sermon.

3. METHODS

The data for this qualitative study was collected from the Acehese Khatibs in seven sub-districts out of 23 sub-districts in Aceh Besar, Indonesia. Due to the limitation of this study, only seven sub-districts were chosen as the location of the research, they are (1) Darul Imarah, (2) Baitussalam, (3) Ingin Jaya, (4) Krueng Raya, (4) Blang Bintang, (5) Montasik, (6) Kota Jantho, and (7) Seulimuem. From each place, two different mosques were chosen every week for one month thus there were four Friday sermons in each mosque. The researchers specifically choose two different mosques in each sub-district to avoid biases. The prejudices may be caused by the specific and diverse cultures of each place hence thus dissimilarity may attract particular sermon styles and languages of Khatibs. A total of 56 Friday sermons were recorded for this study with consent from the Khatibs, whose names remain anonymous.

There were different 56 Khatibs involved in this study. Each of the Friday sermons was recorded separately. The researchers used a smartphone to record the sermons. The recording device was placed right beside the Khatibs during the Friday sermons. Each sermon lasted for 30 minutes, making 1.680 minutes or 28 hours of digitally audio-recorded data. Subsequently, the recorded sermons were transcribed into the Indonesian language before it was translated into English. The data transcription was then identified and examined to find a common pattern of maxim used by the Khatibs in their Friday sermons as well as to examine whether all Khatibs used maxim in their sermons.

Following Miles and Huberman (1994), the data analysis phase was divided into three stages: data selection, classification, and conclusion. After the recordings had been transcribed, they were selected for relevant information to this study. The sentences or phrases that applied and violated the politeness principle were identified

and coded or classified based on politeness comprising tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy (Leech, 1983). Finally, each principle was described in the data presented.

4. RESULTS

The results revealed that only two maxims were found in this study. Out of six maxims, the researchers discovered that the Acehese Khatibs only used the tact maxim and the sympathy maxim in their Friday sermons. Below are the frequency and percentage of results obtained from 15 Friday sermons.

Table 1. The principle of politeness in the Friday sermons.

Srm*	Tact		Sympathy		Generosity		Modesty		Agreement		Approbation	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1	3	3.9	7	9.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0.0	4	5.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	1	1.3	2	2.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	1	1.3	3	3.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	3	3.9	3	3.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	0	0.0	7	9.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	2	2.6	2	2.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	2	2.6	7	9.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	2	2.6	4	5.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	1	1.3	3	3.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	4	5.3	5	6.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	3	3.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	2	2.6	1	1.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	0	0	2	2.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	0	2	2.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tot.	24	31.6	52	68.4	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0

*Sermon

Table 1 shows that only two maxims occurred in 15 Friday sermons, namely the tact maxim and the sympathy maxim. Overall, there were 24 utterances (31.6%) for the tact maxim and 52 utterances (68.4%) for the sympathy maxim. On average, the Khatibs used the tact maxim twice in their sermons with one of them using it four times in one sermon. Compared to the tact maxim, one Khatib used up to seven sympathy maxims in one sermon. On average, the Khatibs used two to seven sympathy maxims in one sermon. Interestingly, none of the other four maxims was found in the recorded sermons.

4.1 The Tact Maxim

The tact maxim is an essential kind of politeness. It is expressed as follows: (a) Minimize cost to others [(b) Maximize benefit to others]. The Khatibs used the tact maxim 24 times or 31.6% in delivering the Friday sermons in Aceh Besar. The tact maxim was used so that the congregations of the Friday sessions felt that the Khatibs did not discredit them regarding the contents of their sermons. The application forms

of the politeness principle in the tact maxim are as follows. The data for each utterance from the sermons are labeled with D1, D2, and so on.

- D1 *Alhamdulillah, tanyo geupeugöt le Allah lam bentuk yang sungguh luar biasa, meunyo tabandéng ngon makhluk yang laén, selaén malaikat...jeuet takalon binatang, tumbuhan, dan selaén-laénnya. Luar biasa geutanyo mulia, tanyo gèt luar biasa, geupeuduk ulèe u wateuh, kemudian geubôh mata, kemudian idông, mulut, telinga, badan dan sebagainya, luar biasa, geubri até le Allah, na mata na geulinyung dan sebagainya.* [‘Praise be to Allah, we were created by Allah in an extraordinary form comparing to other creatures except angels...look at the animals, plants and etc. We are remarkably noble, we are magnificent with the head placed on top, then we were given eyes, along with nose, mouth, ears, body and etc. that Allah provided them wonderfully for us, we got eyes, ears, and etc.’]
- D2 *Mandum nyan peureulèe geutanyo teupu ban mandum nyan. Meunyo han tateupu ibadah geutanyo hana bèrèh. Hana geuteurimong lé Allah. Jangankan geuteurimong lé Allah, sah hana.* [‘We have to know all these matters. If we don’t know how to worship, we are not righteous people, and our worship is not accepted by Allah and is even invalid’.]
- D3 *Mudah-mudahan dengan berhati-hati geutanyo terhindar dari fitnah-fitnah bak akhé zameuen nyo, dan mudah-mudahan beu geupeutunyok lé Allah subhaanahu wa taa’aala, geutanyo ban mandum. Amin ya rabbal ‘aalamiinn.* [‘Hopefully, we can avoid the *fitnah* (slander) of the end time, and may Allah the Most Holy and the Most High show the right path for all of us. Amen’.]
- D4 *Beugèt-gèt bèk rugo tasambahyang, tetapi dijebloskan oleh Allah kedalam neraka Jahannam.* [‘Be careful in our prayer, don’t let Allah throw us into hell’.]
- D5 *Melalui mimbar khutbah ini, Khatib memperingatkan diri supaya bèk lalèe geutanyo, bèk ta puja dro geutanyo, bèk sombong geutanyo, beu ta teupu yang tōh yang paling afdal di hadapan Allah.* [‘Through this sermon, the Khatib warns us not to be negligent and arrogant by worshiping ourselves. We need to know what is the most ritually pure in front of Allah’.]

The data above is an application form of the politeness principle in the tact maxim. As seen in D1, the Khatibs used words that persuaded the congregation without them being cornered to do so. The instruction is expressed indirectly in a polite way. In the data, it can be observed that the Khatib used the tact maxim in delivering the sermon to avoid different interpretations between the Khatib and the congregation. The Khatib delivered a one-way sermon without allowing the congregation to interrupt or express opinions. It is in accordance with Pfister’s (2010) opinion which says the politeness maxim is part of the rational conversation among potentially aggressive parties.

In D1, the tact maxim occurred three times: *tabandéng* ‘(we) compared’, *takalon* ‘(we) can see’, and *geutanyo* ‘we are’. In all three contexts, the Khatib asked the congregation to think up and contemplate God’s creation of human beings. The Khatib put in his request indirectly and politely. He tried to maximize the congregation’s profit and persuade them by mentioning both parties without degrading the other party. That is why he chose specific first-person plural pronouns such as *geutanyo* (we), not ‘you’, by including the audience and himself. A similar situation also happened in D2 and D5 in which the Khatib presented the explanation in an inclusive but indirect way to prevent misunderstanding and offense to the audience.

In contrast, D3 and D4 start their context by voicing a polite directive command with a wish (*mudah-mudahan* ‘hopefully’ and *beugèt-gèt* ‘(we) be careful’). The Khatib did this to encourage the congregation to do something rewarding for

themselves. However, he also inserted the plural pronoun to express his intention by using a word such as *geutanyo* ‘we’, not ‘you’, and by putting the focus on others.

Based on the data above, we know that the word appeal marks the Khatib’s application of the tact maxim, namely *mudah-mudahan* ‘hopefully’ in D3 and *beugèt-gèt* ‘(we) be careful’ in D4. The form of politeness for the Khatib is also indicated by the use of the first plural pronoun, namely *geutanyo* ‘we’ as found in D1, D2, D3, and D5. Meanwhile, in D4, the first plural pronoun is indicated by using the word *ta+sembahyang* ‘we pray’. With the use of these pronouns, the Khatibs not only appeal to the congregation but also advised themselves. From the five transcripts above, all of the Acehese Khatibs demonstrated their wise nature and wisdom in delivering the sermons without necessarily passing blame to the congregation.

4.2 The Sympathy Maxim

The principle of sympathy maxim in politeness is used to make the participants in the speech able to uphold the attitude of sympathy between the speaker and the interlocutors. The sympathy maxim is used for two purposes: (a) to minimize antipathy between self and others, and (b) to maximize sympathy between self and others. This study indicates that the Khatibs’ sympathy maxim was dominantly used when delivering Friday sermons in Aceh Besar. From the 15 Friday sermons, there are 52 sympathy maxims with 68.4%.

D6 *Kaôm muslimin sidang jama’ah jumat yang dirahmati oleh Allah subhaanahu wa taa’aala, kewajiban geutanyo dalam buleuen Ramadan adalah berpuasa.* [‘Dear Muslims, the congregation of this Friday assembly whom Allah blesses, fasting is our obligation during Ramadan’.]

In D6, the *Khatib* opened the Friday prayer sermon by addressing all the attendees of the congregation. He specifically uses the word *dirahmati* ‘blessed by’ to assert his intention. In this case, this word can represent more than one meaning. First, it was used to articulate the obvious fact that Allah had blessed the congregation. Second, it was an indirect gesture of expressing gratitude to Allah that every human being is in his mercy. By using this word, the Khatib expressed his own sympathy while at the same time inviting all the attendees to be grateful. Through implication, the Khatib had successfully asserted his stand politely and inclusively without being offensive and judgmental.

D7 *Allah subhaanahu wa taa’aala geuyu bak geutanyo untuk tapeubut sembahyang. Disampéng geutanyo tapeubut sembahyang, Allah subhaanahu wa taa’aala cit geuyu geutanyo untuk tabayue zakeut. Jika salah sidro ureueng ditém peubut sembahyang tapi han ditém bayue zakeut maka ibadah yang dilakukan hana sempurna dan sembahyang ureung nyan han geuteurimong lé Allah subhaanahu wa taa’aala.* [‘Allah the Most Holy and the Most High tells us to pray and pay *zakat* (almsgiving). If a person does pray but does not pay *zakat*, the worship he performs is not perfect (complete), and Allah does not accept his prayer’.]

D8 *Hanya dengan taubat nasuha lah geutanyo saban tabersihkan diri daripada dosa-dosa besar. Oleh sebagian ulama neupeugah, wajéb taubat ngon lhèe syarat kheun ulama, tinggal maksit sekalian yang pertama, yang kedua dum ata gob tapulang mandum tajak lakèe meu’ah meunyo hana dipeumeu’ah, teuma yang keu lhèe taseusai dro but yang lalu han meuriwang lé beurangkajan selama-lama.* [‘We can cleanse ourselves from major sins with repentance. Some scholars say that there are three conditions for repentance: leaving the sin that we have committed,

returning other people's things that we have taken if it has not been explained, and regretting the actions we have done and will not do it again'.]

Consider examples D7 and D8, where both used the word *geutanyo* 'we' to include the speaker and the attendees. He gracefully injected the word in the sentence to avoid confusion about whom he was addressing. By doing so, he could easily avoid miscommunication or offending the audience about the topic he was going to address. The topic is a sensitive one since he was asking the congregation to pay attention to their worship and sins. In his speech, the *Khatib* was indirectly criticizing those who neglected their worship and warned them about their sins. However, he did it politely because he did not want to admonish them, a stranger.

D9 *Kaôm muslimin sidang jama'ah Jumat yang dirahmati oleh Allah subhaanahu wa taa'aala. Nyo limong malam nyo adalah malam-malam yang dikehendaki mustajabah do'a salah satu jih yang akan tanyo meurumpok enteuk malam Senin nyo insya Allah malam phôn-phôn that ditamong buleuen Rajab.* ['Dear Muslims, the congregation of this Friday assembly whom Allah blesses. These five nights are the desired nights for prayer, one of which is the first Monday night of the Rajab month'.]

D10 *Hadirin sidang jama'ah Jumat yang dirahmati oleh Allah subhaanahu wa taa'aala. Maka tuntut ilmee hai yang pertama getanyo lakukan, kon fisik dan kekuatan nyan poh ajaran sesat, teutapi ilmée nyo keuh nyan poh ajaran sesat.* ['Dear Muslims, the congregation of this Friday assembly whom Allah blesses. Learning is the first thing we must do. The physic and strength cannot protect us from heresy, but knowledge can'.]

In D9 and D10, the *Khatib* also used the inclusive 'we' (*tanyo* and *geutanyo*) to minimize the distance between him and the congregation, indicating that everyone belongs to the same group. In this part of his speech, he was trying to remind the congregation about the importance of knowledge, and the blessings of the last five days of Ramadhan (a month of fasting, prayer, reflection, and community in the ninth month of the Islamic calendar). However, instead of saying it directly and blaming them for their negligence, he used the art of sympathy to attract their attention.

The application of the sympathy maxim occurred when the *Khatib* minimized the degree of antipathy in his sermon by including both himself and the addressee when he addresses a negative circumstance. One of the most frequent occurrences of sympathy maxim in this study was the use of the first plural pronominal *geutanyo* 'we'. Furthermore, the *Khatib* applied the sympathy maxim with assertive and expressive speech. Assertive speech binds the speaker to the truth of what is said. In the data above, it can be seen in *tuntut ilmee hai yang pertama getanyo lakukan, kon fisik dan kekuatan nyan poh ajaran sesat, teutapi ilmée nyo keuh nyan poh ajaran sesat* 'learning is the first thing we must do. The physics and strength cannot protect us from heresy, but knowledge can'. The *Khatib* applied non-assertive speech in the sympathy maxim to give affirmation. [Yuyun \(2014\)](#) believed that the *Khatibs* should address his topic by using different ways of speaking to make their argument sound more assertive to listeners.

Table 2 presents the forms of sympathy expressions uttered by the Acehnese *Khatibs* in this study. These forms are thanking, criticizing, and blaming.

Table 2. Expression of sympathy by the Khatibs.

The sympathy maxim	Examples
Thanking	<i>Kaôm muslimin sidang jama'ah Jumat yang dirahmati oleh Allah subhaanahu wa taa'aala.</i> ['Dear Muslims, the congregation of this Friday assembly whom Allah blesses.]
Criticizing	<i>Jika salah sidro ureueng ditém peubut sembahyang tapi han ditém bayeue zakeut maka ibadah yang dilakukan hana sempurna dan sembahyang ureung nyan han geuteurimong lé Allah subhaanahu wa taa'aala.</i> ['Allah the Most Holy and the Most High tells us to pray and pay <i>zakat</i> (almsgiving). If a person does pray but does not pay <i>zakat</i> , the worship he performs is not perfect (complete), and Allah does not accept his prayer'.] <i>Hanya dengan taubat nasuhalah geutanyo saban tabersihkan diri daripada dosa-dosa besar</i> ['We can cleanse ourselves from major sins with repentance']
Blaming	<i>Nyo limong malam nyo adalah malam-malam yang dikehendaki mustajabah do'a...</i> ['These five nights are the desired nights for prayer...] <i>...tuntut ilmee hai yang pertama getanyo lakukan, kon fisik dan kekuatan nyan poh ajaran sesat, teutapi ilmée nyo keuh nyan poh ajaran sesat.</i> [...learning is the first thing we must do. The physic and strength cannot protect us from heresy, but knowledge can.]

According to [Indriyani et al. \(2019\)](#), the sympathy maxim in expressive speech is in the form of speech acts intended by the speaker so that his speech is interpreted as an evaluation of the things mentioned in the speech, including utterances of thanking, complaining, congratulating, flattering, praising, blaming, and criticizing. In this study, the Khatibs expressed their sympathy in the form of thanking, criticizing, and blaming (see Table 2).

During the sermon, the Khatibs tend to use directive speech acts and speech acts of suggestion to deliver and emphasize the message ([Nugroho et al., 2018](#); [Wardoyo, 2017](#)). However, assertive and expressive speech acts do not make a Khatib delivering a sermon violate the principle of the politeness maxim of sympathy. For example, when the Khatib said *kewajiban geutanyo dalam buleuen Ramadan adalah berpuasa* 'fasting is our obligation during Ramadan', he politely asserted that fasting is an obligation upon all Muslims, including himself without exception.

The Khatibs also did directly criticize the congregation at the Friday sessions, but he also criticized or blamed himself. It can be observed when the Khatib said *hanya dengan taubat nasuhalah geutanyo saban tabersihkan diri daripada dosa-dosa besar* 'we can cleanse ourselves from major sins with repentance'. He made sure that he also included himself in the criteria. The principle of delivering the sermon itself requires that the truth always comes from God, while humans may have been wrong in conveying something.

4.3 Discussion

The Acehnese Khatibs used two types of politeness maxims in delivering the Friday sermons in Aceh Besar, namely the tact maxim and the sympathy maxim. The Khatibs applied the sympathy maxim to give encouragement and an invitation to the Friday congregation to perform good deeds. This is reinforced because the sermon data were collected during the month of Ramadhan. The Khatibs specifically invited the

Friday congregation to focus on worship in that holy month. The sympathy maxim (68.4%) is more dominant compared to the tact maxim (31.6%). The Khatibs used many sympathy maxims in the Friday sermons because they gave advice to the Friday congregation and encouraged themselves to do the same. It is evidenced by the use of the first plural pronominal *geutanyo* 'we'. In other words, the Khatibs also reminded themselves to commit to the advice they delivered in the sermons.

The Khatibs carried out the application of the tact maxim by delivering the sermons in long sentences. Wijana (1996) says that the longer a person's speech is, the greater the person's desire to be polite to the interlocutor. The number of applications of the tact maxim found in the 15 Friday sermons was 24 or 31.6%. The use of the tact maxim tends to be less than the sympathy maxim. Sympathy is found in assertive and expressive speech acts. The Khatibs tended not to use much of the tact maxim because they did not want to do blaming on the congregation in the Friday sermons in the form of expressive speech acts. Much praise and thanks were found to only be directed to Allah and Prophet Muhammad in their sermons.

Furthermore, the data did not contain all six principles of politeness. Approbation, modesty, agreement, and generosity maxims were not identified in the data. The generosity maxim was not found due to the nature of the communication in sermons; the generosity maxim is only practical in a two-way dynamic and requires bilaterality, where a speaker is able to demonstrate or impose his or her "self-centered" or "other-centered" orientation as indicated by Leech (1983). Thus, it is unlikely for this to occur in a sermon or a speech delivered by a Khatib at a Friday prayer congregation because communication is done one way (only the Khatib speaks, and the congregation listens).

The modesty maxim is close to the sympathy maxim. The modesty maxim requires the speaker to praise himself as little as possible and criticize himself as much as possible (Leech, 1983). Nurjamily (2015) asserts that the participants expect the sympathy maxim to maximize sympathy and minimize antipathy toward the speech partner. From the result of the research, there was no modesty maxim to be found in this study. One indicator of politeness in a conversation is praising others during the speech act. In Friday sermons, Khatibs tend not to use the approbation maxim because praise is only for Allah the Most Holy and the Most High in accordance with the pillars of the sermon. In addition, if a Khatib uses the approbation maxim, the negative aspect is saying unpleasant things about other people, especially about the one who delivered the speech himself.

The principle of the agreement maxim was also not found in this study. The principle of the Friday sermon is a monologue. The Khatib speaks to the congregation without asking them to respond to him. This one-way speech event does not open up space for dialogue and discussion. Following Leech's (1983) opinion, there are two conditions for the realization of the agreement maxim: (1) trying to make disagreements between self and others as little as possible, and (2) trying to make agreements between self and others as much as possible. Hence, this is not possible in Friday sermons.

As a final point, the study of politeness in regional languages is complex, we need to understand the culture of each region. Every region in Indonesia has different levels of politeness of its own. That is also the case in the province of Aceh, especially in the Friday sermons. Mahmud (2019) says that a cross-cultural context study of politeness is required to examine the cultural influence on practicing politeness.

Muthalib and Aziz (2022) point out that elements of politeness in the Acehese language are indicated by the choices of pronouns used. The data in this study has shown that the use of pronouns is prominent as a marker of politeness in the Acehese Khatib sermons.

5. CONCLUSION

The study addressed how the Acehese Khatibs used politeness in the Islamic Friday prayer sermons. The findings showed that out of the six politeness maxims (tact maxim, generosity maxim, approbation maxim, modesty maxim, agreement maxim, and sympathy maxim), only two types of maxim were found in the Friday sermons, namely the sympathy (68.4%) maxim and the tact maxim (31.6%). In the tact maxim, the Khatibs generally used the plural pronoun to address the congregation. It worked as a discourse strategy to persuade the congregation without them being cornered to do something against their will. Furthermore, the Khatibs utilized this speech act strategy to be polite and indirectly asserted their intention while at the same time avoiding misunderstanding. Similar to the tact maxim, the Khatibs also used the plural pronouns in the sympathy maxim. However, unlike the former, the Khatibs tended to be more assertive when they incorporated the latter style of politeness in their speech. They used it seamlessly to avoid upsetting the congregation with their directive speech act. The Khatibs used the art of sympathy to attract the audience's attention by not only practicing inclusivity of both parties but also using polite words.

The present study is limited to a small corpus, and therefore, its finding may not be representative of a larger context. Furthermore, it would be interesting if future researchers direct their focus on the indicator of language impoliteness in the Friday sermons.

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Transitivity and Critical Discourse Analysis on a Testament: A Woman's Involvement in *Jihad*

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Abstract

While a plethora of scholars have explored a growing body of research on women's involvement in Jihad, there is still a paucity of studies addressing it using the hybridity of transitivity analysis and critical discourse analysis. The present study examined a testament left by an Indonesian woman involved in what she fallaciously called 'Jihad'. To collect the data, the document analysis was adopted, meanwhile, Halliday and Matthiessen's transitivity analysis (2004) and Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (2003) were employed to analyze the data. The findings demonstrated that the experience of the woman's involvement in jihad was described by the dominant use of material process verbs (59.4%), followed by relational process (19%), mental process (13.5%), and verbal process (8.1%). The transitivity analysis showcases that the testament is not an average text with a religious message or instructions to deal with the left property; instead, it contains a message of the Salafi Jihadist ideology of the Islamic

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State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), which might put people's lives in peril. The five core teachings of ISIS encapsulate the message of ideological teachings, including jihad (struggle in the context of religious war), takfiri (ex-communication), al-wala' and al-barra' (loyalty and disavowal for the sake of God), tauhid (unitary oneness of God), and tahkimiyah (the rule of God – both religiously and politically). The study findings implicate that we must raise awareness of all kinds of testaments left by the jihadi woman because these testaments may contain a global jihadist doctrine. With this in mind, we will not be easily persuaded to join a Salafi jihadist organization.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, *jihad*, testament, Systemic Functional Linguistics, women's involvement.

1. INTRODUCTION

For several years, the involvement of women in the field of *jihad* (struggle in the context of religious war) has long attracted the attention of world experts. A report by Sela-Shayovitz and Dayan (2021) revealed that women are always involved and play an active role in jihad either voluntarily or not. Women serve as propaganda symbols, policymakers, workers, victims of sexual and domestic violence, and refugees. Markovic's (2019) research showed that women involved in terrorist groups have a consequential role even though they hold peripheral positions, such as being militant brides of suicide bombers, given the gender stereotype of being of a traditionally gentle nature. Del Villar (2019) pointed out instances of women's involvement in acts of terrorism related to recruiting new members and smuggling weapons in Israel, Russia, Turkey, and Iraq. The involvement of women in acts of terrorism is not only carried out individually but also in groups, such as the Boko Haram organization in Nigeria, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in Ireland, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Northeastern Sri Lanka, the Red Brigades in Italy, and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) in Syria (Oluwaniyi, 2021).

To date, research that examines the involvement of women in the field of jihad from the perspective of critical discourse analysis and transitivity analysis of systemic functional linguistics seems sparse. Most studies tend to examine such an issue into three trends. The first trend examines the involvement of women in the field of jihad from a gender perspective (Jiwani, 2021; Mutton, 2021; Speckhard & Ellenberg, 2021). The results of their research prove that at first, female terrorists played a passive role as intermediaries, data managers via the Internet, fundraisers, and jihadists for their husbands. However, in their development, they transformed and played an active role in acts of terrorism. This is because, in addition to the issue of patriarchal ideology, women are more quickly recognized for their existence in showing their courage to sacrifice their bodies and soul in jihad. This perceived bravery of being a martyr shows a degree of perceived piety (Termeer & Duyvesteyn, 2022). In addition, ideologically religious martyrs have been considered a toll road to heaven. The second trend is to analyze the involvement of women in the field of jihad from the perspective of media analysis (Bosibori, 2022; Evans & da Silva, 2021; Santoire, 2022). The results of this research show that jihadist groups, such as ISIS, are able to utilize propaganda

strategies that attract women's attention. These strategies are strengthened by utilizing the development of information technology, social media, and other application channels to frame women's perceptions of the concept of Jihad. In addition, the Islamic caliphate through jihad can solve all life's problems. The third trend found the involvement of women in ISIS Jihad activities from a computational linguistic perspective (Qi, 2020; Windsor, 2020). These research studies prove that the use of radical language in blogs can list the daily activities of women who are perpetrators of terrorist acts, either as sympathizers or followers of ISIS. The results of the review of these three trends prove that research on the involvement of women in the field of jihad using transitivity and critical discourse analysis (CDA) is insufficiently conducted.

From a media perspective, most studies use critical discourse analysis and transitivity analysis to discuss political, social, and cultural issues in newspapers (Fitriani et al., 2021; Tang, 2021), websites (Chalupnik & Brookes, 2021), magazines (Radzi et al., 2021), and textbooks (Gu, 2021), but little is known about testaments of female terrorists. In fact, testaments do not only provide certain messages such as religious messages and messages of property inheritance, but also contain elements of ideology, hegemony, or social inequality as found in newspapers, websites, magazines, and textbooks (Roose & Cook, 2022; Shi & Fan, 2019). Likewise, previous research that specifically discusses a female perpetrator of the attack on the Indonesian Police Headquarters, Zakiah Aini, has also been carried out from the perspective of peace and political education (Sulistyanto et al., 2021), but the discussion still ignored the use of a critical discourse approach with transitivity analysis.

To fill this lacuna, the present study aims to examine Zakiah Aini's testament to her family before carrying out the attack at the Headquarters of the Indonesian Mobile Brigade Corps in Jakarta. The importance of the research lies in examining the experience of the perpetrator's life when interacting with the issue of jihad. Thus, this research is expected to confer an explanation of how the representation of the experiences of a woman involved in the field of jihad by revealing the hidden ideology behind a testament text. It is essential to know because we can get new insight into ISIS and its core teachings. In addition, this research is expected to be able to increase readers' critical awareness of a jihadist's testament so that the message is not taken for granted. Hence, our study attempted to provide the answer to the question of how the representation of a female jihadist's experience in her testament is from the transitivity and CDA analysis perspective.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics

As one of the analytical approaches or tool-kits for CDA, Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) can be used to understand the meaning of a text to reveal social actions such as power relations, gender inequalities, ideology, injustices, and racism (Flowerdew, 2008). The meaning can be observed from three functions or metafunctions, namely ideational functions, interpersonal functions, and textual functions. Eggins (2004) reveals that:

The ideational function describes the human experience of the external world through language. The interpersonal function analyses how an individual interacts with other individuals at the social level. The thematic function evaluates how the use of linguistic forms relates to each other and in the context of certain situations (Eggins, 2004, p. 206).

In disclosing metafunctions, García and Li (2014, p. 62) pinpointed that “language and discourse cannot be considered neutral; they are caught up in political, social, racial, economic, religious and cultural formations”. In analyzing a text, the SFL analytical approach does not only undertake linguistic analysis but also focuses on the interpretation of the relationship between the text and social aspects of life (Jaipal-Jamani, 2014). In this section, SFL is closely related to CDA. They complement each other's weaknesses because the focus of the study is language relations, such as the grammatical properties of a text and social context (Flowerdew, 2004). Hence, Li (2010) argued that both theories view the use of such properties as a means of communicating language's social and ideological meaning. In addition, Martin and Wodak (2003) highlighted that SFL has contributed to developing the CDA concept to comprehensively see the meaning of texts and conduct relevant quantitative discourse studies. The function of SFL is to dismantle the ideology of a text using lexico-grammatical properties, such as the use of process types in transitivity analysis both syntagmatically and paradigmatically (Coffin & Donohue, 2012). Meanwhile, CDA dismantles an ideology behind a text by adopting interpretation and explanation analysis because it involves a more comprehensive or global context of situations and cultures (Fairclough, 2003). Therefore, the combination of SFL and CDA analysis is expected to contribute to how a jihadist woman used certain lexicogrammatical aspects, especially the types of processes in transitivity, to narrate the concept of jihad.

2.2 Transitivity Analysis

In systemic functional linguistics, there are three metafunctions of language, which are ideational, interpersonal, and textual. In ideational metafunctions, there are two sub-metafunctions; experiential and logical metafunctions. Experiential metafunction is also known as a transitivity system. Bartley and Hidalgo-Tenorio (2015) pointed out that transitivity analysis allows us to identify how people can describe their experiences in discourse using syntactic and lexical tools. The analysis focuses on finding ‘who did what, to whom, and under what circumstances?’ in a clause. Anchored in Halliday (1985, p. 53), a clause is the basic unit of analysis because it is the “clause that represents experiences, interaction, and message”. Transitivity analysis includes three main components, such as process, participant, and circumstances (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). Process refers to seeing how an event is represented. It is the process that expresses our experiences and the world around us. The process is realized by a verbal group in a clause. Participant refers to the nominal group involved in the activity. Circumstance refers to an adverbial or prepositional phrase; it is an additional meaning of the process. It gives extra detail about the physical action and inner world in which human experiences are constructed.

Following Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 224-244), there are “six types of processes in transitivity such as material process, mental process, relational process,

verbal process, behavioral process, and existential process”. They can be explained as the following:

- First, the material process is also known as the action process. It shows physical actions (doings) and events (happening). It constructs our physical world by showing our actions and events. Participants in the material process are an actor (the doer of the action), goal (the participant who is affected by the actor), scope (the participant who is unaffected by the actor), beneficiary-recipient (the participant to whom the process occurs), beneficiary-client (the participant from whom process occurs), and initiator (the participant that acts as a catalyst).
- Second, mental process refers to our inner world. This process shows the experiences of consciousness. It represents the inner thoughts, ideas, perceptions, desires, and emotions of human beings. There are four main subtypes of a mental process such as mental perception, mental cognitive, mental emotive, and mental desiderative. In mental perception, the senser perceives an object in the external world using his five senses such as seeing and hearing. In mental cognitive, senser involves his mental process to construct his inner world such as thinking and knowing. In mental emotive, senser constructs his emotion in the world of consciousness such as like, love, and hate. In mental desiderative, senser shows the desires of his inner world such as hope and wish. The participants in the mental process are senser which is a participant who perceives, thinks, feels, and wants in the mental process and the phenomenon which is the act, thing, or fact which is perceived, felt, and wanted.
- Third, the relational process refers to the relationship between different entities and constructs the relations between acts, facts, and things. Two subtypes of this process are attributive and identifying.
- Fourth, the verbal process is also known as the process of saying. The participants in the relational process are the carrier, attribute, attributor, token (the participant which is indicated by an entity in the identification process), and value (the participant which is identified as the token).
- Fifth, the behavioral process constructs the physiological and psychological behaviors of human beings like breathing and smiling.
- Sixth, the existential process shows the existence of things or happenings of events. The word ‘there’ and ‘to be’ are also used to show the existence of things.

With language, one can describe a person’s experience by describing how the experience occurred, who was involved in it, and in what situation the experience was carried out. To convey an experience, the use of process verbs is an important element in a clause. The type of participant will depend on the type of process used. For example, [Li \(2010\)](#) pointed out that identifying a relational process means giving identity to an event or person. For example, the clause ‘Jihad is the highest practice in Islam’ identifies jihad as the highest practice in Islam—an identity that is clear because the word ‘jihad’ here belongs to the participants identification as the highest practice, not praying, fasting, zakat, or performing the pilgrimage. In identifying relational processes, identified/token and identifier/value are reversible ([Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004](#)). Thus, the clause can be rewritten with ‘the highest practice in Islam is jihad’ without any change in meaning. Meanwhile, attributive relational focuses on attributing a quality or a judgment to a person or an event, which is referred to as an entity by [Halliday and Matthiessen \(2004\)](#). Finally, the use of the SFL and CDA transitivity approaches in analyzing a testament of women terror perpetrators

aims to fill the gaps in previous research that only focused on analyzing newspapers, websites, magazines, and textbooks.

2.3 Salafism in Literature

In simple terms, Salafi belongs to the group of people who adhere to the *Salafi manhaj* (method of the lived example of the early generations of Muslims) (Dumbe et al., 2021). Reference sources in understanding the creed of this *manhaj* (method) come from the Qur'an, Hadith, and the Ijma of the Salaf Ulama. Wiktorowicz (2006) revealed that in monotheism, the Salafi group is divided into three factions, namely puritan groups, political groups, and jihadist groups. The first group calls for the purification of religious teachings as non-political and combats practices that deviate from religious teachings. The second group belongs to political Salafism. This group is Islamizing and spreading religious teachings through parliaments like the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. The third group belongs to the Salafi jihadist group. This group emerged because they considered the previous two groups weak in facing political pressure from the West. The jihadist Salafi group is regarded as the toughest and most rigid of Salafi groups. They attack and fight anyone who disagrees with them. This jihadist Salafi group has five ideological doctrines, namely *takfiri* (ex-communication), *al-wala'* (monotheism), and *wa al-barra'* (judiciary).

3. METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This study used a discourse analysis research design. Fairclough et al. (2011) pinpoint that the primary concept of CDA is to reveal the ideological assumptions in the discourse. As a social practice, language is a strong instrument for individuals or organizations to manufacture specific meanings and control people's minds in order to promote certain social ideals and conceal others in favor of a particular group. In this regard, this research sought to reveal the ideology behind writing a testament.

3.2 Data Collection and Data Analysis

This study used a documentation technique to collect data related to a Jihadist woman's testament written in a form of a testament spread on the Internet. The perpetrator, Zakiah Aini, was related to the attack on the headquarter of the Mobile Brigade Corps of Indonesia Police in Jakarta in 2021. The testament was employed as the material for analysis because her testament contained clear and explicit propaganda and global jihadist ideology compared to the testament left by other suicide bombers such as the perpetrators who bombed the cathedral church in Makassar in 2021 (Rusdianto & Llewellyn, 2021).

Moreover, since CDA aims to examine the dialectical relationship between language and society, we followed Fairclough's (2003) three-dimensional model as the data analysis technique, namely description, interpretation, and explanation. The description dimension was carried out by analyzing the linguistic features of the testament text using the transitivity analysis of Halliday and Matthiessen (2004).

Moreover, the interpretation dimension was used to reveal the hidden ideology behind the writing of a testament, which was identified through transitivity so that it can clarify language as a discursive practice. Additionally, the explanatory dimension was used to relate the text to the actual social context of the testament.

The data analysis procedure was undertaken with the following steps: (1) we selected and determined Zakiah Aini's testament as the data unit, (2) we sorted the data and determined the type of process based on the concept of transitivity as many as 35 clauses, (3) we quantified the percentage of process types to get the dominant pattern, (4) we analyzed the type of transitivity process, (5) we interpreted data based on the type of transitivity process found, (6) we performed data explanation based on the type of transitivity process found, and lastly, (7) we drew conclusions.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For this section, we analyzed the representation of a woman jihadist, Zakiah Aini, from a transitivity and CDA framework through her testament. We conducted a transitivity analysis to enclose the participants, processes, and circumstances. Then, we showed a discursive analysis of the testament and its sociocultural explanation from a critical discourse analysis standpoint.

4.1 Transitivity Analysis

A testament refers to a will that someone makes, saying what should be done with their money and property after they die (Cambridge University Press, n.d.). In this study, however, the testament referred to Zakiyah's statement to her family. It is classified into three parts. The first part included greetings *assalamualaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh* (peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you) and was followed by a 'testament to the people I love for the sake of Allah'. The second part was Zakiyah's message to her family such as her father, mother, brother, and sister. This message was handwritten and consisted of 35 clauses. The last part closed with an apology to her family and her hope to be able to enter heaven with the whole family because of what she fallaciously called 'jihad'. The name of the perpetrator was also written at the end. Because it was in the form of a testament, Zakiyah's messages to her family were in the form of orders and prohibitions. Therefore, to begin the analysis, it is important to conduct a transitivity analysis to reveal the representation of Zakiyah's experience as a female terrorist. The representation of the experience was revealed in the use of process verbs as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Transitivity process in Zakiyah Aini's testament.

Process type	Examples	Frequency	Percentage
Material	The chosen people will make a rival law of Allah which is sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah.	22	59.4
Relational	Democracy, <i>Pancasila</i> (five principles of The Indonesian state), the Constitution, and elections are derived from infidel teachings which are clearly polytheistic.	7	19
Mental	Bank interest is not blessed by Allah.	5	13.5
Verbal	Zakiah advises to Mama and family.	3	8.1

Table 1 continued...

Behavioral	Nation mourns the martyrs.	-	-
Existential	There is a lot of advice from Zakiah to her family.	-	-
Total		37	100

Table 1 shows that the process verbs that evoked the perpetrator's experience constituted 35 clauses and consisted of four processes, namely material, mental, relational, and verbal processes. Of these four process verbs, Material process verbs were the most dominant, accounting for 59.4% and followed by relational process (19%), mental process (13.5%), and verbal process (8.1%). The behavioral and existential processes in the data were not found. These data mean that Zakiah wanted her family to do what she wanted as stated in the testament. The results are further elaborated in the next sub-sections.

4.1.1 Material process

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) revealed that material process verbs are related to physical actions or the process of happening either intentionally or unintentionally. The material process used in the perpetrator's testament included the words 'reunite', 'take', 'give', 'help', 'make', 'leave', 'stop borrowing', and 'quit working'. All of those words can be observed in the following examples. In the testament, Zakiah refers to herself as 'Zakiah', without using the personal pronouns of 'I', 'me' and 'mine' in her testament.

- (1) *Allah **kumpul kembali** keluarga di surga.*
Allah [actor] **reunites** [material process] family [goal] in heaven [circumstance: place].
- (2) *Zakiah **tempuh** jalan ini sebagaimana jalan Nabi/Rasul Allah untuk selamatkan Zakiah.*
Zakiah [actor] **takes** [material process] this path [range] as the way of the Prophet/Rasul Allah [circumstance: role] to save [material process] Zakiah [goal].
- (3) *Dengan izin Allah, bisa **memberi** syafaat untuk mama dan keluarga di akhirat.*
With Allah's permission [circumstance], we can **give** [material process] intercession [range] for Mama and family [beneficiary] in the afterlife [circumstance].
- (4) *Amalan Jihad Zakiah akan **membantu memberi** syafaat kepada keluarga di akherat Insya Allah dengan karunia Allah.*
The practice of Jihad Zakiah [non-human actor] will **help provide** [material process] intercession [range] to the family [beneficial-client] in the hereafter [circumstance place] Insya Allah with the grace of Allah [circumstance].
- (5) *Orang-orang terpilih akan **membuat** hukum tandingan Allah yang bersumber dan Al-Qur'an dan Sunnah.*
The chosen people [actor] will **make** [material process] a rival law of Allah which is sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah [goal].
- (6) *Untuk mama dan ayah, jangan **tinggalkan** salat.*
For mom and dad, do not **leave** [material process] salat [scope].
- (7) ***Berhenti berhubungan** dengan bunga bank.*
[beneficiary-recipient], **stop borrowing** [material process] the bank interest (credit card) [scope].

- (8) *Berhenti bekerja menjadi Dawis yang membantu kepentingan pemerintah Thogut.*
 [beneficiary-recipient], **quit working** [material process] as Dawis who [actor] helps [material process] the interests of the *Taghut* government [range].

Data 1-8 show that the testament used various material process verbs. The word 'reunite' in datum (1) refers to a material process with God as an actor and initiator. As the universe's creator, Allah is the only one with the power to reward anybody He chooses, including jihadists, by assembling them along with their families in heaven. In this case, Zakiyah believed that Allah gathered her and her family in heaven because they had done their part in jihad. This is evidenced by the use of circumstantial locations in heaven with the verb process of material 'reunite'. Likewise, the verbs of the material process of 'take' and 'give' on the data (2) and (3) were used to refer to Zakiyah as an actor. The material process was adopted to reveal that Zakiyah's attitude to carrying out jihad actions was to imitate or follow the jihad that the Prophet of Allah had ever carried out. That is, because of the action of jihad, Allah's apostle will give her salvation. With the act of jihad, the mother and her family received Allah's help. This is evidenced by the use of the verb material process 'give' and 'intercession' as a range and 'with Allah's permission' and 'in the hereafter' as a comitative circumstance. The word 'intercession' is referred to as 'range' because it is an abstract, believable, and palpable thing. This demonstrates how strongly Zakiah believed she could obtain Allah's intervention through jihad. The nominal group 'with Allah's permission' further supports this argument and shows that Allah is all-powerful in assisting His servants. Other material processes, save, datum (2) which assumed the actor was Allah and its goal was Zakiah showed that the writer framed that Allah will be fully responsible to save those involved in 'Jihad', so there is no need to fear. Similarly, other material processes such as 'help providing' refer to Zakiyah's jihad practice as a media actor in datum (4) and 'selected people' in datum (5) as actor participants. As a media actor, Zakiyah believed that jihad is one of the ways to get intercession. This argument is clarified by circumcision with Allah's permission (God willing), by Allah's bounty, and in the hereafter, which shows hope. Only with Allah's permission, the practice of jihad will provide help for the perpetrators.

Another participant who functioned as an actor and used material process verbs was 'selected people' (datum 5). 'Selected people' refer to people chosen by the community in the general election process carried out by the government, both for regional head elections and presidential elections. Since they are chosen to serve as the people's representatives, it also follows that they are clever, imaginative, and politically astute individuals. This process type is then followed by 'a rival law of Allah' as the goal. This shows that all general elections conducted by the government have produced leaders who are not in the will of Allah. This is because all the policies and regulations made have been contrary to the laws that God has determined. In other words, the perpetrator indirectly argued that man-made laws are contrary to God's.

The data (6 and 8) also show the material process. The material process was found in the words 'leave', 'stop borrowing', and 'quit working' process verbs. Zakiah asked her father and mother to always perform prayers by using the negative directive clause 'do not leave' (datum 6). The verb 'leave' in the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) refers to the meaning of neglecting or throwing away ([Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, n.d.b](#)). This means that Zakiyah asked her mother and father to always worship Allah, especially in the five-time prayers. This is because she believed that by performing prayer activities, Allah will reward the act with heaven. The word '*salat*'

(prayer) is considered a 'scope' because it is categorized as an item that cannot be changed before or after an activity is carried out. Additionally, it implies that performing '*salat*' is a natural human activity that begins even before conception. Consequently, this activity should not be completely stopped. Likewise, she advised her father and mother using the material process verb 'to stop borrowing' and 'quit working'. These complex words refer to two things, namely stopping to make loans using credit cards or bank interest in datum (7) because it is considered usury and not blessed by Allah and stopping working as a civil servant because it is considered to be helping the interests of the *Taghut* (boundary-exceeding) government as stated in datum (8).

4.1.2 Mental process

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) revealed that the mental process is a process of the non-physical activity. Mental processing verbs are classified into four types. The first type is the perceptive mentality, such as seeing, hearing, feeling, and smelling. The second type is mental cognitive, such as thinking, knowing, and judging. The third type is the emotive mentality, such as like, love, and hate, and the fourth type is mental desiderative like want, hope, and wish. The research data show that the mental processes used in the *testament* are the words 'forget,' and 'blessed'.

- (9) *Jangan lupa* senantiasa beribadah kepada Allah.
Don't **forget** [cognitive] to always worship Allah [phenomenon].
- (10) *Bunga bank tidak diberkahi* Allah.
Bank interest [phenomenon] is not **blessed** [perceptive] by Allah [senser].

Datum (9) shows the use of the cognitive mental process 'forget'. Because it relates to a thinking system that involves an individual's consciousness and subjectivity, this process is categorized as a mental process. As a result, this process existed in the data to serve as a reminder to her parents to never become careless in their devotion to Allah. Besides, datum (10) used the perceptive mental processes 'bless'. The word 'blessing' means the gift of Allah that brings goodness to human life (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, n.d.a). If it is stated that bank interest is forbidden and will only destroy human life, it signifies that bank interest is neither blessed by Allah. The employment of this perceptive material process, however, suggests that the discourse on bank interest only pertains to Zakiah and not to others. This is due to the ongoing controversy around bank interest issues. There are *ulama* or Islamic scholars who forbid it and vice versa (Kamla & Alsoufi, 2015). In this instance, Zakiah chose and adopted *ulamas'* viewpoints that prevent bank interest.

4.1.3 Relational process

The relational process shows the relationship between different entities and constructs the relation between different acts, facts, and things. There are two main subtypes of relational processes, attributive and identification. These two subtypes have three subcategories such as intensive, possessive, and circumstantial (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). An intensive relational process can be illustrated by X is Y or X becomes Y. If X is a noun group in the form of a pronominal or other entity, Y can

be in the form of a noun group or an adjective. The relational process of possessive can be illustrated by the example that A is part of B, or A encompass B. A and B are entities that take the form of abstract or concrete noun groups. The circumstantial relational process is related to the adverbial form of circumstantial. The basic concept of this type of process shows that A is related to B. Thus, it can be seen that there are six forms of this concept, namely attributive intensive, attributive possessive, attributive circumstantial, identifying intensive, identifying possessive, and identifying circumstantial. The results showed that the words 'is' and 'derive' are included in relational process verbs. Those data can be observed in the following examples.

- (11) *Jihad adalah tertinggi dalam Islam.*
Jihad [token] **is** [identifying process] the highest practice [value] in Islam.
- (12) *Inti pesan Zakiah kepada mama dan keluarga adalah agar tidak mengikuti kegiatan pemilu.*
The essence of Zakiah's message to mama and family [token] **is** [identifying] not to participate in election activities [value].
- (13) *Demokrasi, Pancasila, UUD, pemilu berasal dari ajaran kafir yang jelas musyrik.*
Democracy, Pancasila, the Constitution, and elections [token] are **derived** [identifying] from infidel teachings which are [process] clearly polytheistic [attribute].
- (14) *Semuanya selamat dari fitnah dunia yaitu demokrasi, pemilu.*
All [carrier] is [process] **safe** [attribute] from the slander of the world, namely democracy, elections [circumstance].
- (15) *Untuk kaka di rumah Cibubur juga Dede dan Mama, tidak membanggakan kafir Ahok.*
For my sister in Cibubur's house, brother, and mother [attributors], do not **be proud** [process] of Ahok's infidel [attribute].

Relational process verbs in data (11 and 15) can be found in the words 'is', 'derived', 'are', and 'be'. The word 'is' in data (11 and 12) indicates the identification process of the participant 'jihad' and 'the essence of Zakiyah's message' to her mom and family. In datum (11), the word 'jihad' is identified as the highest practice in Islam. The other identification process refers to Zakiyah's message to her mother and family not to participate in election activities (datum 12). Given that the clauses are interchangeable, these two data are categorized as identification relational processes. For instance, the first clause can be modified to 'the highest practice in Islam is jihad' and the second clause was altered to 'not to participate in election activities' is the essence of Zakiah's message to her mom and family. The two clauses can be switched around and still be acceptable in the Indonesian grammar. In contrast to the earlier data, datum (13) has two clauses. The first clause refers to 'Democracy, Pancasila, the Constitution, elections are derived from infidel teachings' and the second clause is infidel teachings are clearly polytheistic. The first clause is classified as a relational process of identification because the principles of democracy, Pancasila, and the Constitution are identified as infidel teachings, while the second clause is classified as a relational attributive process because these infidel teachings are considered polytheistic teachings. Thus, the carriers of these two clauses are different. The carrier in the first clause refers to 'democracy, Pancasila and the Constitution', while the second clause refers to the noun group of 'infidel teachings'. Furthermore, datum (14) showed that elections and democracy are also derogatory to the world. Therefore,

abstaining from the election ensures protection from the defamation of the world. In the same vein, datum (15) states that Ahok is assigned the attribute of being an infidel, so no need to be proud of him. This is because Ahok is a non-Muslim, and all non-Muslims are regarded as infidels.

4.1.4 Verbal process

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) revealed that the verbal process is often referred to as a saying process. This process is critical in written and spoken text and the development of narrative passages. The verbal process consists of two types, namely activity (targeting and talking) and semiosis (neutral quoting, indicating, and imperating). Those data can be observed in the following examples.

(16) *Zakiah nasehatkan kepada Mama dan keluarga.*

Zakiah [sayer] **advises** [verbal] to mama and family [receiver].

(17) *Allah yang akan menjamin rezeki, kak.*

Allah [sayer] who will **guarantee** [verbal] sustenance [phenomenon], sis.

The verbal process is found in the word 'advise' as in datum (16), and 'guarantee' in datum (17). The word 'advise' means advise to do or forbid something as can be observed in the dominant material process found in this research. This process is said by Zakiyah to her mother and family to do what she wanted. Thus, her mother and family become the 'receiver'. Likewise, the use of the verbal process of 'guarantee' shows Zakiyah's belief that Allah SWT is the God who guarantees the sustenance of every creature. In this case, Allah is a sayer, and sustenance is called a phenomenon.

4.2 Interpretive Analysis

This section examines the discursive representation of Zakiah's identity as a female jihadist. The identity of jihadist woman can be observed from the use of the transitivity system in the testament, which is represented in several key concepts such as *tauhid* (unitary oneness of God), *tahkimiyah* (the rule of God –both religiously and politically), the concept of *jihad* (struggle in the context of religious war), *takfiri* (ex-communication), and *al-wala' and al-barra'* (loyalty and disavowal for the sake of God). Maher (2016) revealed that the five concepts are the basic principles of the ideology of the global jihadi group or jihadi-Salafism, they are explained as follows.

4.2.1 Concept of unitary oneness of God

The concept of Salafi jihadist monotheism refers to the pure recognition of the oneness of God (Kassim, 2015), which, in Islam, is a monotheistic doctrine that is distinguished from polytheism and other doctrines. This group generally refers to the writings of Abd Al-Wahab whose followers are known as the Wahhabi doctrine. Abd Al-Wahab classifies the concept of monotheism into three parts (Macris, 2016). The first is monotheism *rububiyyah* (or Allah creates, sustains, nourishes, and owns everything, without exception). This concept refers to the specific belief that God is the almighty God of mankind who absolutely gives command and control over all of

his creation. This concept can be observed from the use of the verbal process ‘guarantee’ sustenance as in datum (17). This indicates that Zakiah’s belief in Allah was very high so she tried to convince her sister, who did not have a job, not to worry about her life because Allah had arranged all human sustenance. Because Allah is the regulator of sustenance, the call to stop being a civil servant was not a problem. It can be observed from the use of the ‘stop’ material process in datum (7). The second is monotheism *uluhiyah* (divinity), namely the belief in Allah as the God who does not need a partner so that it is worthy of worship. Third, monotheism *al-asma wa al-shifah* (oneness of names and attributes) refers to exclusive belief in all of Allah’s attributes and relationship with Him. However, data referring to these two concepts are not found in Zakiah’s will to her mother and family.

4.2.2 *Concept of the rule of God—both religiously and politically*

The concept of *tahkimiyah* (the rule of God – both religiously and politically) is also found in Zakiah’s testament to her family. This concept refers to the oneness of God in legal and sharia matters (Ghifarie, 2016). In his power, Allah does not have the Shari’a in dealing with the affairs of creatures and has no partners in law and law-making (*tasyri*). Maher (2016) revealed that absolute power is in the hands of Allah. Therefore, humans are obliged to follow all the provisions of Allah as a whole. Doing the opposite implies that humans are capable of making laws and legal provisions, whereas only God can do that. This kind of understanding has implications for an attitude of opposition to secular and democratic forms of government. Another implication is that the government is considered the leader of the *Taghut* and must be fought because its blood is lawful. It is why the jihadist Salafi group rejects a democratic system that is in the hands of the people. The use of the relational process verb ‘derived’ in datum (13) describes Zakiah’s identity as a person who rejected the Constitution, Pancasila, and the democratic system. She believed that the democratic system was an infidel teaching and clearly polytheistic. Therefore, she advised her family not to participate in general election activities as a derivative of the democratic system because it was against Allah’s law. It can be observed in the use of relational process verbs in datum (16). As a result, the chosen people’s result of the general election will make a rival law of Allah as revealed in datum (5). The results of this study are in line with the research conducted by Gregg (2010), which revealed that Islam only recognizes theocracy and does not recognize democracy. Nonetheless, this research was refuted by Hashemi (2014). He highlighted that Islam is getting more and more progressive and suicide bombing cannot be attributed to Islam.

4.2.3 *Concept of struggle in the context of religious war*

Litvak (2010) revealed that the concept of jihad is literally an effort for the sake of God. However, for Salafi jihadists, the concept of jihad refers to the meaning of fighting against infidels and the *Thagut* government (boundary-exceeding) (Burki, 2013). Cook (2015) pinpointed that jihad is the second most important pillar of Islam after faith. This concept of jihad can be found in the relational process verb ‘is’, as in datum (11), which identifies the meaning of jihad as the highest practice in Islam. The results of this study are in line with research by Drevon (2016) which reveals that jihad is the highest level of practice in Islam. Jihad can intercede for the bereaved family

and send them to heaven. [Torregrosa et al. \(2022\)](#) reported that war against the *Thagut* government is an integral part of the Salafi jihadist's narrative construction. They use a negative tone, specific slang, and idioms demonstrating their unique language style such as 'playing football' which refers to war against government security staff.

4.2.4 Concept of *Takfiri* (ex-communication)

This phenomenon can be observed in the relational process verb 'not boasting', whose attribute consists of 'Ahok's infidel' noun group (datum 15). The word 'Ahok' functions as a head, while *kafir* (infidel) functions as a classifier. [Hassan \(2017\)](#) reported that the concept of *takfiri* refers to the act of punishing another party as an infidel. This concept is not only addressed to non-Muslims, but to all those who disagree and are in line with their ideology including government officials such as police, army, and civil servants. The implication is that all unbelievers are considered heretics, and apostates and their blood are lawful to fight. That is why Zakiah asked her family 'not to boast' about 'Ahok's infidel' because he is considered an enemy. In line with this research, [Cook \(2015\)](#) revealed that the concept of *takfiri* is similar to the principle of ex-communication in the Catholic Church and is closely held by jihadist Salafi groups. In declaring the enemies of religion, they consistently employ particular terms such as *kufir*, *kuffar*, *tawaghit*, *taghut*, *murtadd*, *rafidah*, *mushrikin*, *murtaddin*, *kafir*, *takfir*, *shrik*, and *murji* ([Vergani & Bliuc, 2018](#)).

4.2.5 Concept of *Al-Wara'* and *Al-Barra'* (loyalty and disavowal for the sake of God)

Another concept that appears in the testament is *al-wala* and *al-barra* (loyalty and disavowal). [Maher \(2016\)](#) revealed that *al-wala* and *al-barra* mean being loyal only to their group and refusing to be loyal to people outside their group. In Zakiah's testament, this concept can be found in the use of the noun group 'infidel Ahok' (datum 15). The mention of the infidel Ahok shows the existence of segregation between Muslims and non-Muslims as well as Zakiah's direct rejection of the existence of infidels. This is because the disbelievers are considered people who are outside their group and therefore must be fought. This is consistent with a number of research conducted in the field of computational linguistics. [Nadia and Anfinson \(2018\)](#) revealed that the Salafi jihadist group employed binary oppositional language 'us' and 'them' to distinguish their organization from other groups. [Sakki and Pettersson \(2016\)](#) were more prone to apply the term 'otherness' to members of distinct groups, while [Bennett Furlow and Goodall \(2011\)](#) used the term 'enemy'.

4.3 Explanative Analysis

[Fairclough \(2003\)](#) pointed out that explanatory analysis in CDA is the last step in analyzing a discourse. The explanative analysis includes situational, institutional, and socio-cultural aspects.

4.3.1 Situational aspect

[Rahim \(2021\)](#) in his research showed that Zakiah is one of the sympathizers of the Salafi jihadist Islamic group like ISIS. This was proven by her posting on social

media, Instagram, 21 hours before carrying out the attack at the Brimob headquarters in Jakarta, Indonesia. In her posts, writings related to jihad activities and the ISIS flag were found. In addition, Police General Listyo Sigit Prabowo as the Head of the Indonesian National Police revealed that in carrying out her actions, Zakiah acted as a 'lone wolf'. Vidino et al. (2017) demonstrated that the term lone wolf originally refers to far-right actors in the US. However, since the mid-1990s, the term has increasingly been used to denote a terrorist ideology. This happened in the aftermath of the 9/11 tragedy which coincided with the emergence of the Islamic State and increasing disillusionment and concern about far-right extremes in western countries. On the other hand, Bartal (2017) reported three key indicators that can identify a person as a 'lone wolf', namely (1) they operate as individuals, (2) they do not belong to any organized terrorist group or network, and (3) their modus operandi is drawn up without direct outside orders. These three indicators were found in Zakiah's case. She herself carried out the attack alone without direct orders from others and did not enter into the organizational structure of the ISIS terrorist network because she was only classified as a sympathizer.

4.3.2 Institutional aspect

Wiktorowicz (2006) revealed that there are three categories of Salafi: (1) Purist or Quietist Salafis, (2) Politicos Salafis, and (3) Jihadi Salafis emphasizing a militant interpretation of Salafi creed with a view that the current global context calls for violence and revolution such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Both groups are representations of the radical Islamic movement's ideology, but they still have some basic differences. Although born from the Islamic movement group called Al-Qaeda in Iraq, ISIS has a certain ideology, goal, group structure, attack tactics, attack targets, and affiliations that distinguish it from the structure of other Islamic movement groups. The ideology of this group tends to be *takfiri*. The goal is to establish an Islamic state because only with the caliphate system can the problems of justice, poverty, and unemployment be resolved (Toguslu, 2019). It is also for this reason that the ISIS group led by Abû Bakr al-Baghdâdî uses religious arguments to justify their actions.

4.3.3 Sociocultural aspect

Socio-culturally, Zakiah adhered to the Salafi-jihadist or global jihadi ideology. This is evidenced by the internalization of her very strong understanding of the Salafi Jihadist ideological doctrine represented in the five main elements of teaching shown in the testament, namely the concept of *jihad*, *takfir*, *al-wala'* and *al-barra'*, monotheism, and *tahkimiyah*, leading to the establishment of an Islamic state. Therefore, Zakiah's testament was not a child's testament to her family as is generally the case, but it was a letter to define the Salafi-jihadist ideology in her family. Mahood and Rane (2017) showed that Salafi-jihadist groups use more religious language, such as applying Islamic law and the promise of heaven for those involved in jihad. This is in accordance with the opinion of Jahanbani and Willis (2019) who revealed that religious and sociocultural factors are one of the reasons why women participate in jihad.

5. CONCLUSION

Through transitivity analysis, the results of this study indicated that the involvement of a woman in the field of jihad was represented by the use of material, relational, mental, and verbal processes. Of the four process verbs, the material process was the most dominant process found and followed by relational processes, mental processes, and verbal processes. It means that the perpetrator dominantly asked her family to apply the teachings of the ISIS ideology that she adhered to. Likewise, the critical discourse analysis found that Zakiah's testament to her family was not a testament that contained normative messages from a person to her family when she was about to die, but rather contained the ideological doctrines of the Salafi-jihadist group ISIS such as the concept of *jihad*, *takfiri*, *al-wala'* and *al-barra'*, monotheism, and *tahkimiyah*, which led to the ideals of establishing an Islamic caliphate state system. It also means that Zakiah's testament was a letter that aimed at disseminating the jihadist Salafi doctrine to her family and readers globally to be followed and applied. This implies that, on the one hand, the advice contained in the testament appeared to be beneficial, yet on the other hand, it also encompassed the instruction to simplify things. For instance, jihad is the best means to reach heaven. In reality, religious doctrines are not so straightforward. There is a great deal of intricacy that necessitates a process of ongoing rather than immediate learning.

Furthermore, the present study had some constraints. The limitations of this study were found in the perspective used. This research was limited to using the SFL transitivity analysis in analyzing a testament, and hence, future research can examine it using a multimodality critical discourse analysis (MCDA), appraisal, rhymes, and speech act studies. Specifically, when using appraisal theory, future researchers can look at the aspects of affect, judgment, and appreciation. Each of these aspects even has a number of typologies that can be explored separately or together in a study. Similarly, in speech act, a researcher can focus on locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. He/she can also further analyze types of illocutionary, including assertive, commissive, directive, declaratory and expressive illocutionary.

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Idiomatic Expressions Used by the Acehnese Novelist Arafat Nur in the Novel *Tanah Surga Merah*

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Abstract

Writers as language users are fully aware that idioms are powerful tools to get messages across. This research is to examine idiomatic expressions in Arafat Nur's novel Tanah Surga Merah (2017). It is intended to find out the types of idiomatic expressions and the contextual meaning used in the novel. The research design of this study was qualitative research. This study was aimed at finding out the seven types of idioms based on O'Dell and McCarty's (2017) theory and Baker's (2018) translation strategies for contextual meaning. The techniques of data analysis were data reduction, data display, and data verification suggested by Miles et al. (2018). After collecting and analysing the data from the novel, three types of idioms were found, with 30 idioms in total. There are eight idioms in the form of verb+object/complement/adverb or 27% of the share, 19 idioms in the form of compound, which is the most frequent type of idiom used with a percentage of 63%. Lastly, there were only three idioms in the form of simile, or 10% of the share. Idioms in the form of prepositional verbs, binomial (word+word), trinomial (word+word+word), and whole clauses or sentences were not found in this novel. In a nutshell, the contextual meaning of those idioms in the novel varied based on the situations and the contexts which function to describe feelings, emotions, and conditions in conversations. Paraphrasing is the most suitable translating strategy for equal meaning in English as it provides meaning in the context of the idioms found in the novel, and compound idioms are mostly used by the author to describe the characters in the novel.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the most challenging figurative language to comprehend is an idiom. Not only it sounds foreign to the ears even for native speakers, but it also seems irrelevant to the whole context of utterances as well. The complexity of an idiom's nature is agreed by some experts who defined it as a phrase, word, or expression with fixed combinations of words that do not have a specific arrangement of words, no grammatical rules, and has a difficult or unpredictable meaning within the word itself (Hornby, 2015; O'Dell & McCarty, 2017; Walker, 2003). In the same vein, Fromkin et al. (2007) stressed that it could be problematic for people to understand idioms because the meaning of an idiom cannot be inferred from the literal meaning of each word. What is interesting about idioms is that it has significant regional and cultural values providing possible information about their people, traditions, and custom (Baghana et al. 2021, p. 130). Therefore, having idiomatic competencies is necessary for language learners/users for "communicative reality and social relevance in everyday discourse" (Liontas, 2015, p. 621).

The challenge in interpreting idioms is that they cannot be translated from word to word, but they must be done contextually to get the meaning or message across. Spears (2000) mentioned some common English idioms with contextual meanings such as 'break a leg' (good luck), 'how time flies' (how quickly time has passed), 'something makes your day' (something makes you feel very happy), and 'kill two birds with one stone' (produce two useful results by just doing one action). Similarly, Indonesian also has an equivalent idiom to 'kill two birds with one stone', that is *sekali merengkuh dayung, dua tiga pulau terlampaui*, which literally translated as 'once you paddle, two and three islands passed'. Other Indonesian idioms are such as *panjang tangan* 'long hand' which figuratively means thief, *berbadan dua* 'having two bodies' which figuratively means pregnant, *badai pasti berlalu* 'the storm will pass' which figuratively means every problem must have a resolution. In reference to *badai pasti berlalu*, the equivalent idiom in English is 'every cloud has a silver lining'. These idioms applied the idiom translation strategy of paraphrasing (Baker, 2018) by taking into account the sociocultural aspects of the source language.

O'Dell and McCarty (2017) classified idioms based on functions. They listed seven functions of idioms. Those are idioms used for emphasis, used to agree with previous speakers, used to comment on people, used to comment on a situation, used to make an anecdote more interesting, used to catch the reader's eye (i.e., in headlines, advertising slogan and names of small businesses), and used to indicate membership of a particular group. As the natural part of the language, idioms are commonly used in any mode of communication; informal and formal, in direct conversations, and also in written form. Literary texts such as poetry, prose, song lyrics, movie conversations, and novels utilize idioms for more dramatic effects. The following are some studies investigating idiomatic expressions in literary works.

Rozikin, et al. (2021) conducted a study on the analysis of idiomatic expressions in the 'Joker' movie. By applying O'Dell and McCarty's (2017) framework, they found all six types of idioms in the movie. There are eighty idioms in total with the distribution of 18 transitive verb phrases, 55 verbal phrases, one prepositional phrase,

one pair of words, and one whole clause or sentence pattern (fixed statement). In the same framework, Zaid (2019) examined idiomatic expressions used by the characters in ‘Hotel Transylvania 1’, ‘Hotel Transylvania 2’, and ‘Hotel Transylvania 3’. He also found all six types of idioms as suggested by O’Dell and McCarty (2017). The total idioms found from those sequels are one simile, two binomials, seven proverbs, two euphemisms, seven clichés, and six fixed statements.

Besides the aforementioned research examining idiomatic expressions in English movies, other researchers applied O’Dell and McCarty’s (2017) framework in classifying the types of idioms found in English-Indonesian translated novels. Sabrina (2019) conducted a study examining a novel entitled ‘The Life We Bury’. She investigated the types of idioms and the strategies used in translating and providing equivalent meanings from English idioms into Indonesian. The results of her study showed that all of the six types of idioms based on O’Dell and McCarty’s (2017) concept were found. There are three fixed statements, four idioms of prepositions phrases, two compound idioms, three idioms of simile, one binomial, and two fixed statements. To address the strategies used in translating and providing equivalent meanings from English idioms into Indonesian, Sabrina (2019) used Baker’s (1992) translation strategy and Nida and Taber’s (1969) meaning equivalence strategy. It is revealed that the Indonesian-translated novel applied paraphrased strategy of translation as the dominant strategy used and the equal meaning in Indonesian was determined by applying contextual paraphrasing. Similarly, Putri et al. (2021) in their research on finding the type of idioms and strategy used in translating English into Indonesian entitled ‘The Girl on The Train’ also used O’Dell and McCarty’s (2017) idioms classification and Baker’s (2018) framework to examine the kind of strategy used in the translation of the English idioms into Indonesian. The research resulted in one simile, two binomials, one proverb, 14 euphemisms, 19 clichés, and 36 fixed statements. The most common strategy applied to translate the English idioms in the novel into Indonesian was also by paraphrasing.

Aligned with those previous studies, this article aims at examining idiomatic expressions used in the novel ‘*Tanah Surga Merah*’ by an Acehese novelist Arafat Nur (2017). The highlight of this research compares to the previously mentioned works is that this study observes an Indonesian literary work, not an English or translated version of English literary works. The framework of this study is to implement O’Dell and McCarty’s (2017) idiomatic expressions types and Baker’s (2018) translation strategies. ‘*Tanah Surga Merah*’ was published in 2017 and it is Arafat Nur’s 16th novel which won an award in *Sayembara Novel Dewan Kesenian Jakarta* (Jakarta Arts Council Novel Competition). We chose the novel because the setting of the story was on the times of the political conflict in Aceh. More importantly, this novel is rich with idiomatic expressions which implicitly displayed the situation, condition, and life of the Acehese people at the time. Accordingly, the research questions of this study are:

1. What are the types of idiomatic expressions found in Arafat Nur’s novel ‘*Tanah Surga Merah*’?
2. What is the contextual meaning of the idioms used in Arafat Nur’s novel ‘*Tanah Surga Merah*’?

This research is expected to be rewarding benefits both to theory and practice. The results are expected to add knowledge to the existing literature on idioms, and also reference to other researchers who intend to conduct similar studies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Idiom

Even though every language around the world has its own different idioms used, they generally have the same features in which idiomatic expressions are used through lexical items such as words or phrases. An idiom is a fixed combination of words that is difficult to understand and guess the meaning of each word (O'Dell & McCarty, 2017). They further explained that the best way to understand idioms is to examine the context of idiomatic sentences. For example, 'flying on a hot air balloon over Cappadocia was an unforgettable moment for me', though it 'cost me arm and leg'. The meaning of 'cost arm and leg' can be inferred by the keywords 'flying on a hot air balloon' and in a specific place 'Cappadocia'; therefore, it can be inferred that something costing an arm and leg is very expensive. Further explanation on the nature of idiom, Cooper (1999) pointed out that idioms belong to the category of non-literal or figurative language that also includes metaphors, similes, and proverbs. These forms of language are difficult to understand and learn because they do not mean exactly what the literal words express. Cooper (1999) explained that of the four kinds of non-literal expressions, idioms are the most commonly found in discourse. An idiom can have a literal meaning, but its alternate, figurative meaning must be understood metaphorically in discourse. For example, 'over the hill' can mean on the other side of the hill, but the figurative meaning means no longer young, and too old to do a particular thing. An example of this is in a sentence: 'It's true some people regard you as probably over the hill at fifty'.

What is tricky is that the idiom cannot be translated literally because it can be meaningless or changed when forcefully translated into another language (Cooper, 1999). That is why the translator should consider the equivalent of the idiom used in the target language to make it comprehensible (Baker, 2018). For example, *panjang tangan* is the Indonesian idiom, literally translated into *panyang jaroe* in Acehese. Meanwhile, the literal translation is 'long hand' in English, which is meaningless because this idiom has a culture-specific concept that is not comprehensible at the lexical level in English (Baker, 2018, p. 21). Both *panjang tangan* and *panyang jaroe* have the same meaning which is used to call someone a thief, while in English, the idiom is 'light fingers' to call people who like to steal, not 'long hand'.

2.2 Types of Idioms

There are various types of idioms made to simplify the analysis. According to Palmer (1976), idioms are classified into three types. They are phrasal verbs (verb+preposition or verb+adverb), prepositional verbs (verb+adverb/verb+preposition), and partial idioms. Other experts such as Kunin (1996, as cited in Baghana et al., 2021) classified English idioms based on thematic classification. He arranged idioms into eight categories; the first is nominal idioms; a category of a phenomenon, a person, or an object with the formula scheme: adjective+noun, or noun+noun, for example, 'a back number' which means a backward person or something outdated, antediluvian. The second one is verbal idioms to express object-circumstance relations. Oftentimes, the formula structure is verb+noun, -verb+auxiliary pronoun+noun. The examples for this criterion are 'search

one's mind' and 'break your head' which means to solve a difficult problem, and 'to hit the nail on the head' which means guess something and get to the point. Third, attributive idioms denote the properties of an object, a person, or phenomenon, for example, 'blue blood' means a man of noble birth, and 'nutty as a fruitcake' means a very stupid, narrow-minded person. Fourth, adverbial idioms, denoting properties, signs of action, for example, 'not at any price' means under no circumstances, not for anything in the world. Fifth, modal idioms express the speaker's attitude to a particular event or situation, for example, 'It's not my cup of tea' means that something is not for me. Sixth, comparing idioms to describe the appearance of people, their character, and mood details. The pattern is 'as...as.../ like...', for example, 'as proud as a peacock' which describes a proud man, and 'like a bull in a China shop' which means something that is absolutely out of place. Seventh are idioms describing people. For example, 'Jack of the trades, master of none' which means that a person can do many different things well but cannot be an expert in everything. The last category is idioms of feelings and moods; for example, 'full of beans' means to be full of energy and 'eat a horse' means feeling very hungry.

Meanwhile, O'Dell and McCarty (2002) divided idioms into three types: phrasal verbs, idiomatic noun phrases, and common metaphors. Later, O'Dell and McCarty (2017) extended the types into seven idiomatic expressions in the form of verb+noun/complement/adverb, prepositional phrase, compound, simile, binomial, trinomial, and whole clause or sentence as explained below.

2.2.1 Verb+object/complement/adverb

Idioms in the form of verb+object/complement, or adverb, are words that represent an action, for example, to write, read, eat, drink, etc. (O'Dell & McCarty, 2017, p. 6). Cruse (2006) stated that verbs are elements that can display morphological contrasts of form, sound, aspect, mood, and numbers. It means that verbs can represent tenses of sentences like the present, past, or future. It can describe a mood or feeling such as the verb 'hate', 'like', 'love', 'sad', etc. It is not just a word indicating action but also non-action. An example of an idiom using an action verb is 'drive someone up the wall', meaning make someone very angry (O'Dell & McCarty, 2017).

2.2.2 Prepositional phrase

This is a set of phrases that begin with prepositions and function as adjectives or adverbs. The phrase is a term used in grammatical analysis, referring to one element of the structure that usually contains more than one word and has no subject or verb (Cruse, 2006). A prepositional phrase can be something such as 'at the moment', 'from time to time', 'in a hurry', etc. (O'Dell & McCarty, 2017). It can be seen that almost all begin with prepositions and do not have a subject or verb. An example of an idiom with a prepositional phrase is 'in the blink of an eye', meaning in an extremely short time (O'Dell & McCarty, 2017).

2.2.3 Compound

A compound refers to a linguistic unit that functions independently (Cruse, 2006). It consists of free morphemes, meaning that the compound has two regular

words joined together. Sometimes the words are written separately, they have conjunctions and are written as one word, for example, 'narrow-minded' that means uninterested in hearing other people's opinions or refusing to accept them. An example of idiom in the form of compound is 'a bone of contention', meaning something that people argue and disagree over (O'Dell & McCarty, 2017)

2.2.4 *Simile*

A simile is an expression that compares two things which include the words 'as' or 'like'. The function is to make the sentence more interactive and the comparison more powerful (O'Dell & McCarty, 2017). For example, 'as dry as a bone' means very dry indeed, and 'as fit as a fiddle' means perfectly well (O'Dell & McCarty, 2017).

2.2.5 *Binomial (word+word)*

A binomial is a composition of two words joined together to form another meaning. For example, 'single-handed' means alone or no one help (O'Dell & McCarty, 2017). Some common idioms in the form of binomial 'black and blue', 'sick and tired', 'life and death', 'body and soul', 'odds and ends', 'flesh and bones', 'bright and early', 'again and again', 'alive and well', and so on (Spears, 2000). These binomial expressions are frozen. For example, the binomial 'black and blue' cannot be inverted into 'blue and black' and so do other binomials.

2.2.6 *Trinomial (word+word+word)*

A trinomial is a type of idiom that consists of three words joined together to form a new meaning, such as 'cool, calm and collected', meaning relax, in control, and not nervous (O'Dell & McCarty, 2017). Some other trinomial expressions are 'mind, body, and soul', 'here, there, and everywhere', and 'healthy, wealthy, and wise' (Spears, 2000). Resembling binomial, trinomial expressions are also frozen, where 'cool, calm, and collected' cannot be reserved into 'collected, cool, and calm'.

Some idioms come in the form of clauses. Clauses are terms used to refer to a grammatical organization smaller than a sentence but larger than a phrase, word, or morpheme (Cruse, 2006). A clause can be dependent or independent. A dependent clause, or subordinate clause, is not a complete sentence because it needs a main clause or independent clause. An independent clause is a simple sentence. An example of an idiom from a whole clause is 'to cut the long story short' means to tell the main points, but not all the fine details. In addition, an idiom in the form of whole clauses and sentences can be in conversational responses or proverbs such as 'you name it', 'that's life', 'it's a small world', 'how time flies', etc. (O'Dell & McCarty, 2017).

2.3 **Idioms Translation Strategy**

Expanding literary horizons by reading foreign languages' literary works is possible with the help of translation. The challenge of translating a novel, for example, is to provide equal meaning by taking into account differences such as figurative and idiomatic expressions. The translated version of the work should be made equal so that readers can have the same aesthetic experience as if they read the original version.

Nida and Taber (1969) set a definition of translation as the reproduction of the closest natural equivalent in terms of meaning and style of the source language (SL) message into the target language (TL) word or phrase. Their concept of equivalence translation later developed into some strategies for translation by Baker (1992, 2018) that are based on the complexity level. The first strategy is using similar meanings and forms of words and expressions. The following is the example of the first strategy applied in translating English idiomatic expressions in ‘The Diary of a Young Girl (The Definitive Edition)’ into the Indonesian version of ‘*Catatan Harian Anne Frank (Edisi Paling Lengkap)*’:

- (a) ST : ..., I quickly **racked my brains** for a neutral topic
 TT : ..., *cepat-cepat aku memeras otakku, untuk memikirkan topik*
 (Prihatiwi, 2010, p. 54)

The second strategy for idiom translation is similar meaning but dissimilar form. The TL may have a different lexical item from the SL but equally bears the same meaning. Here is an example:

- (b) ST : Then Mrs. Van D really **flies off the handle**.
 TT : *Lalu Nyonya Van D mulai berkicau.*
 (Prihatiwi, 2010, p. 56)

The idiomatic expression of ‘flies off the handle’ means to get angry. In the Indonesian-translated version, this is translated into *mulai berkicau* which is also an idiom in the Indonesian language. Only the word *berkicau* refers to a bird singing that is to describe an action of being ‘talkative’. The idiom flies off the handle and has different lexical items from *mulai berkicau*. Flies off the handle if translated with equivalent lexical items is *melempar gagang* which certainly means something else. The third strategy for idiom translation is paraphrasing which is translating a source idiom by giving its meaning in the target language; it can be a single word or a group of words. The example is as follows:

- (c) ST : But the other side of the coin is that the British Air Force is operating **around the clock**.
 TT : *Tetapi sisi Angkatan Udara Inggris beroperasi setiap saat.*
 (Prihatiwi, 2010, p. 56)

The meaning of the idiomatic expression ‘around the clock’ is all day and all night. The translator of ‘The Diary of a Young Girl (The Definitive Edition)’ uses equal meaning in translating into the Indonesian language *setiap saat*. Although the word is not an idiom in the Indonesian language, the paraphrasing strategy applied suits the meaning as it is not comprehensive to literally translate the idiom ‘around the clock’ into *seputaran jam dinding*. The last strategy in translating idiom is an omission which is when there is no equal meaning of the SL in the TL or contextually the meaning is not comprehensive. The following is an example of omission:

- (d) ST : Yesterday Mother and I had another run-in and she really **kicked up a fuss**.
 TT : *Kemarin aku dan Mama kembali terlibat pertengkaran.*
 (Prihatiwi, 2010, p. 64)

The idiom ‘kicked up a fuss’ means to complain loudly in order to describe a state of being annoyed about something. ‘The Diary of a Young Girl (The Definitive Edition)’ novel, it is used to describe Anne Frank’s mom feeling towards Anne (a Jewish teenager who chronicled her family’s two years (1942–44) in hiding during the German occupation of the Netherlands during World War II). The translators deliberately did not provide a translation of the idiom ‘kicked up a fuss’ into the Indonesian language. Prihatiwi (2010) assumed that the omission strategy was used since the idiom run-in is sufficient to describe the unpleasant atmosphere that Anne experienced.

2.4 *Tanah Surga Merah*

‘*Tanah Surga Merah*’ was written by Arafat Nur and published in 2017. It narrates the story of a former GAM (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* or Free Aceh Movement)—combatant; named Murad who returned to his hometown, Aceh, in 2014. He witnessed a political, and socio-economic condition that was increasingly unpredictable and concerning after a major conflict with the Indonesian government. The novel also depicts his struggle to return to his community while escaping from his ex-fellow comrades who accused him as a traitor.

Murad, the main character in ‘*Tanah Surga Merah*’, is described to return to his homeland after more than five years of escaping the government’s prosecution of being a separatist. He was once an Aceh freedom fighter who was praised, respected, and feared by his people. Nonetheless, when he came back, he was no longer a hero but a fugitive who has been staked out by the government police and hunted down by vengeful *Partai Merah* (literally translated as Red Party) people. Afraid of being traced, he disguised himself with a trendy haircut, freshly shaved and cleaned face. He intended to visit everyone that matters to him; family, relatives, companions, and those whom he considered as friends but later turned out to be his foes. Eventually, Murad’s life started to be in hardship. He moved from one place to another in order not to get caught and visited his relatives and friends for shelter. Despite all his efforts to be undercover, he was soon identified; it is not easy to hide for someone as popular as he was. However, Murad managed to escape one more time with the help of his best friend. This time Murad had to live far away and no one knows him and where he was a *Teungku* (religious teacher) in disguise. The story ended when Murad found the woman of his life but sadly he had to leave her behind. She was the last person who helped him escape into the forest after the enemy found his whereabouts.

Interestingly, the title of the novel ‘*Tanah Surga Merah*’ suggests respective meanings. *Tanah* (land) is the land of Aceh, and *Surga* (paradise) describes the fascinating beauty of its nature. *Merah* (red) is interpreted as a bloodbath. Figuratively, *Tanah Surga Merah* means a beautiful land of wonder but there have been many conflicts of bloodshed happened.

3. METHOD

This research applied a descriptive qualitative approach as the data are in the form of words, phrases, and/or sentences (Creswell, 2014). In order to find types of idiomatic expression in *Tanah Surga Merah*, O’Dell, and McCarty’s (2017)

framework and Baker's (2018) idioms translation strategies for contextual meaning were applied. The instruments used for the study were the novel, the classification form, and the Indonesian Idiom dictionary (Chaer, 1993). The process of collecting the data followed the steps suggested by Miles et al. (2018). The first step was data reduction, which was done by reading the novel thoroughly to locate idioms. The next step is data display which idioms were sorted based on the types of idioms proposed by O'Dell and McCarty (2017) and calculated the occurrences of each type of idiom found in the data. The last step was data verification which the data were classified on a checklist based on the types of idiomatic expressions, and from there on the Indonesian idiomatic expressions found were analysed using the strategies proposed by Baker (2011).

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Through the process, there are 19 idioms found in '*Tanah Surga Merah*' novel. The idioms are classified into seven types of idioms as proposed by O'Dell and McCarty (2017). However, there are only three types of idioms found which are: verb+object/complement/adverb, compound, and simile. Meanwhile, the idiom in the form of prepositional phrase, binomial, trinomial, and whole clause was not found in the novel. In addition, this study also applied Baker's (2011) idiomatic expressions translation strategy to reach equal meaning in the target language (English). Considering the metaphorical language of the idioms in the source language (Indonesian language) is highly culturally and socially related, the most appropriate translation strategy to use is paraphrasing. To get valid and reliable results, Miles et al. (2018) matrix was used to calculate the rate of occurrences of those idiom types in '*Tanah Surga Merah*' novel.

Table 1. The frequency of idioms found in the novel '*Tanah Surga Merah*'.

No.	Types of Idiom	Frequency	Percentage
1	Compound	19	63%
2	Verb+object/complement/adverb	8	27%
3	Simile	3	10%
Total		30	100%

Table 1 reveals that the types of idioms in the form of compounds are placed in the first position as the most used idioms with 19 frequencies (63% out of 100%) of the total. Next, the type of idiom in the form compound is placed in a second position with eight frequencies (27% out of 100%) of the total frequency. The least used idiom found in the novel is in the form of a simile with three frequencies (10% out of 100%) from the total frequencies. To further discuss the findings, the following subsection are used to elaborate on the three types of idioms found in *Tanah Surga Merah* novel.

4.1 Idioms in the Form of Compound

According to Cruse (2006), a compound refers to a linguistics unit that functions independently. A compound word consisting of a free morpheme means that a compound has two regular words joined together. Similarly, O'Dell and McCarty (2017) stated that a compound is a unit of meaning formed by two or more words.

Sometimes the words are written separately, had conjunctions, and are written as one word, for example, ‘narrow-minded’. The results from the data are as follows.

4.1.1 *Kaki tangan*

The idiom *kaki tangan* was spoken by Murad on page 16, line 2. Minion is the appropriate word that has an equivalent meaning to *kaki tangan*, describing a character of a person who is a loyal servant of another more powerful being, as shown in (1).

- (1) “*Baru saat itu aku menyadari, bahwa diantara mereka ada Saifud, yang merupakan kaki tangan Suardin sang wali kota.*” [‘Then I realized that among them was Saifud, who was Suardin’s minion’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 16)

4.1.2 *Simpang-siur*

The idiom *simpang siur* on page 24, line 28, in the novel means ‘uncertain, unclear or confusing’. In (2), Murad told that the unclear and confusing news of his gun shooting, and that everyone regretted what had happened. He explained the reason why he shot fired; it was nothing political, it was merely because of unfair money sharing of a certain infrastructure project.

- (2) “*Berita itu begitu simpang-siur dan semuanya menyesalkan penembakan yang kulakukan, yang tidak ada kaitannya dengan masalah politik, melainkan mengenai perkara fee proyek.*” [‘The news was so obscure and everyone regretted the shooting that I did, which had nothing to do with political matters, it is about the project fee’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 24)

4.1.3 *Hidung belang*

Hidung belang means ‘a womanizer or a playboy’. The example of *hidung belang* in a sentence was found on page 25, line 7, as displayed in (3).

- (3) “*Namun, yang lebih memicuku untuk membunuh lelaki hidung belang itu adalah kejadian tak terencana ketika pada suatu malam dia hendak memerkosa Fitri, gadis Buloh yang masih kerabat dekatku.*” [‘However, what triggered me to kill that playboy; it was unplanned. It happened when one night he was about to rape Fitri, a girl from Buloh who was still my relative’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 25)

The idiom of *hidung belang* is usually used to call a molester who likes to take advantage of women. The sentence above refers to a male subject that Murad had killed because the man was about to rape a woman, who was one of Murad’s relatives.

4.1.4 *Gerak-gerik*

This idiom means ‘action or movement.’ it is usually used to describe someone’s gestures or movements. The statement of the *gerak-gerik* idiom was found on page 46, line 28, as shown in (4).

- (4) “*Dengan sabar aku menungguinya, mengamati setiap gerak-gerik dan bahasa tubuhnya yang sudah cukup aku kenal.*” [‘I patiently waited for him, observing his every gestures and body language that I am very familiar with’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 46).

Contextually, the sentence above refers to what Murad did when he secretly surveilled his old friend, Mukhtar, who was preparing a net to catch a fish. Murad was surprised to see how his fellow ex-GAM (Free Aceh Movement) member has drastically changed from a warrior look into a poor fisherman image (Mukhtar is now skinny, and his hair is messy and stiff).

4.1.5 *Pahlawan kesiangan*

Contextually, this idiom *pahlawan kesiangan* found on page 51, line 26, is to criticize people in power who were nobody during the conflict, but behave as if they are ‘the heroes’ once the conflict is resolved. This is depicted in (5).

- (5) “*Orang-orang yang muncul belakangan, yang mengelap darah di pedang, tidak lain adalah pahlawan kesiangan*”. [‘The people who appeared later, who wiped the blood on the sword, were none other than late heroes’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 51)

4.1.6 *Lapang dada*

Contextually, the idiom *lapang dada* found on page 51, line 1, means ‘sincere’ or ‘a state of accepting hardship without complaining’. The data can be seen in (6).

- (6) “*Dia begitu menderita, tetapi tampak tenang dan menerima keadaan dengan lapang dada*”. [‘He suffered greatly, but seemed calm, and accepted the situation sincerely’] (Nur, 2017, p. 51).

4.1.7 *Anak jadah*

The idiom is found on page 74, line 27. This statement was spoken by Abduh, Murad’s high school friend, who now is a high school teacher.

- (7) “*...Anak jadah inilah generasi mendatang yang akan memimpin Aceh...*” [‘This illegitimate child is the next generation who will lead Aceh’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 74)

The idiom in (7) means ‘a child born out of marriage’, it is commonly called an illegitimate child. In the situation above, Abduh and Murad were discussing the condition of their community where plenty of young people dating like married couples. Abduh was concerned about the consequences of young people committing adultery. There will be many illegitimate children who are not ‘good seeds’ to become role models as the leaders of the future.

4.1.8 *Babak-belur*

The idiom is found on page 103, line 30. This was spoken by Nanda, one of Murad’s neighbours, as presented in (8).

- (8) “*Aku sangat benci pada mereka. Abangku juga pernah dapat masalah. Hanya kena senggol sedikit, mereka sudah main pukul. Ya, babak-belur!*” [‘I really hate them. My brother was also in trouble because of them. He just nudged them by accident, but they hit him without warning. Yes, black-and-blue!’] (Nur, 2017, p. 103)

The idiom in (8) means ‘the swollen and bruises of the body as the effect of getting hit, punched, tortured, etc’. Contextually, the sentences above described Nanda’s brother who was also beaten hard by some people from *Partai Merah*. *Babak-belur* is similar to the English idiom black-and-blue; although in English, the idiom of ‘black-and-blue’ belongs to the binomial type.

4.1.9 *Keras kepala*

The idiom *keras kepala* is found on page 115, line 23. It was spoken by Hadi Kriet. It means ‘someone does not want to accept or listen to other people’s advice’. Contextually, the sentence in (9) describes Murad’s character. The English idiom ‘bull-headed’ also bears the same meaning as *keras kepala*.

- (9) “Dari dulu kau keras kepala begitu”. [‘You have always been stubborn’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 115)

4.1.10 *Omong kosong*

The idiom is found on page 145, line 3, as shown in (10). The idiom *omong kosong* means ‘something that one said was meaningless or deceitful’. The sentence above contextually means the performance of Abduh’s drama is more useful than the lies that some people tell to fool the people of Aceh.

- (10) “Pastinya pertunjukan drama Abduh itu lebih berguna daripada omong kosong yang semakin membuat rakyat Aceh yang bodoh ini bertambah bodoh”. [‘Indeed Abduh’s drama performance was more useful than the nonsenses that made the Acehese people fools even more stupid’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 145).

4.1.11 *Kepalang basah*

The idiom *kepalang basah* is found on page 148, line 3. This statement was spoken by Murad, and means ‘the damage is done’. Sentence (11) describes Murad’s condition that he has already gotten into an increasingly serious problem. After a few days of returning to Aceh, people of *Partai Merah* found out about him and tried to arrest him. Here Mukhtar talked to Imran about the weapon he used in the conflict time to protect himself after his presence was traced by *Partai Merah*.

- (11) “Sekarang aku sudah kepalang basah. Sedangkan situasi semakin gawat...” [‘I’m absurdly wet. While the situation is getting worse’] (Nur, 2017, p. 148)

4.1.12 *Luntang-lantung*

The idiom is found on page 156, line 11, as shown in (12). The idiom above describes someone who has no purpose in life or those who have no earnings. This sentence described a man, who looks like a beggar and earns his livelihood by delivering *ceramah liar*, literally translated as ‘wild speech’, meaning a mass-gathering speech. It is called so because to deliver a speech, one needs to have an authorized permit, in which he did not have.

- (12) “*Hidupnya luntang-lantung dan hanya mendapatkan nafkah dengan cara berceramah liar di sejumlah pasar*”. [His life has no purpose and only earns a living by giving mass-gathering speeches at some markets’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 156)

4.1.13 *Sumpah-serapah*

The idiom is found on page 174, line 27. The idiom *sumpah serapah* means various bad words accompanied by a curse or oath. The sentences above described *Partai Merah* members/well-wishers who cursed other road users with bad words, as shown in (13).

- (13) “*Perilaku hewan-hewan itu tidak jauh beda dengan orang-orang Partai Merah, yang begitu lepas, meloncat-loncat gasang menguasai jalan, bahkan pengguna jalan lain pun disumpah-serapah saat gerombolan kendaraan mereka melaju kencang*”. [‘Those animals behaviour are not much different from the *Partai Merah* people, who were so loose, jump around in control of the road, even other road users were cursed as the hordes of their vehicles speeding’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 174).

4.1.14 *Mata-mata*

The idiom is found on page 197, line 72. This statement was spoken by a petrol seller, as in (14).

- (14) “*Apakah kau membawa mata-mata?*” [‘Did you bring a spy with you?’] (Nur, 2017, p. 197)

The idiom above means ‘a person assigned to investigate secretly’. The sentence above was uttered when a petrol seller saw Dahli with Murad and thought he brought a spy with him when they stopped by to fill the gas of their vehicle.

4.1.15 *Rendah hati*

The idiom is found on page 204, line 1, as shown in (15). The idiom *rendah hati* means ‘someone who is not arrogant or humble’. Contextually, the idiom described people’s opinion about Murad who disguised himself as a *Tengku* (religious teacher).

- (15) “*Tengku sangat rendah hati sekali*”. [‘Tengku is very humble’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 204)

4.1.16 *Lidah api*

The idiom is found on page 48, line 26. This statement was spoken by Mukhtar, as in (16).

- (16) “*Lihat saja situasi saat ini, memang tidak kelihatan, tapi diam-diam keadaan semakin memanas, dan tak lama lagi bakal muncul lidah api yang menyala*”. [‘Just look at today’s situation, though it may look invisible, but the situation is getting heat up silently, and soon there will be a burning flare’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 48)

The idiom *lidah api* means ‘a triggered issue or something that fan the flames’. The sentence above means something bad is going to happen since there is a silent trigger that goes unnoticed and some people take it for granted.

4.1.17 *Lepas tangan*

The idiom is found on page 126, line 12. This statement was spoken by Aminah, as shown in (17). The idiom *lepas tangan* means to stop taking responsibility. Contextually, the statement is Aminah's request to Mukhtar to not give up his responsibility, and abandon her and their children.

- (17) “*Kau tak bisa lepas tangan begitu dan meninggalkan kami*”. [‘You can’t wash your hands clean and leave us’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 126).

4.1.18 *Jalan setapak*

This idiom is found on page 45, line 13. In English, *jalan setapak* is called ‘pathway’. The idiom of *jalan setapak* means ‘narrow road/a small road that cannot be passed by vehicles like motorcycles, cars, etc’. It is usually in villages or rural areas. In (18), the author explained the situation that was passed by the main character to illustrate the road that can only be passed by pedestrians.

- (18) “*Tak jauh dari situ, aku melalui jalan setapak berbelok ke barat dengan rumput liar tebal di kedua sisinya sehingga ujung celana jins-ku basah oleh tempelan embun*”. [‘Not far away, I went through a pathway turning west with thick weeds on both sides. It is so that the tips of my jeans were wet with dew’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 45)

4.1.19 *Membabi-buta*

The idiom is found on page 100, line 25. It does not mean a blind pig (*babi buta*), but the idiom *membabi-buta* intends to do something recklessly without thinking of the circumstances. This idiom is used to show the adverse effects that are done out of the control (lost control), such as presented in (19). Contextually, the meaning of the sentence describes Murad's daredevil acts and loss of control without estimating the risk because he was extremely angry.

- (19) “*Aku bergerak membabi-buta, melawan mereka seperti tingkah orang gila mengamuk*”. [‘I moved blindly, fighting them like a crazy man’s temper’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 100)

4.2 Idioms in the Form of Verb + Object/Complement/Adverb

O’Dell and McCarty (2017) mentioned that idioms can be in the form of verb+object/compliment/adverb. A verb is a word that represents an action, i.e., ‘to write’, ‘read’, ‘eat’, ‘drink’, etc. Adding to that, Cruse (2006) stated that verbs are elements that can display morphological contrasts of form, sound, aspect, mood, and numbers. It means that a verb can represent tenses of sentences like the present, past, or future. It can describe mood or feeling such as the verb ‘hate’, ‘like’, ‘love’, etc. Seven idioms in the form of verb+object/complement/adverb are found in the novel.

4.2.1 *Lupa diri*

This idiom is found on page 52, line 29. It was a conversation between Mukhtar and Murad who described a friend of theirs who has totally changed, as shown in (20).

- (20) “...*Si miskin itu sekarang sudah kaya, punya mobil, rumah besar, dan hidup layaknya orang terpandang yang lupa diri*”. [‘The poor man is now rich, has a car, a big house, and live like a respected person who forgets himself’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 52).

This idiom means ‘someone who is not aware of himself’. Here, Murad used the idiom to describe their old friends who used to be a comrade in ‘the army’, had become rich men now and had good positions in the *Partai Merah*. Mukhtar used *lupa diri* to emphasize his disappointment because the once ‘comrades’ had forgotten their struggling time and pretended not to know them.

4.2.2 *Mempertaruhkan nyawa*

This idiom is found on page 54, line 26. This statement was spoken by Mukhtar. It means ‘to risk a life’. From the contextual meaning, Mukhtar explained his present life from the remnants of his past struggles. In sentence (21), risking life referred to how Mukhtar and Murad used to fight as combatants and hold status as *Partai Merah* members. They should have become ‘respected officials’ and lived prosperously since *Partai Merah* has become the ruling government post the conflict era. Sadly, Mukhtar was only a father who fed his family as a fisherman afterward.

- (21) “*Beginilah kehidupanku sekarang, buah perjuangan kita dulu mempertaruhkan nyawa di hutan*.” [‘This is my life now, the outcome of struggle in risking my life in the forest’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 54)

4.2.3 *Naik daun*

This idiom is found on page 57, line 24. This statement was spoken by Mukhtar. Sentence (22) does not literally mean someone who is climbing up a leaf (*naik daun*), although it is quite amusing to see. In the Indonesian language, the idiom of *naik daun* means something or someone currently in fashion or going famous. Contextually, the sentence depicts how Mukhtar explained the situation that Murad had gone viral with the problem he was facing.

- (22) “...*Fotomu begitu besar tertempel di halaman muka dan ada di mana-mana, mirip artis yang sedang naik daun!*” [‘Your picture is huge, it is published on the front page of the newspaper and everywhere else, like a rising star’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 54)

4.2.4 *Berutang budi*

This idiom is found on page 123, line 25. This statement was spoken by Murad, as shown in (23).

- (23) “*Demikianpun, aku tidak merasa berutang budi padanya*”. [‘Even so, I don’t feel I owe him a favor’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 123)

The idiom *berutang budi* means ‘a kindness should be returned’. In English, it is similar to ‘owe a favor or indebted’. In this context, the sentence above explained that Murad thought he did not need to repay Hadi Kriet’s kindness because Hadi Kriet once owed him a favor and it is also because Murad knew Hadi Kriet too well; he was a notorious cheapskate as his nickname *kriet* means ‘stingy’ in Acehese to describe his personality.

4.2.5 Naik darah

This idiom is found on page 178, line 20. This statement was spoken by Imran, as presented in (24). The idiom *naik darah* in the Indonesian language means ‘get angry’. Imran refused Murad’s request for a gun and stated that he could easily lose his temper when he holds a weapon.

- (24) “*Aku tidak yakin. Kau cepat naik darah kalau pegang senjata...*” [‘I am not sure. You get angry easily if you hold a weapon’.] (Nur, 2017, p. 178)

4.2.6 Lalu-lalang

The idiom was found on page 117, line 24, as depicted in (25). The meaning of *the lalu-lalang* idiom is ‘passing by’ (walking, passing, and so on), or coming in and out. Contextually, the sentence above explained a crowded traffic condition.

- (25) “*Kendaraan itu terus melaju di jalan yang kini telah ramai oleh lalu-lalang kereta, mobil sedan, bus penumpang, dan truk angkutan barang*”. [‘The vehicle keeps moving on the road which is now crowded with motorcycles, sedan cars, buses and trucks passing by’] (Nur, 2017, p. 117)

4.2.7 Berpecah-belah

The idiom is found on page 156, line 27. This statement was spoken by a man giving a speech on the market street. The idiom *berpecah-belah* means ‘disunited’. The meaning of the sentence in (26) is to remind people that Allah would not grant a prayer if the people are disunited.

- (26) “*...Bagaimana mungkin Allah bisa mengabulkan doa semacam itu bila umat Islam sendiri senang bertengkar dan hidup berpecah-belah?*” [‘How can Allah grant such prayers if Muslims fight against each other and live disunited?’] (Nur, 2017, p. 156)

4.2.8 Berbunga-bunga

The idiom is found on page 243, line 15, as shown in (27). The idiom *berbunga-bunga* means ‘extremely happy’. Murad was describing his feeling to a girl. It happened when Murad was walking around the village, he saw a girl who caught his attention, and the girl looked back at Murad and smiled.

- (27) “*Setiap kali pandangan kami bertemu, dia melayangkan senyuman yang membuat hatiku berbunga-bunga*”. [‘Every time our eyes met, she gave me a smile that made my heart happy.’] (Nur, 2017, p. 243)

4.3 Idioms in the Form of Simile

A simile is an expression that compares two things that include the words ‘as’ or ‘like’. O’Dell and McCarty (2017) state that the use of similes in spoken and written English makes the comparisons more colourful and more powerful. For example, ‘as dry as a bone’ means very dry indeed, and ‘as fit as a fiddle’ means perfectly well (O’Dell & McCarty, 2017). The following are similes found in *Tanah Surga Merah* novel.

4.3.1 *Kepalanya sama keras dengan kepalamu*

The meaning of *kepalanya sama keras dengan kepalamu* is to describe two people who have the same character; stubborn. A stubborn person is someone difficult to handle as he/she is persistent and will not listen to other people's opinions. Hadi Kriet made this statement on page 117, line 1, as shown in (28).

(28) "*Kepalanya sama keras dengan kepalamu*". ['His head is as hard as yours'.] (Nur, 2017, p. 117)

4.3.2 *Tubuhku kaku seperti patung*

The statement is found on page 134, line 23. Sentence (29) means 'not moving at all'. It describes Murad's condition as a reaction of surprise or shock. The sentence illustrated how Murad did not move at all because of a hug from his old friend, Imran, when they met again after being separated for so long.

(29) "*Tubuhku kaku seperti patung*". ['My body is stiff like a statue'.] (Nur, 2017, p. 134)

4.3.3 *Kau muncul disini seperti hantu saja!*

The statement uttered by Mukhtar on page 48, line 9, as presented in (3), literally means someone who suddenly appears and disappears. Contextually, the sentence describes Murad when he came unexpectedly to meet his friend, Mukhtar.

(30) "*Kau muncul disini seperti hantu saja!*" ['You appear here like a ghost'.] (Nur, 2017, p. 48)

This research finding is similar to Sabrina's (2019) finding which analysed the types of idiom based on O'Dell and McCarty's (2017) framework and the translation strategy proposed by Baker (2018) in the Indonesian version of 'The Life We Bury' novel. She found the same number of similes as found in '*Tanah Surga Merah*' novel which was three similes. Translation by paraphrasing is a similar strategy applied in translating idioms in both studies.

5. CONCLUSION

'*Tanah Surga Merah*' is an award-winning novel describing the political, social, and cultural situation in Aceh after the post-peace agreement of the free Aceh movement with the Indonesian government in 2005. This novel is rich with figurative expressions particularly idioms to express Arafat Nur's critics, opinions, and concerns through his main character, Murad, and other supporting characters. Nearly all of the characters in the novel use idioms in their conversations; Mukhtar, Murad, Imran, Nanda, Hadi Kriet, the man giving a speech at the market, and the petrol seller. The intended use of the idioms in the novel was to indicate a situation such as *naik daun*, *kepalang basah*, *luntang-lantung*, etc. The other purpose was to show the characters or emotions of a person such as *hidung belang*, *pahlawan kesiangan*, *lupa diri*, *rendah hati*, *lapang dada*, etc. It can be concluded that the function of idioms found in the novel is to emphasize statements, conditions/situations, emotions, and/or characters.

The research results showed that idioms in the form of compounds are more widely used in the '*Tanah Surga Merah*' novel as there are 19 idioms found. From our perspectives, compound idioms are widely used because they can describe characters, events, and situations in a more attractive way and are contextually comprehensible. On the other hand, idioms in the form of similes are the least found. There are only three similes. A simile is an expression that compares two things by using the word 'as' or 'like'. The use of similes in spoken and written English is to make the sentences more attractive and the comparison is more powerful.

After conducting a thorough and measurable study on the types of idioms in the '*Tanah Surga Merah*' novel, it can be concluded that there are three types of idiom found with 30 idioms in total. There are eight idioms in the form of verb+object/complement/adverb or 27% of the share, 19 idioms in the form of compound, which is the most frequent type of idiom used with a percentage of 63%. Lastly, there were only three idioms in the form of simile, or 10% of the share. Idioms in the form of prepositional verbs, binomial (word+word), trinomial (word+word+word), and whole clauses or sentence were not found in the novel. In a nutshell, the contextual meaning of those idioms in the novel varied based on the situations and the contexts which function to describe feelings, emotions, and conditions in conversations.

As every study needs further analysis for advancement, this study comes not without limitations. This study does not provide a detailed elaboration on the word root of each Indonesian idiom used in the novel and how they have transformed into idioms. Moreover, as the idioms' meaning is translated by using a paraphrasing strategy, it is not possible to come up with one single-fixed meaning in the target language. Although there are some idiomatic expressions in the novel resemble those of the target language (English), there are still idioms remaining unexplored.

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