



GEN TEFL

JOURNAL

GEN TEFL Journal is a refereed journal with an editorial board of scholars in various fields. It is an annual publication of Global Educators Network Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (GEN TEFL). The journal aims to gather and record range of studies exploring English language teaching theories, approaches, methodologies, technologies and best classroom practices honed by teachers, researchers, administrators, and interested individuals for the long term advancement of ELT related research and knowledge.

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To the Authors and Readers,

Greetings!

This edition of GEN TEFL Journal comprises of papers analyzing the effects of technology in English teaching such as Google Classroom, memes, e-CLIP Model, multi-media instruction versus visual static materials, and Connect2Learn. It also includes papers discussing the challenges and opportunities of English language teachers in Bangladesh and Indonesia, a validation of a Math workbook in the Philippines, and a detailed analysis of CEFR levels of university students in Thailand. The variety of topics makes it an interesting read for English language teachers to get ideas on how to improve their teaching strategies and to add to their best practices. These papers show that English language teaching, specifically in Asia, is dynamic and still growing which allows opportunities for teachers to develop their craft making it more exciting and fascinating.

I would like to thank the authors for their wonderful contributions, not just in ELT and TEFL, but also in other fields of study. By sharing your knowledge and experiences through your research, you have encouraged the readers to ameliorate their teaching practices. I would like to acknowledge your dedication and hard work in submitting your papers and for your patience in the process. To the readers, I hope that by imbibing the contents of this journal you will somehow be inspired to also write your own research papers and be contributors in our next journal.

It is my great pleasure and honor to have served as GEN TEFL Journal's editor for 2019. A few years ago, I was one of the fortunate people who got published on GEN TEFL Journal's first issue. It is still surreal for me to be assigned in this position. I am grateful to Dr. Andy Cubalit for encouraging me to publish my research and for mentoring me in order to fulfill this enormous task. He paved the way for my interest in research and he believed that there is nothing that I cannot accomplish. For that, I offer my sincerest gratitude.

To end this message, I will leave you with a quote by Virgil from Aenid, "Fortune favors the bold." May you be bold enough to tread on new paths and be fortunate in the end.

Yours sincerely,

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Evaluating Google Classroom in Teaching and Learning Writing at Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology

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Abstract: The Internet, a revolutionary invention of mankind, has evidently played an indispensable role in this 4.0 Technology era. Recent years have witnessed the adoption of the Internet-based technology in Language teaching and learning, which has brought both unprecedented benefits and challenges to teachers and learners. Released in August 2014, Google Classroom, a kind of virtual classroom, is relatively new to many Vietnamese teachers of English. Therefore, this research aimed to introduce this technology to fellow teachers and to evaluate its effects on teaching writing. A variety of previous studies into the same area were reviewed carefully before the research commenced. The research was designed using Post-test Only Experimental method. The writer taught TOEIC Writing to seniors at Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology (HCMUT) in total 48 hours in eight weeks. 63 seniors were randomly assigned into two classes, one with 30 students and the other with 33. Without any pre-test, the control group was chosen randomly to study writing with the teacher in a traditional way. The experimental group, in addition to normal classes with teachers, participated in a virtual class on Google Classroom. After eight weeks, both groups did a mock test of TOEIC Writing and were marked on a 200-point scale of TOEIC. The data were analyzed using T-test, and a questionnaire was spread out for students to fill in. Also, some students took part in voluntary interviews about the effects of Google Classroom on their interest and outcomes in TOEIC Writing skills. Regarding the findings, the experimental group had higher average points in their writing test compared to the control group although the difference was not remarkably big. However, questionnaires and interviews showed that students' eagerness in Writing improved noticeably with the support of Google Class. Therefore, these findings are hoped to contribute to modern teaching and learning.

Introduction

Together with reading, writing skills are most crucial for students, according to the Peter D. Hart Association (1994). They allow students to express their understanding and opinions on different matters, in the form of written texts. Not only are they vital when students are at universities, but they open doors to better opportunities for graduates. In all businesses, employees are expected to be competent at writing skills to handle business correspondence such as emails, letters and memorandums.

To prepare students for future careers and to standardize education and training programs, Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training has compiled and enforced "The foreign language teaching and learning proposal towards 2020", which requires university students to get at least B1 level in Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Hence, students should get a minimum score of 200 in TOEIC Writing and Speaking.

Although writing skills play such key roles, a majority of students do not have the necessary skills to communicate effectively in written format (Flaherty & Choi, 2010). This puts pressure on universities and teachers to enhance the quality of teaching and learning writing. However, this effort is hindered by numerous problems such as large classes (Van, 2008), the traditional teacher-centered approaches (Tuyet, 2013a) and the low average English level of learners when entering university (Van, 2007). This last problem, at HCMUT is tremendous. Some students cannot even write a correct basic simple sentence because of their bad grammar. Another stumbling block is the course length. The total duration of each course is 48 hours over a period of two months. This is challenging for teachers and frustrating for the struggling ones, to handle a heavy load of knowledge and skills in writing, from grammar, vocabulary to the organization of ideas.

As a result, there is a growing need for extra support and activities outside the classroom. Technology, thus, has been employed to facilitate traditional classes. Like what Valdez (2005) said in his report, teachers must take into consideration how to intergrate technology into instructions and use it to supplement teaching and learning. Recently, internet-based classes have come as potential solutions to the mentioned problems. Some universities, including HCMUT, have applied e-learning for mainstream students learning general English. One platform that has been used in HCMUT is the ELT online course developed by National Geographic and Cengage Learning. Students when purchasing their book are given a code to access a course set by teachers. Teacher can select from a list of available exercises and assign them to students. Nonetheless, one drawback is that it does not allow much interaction between teacher and students. Only teachers can send students email, and teachers cannot mark or comment on students' performance since all the marking is automated. Consequently, students find almost no motivation in attending this course.

On the contrary, Google Classroom offers many more benefits. Firstly, it is free for anyone. Secondly, it supports two-way interactions between teachers and learners, and among learners. All parties can share and access the sources of materials, and more importantly, contribute to the content of the documents. All notifications are sent to users' email addresses, so there is no message or announcement being missed. Furthermore, it is user-friendly, so teachers assuming themselves "low-tech" can easily create and operate their own Google Classroom.

Therefore, this study into the use of Google Classroom in teaching and learning writing at HCMUT was expected to give: 1) an introduction to Google classroom and 2) an in-depth evaluation of this new technology.

Using Post-test only experimental research, there lied many limitations. Firstly, the lack of pre-test might result in the assignment bias as two groups might not be equivalent. Moreover, the sample size for each group was not big enough (33 and 30, for control group and experimental group respectively); and thus, this might negatively affect the validity of the research. Finally, only five students joined the interview, which was a small number.

However, the post-test only method was employed because at the beginning of the writing course, it was hard for students with no experience in TOEIC writing test to do a standard test. Furthermore, at the time of the experiment, there were only two writing classes assigned to the writer and the class size was fixed. Therefore, the sample size was quite small and it was impossible to administer a pre-test. Time is also a problem with the interview session. It is hoped that in the future, there will be more research in this field, and all these limitations will be eliminated.

This research was conducted with the following hypothesis: "After students in experimental group attend a virtual classroom on Google besides normal class, their outcomes and engagement in writing will be higher than students in control group who only study in physical class with teacher".

Literature Review

About Google Classroom

History

Google first announced its Google Classroom in May 2014, yet only those who owned G Suite for Education account could gain access to this platform. From March 2017, anyone with a personal Google account has been able to create or join Google Classroom. (Etherington, 2014). Google Classroom now becomes a free web service for anyone.

Features

Creating a class with Google Classroom is fast and easy. Teachers can go to www.classroom.google.com after signing in their Google account. By simply clicking on “Create” button, they then can name the class and add descriptions of the class. Teachers can invite students to their classes either by adding students’ email addresses or by sending them a class code.

On the Stream page, when hitting a plus button in the bottom right corner, four options appear, including creating new announcement, creating assignment, creating question or reuse post. Any of these allows teachers to insert links to Google Drive, websites, or upload existing files from their computer. Interestingly, with any kind of material, teachers can create a copy for each student instead of allowing them to modify on the same file. (“Create and manage class”, n.d.)

Students can do assignment on Google Docs or attach Word documents. However, Google Classroom is meant to work perfectly with other Google products in its ecosystem; hence, Docs is highly recommended than an attached Word document. This way, teachers can easily add comments on students’ work, give grades and return it to students. (“Grade and return an assignment”, n.d.)

Students can gain access to all resources shared by teachers, especially the Class Drive folder. They can create post themselves or comment on others’ posts.

Google Classroom in language learning

Google Classroom has proved its superiorities over old-school methods. Firstly, Google Classroom has a responsive design and hence can run on any device resolutions such as desktop, tablet or mobile phone. According to Janzen (2014), “mobile access to learning materials that are attractive and easy to interact with is critical in today’s web connected learning environments”.

Iftakhar (2016) listed in her research some other benefits of this technology, one of which was flexibility. When used either parallel with physical class or as a merely virtual class, this app was accessible and easily used by both instructors and learners anywhere anytime, even during national holidays.

In a recent research conducted by Randy, Karen, Jasmine, Christian, and Nieva (2018), Google Classroom was evaluated using ISO, and the results revealed that this app was extremely useful in collaborative learning. Likewise, teachers in Iftakhar’s research (2016) who let their students work in groups and submit their project via Google Classroom reported that it promoted collaborative learning. This method of learning, according to what MacArthur found in his research in 2009, motivated and encouraged students in writing because they could reach a wider audience. A case study by Mitchell’s (2014) also showed that as peers can see their writing, students tended to produce well-developed writing. Marjan and Seyed (2012) reported a similar result when students engaged in this learning method had higher achievement and greater productivity and self-esteem.

Furthermore, MacArthur’s (2009) Google Classroom encouraged writing and editing since students did not have to recopy their work. For example, these tools provide free spelling and

punctuation checkers and suggest correction and thus, they are beneficial for struggling students having problems with punctuation, spelling and grammar.

Moreover, along with being able to give instructions and share writing prompts as well as other additional resources, teachers can send their students' comments and feedbacks through Google Classroom promptly, which may significantly contribute to the outcomes of their writing classes. (Izenstark & Leahy, 2015)

Therefore, despite being new in education and not being extensively researched, Google Classroom receives many positive reviews from educators and specialists. It is believed to greatly support language teaching and learning.

Research Methodology

Participants

There were 22 female and 41 male participants. They were all seniors from 11 different faculties at HCMUT, and got a minimum of 450 in TOEIC Listening and Reading Test. They needed a minimum score of 200 in TOEIC Writing and Speaking. Participants voluntarily attended this extra Writing class in total 48 hours, each class lasted two hours every Monday-Wednesday-Friday or every Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday, over eight weeks. Students themselves chose the class that suited their schedule. All had experience with technology, owned a laptop and/or a desktop computer with access to the Internet.

The Mon-Wed-Fri class was chosen to be the experimental group, with 10 females and 20 males. The other one on Tue-Thur-Sat, with 12 females and 21 males was the control group. 30 samples were chosen randomly without any pre-test.

Materials

A TOEIC Writing class was created on Google Classroom, and students in experimental group were enrolled in this class. A mock TOEIC Writing test with all 11 questions was given to both groups at the end of the course. Then, a questionnaire using Google Form was sent to students to fill in. Interviews followed up the findings of the experimental research.

Design

Initially, one method of quantitative research, experimental design, was employed. In this design, four variables were taken into consideration. Firstly, independent variable was the use of Google Classroom. Dependent variable, on the other hand, was the scores of students on the mock test. Thirdly, control variables were the textbook, the time and duration of classes, and the mock test. Finally, an extraneous variable, the various students' English proficiency, might exist. Afterwards, a quantitative questionnaire among all students, and qualitative interviews with some voluntary students were conducted. Therefore, this research was a mix of quantitative and qualitative design.

Procedures

In the first class, experimental group was informed of attending Google Classroom, using a code provided. They were instructed how to access to the site, get materials, work with Google Docs and turn in their assignments. Those instructions were given in class and via email from the teacher later.

In the next classes, announcements of what students should prepare in advance were posted on Google Classroom before any physical class as reminders. Supplementary materials such as sentence

structure exercises, pictures for picture description tasks, sample emails and essays were uploaded so that students could access to and download. After each physical class, practice exercises were assigned to students, requiring them to use either Word processor or Google Docs to write and submit. After they turned in, they got comments and feedbacks from the teacher through Google Docs.

Control group was provided with the same supplementary materials in form of handouts, and was asked to do the same exercises and assignments on paper.

Data sources

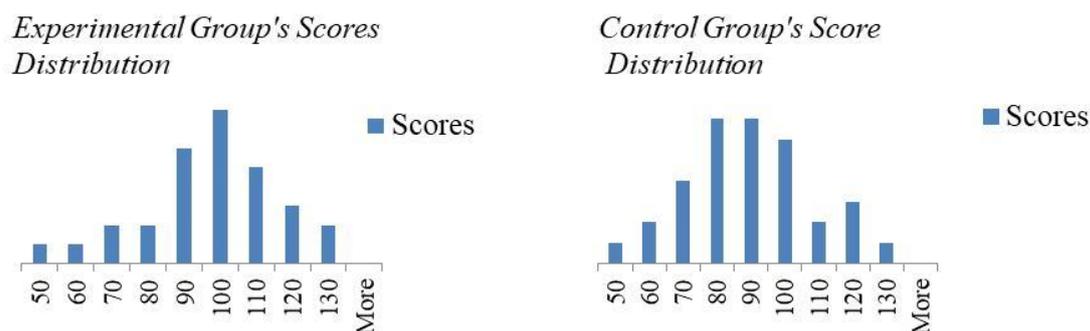
At the end of the course, both classes did the same mock test with all 8 questions of TOEIC Writing, including five picture description questions, two emails, and one opinion essay in one hour, and were marked using the same criteria on a 200-point grading scale.

After the test, experimental group took part in an online questionnaire with six close-ended questions posted on their Google Writing classroom. Moreover, five students voluntarily participated in an interview with three open-ended questions, each lasted five minutes. Audio responses were recorded for further analysis.

Data Analysis

Post-test scores

Figure 1



As can be seen from figure 1, both groups showed a normal distribution of the post-test scores. Since two groups were observed independently and had no connection, an independent sample t-test was conducted to check the hypothesis.

Because the experimental group was hypothesized to have higher average test score, and the sample sizes (n) and variances of two groups were unequal, one-tailed t-test with unequal variances was ideal for the research. Moreover, it is better to mention that in this case, the null hypothesis was that the experimental group had either the same or lower average test score compared to the control group.

Table 1

Results of T-test and Descriptive Statistics for Writing Scores between Experimental Group and Control Group

| | Experimental Group | Control Group |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Sample size (n) | 30 | 33 |
| Mean (M) | 95.166 | 83.672 |
| Variance (s ²) | 362.902 | 365.672 |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------|
| Standard Deviation (s) | 19.049 | 19.122 |
| t Statistic | 1.671 | t Critical one-tailed 1.670 |
| Calculated Probability (p) | 0.049 | Confidence Interval 0.05 |

Table 1 shows the results in Microsoft Excel. Firstly, if t Statistic is bigger than t Critical one-tailed, the null hypothesis will be rejected, which is exactly this case (1.671>1.670) although the difference was not big.

Furthermore, compared to the common Confidence Interval 0.05, the p value of this test was marginally smaller (0.049). Once again, the null hypothesis was eliminated. It revealed that the difference between the experimental group's scores and those of the control group did exist.

Online questionnaire results

Table 2

Results of Online Questionnaire

| Question | Results |
|--|---|
| 1. Do you feel comfortable working with Google Classroom? | 1. Yes  80% 2. No  20% |
| 2. Choose the feature of Google Classroom that is most beneficial to you. | 1. Create and receive announcements  10% 2. Access to links shared by teacher  25% 3. Do assignment and get teacher's comments on Google Docs  60% 4. Communicate with other students in the class  5% |
| 3. Are you willing to share your writing with your classmates? | 1. Yes  60% 2. No  40% |
| 4. How often do you comment on teacher's or classmates' posts? | 1. Always  10% 2. Sometimes  30% 3. Never  60% |
| 5. Do you feel encouraged in your writing learning with the support of Google Classroom? | 1. Yes  75% 2. No  25% |
| 6. Do you want to continue using Google Classroom to receive teacher's supports after the course ends? | 1. Yes  83% 2. No  17% |

Table 2 shows most students did not have problems with Google Classroom. Among four listed features, the use of Google Docs to write assignment and receive comments from teacher seemed most commonly be used by students, 60%. Coming second in this list was accessing to the subordinating materials shared by teacher, 25%. More than half of students never commented on other's posts. Although students did not interact much with teacher and classmates by comments, respectively 75% and 83% of them claimed that Google Classroom encouraged their writing learning and hoped to continue benefiting from this platform even when the physical class ended.

Summary of interviews

Question 1. How did Google Classroom benefit your writing learning?

Student 1 said Google classroom made the access to the various materials on the internet easier by clicking on the links. He was too lazy to find those materials himself. Meanwhile, student 2 thought writing on paper was frustrating for him since he usually had difficulties with spelling. Writing an essay by Word processor or Google Docs was much easier because there was auto spell check. According to student 3, because Google Classroom automatically sent all notifications to his email address, and the Calendar feature showed all the upcoming events and duties that he needed to fulfill, he was notified of important announcements and deadlines and could stay disciplined in his learning. Student 4 and 5 both said that they worked with their computer all the time, so a virtual classroom with cloud storage was more practical and convenient for them to access to, keep and manage all the files in the long run.

Question 2. Why didn't you post comments on Google Classroom?

Interestingly, four out of five students said that they were so busy with their dissertations that they did not want to waste their time on anything except for teacher's comments and suggestions, which could help improve their writing skills. One student said he did not know his classmates well, so he did not feel comfortable chatting to them.

Questions 3. What function of Google Classroom do you want to use more?

Student 1, 2 and 4 wanted teacher to share more videos of writing instructions, in addition to Word and PDF documents. Student 3 said that classmates did not actually connect to each other, and hoped to more pair work and group work using Google Classroom to create a more constructive learning community. Student 5 gave no response to this question.

Conclusion and Implications

Conclusion of the research hypothesis

As mentioned in the introduction, the researcher hypothesized that after students in experimental group attend a virtual classroom on Google besides normal class, their outcomes and engagement in writing will be higher than students in control group who only study in normal class with teacher. Following are the conclusions of this hypothesis.

Firstly, as seen in the quantitative analysis, when comparing the mock test results between two groups using independent samples t-test, the parameters proved that the scores of the experimental group were statistically higher than those of the control group.

Secondly, the quantitative close-ended questionnaire indicated that Google Classroom engaged a majority of students in learning writing. Furthermore, the qualitative analysis of the interview sessions strengthened this conclusion when all participants easily gave their explanations of how Google Classroom facilitated their writing.

Implications

Implications for teachers

To start with, the employment of such internet-based class as Google Classroom is perfectly feasible. University students, the millennials, have been familiar with technology, the internet and a wide variety of devices. Also, Google Classroom is very user-friendly, so both teachers and students do not have difficulty getting used to it.

Secondly, technology just plays a supportive part, and teachers should be responsive to students' activities. The most favorable feature of Google Classroom among students is the use of Google Docs for writing assignments, giving and receiving comments and feedbacks. What students expect most when attending a writing class seems to be teachers' remarks and suggestions. In a traditional class, students have to wait until the next class to get their papers back. In contrast, through Google Classroom, teachers can return students' writing immediately after finishing evaluating it.

Thirdly, the interactions on Google Classroom should not be restricted to teachers and students. The most common reason students gave for not interacting much with their classmates was being busy, and the other was not knowing their classmates well. However, if students do not work individually but in pairs or groups right at the beginning, there will be more interactions among them, and hence, collaborative learning will be promoted. Thus, teachers should assign students in groups, and encourage peer review or peer edit on Google Classroom. These collaborative activities promise to bring many benefits to students learning and save time and effort for teachers in grading phase.

Finally, there are still other features of Google Classroom that teachers should make use of. They can invite other teachers to conduct co-teaching. This approach may be very rewarding if they can collaborate well with each other, and it suits the physical classes run by two or three teachers. Furthermore, teachers should diversify the materials shared on Google Classroom, for example, they can upload videos and pictures, not just word and pdf documents.

Implications for students

Firstly, being born and living in the era of technology is both an opportunity and a challenge for students. The availability and accessibility of the Internet and various technological devices only bring advantages if students use them critically. Instead of wasting time surfing the Internet or playing online games, learners should make use of technology to serve their language learning, especially when it is free like Google Classroom.

Furthermore, students' autonomy still plays an indispensable role in the effects of Google Classroom, or any other internet-based classes. Teachers only empower students by giving general guidelines, providing links to materials, and setting the assignments. It is the students' choice to download and study those materials, to invest time and effort in writing those assignments or not. While Google Classroom is a contributing factor, students' autonomy is a decisive one that determines the outcomes of their learning.

Lastly, students should change their mindset about learning. Not only are teachers those who give support, classmates are also potential facilitators. Students should feel free to create posts when they have questions or useful materials, and the whole class can join to discuss and get the links. Furthermore, students can make use of peer review by sharing their writing to classmates. In this research, students are not from the same major and are not close to each other, but in other contexts where students know each other well, peer review and peer edit are more feasible.

Implications for future research

<http://www.gentefl.org/gen-tefl-journal.html>

Google Classroom is a relatively new technology in Vietnam, and there is not much research into its applications in language teaching and learning. This research, therefore, lays a foundation for further investigations into this field.

There still exist certain limits in this research, from the small sample size, the lack of a pre-test and the short duration of experiments. These factors may create chances for uncontrollable variables and other possible threats to the research validity. Thus, future research can be conducted with a bigger quantity of samples. A pre-test is also necessary to ensure the equivalence of control group and experimental group.

Finally, future research can also look into the effects of Google Classroom on not just university students, but a wider range of learners. For example, if those future studies prove that the employment of Google Classroom works for junior and high school students, they will substantially contribute to enhancing writing skills from an earlier age.

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Strategies for 21st Century Learning Mindsets – Best Practices from the Classroom and Connect2Learn.education Platform

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Abstract: Learning the English language has become widespread, but in many schools it is still taught in traditional ways, not sufficient enough for the needs of workers in the 21st century global economy. Thus, enhancement of English language instruction with strategies for learning in general is essential in order to facilitate acquisition of lifelong learning skills as well as effective assimilation of skills and competencies essential for success in life. To ensure global, national, and personal success of citizens, education systems worldwide need to provide students with systematic practice opportunities of skills and competencies such as creative and collaborative problem solving, persuasion, adaptability and time management, and further facilitate English language learning for communication and intercultural understanding in order to connect societies across barriers and cultures. This paper outlines several practical strategies for building learning power and growth mindsets for learning, applicable in school-based face-to-face English language learning classes as well as blended learning environments or entirely online learning courses.

Introduction – the Purpose of Learning English

Teaching English as a Foreign Language is changing, more often than not including technological innovations. (Chong, 2016). Yet “only the innovations that come with solid teaching practices will stand the test of time.” (Chong, 2018). The myriad activities for the classroom vary depending on the language teacher, course, school, student, age, language level, and a multitude of other factors. The effort exerted by the teacher – beyond the obvious classroom presence – can also take on diverse forms: from preparing original exercises for practice to searching for state-of-the-art ready-made handouts available online; from designing interactive role play to marking vocabulary tests. Methodologies vary. A vast assortment of educational websites beckons to work online through blended learning. Numerous startups provide additional tools for learning, with apps ranging from vocabulary acquisition and sentence building to listening comprehension and reading support. Learning a language, especially English, seems to have become widespread worldwide and gone digital.

This digital world of the 21st century has brought increased connectivity. Thus, access to language learning seems relatively easier. In many countries children and young adults learn English from kindergarten or elementary school. Such young beginners often learn vocabulary and grammar structures as naturally as they can be taught, through language immersion courses, interactive play time, and multimedia. Older beginners encounter more traditional methods through various language courses offered outside regular school hours, while at school, with large numbers of students per class, language learning can sometimes take a long time (if school is the only source of learning English) and turn into a tedious, uninspiring task. Students in many countries finish high school with a basic knowledge of the

language despite years of instruction, and most of their knowledge is passive rather than active (EF English Proficiency Index, 2019). In many cases, language learning is pursued for a superficial, ephemeral goal: potential future traveling, comprehension of songs, movies or TV shows, and less often to improve employment opportunities or to better understand other cultures.

So how can this trend be altered? How can language instruction reach beyond merely boosting vocabulary range and providing practice of correct grammatical structures in artificially staged, simulated role-play within a classroom? Essential is the enhancement of English language learning with strategies for learning in general: for lifelong learning. How can this be achieved?

Hence this exploration to answer the question: how can English language instruction reach beyond the walls of the school or the course to provide a sophisticated purpose: to empower all students with 21st century competencies and skills essential for greater success in life?

Learning in the 21st Century

Skills and Competencies

In order to achieve success in life, taken broadly, student learning in the 21st century needs to focus on competencies and transferable skills rather than facts and knowledge (Care et al, 2018). Memorization of procedures, lists of vocabulary, or regurgitation of facts accessible with a number of clicks are not enough anymore. Assuming that education overall aims to produce educated workers and competently engaged members of society, students need to acquire a conceptual understanding of concepts, for starters, and then develop the ability to work with them to create new knowledge, products, ideas or theories (OECD, EDUCERI21st, 2019). Design of lessons, units, or courses needs to incorporate pedagogy that is student-centred and team-based, such as project-based, inquiry-based and problem-based learning experiences (Oliver, 2001).

In addition, in order to respond to a world of rapid change, an ever-expanding knowledge base, as well as interactions between a plethora of people in multifarious circumstances (personal and/or professional), students must be able to critically evaluate what they read – online and off – and be able to express themselves clearly in spoken or written form of a language (Milligan & Wood, 2010), in this case, English.

Therefore, what specific competencies and skills do students need immediately? World Economic Forum cites a recent analysis from networking site LinkedIn, which reveals that “2019’s employers are looking for a combination of both hard and soft skills, with creativity topping the list of desired attributes.” The remaining top five competencies are persuasion, collaboration, adaptability and time management (Charlton, 2019).

In January 2016, Alex Gray in his article “The 10 skills you need to thrive in the Fourth Industrial Revolution” cites the Future Jobs Report, listing skills essential for 2020 (Gray, 2016):

Top 10 skills

in 2020

1. Complex Problem Solving
2. Critical Thinking
3. Creativity
4. People Management
5. Coordinating with Others
6. Emotional Intelligence
7. Judgment and Decision Making
8. Service Orientation
9. Negotiation
10. Cognitive Flexibility

in 2015

1. Complex Problem Solving
2. Coordinating with Others
3. People Management
4. Critical Thinking
5. Negotiation
6. Quality Control
7. Service Orientation
8. Judgment and Decision Making
9. Active Listening
10. Creativity



Source: Future of Jobs Report, World Economic Forum

Figure 1: Future of Jobs Report, World Economic Forum, 2016

In the four years between January 2016 and 2019, the top five competencies on the skills list have changed:

from

to

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. Complex Problem Solving | 1. Creativity (up from 3 rd) |
| 2. Critical Thinking | 2. Persuasion (previously 9 th Negotiation) |
| 3. Creativity | 3. Collaboration (previously 5 th Coordinating with Others) |
| 4. People Management | 4. Adaptability |
| 5. Coordinating with Others | 5. Time Management |

The remaining competencies listed in the January 2016 Future of Jobs Report, should not be dismissed, as their importance in 21st century learning will certainly reemerge. Moreover, the five competencies listed for 2019 intrinsically include the ten generated in 2015, and none of them can be acquired without the use of a language.

In 2017, Dylan Lyons on www.babbel.com claimed that English “is by far world’s most studied language. And 20% of the world speaks it.” (Lyons, 2017). Although, World Economic Forum in 2016 put the number of speakers at 1.5 billion, with over 1 billion speakers of English as a secondary language, currently, according to www.ethnologue.com 2019 edition, over 2 billion people speak it (Breene, 2016). Regardless of the exact numbers, an upward trend in English language learning is evident, especially as technology and access to internet permeate remote corners of the world.

Ultimately then, to ensure global, national, and personal success of citizens, education systems worldwide should not only be striving to provide students with systematic practice opportunities of these competencies, especially creative and collaborative problem solving, which includes elements of critical thinking and flexibility in time management, but also to further facilitate English language learning for communication and understanding in order to connect societies across barriers and cultures.

Creative and Collaborative Problem Solving

“Creativity now is as important in education as literacy,” said Sir Ken Robinson in his 2006 TED talk entitled “Do schools kill creativity?” (Robinson, 2006) and it seems that despite over 58 million views on YouTube in over a decade not much has changed inside the average public-school classroom. Educators are still struggling to provide creativity, which is crucial in the learning process.

Creativity, critical thinking and communication are essential to keep students motivated. Canada’s Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council published a report in 2016 that focuses on “developing the capacity and motivation to create, understand, interpret and communicate knowledge” so that citizens can thrive in an evolving society and labor market. The report states that “Central to today’s teaching and learning are inquiry-based and student-centered approaches and techniques shaped by networks, collaboration, technology and design.” (SSHRC, 2016).

Inquiry-based learning provides a number of benefits for learning. Inquiry promotes questioning skills that foster curiosity and increase engagement. (MacKenzie, 2017) Motivation to learn and to persevere when obstacles are encountered is increased as students pursue solutions to problems in topics about which they feel passionate. (Figure 2)

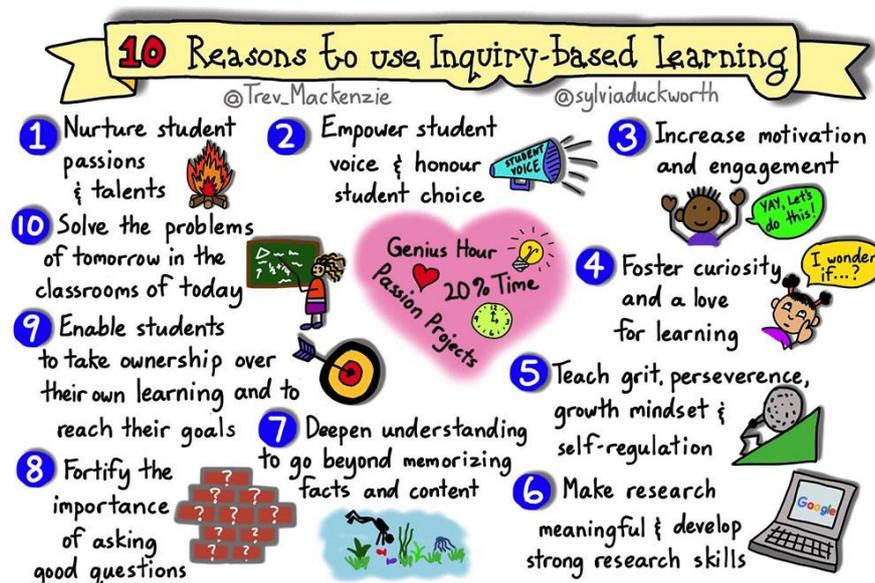


Figure 2. Trevor Mackenzie, 10 reasons to use inquiry in your classroom.

However, in order to develop inquiry mindsets, a paradigm shift needs to occur. The center of teaching and learning needs to shift from teacher to student.

The student-centered approach to teaching and learning requires the teacher to pivot their focus from self to student, empowering the students with choices and decisions to make, providing them with voice, and acknowledging their expertise in some areas. (MacKenzie, 2019) (Figure 3)

In other words, the teacher becomes the designer of the learning experience and facilitator of the learning. The student becomes responsible for the learning, with a heightened sense of accountability in well-designed, collaborative learning situations.

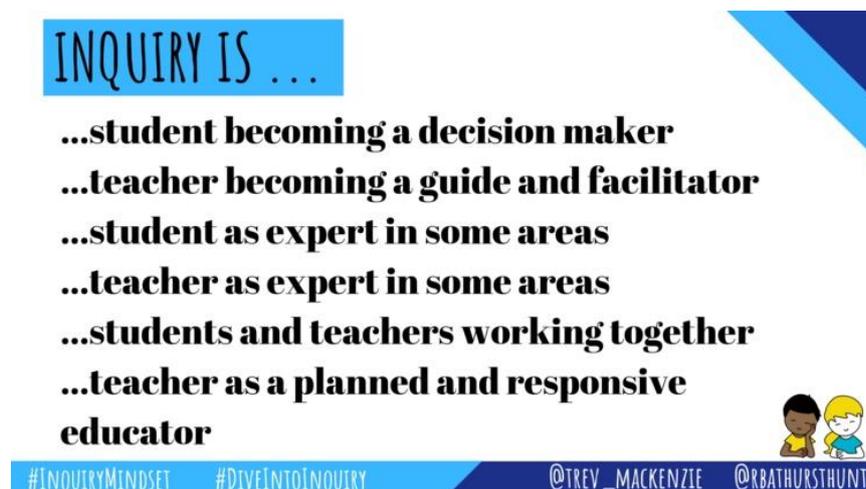


Figure 3. Trevor Mackenzie, Inquiry is....

Recently, the importance of collaborating in a team (2+ members) has been recognized, naming collaboration as an important educational outcome in its own right, not just a way to garner, develop, or evaluate knowledge (this is done through student engagement and practice) (Kuhn, 2015; Lai, 2011). Collaboration has also been described as a skill encouraging a number of learning mechanisms, such as induction, deduction, and associative learning (Dillenbourg, 1999; Hunter, 2006). Furthermore, evidence exists that students working in collaborative teams achieve higher levels of comprehension and retain knowledge longer than students who study alone (Johnson & Johnson, 1986). This is because in a collaborative learning situation, learners have the opportunity to present, discuss, and defend their ideas with peers; exchange beliefs and opinions; and question conceptual frameworks.

Most importantly, in collaborative work on problem-solving tasks, the learners are actively engaged over prolonged periods of time (Srinivas, 2011), while shared learning provides learners with an opportunity to be responsible for their own learning, and subsequently become critical thinkers (Totten, 1991).

As groups of learners work together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product, they are challenged both socially and emotionally through listening to different perspectives, articulating and defending their points of view. As a result, they create their own unique conceptual frameworks and not rely solely on an expert's (for example the teacher's) or a text's/textbook's framework (Laal & Laal, Kermanshahi, 2012). Hari Srinivas lists 44 benefits of collaborative learning, too numerous to mention here in entirety (Srinivas, 2011).

Language learning, therefore, also needs to adopt creative inquiry-based and student-centered approaches in order to simultaneously develop both language and communication competencies as well as the aforementioned "soft skills" essential for achieving success in the 21st century.

Intercultural Understanding

Proficiency in another language, English in this case, enables interaction with people from other cultures in a variety of contexts. But how effective and appropriate is that interaction? It is not enough to learn a language; a student also needs to garner a cultural awareness and knowledge. Effective interaction and communication require interpersonal skills such as empathy, open-mindedness, adaptability and flexibility. Often the art of persuasion, negotiation and conflict resolution are required (Milligan & Wood, 2010).

Milligan and Wood advocate for “a conceptual approach to teaching that responds to a world of rapid change, growing global interactions, and expanding knowledge bases.” Walton defines intercultural understanding as “an on-going critically reflexive process involving the development of skills, attitudes and knowledge, necessary for interacting with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. It involves having cognitive, meta-cognitive and emotional capabilities, as well as critical cultural awareness and self-awareness when interacting across cultural groups.” (Walton et al, 2013). This intercultural understanding (ICU), links closely to acceptance of cultural diversity, includes anti-racism, and leads to effective cross-cultural conflict resolution (Paradies et al., 2009). In addition, ICU challenges an ethnocentric view of the world through critical cross-cultural awareness (Bennett, 1993).

Therefore, to include promotion of intercultural understanding, language learning needs to shift from teacher-centered instruction aimed at proficiency and mastery of spelling, vocabulary and grammar structures to student-centered inquiry-based creative problem-solving activities, during which language proficiency develops naturally with the built-in need to communicate with others efficiently and effectively. In addition, access to “others” for interacting “across cultural groups” is essential.

Mindsets for Learning

Classroom teachers facing anywhere between 20 and 40 students in a room aim to achieve a central goal: to deliver the content as efficiently and effectively as possible so that the final assessment, the final exam, proves that students have learned the content. However, sometimes it is forgotten that teachers are not the ones making the most important instructional decision (to study), the students are (Stiggins, Arter, Chappuis, & Chappuis, 2004). When students enter the classroom, regardless of age, with a mind already convinced that “I’m useless with crayons,” or “My writing is terrible,” or “I can’t learn math,” or “I’m no good in languages,” they often automatically shut down to further learning and disengage. When the goal of the language learning instruction is to master content and pass an exam, students memorize, regurgitate on a test, and forget. This joyless learning, often devoid of engagement and creativity, does not contribute to development of a mindset for lifelong learning.

Nevertheless, as professor Carol Dweck illustrates in her book *Mindset. The New Psychology of Success*, this “fixed” mindset can be changed. Professor Dweck explains the “fixed mindset” as a belief that a person’s qualities – intelligence, personality, moral character, or abilities – are fixed from the start and unchangeable. On the other hand, a “growth mindset” is a belief that all of those qualities are just the starting point for development (Dweck, 2007). Sustained and systematic training to focus on growth and development allows for greater success because “a person’s true potential is unknown (and unknowable); that it’s impossible to foresee what can be accomplished with years of passion, toil, and training.” (Dweck, 2007, 7).

In order to facilitate such a change from “fixed” to “growth” mindset in a school and classroom environment, several criteria must be met:

1. An atmosphere of trust and safety must be established to allow for risk-taking, inevitable ridicule-free failures, and constructive critique (Figure 2).
2. Instructional tasks must be designed to accommodate varied learning styles and abilities to ensure possibility of improvement and growth at any level and any step of the task.
3. Greater focus must be placed on developing competencies and skills through visible learning and collaborative learning strategies, empowering students with choice and reflective voice.
4. Language used by both teacher and student to describe the learning process must change, including a consistent use of “yet” to promote belief that further development is possible with continued training. (Figure 4 and 5.)

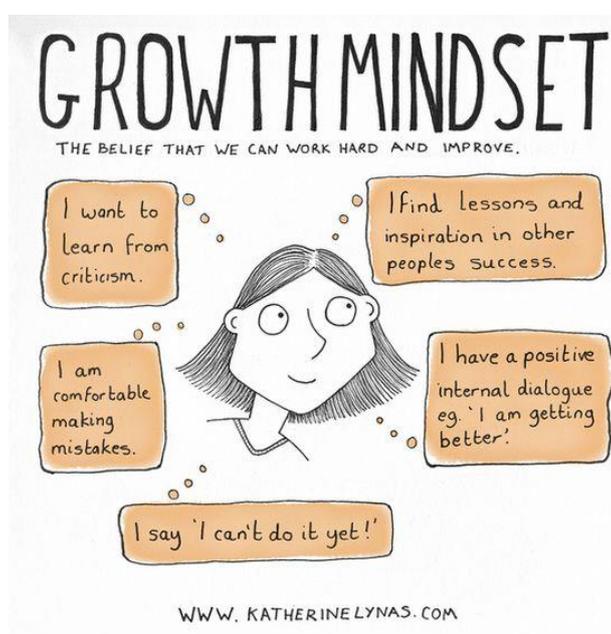


Figure 4. Katherine Lynas, Growth Mindset.

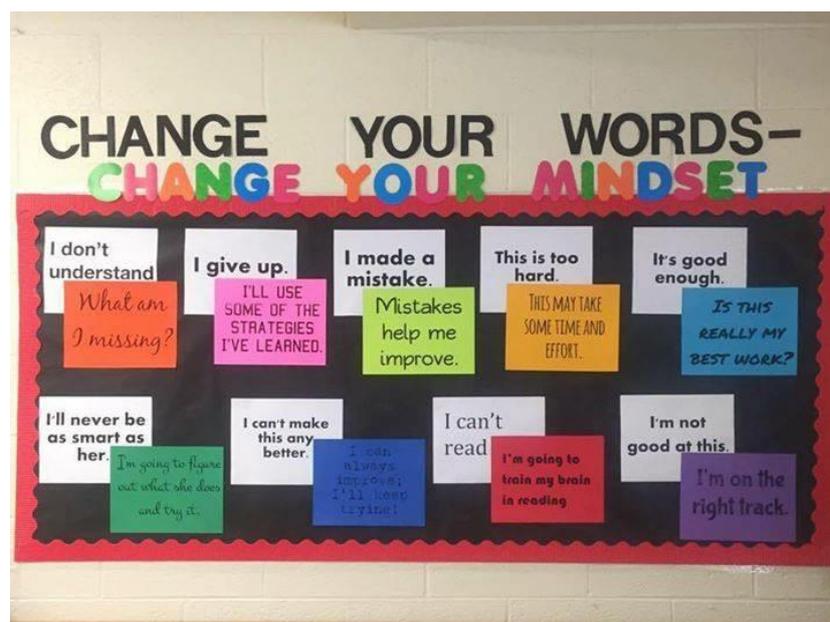


Figure 5. James Anderson, *Change Your Words – Change Your Mindset*.

In language classrooms set up to promote development or nurturing of “growth mindsets”, students do not mind making mistakes, so common yet too often perceived as debilitatingly embarrassing, because mistakes are evidence that the work is hard enough to make them smarter. This is when they understand that unchallenging tasks do not promote further advancement in their knowledge (William, 2013). Student athletes know that to improve in their chosen sport, they must systematically and continuously practice what they cannot yet do, and push further during each and every practice session, even a tiny amount: millisecond or centimeter, lap or kilogram, whatever their measure is. And in the face of failure, they must get up, spit on a scraped knee, and try again and again.

Students in the classrooms need to understand this “growth mindset” concept as well. Especially in language learning, where it allows students to believe that they can not only memorize 20 new words for a quiz but also use them effectively, genuinely improve their communication skills and language proficiency to build learning power for life.

Clearly, the process of learning anything, including the English language, encompasses a complex web of essential elements in order to achieve success. Most children enroll in the public education system provided by their governments. In the average public school worldwide, the language class is composed of local students (therefore monolingual and monocultural). To provide uniformity for examinations, the curriculum is most often sequentially set by the Ministry of Education or a local education administration. Mastery goals are set uniform by age. The language syllabus still mostly concentrates on proficiency in specific grammar structures, syntax, and vocabulary, while students sometimes wonder what is the purpose of this lesson. Due to time constraints and prescribed amounts of “content to cover” within the lesson or year, learning is often limited to passive contemplation of texts, both written and oral/visual, rather than the practice of receptive and productive language skills for an authentic purpose.

And what about 21st century skills and competencies? Students whose mindsets tend to fixate on present limitations in their language proficiency, in an atmosphere of fervent competition for points, grades, stars, “likes” or another external reward system, disengage. Students with low self-esteem

become targets for ridicule or bullying. The vulnerable disconnect from learning and spiral towards a feeling of permanent failure that spreads to other areas of their life; the few intrinsically high achievers, regardless of external stimuli, thrive. Between these extremes jostles for position the vast majority, struggling to keep up with the increasing demand for ephemeral “ideal, perfect, the best.” And they wonder, even fear how they will fare in a few years when they enter the ever-changing and increasingly internationalized and digitized job market, where English language is a staple.

Hence the question again: how can English language instruction reach beyond the walls of the school or the course and empower all students with competencies and skills essential for greater success in life?

The answer lies in a set of strategies for 21st century learning. Strategies to empower students with skills and competencies, unleashed creativity and collaborative problem-solving, and intercultural understanding essential for life in a multicultural world. Strategies to also equip students with learning power for lifelong learning.

Strategies for 21st Century Learning

Competencies and “Soft” Skills

The competition in the 21st century depends on the quality of the nation’s population (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). As mentioned before, the top five “soft” skills desired in new workers by their employees are creativity, persuasion, collaboration, adaptability and time management.

To develop their creativity in school, students need space and time as well as opportunities to delve into various themes and topics, with the assistance of a skilled educator, whose chief role is to design the learning experiences and facilitate the problem-solving and learning process.

Such practice opportunities are available through a variety of project-based and inquiry-based activities, either designed by creative teachers or available online on a number of educational sites. One strategic online learning site is Connect2Learn.education.

Case Study

Connect2Learn.education (www.connect2learn.education) currently provides creative thematic units based on the syllabus of the IB English B, newly released in 2018 for first examinations in 2020. Each collaborative unit integrates a wide variety of both receptive and productive skills, as well as soft skills needed by students in today’s world: teamwork, collaboration, astute assessment of responses, thoughtful language of opinion, agreement and disagreement. Each unit includes critical analysis of texts and insightful research, allowing student creativity to thrive. Each skill is practiced in conjunction with another to provide an overall authentic experience that enhances intercultural understanding and builds a growth mindset through perseverance and grit.

For example, the *Human Ingenuity - Innovation in Technology* unit includes six online lessons, each divided into three sections, with an additional optional extension activity. Tasks involve the practice of reading, speaking, listening and writing skills. Students make choices and decisions as they proceed through the tasks, self-regulating their time and engagement, with classroom teacher providing guidance and feedback. Reading, integral to the unit, requires students to critically analyze provided texts, self-researched texts, and texts produced by themselves and their peers. Listening skills are honed

during class discussions of texts in order to thoughtfully reply to peer recordings. Speaking is demonstrated through recorded introductions and replies to peer opinions. Further refinement occurs while deliberating on the collaborative research task and through peer feedback. From scripts for introductions to opinion recordings, from forum discussion to collaborative product creation, and ultimately the project feedback at the end, students express themselves in writing through each step of the process.

The learning units proposed by Connect2Learn.education encompass numerous strategies for 21st century learning. The tasks are student-centered, with many opportunities to make choices, execute decisions, and reflect upon their effects with the teacher's support and feedback.

The themes and topics, required by the IB English B course syllabus, illustrate that prescribed content can be delivered through inquiry-based and project-based activities that unleash student creativity and allow for collaborative teamwork. It is the teacher's role as facilitator of instruction to establish and maintain an atmosphere of trust and safety, so that English language learners can comfortably engage in risk-free, ridicule-free development of their communication skills and constructively critique each other's work.

Collaboration for Improvement of Communication and Persuasion Skills

A lot has been written on peer tutoring and collaborative learning, especially in English language arts. The term "collaborative learning" refers to an instruction method in which learners at various performance levels work together in small groups toward a common goal. Responsibility for one's own learning and that of the group members' rests on the learner. In this way, the success of one learner helps other students attain success as well (Srinivas, 2011).

Having conducted informal observation of high school students in her classes over three decades of teaching English as a Second or Additional Language and various Language Arts courses, the researcher can verify that class peers can be very effective assessors of one another's work, especially when the focus of the collaboration is either on a common goal or on improvement rather than grading.

Establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of trust and safety is crucial for effective language learning and risk-free, ridicule-free engagement to hone receptive and productive communication skills. Students must be able to listen to peers speak, deliver a talk or speech, or engage in a conversation with confidence and trust that an error will be perceived as a lesson to learn, not as source of shame or fodder for bullying.

One effective strategy to establish an atmosphere of trust is a student-generated list of beliefs and values for the classroom (Figure 6). Focusing on the positive and minimizing the list of "don'ts" ensures greater buy-in. Posting the list on the classroom wall allows misdemeanors to be quickly acknowledged and behavior corrected through apology, restitution measures, or another type of instant intervention.

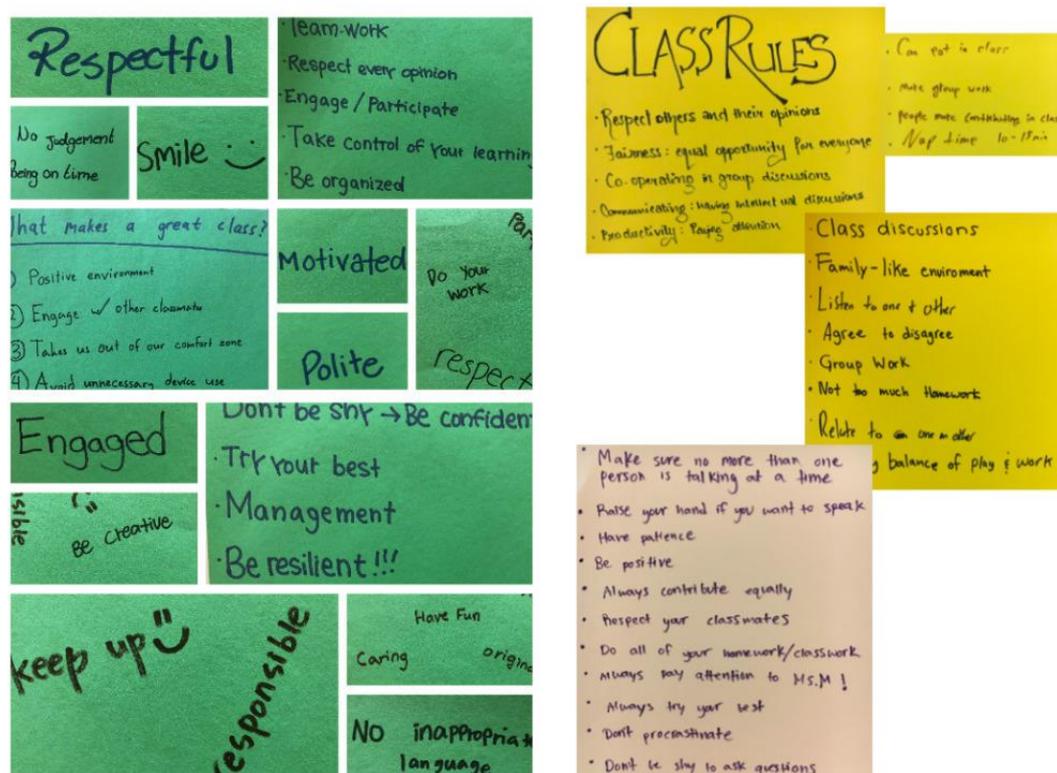


Figure 6. Student-generated class rules (beliefs and values)

Classes engaging in collaborative work through the Connect2Learn.education platform are provided with a framework of beliefs and values established by the IB Learner Profile, which includes traits such as “caring” and “principled.” Participating teachers are encouraged to engender and extend the atmosphere of trust and safety to the online collaboration with students outside the classroom walls to support successful teamwork.

Teamwork is defined by Scarnati (2001, 5) “as a cooperative process that allows ordinary people to achieve extraordinary results.” A study on successful teamwork conducted by Tarricone and Luca (2002) at university level reveals that key attributes need to be carefully considered by both instructors and students when teamwork activities are proposed. These attributes include commitment to team success, interdependence, interpersonal skills, open communication and positive feedback, appropriate team composition, and commitment to team processes (leadership and accountability). High school students are developmentally still constructing many of these attributes; teamwork and development of collaborative skills must be learned.

Case Study

Collaborative learning requires practice. Since “collaborative learning” means learners at various performance levels work together in small groups and are responsible for one another's learning as well as their own, it is important to carefully assemble the teams and rotate the students throughout the length of the course (month, semester or year), taking notes on individual performance and engagement within the groups, language proficiency, roles played and levels of responsibility to exert utmost effort.

The researcher has implemented this collaborative learning strategy and informally observed its beneficial effects over the course of each school year since the 1990's. In the first weeks I observe student behavior and collect the first written task, "letter to the teacher," in which students answer a list of questions, including "how do you feel about group work, what is your experience in teams." Based on gathered information, teams are composed, first assembling groups with at least one self-proclaimed leader and one who prefers individual work over a group. For subsequent assignments students change seats to eventually closely interact with every member of the class. After every collaborative task, students write reflections, either informal in their journal notebook, using checklists with questions, or – since the dawn of the internet – via Google forms.

The careful team composition and member rotation allows students to hone adaptability skills, while frequent opportunities to reflect and engage in a written or oral conversation with the teacher enhance their understanding of effective cooperation to reach a common goal or completion of a task or project (See Figure 7a and 7b). Benefits of this collaborative work and reflection were verified through a recent Facebook Messenger conversation by Rahul Vasandani, my former 9th grade student in 2010-2011 and author of reflection in Figure 7b: "Having the opportunity to work collaboratively with others, to discuss and explore these themes with others, has helped hone my leadership skills in many life activities: sport, family and business." (Vasandani, 2019)

Group/pair work reflection Semester Two

| A group works effectively when: | Agree/Disagree | How do I fare? Do I do this? Comment |
|---|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| There is a good leader to organize group members | Agree | Always is one Not "chosen" |
| The work is distributed equally | Agree | Most of the time |
| Everyone contributes to the best of his/her ability | Agree | I am not sure about everyone |
| Everyone collaborates and communicates | Agree | Mostly yes |
| Everyone brings his/her contribution on time | Agree | I have, but not everyone |
| A group doesn't work effectively when: | | |
| The leader is assumed/expected to do most of the work | Agree | They give themselves more. |
| All the crucial work is "dumped" on one person | Agree | Depending on people in group |
| Group members do not communicate (sms, email, meet) | Disagree | People do, or I do. |
| Contribution is late or not completed | Disagree | I've never. |
| Time is wasted by procrastination, distraction | Disagree | NOPE. |
| Group members don't care about effect | Disagree | I care about it but not everyone does |

CONCLUSION: Am I a valuable team member? YES / NO / SOMETIMES
 Would people WANT to work with me if they had freedom to choose their groups/pairs YES / NO
 What can I improve? Trusting people with their work But if they don't do it then it shouldn't reflect badly on me.

It's hard working in a group when you have people that don't care about their work in your group. And since you want to get a good grade you never know if you should give yourself double the work or let yourself & your "partner" get in trouble.

I see your point - this is why we're reflecting so much, in the effort that maybe those who don't care start caring and change their ways :)

Figure 7a – Group/pair work reflection Semester 2

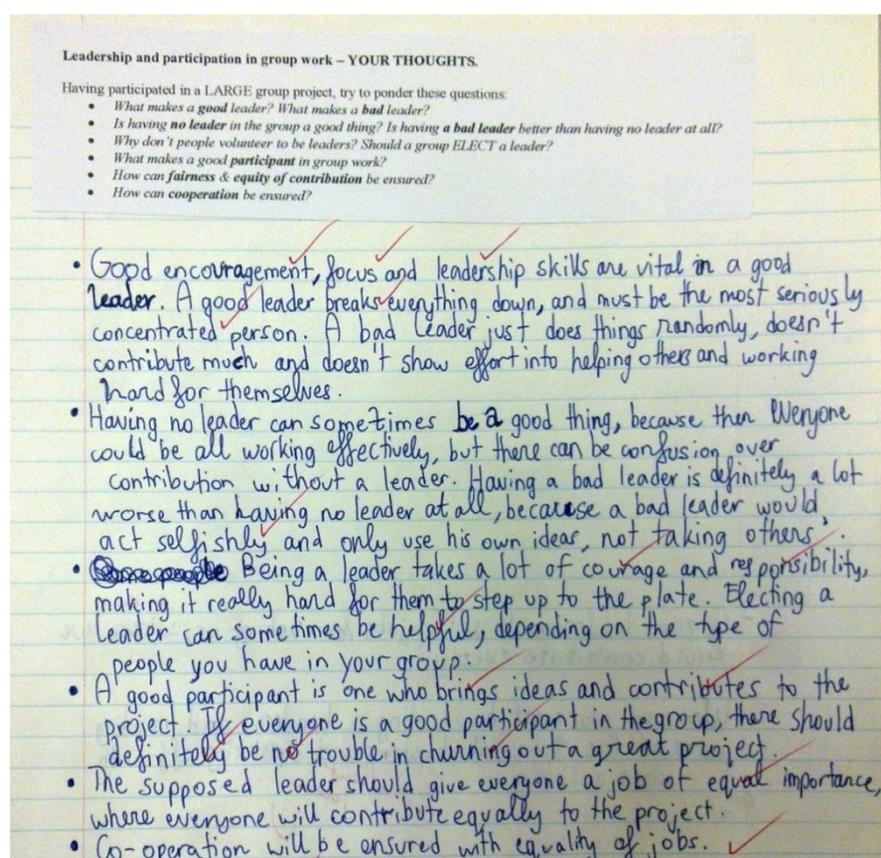


Figure 7b – Leadership and participation in group work – your thoughts

Intercultural and multinational teams working collaboratively on tasks provided by the Connect2Learn.education platform rely on participating teachers to encourage the team members to sustain high engagement in the collaborative process in an atmosphere of trust and safety. Especially important here is the precision of communication skills – negotiation or persuasion – which may falter due to the use of asynchronous digital tools. Imprecision in English language use may lead, for example, to miscommunication of vocabulary or emoticons, or to misuse of expressions and therefore breakdown of mutual understanding. Asynchronous nature of digital educational tools for communication develops many 21st century skills, for example adaptability to another person's time zone or cultural framework. This may challenge efficient time management and impact task completion by the team. It is therefore crucial, as in face-to-face situations, for the participating teacher to engage in communication with the students and the other teachers in the collaborative session, and together with the involved students strive to resolve the issues, linguistic or cultural.

Communication includes the ability to negotiate and persuade, and these skills are honed through collaborative work on multifarious inquiry-based and project-based tasks. In order to ensure support of further improvement and growth, students must be taught a set of strategies to provide encouraging, constructive feedback, and frequently practice their use.

Providing feedback, assessing or commenting peer work requires skillful use of specific language structures. High school students in my classes use a prepared list; many such lists are readily available online by searching for a "list of English expressions for agreement or disagreement." Feedback success arrives with systematic use and purposeful application of these expressions.

One beneficial and successful strategy is the “2+1” method the researcher has implemented to build a mindset for continuous learning through provided feedback. Commenting on a peer’s work, the student is required to focus on two positive aspects or observations made, and suggest one area for improvement. To provide support and encourage further practice for refinement, students are asked to avoid using “don’t” or “must.” Students gather peer feedback for the communication task and write a self-reflection with a plan for further improvement of their performance. This strategy can be applied to peer evaluate both oral and written tasks, collaborative or individual. (Figure 8 a, b, c)

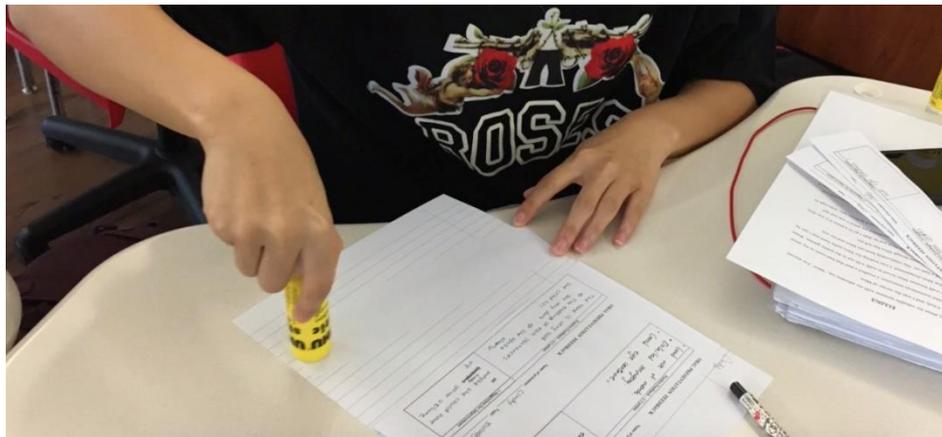


Figure 8a. Gathering peer feedback on an oral presentation.

Cindy

| ORAL PRESENTATION FEEDBACK | |
|--|--|
| Positive Feedback – 2-3 points | 1 Suggestion for Improvement |
| Name of presenter <u>Cindy</u> Topic _____ • Good use of words. • Detailed imagery. • Good eye contact. | Voice was not loud enough. ✓ |
| Name of presenter <u>Cindy</u> Topic <u>Eulogy</u> The tone is very sad. ↳ The endings of each sentences are very dark. ↳ She spoke slowly she cried xixi | maybe she could have made your volume up. ✓ |
| Name of presenter <u>Cindy</u> Topic _____ • Good tone • Facing the audience | NONE |
| Name of presenter <u>Cindy</u> Topic _____ read a lot of good words good acting. | more eye contacts? |
| Name of presenter <u>Cindy</u> Topic _____ 1. As I closed my eyes and listened her, it actually felt that I'm in funeral 2. Serious 3. literary devices | FEEDBACK ✓ |

Figure 8b. Peer feedback – focus on at least two positive aspects and one suggestion for improvement.

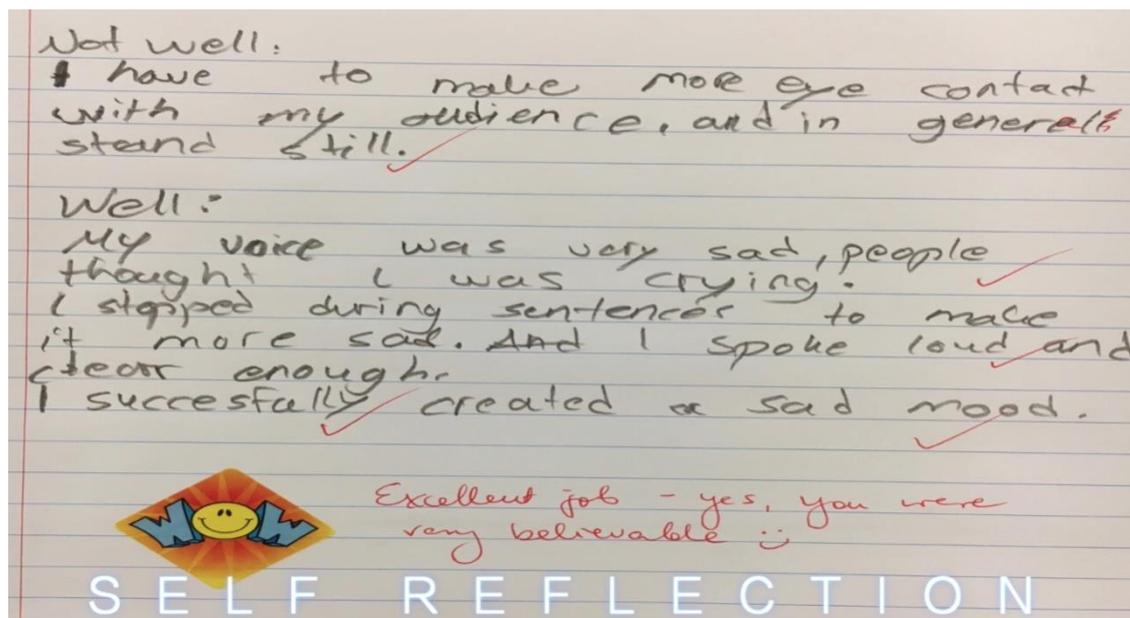


Figure 8c. Self-reflection on gathered and analyzed peer feedback.

The same “2+1” feedback strategy can be successfully applied to online feedback and commenting on student blog posts, or uploaded oral presentations, or multimedia projects. It does take some practice and sustained effort to reduce or eliminate the tendency to criticize with negative comments, focusing on the positive aspects and adding a suggestion for improvement. (Figure 9a and 9b).

| File information | File size | Options |
|-------------------|-----------|----------|
| Original MP4 File | 174.1 MB | Download |
| MP4 File | 12.1 MB | Download |

> Add to collection > Remove from collection > E-mail
 > Link > Edit > Delete > Log > Copy Embed
 > Report this resource > Embed Code (Moodle, etc)
 > Embed URL (Google Sites) > Share Link

> Add comment

Comments

Jisoo: I thought that you were very clear with what you were explaining and you had lots of gestures which helped us to understand better. Maybe you can improve on speaking more slowly because you were a bit fast when you were speaking. I think your presentation was really creative :D

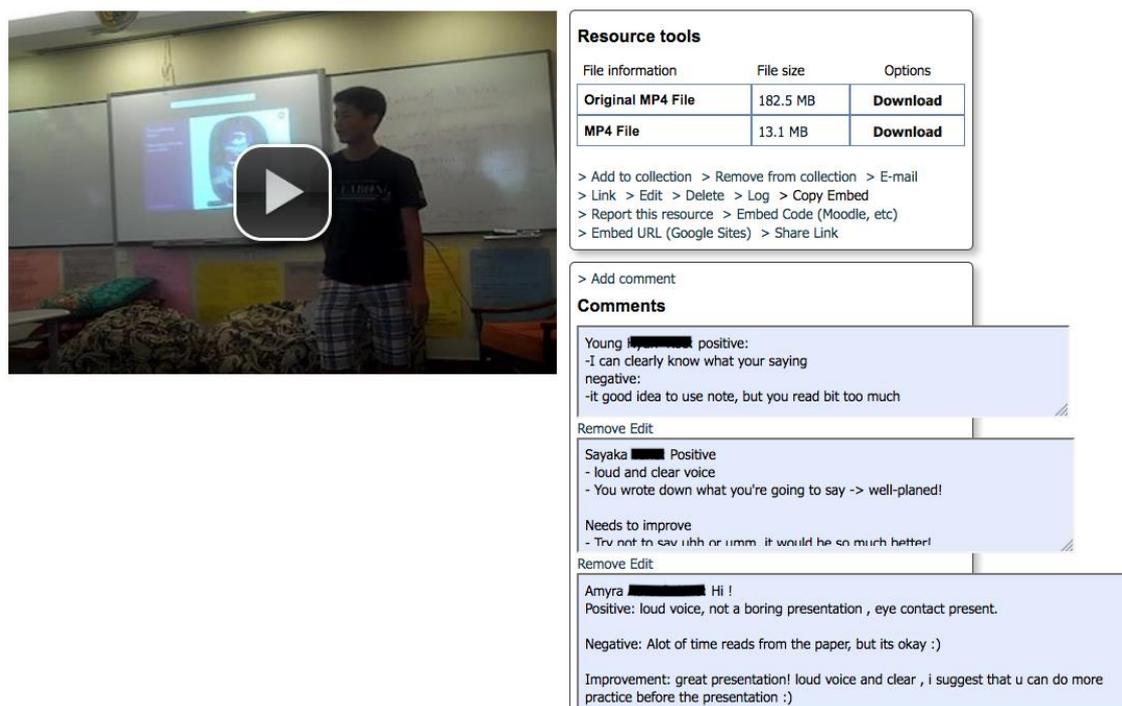
Remove Edit

Miku: Clear and nice voice!! and you have pretty nice eye contact!! i think you need to stop saying "ammm". and speak slower.

Remove Edit

Min: You have clear and loud voice, and the summary was good :) But probably it might be better if you try to speak slower and it will be very good.:D

Figure 9a. First try at positive feedback. Students view positive comments in contrast to negative, and include the negative in their feedback.



Resource tools

| File information | File size | Options |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Original MP4 File | 182.5 MB | Download |
| MP4 File | 13.1 MB | Download |

> Add to collection > Remove from collection > E-mail
> Link > Edit > Delete > Log > Copy Embed
> Report this resource > Embed Code (Moodle, etc)
> Embed URL (Google Sites) > Share Link

> Add comment

Comments

Young [redacted] positive:
-I can clearly know what your saying
negative:
-it good idea to use note, but you read bit too much

Remove Edit

Sayaka [redacted] Positive
- loud and clear voice
- You wrote down what you're going to say -> well-planned!

Needs to improve
- Try not to say uhh or umm. it would be so much better!

Remove Edit

Amyra [redacted] Hi !
Positive: loud voice, not a boring presentation , eye contact present.
Negative: Alot of time reads from the paper, but its okay :)
Improvement: great presentation! loud voice and clear , i suggest that u can do more practice before the presentation :)

Figure 9b. After class discussion on use of “plussing” technique, greater use of positive feedback and suggestions for improvement.

This positive feedback strategy, similar to Pixar’s “plussing” technique of feedback, whereby one is only allowed to critique an idea if one adds a constructive suggestion, using language structures such as “what if...” or “yes, and...” (Gogek, 2015), has been utilized by students in the researcher’s classes for over two decades. Incidental errors in English language usage (visible in Figure 9a and b comments) are corrected by teacher’s use of the proper structures when discussing the feedback and its impact on the student’s willingness to review their errors in the performance and try again. Repeated practice of the task as a result of a positively charged mindset built on received supportive encouragement, as well as heightened student engagement to correct the flaws ultimately yield greater proficiency and fluency in language use.

Learning Power – Growth Mindset

Why is it important for students to provide positive feedback and suggestions for improvement? Because this is one of the strategies to help develop a growth mindset and build learning power. Both are essential for lifelong learning in the digital 21st century, in which the workplace requires inordinate amounts of flexibility, adaptability, and skillful time management.

Case Study

To help develop 21st century skills and competencies, another strategy involves reflection on past performance and analysis of the learning process. Even when English language proficiency is limited (Figure 10), the process of reflecting on team performance after each meeting allows the student to creatively use language, albeit with numerous errors, while simultaneously gaining conscious awareness of “soft” skill development, for example greater confidence in acting/public speaking despite the limited proficiency.

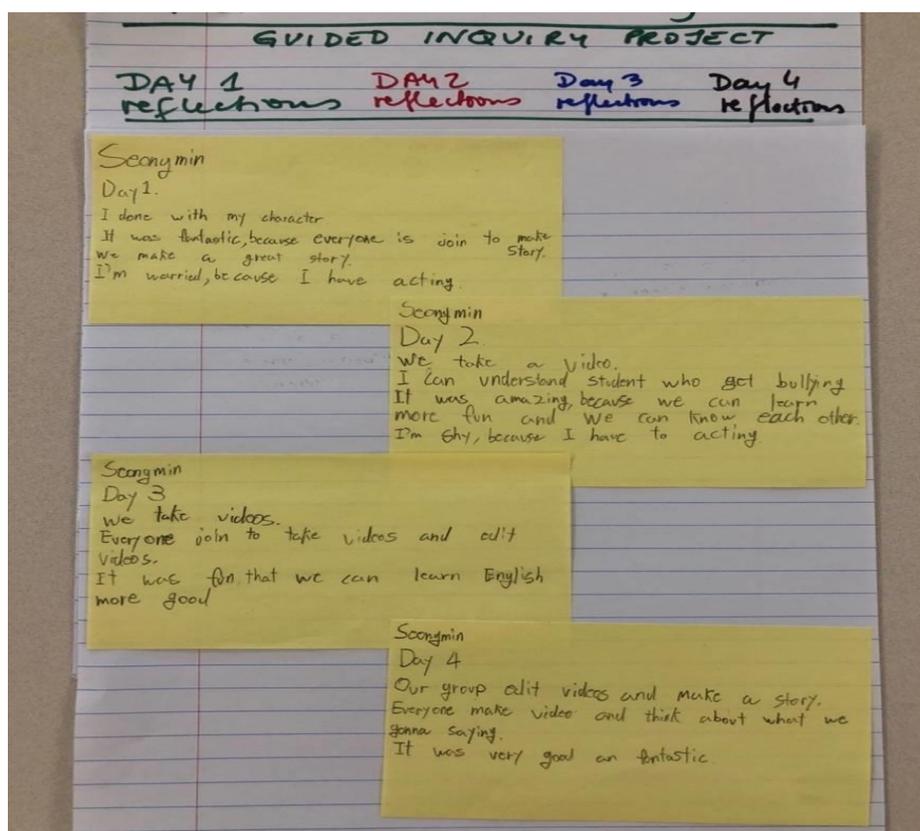


Figure 10. Four-day guided-inquiry group project reflection.

In an inquiry-based, project-based learning experience, due to the nature of the activity requiring collaboration, noise, and possible initial chaos, every student regardless of language proficiency enjoys an opportunity to actively engage in the activity. Every student is included. Every student can contribute to their utmost ability and work collaboratively to complete the task, correcting errors as they appear and are noticed by either peers or the teacher supporting the learning process.

The excitement for collaborative work, coupled with some needless worry (as the student admitted when we discussed the four reflections), is clearly palpable in the reflections (Figure 10): Day 1 “it was fantastic” because “everyone is join”; Day 2 “it was amazing”; Day 3 “it was fun”; Day 4 “it was very good and fantastic” – and noticeable is the informal contraction “gonna” that this student picked up along the four teamwork sessions.

This student’s motivation and enthusiasm for learning received a substantial boost through participation in this collaborative guided-inquiry project right at the beginning of the school year. The fact that each slip and stumble in English proficiency was met with support from both teacher and peers led to realization that “I don’t know this YET, but with practice I will get better.” This in turn triggered a sustained effort to improve over prolonged periods of time. Inevitably, the student encountered less successful days when tasks posed more problems and vocabulary acquisition or grammar structure usage proved insufficient to score well on a summative assessment, but over the year this student’s “growth” mindset resulted in heightened perseverance and grit to keep on going, yielding high grades in the end.

In subsequent collaborative tasks, this student worked with different people, adapting to various learning styles and work ethics of his peers. Each time, through reflection and self-evaluation of own performance and own contribution to the team outcomes, this student resolved to work harder and apply the lessons learned in a thought-out fashion. In fact, by the end of the year, quite unsurprisingly despite very low entry test scores, this student was scoring in the top 5% of the class on productive vocabulary usage in writing and comprehension of written and spoken text. The learning power of the growth mindset, albeit assessed only through anecdotal evidence, is authentic.

This success of collaborative engagement and building learning power can be achieved by students in any English language class worldwide, through engaging teamwork to complete thematically arranged, multifarious tasks like those provided on the Connect2Learn.education platform. Reviews on the platform include a statement from Ben Rinne, whose English class at Sekolah Bogor Raya in Bogor, Indonesia, worked collaboratively with my IB English B students in Jakarta Intercultural School: "I think that the authenticity of the types of materials being used and the skills being exercised are all integrated well with this unit. I especially appreciated the built-in differentiation for each of the tasks, where the students were allowed to create, write, and reply to the extent that they were most comfortable with, while still providing them with specific targets to achieve." (Rinne, 2019)

When language learning incorporates development of 21st century competencies and skills, the language is learned in an authentic way and enthusiastically practiced for a specific, sophisticated purpose: communication and lifelong learning for success in future life.

Intercultural Understanding for Success in the 21st Century

Without delving into intercultural and cross-cultural communication research, it suffices to say that culture, synthesized as a "set of knowledge, values, emotional heritage, behaviour and artefacts which a social group share, and which enable them to functionally adapt to their surroundings" (Aneas & Sandin, 2009), affects people in the way they interact with their environment, influencing both how they construct it and how they understand it.

Learners of a foreign language who attempt to use it within the context of the culture of that language can understand how intercultural communication reaches beyond knowledge of the language itself. It takes much more than understanding of the language – it involves understanding symbols, values and behaviours, all of which vary by culture and individuals within the culture as well. (Malik, 2019) And it is important not to stereotype behaviours typically attributed to a culture: not every Frenchman walks the streets of Paris in a chequered shirt, a beret on his head and a baguette under his arm. Nevertheless, the symbols, values and behaviours impact communication interactions, and understanding these factors is crucial in the modern era of globalization and worldwide migration.

Therefore, in the era of rapid and exponential change, intercultural understanding, broadly taken beyond mere acknowledgement of diversity, is essential for success, as the 21st century workplace may not only include workers from various countries and cultures but also exist as a remote, entirely online, virtual work environment. Students in today's high schools must therefore expand their knowledge of various cultures, and while learning English they need to interact and communicate with a wide array of peers from many nations.

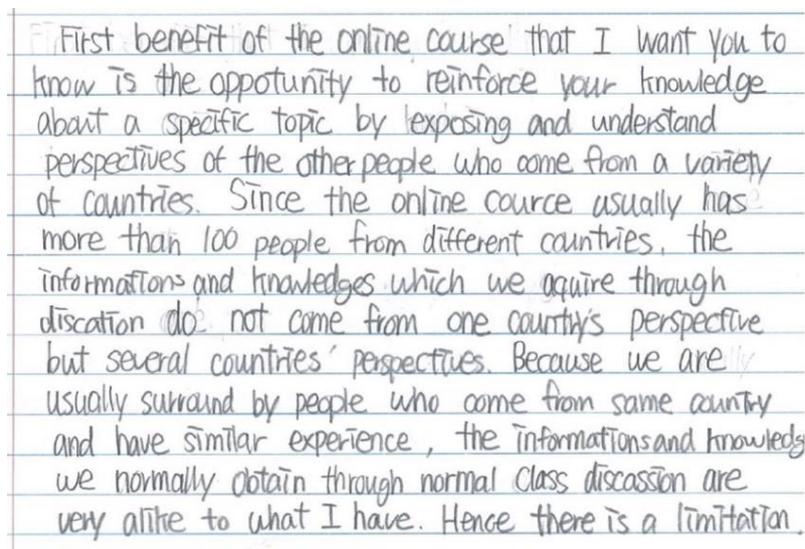
At international schools like Jakarta Intercultural School, where over 60 nationalities study together, this expansion of knowledge occurs naturally as students interact on a daily basis. But what about local high schools, where students mostly encounter their loyal friends from elementary school

and sworn enemies from the sandbox? How can they interact and communicate reaching beyond their monocultural and monolingual classroom peers?

Case Study

One strategy the researcher has found very successful is the online interaction and collaboration on unit tasks provided by Connect2Learn.education, where teenagers can validate their own knowledge and English language skills and gain a different perspective on an issue raised in the thematic unit. While collaborating on and offline on a project of their choice, students practice working in a multinational and multicultural team, learn to negotiate breakdown and distribution of tasks, manage their time, and familiarise themselves with various educational online tools they may later use for academic or personal purposes. Through this collaboration, students reach beyond mere awareness of other cultures. They gain an understanding that with respect for others, through cooperation on a task with strange peers, with negotiated compromise and with genuine empathy, they can creatively resolve challenges, solve problems, make progress in English, and feel proud of their collaborative achievements.

Students in the researcher's IB English B class (2018 graduates) took part in several collaborative 2-3-week sessions on a variety of topics ("Do Monuments Matter" and "Decision Design" on the Global Online Academy platform, and "Human Ingenuity – Innovation in Technology" on Connect2Learn.education) and upon completion of each unit reflected on their intercultural experience. They acknowledged the benefits of interaction with peers from several countries and their varied perspectives (Figure 11a), the benefits of the contrast in views and ideas (Figure 11b), and the enhanced interaction and engagement in this type of inquiry-based and project-based learning (Figure 11c).



First benefit of the online course that I want you to know is the opportunity to reinforce your knowledge about a specific topic by exposing and understand perspectives of the other people who come from a variety of countries. Since the online course usually has more than 100 people from different countries, the informations and knowledges which we acquire through discission do not come from one country's perspective but several countries' perspectives. Because we are usually surround by people who come from same country and have similar experience, the informations and knowledges we normally obtain through normal class discission are very alike to what I have. Hence there is a limitation.

Figure 11a. Benefits of interaction with peers from several countries and their varied perspectives

in them that they view certain subjects differently, I enjoyed ~~that~~ ^{the controversy} ~~the~~ ~~are~~ ~~different~~ between students' ~~views~~ ^{opinions} because ^I ~~there was no~~ ^{could learn enormous} ~~high~~ amount of information from that contrast, ~~in~~ ^{include} our school, Jakarta Intercultural school, ~~has~~ ^{includes} many ~~have~~ ^{many} ~~students~~ ^{students} cultural backgrounds, but there is a limit to ~~not~~ ^{can} have a variety of those back grounds in one class. Overall, the online learning ~~is~~ ^{broadens} ~~at~~ the perspectives ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} students through the ^{global} ~~interaction~~ ^{interaction}.

Figure 11b. Benefits of the contrast in views and ideas

The greatest advantage of online learning is that it allows communication with the peers and the ~~the~~ teachers all over the world. ~~There~~ ^{In my} ~~was~~ ^{current} online ~~the~~ ^{course}, the number of students reaches ~~is~~ ^{from} ~~the~~ ^{school} 9 hundred seventy - five from seventeen different schools ~~is~~ ^{located} in 4 different countries. Communicating and sharing ideas with over a hundred people are not accessible. However, ~~by~~ ^{by} lending ~~to~~ ^{the} opportunity to discuss ^{in online} ~~the~~ course, I personally has ^{been} ^{more} engaged than any other classes due to the contrasting ~~of~~ perspectives of others. The peers from all around the world ~~can~~ ^{perceive} ~~different~~ ^{various} cultural ~~traits~~ ^{traits} in them that they view certain subjects differently. I

Figure 11c. Enhanced interaction and engagement

Even in a progressive and innovative international and intercultural environment of the Jakarta Intercultural School, students realize the need for additional encounters of blended learning, exposure to e-learning methodologies, and to increased intercultural interactions. (Figure 11d).

The online course is a brand new style of learning for most of the students who is taking IB H1 English B class. The students, including myself, ~~we~~ ^{we} have ~~struggled~~ ^{struggled} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~be~~ ^{adapt} ~~used~~ ^{to} ~~new~~ the unfamiliar learning strategy. However, this online course ~~has~~ ^{has} enhanced ~~the~~ ^a ~~variety~~ ^{variety} of abilities regarding ~~the~~ ^{the} English. ~~Therefore~~ ^{Therefore} I would ~~like~~ ^{like} to recommend this program to the other classes. ds / ds / ds / ds

Figure 11d. Realized need for additional experiences

If cultural universal concepts are taught with appropriate focus on powerful ideas, meaning conceptual understanding, and their potential life applications, students should develop basic sets of connected understandings (Brophy & Alleman, 2006). These powerful ideas in language learning may focus on topics connected with how the social system works, how and why it varies across locations and cultures, and what all of this means for personal, social and civic decision-making, in other words, for life. Acquisition of this knowledge requires language.

Therefore, it can be said that language learning, English in this case, through simultaneous acquisition of competencies and skills, through interactions for intercultural understanding, and with a focus on powerful ideas, can become a language learned for a sophisticated purpose, with intent for effective intercultural communication in the 21st century world.

Conclusion

“Teaching English as a Foreign Language requires a wealth of activities and massive effort on the part of the teacher as the instructor.” I interpret this statement as a wealth of interactive, collaborative, inquiry-based and problem-based experiential learning in a multitude of various tasks geared towards practicing receptive and productive language skills. The massive effort on the part of the teacher is exerted on designing and preparing such activities, while the classroom tasks are facilitating the learning and knowledge acquisition (vocabulary, grammar, facts, ideas, concepts), as well as providing support (inspiration for creativity, encouragement for perseverance) and guidance for collaboration and interpersonal skills (empathy, open mindedness, respect).

In a face-to-face classroom environment, working collaboratively, students instinctively provide feedback and readily take to the 2+1 “plussing” strategy, initially needing help with focusing on the positive and on suggestions for improvement. Students suggest alternative strategies for problems they encounter if an atmosphere of trust and safety has been established and errors are perceived as lessons to learn. Most importantly, in a student-centered collaborative classroom, students genuinely engage in various naturally occurring communication scenarios and volunteer more often, thus practicing their English language skills.

This also happens in an online team collaboration, albeit the challenge is greater due to added aspects of increased need for precise time management, heightened sense of patience needed for asynchronous collaboration and communication, and the need for intercultural understanding when dealing with a multicultural and multinational team. Nevertheless, such is the nature of the 21st century workplace, more prevalent year by year as digital businesses mushroom.

According to www.workflexibility.org 2017 State of Telecommuting Report, 2.9 % of total US workforce work from home, and increase of 115% from 2005 (Parris, 2017). Meanwhile, Owl Labs in their “23 Key Remote work and Telecommuting Statistics for 2019” cite their Global State of Remote Work report, which says that 16% of global companies are fully remote and 40% are hybrid (Bernazzani, 2019).

This clear upward and global trend of digital workplaces means that today’s students must be prepared for such workplaces of tomorrow and gain experience of collaborating in online teams. Teachers, therefore, must equip their students with skills and competencies through application of 21st century learning strategies, so that students can subsequently thrive.

English language instruction can reach beyond the walls of the school or course to provide this sophisticated purpose – to empower all students with 21st century competencies and skills essential for greater success in life through systematic application of several 21st century strategies:

- teaching and practicing of contemporary skills and competencies,
- allowing creativity to thrive in the learning process,
- fostering a growth mindset and building learning power,
- focusing curricula on problem-solving and inquiry-based (task-based, project-based, action-based, terminology varies) learning in blended-learning experiences,
- facilitating student-centered collaborative learning to develop interpersonal skills, widen perspectives, and promote greater intercultural understanding, attitudes and knowledge,
- employing online educational platforms and digital tools to connect students for interaction and communication to engender empathy, embrace open-mindedness, develop adaptability and flexibility needed for the 21st century ever-changing world.

Dylan William says: “People often want to know “what works” in education, but the simple truth is that everything works somewhere, and nothing works everywhere. That’s why research can never tell teachers what to do.” William explains that classrooms are far too complex for any prescription to be possible, and variations in context may change an effective lesson strategy to a disaster in another context. Nevertheless, research can help point teachers to avenues worth exploring. “Across a range of contexts, attending not to what the teacher is putting into the instruction but to what the students are getting out of it has increased both student engagement and achievement.” (William, 2013)

I agree with William, especially in today’s age, when learning includes digital literacy, premised on creativity and innovation, and is essential for functioning in school, workplace, and personal life. A variety of strategies can be tried. Digital literacy also encompasses new methodology that actually takes into account the possibilities brought by new technology.

Up until now, online systems for language learning have resorted to chiefly digitalizing traditional language learning tasks, which the students could equally easily complete with pen and paper. (Talmo, Einum, & Støckert, 2014). Further innovation in language learning and combining language learning strategies with strategies for 21st century learning in general, including a variety of e-learning set ups, will inevitably yield greater success in language acquisition, ease of communication, efficacy in interaction and greater intercultural understanding.

This paper is based on case studies involving a small sample size of students in several classes, a limitation in terms of being able to infer statistical significance or generalize at a population level.

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Figure 2. Trevor Mackenzie, 10 reasons to use inquiry in your classroom.

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Figure 3. Trevor Mackenzie, Inquiry is....

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Figure 4. Katherine Lynas, Growth Mindset.

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Figure 5. James Anderson, Change Your Words – Change Your Mindset.

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Figure 6. Student-generated class rules (beliefs and values). Photo by Beata Mirecka-Jakubowska

Figure 7a – Group/pair work reflection Semester 2. Photo by Beata Mirecka-Jakubowska

Figure 7b – Leadership and participation in group work – your thoughts. Photo by Beata Mirecka-Jakubowska

Figure 8a. Gathering peer feedback on an oral presentation. Photo by Beata Mirecka-Jakubowska

Figure 8b. Peer feedback – focus on at least two positive aspects and one suggestion for improvement. Photo by Beata Mirecka-Jakubowska

Figure 8c. Self-reflection on gathered and analyzed peer feedback. Photo by Beata Mirecka-Jakubowska

Figure 9a. First try at positive feedback. Students view positive comments in contrast to negative, and include the negative in their feedback. Photo by Beata Mirecka-Jakubowska

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Figure 10. Four-day guided-inquiry group project reflection. Photo by Beata Mirecka-Jakubowska

Figure 11a. Benefits of interaction with peers from several countries and their varied perspectives. Photo by Beata Mirecka-Jakubowska

Figure 11b. Benefits of the contrast in views and ideas. Photo by Beata Mirecka-Jakubowska

Figure 11c. Enhanced interaction and engagement. Photo by Beata Mirecka-Jakubowska

Figure 11d. Realized need for additional experiences. Photo by Beata Mirecka-Jakubowska

Effect of Multimedia-Assisted Instruction and Visual Static Materials on Pupils' Attitude, Engagement and Understanding in English Classes: Bases for an Enhanced Curriculum

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Abstract: This study examined the influence of multimedia-assisted instruction and visual static materials on pupil's attitude, engagement and understanding in English. Thirty-five (35) Grade 4 students of Sto. Niño Central Elementary School were the respondents of this study that was conducted during the first quarter of the School Year 2018-2019. This study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design. Data on student's attitude regarding their own engagement with the use of multimedia-assisted instruction were collected using the Learners Attitude Survey, while the learners' level of engagement in different learning episodes were determined through classroom observations conducted by the School Head and District Supervisor. Findings of the study revealed that the use of multimedia-assisted instruction had a significant effect on the pupils' levels of engagement in all learning episodes. Results also indicate that the use of multimedia-assisted instruction has a significant effect on the pupils' understanding in English. Further research and enhancement of curriculum using multimedia-assisted instruction for teachers and administrators are recommended.

INTRODUCTION

The increased use of new technology to represent scientific activity, students' acquisition of knowledge, now poses challenges for effective classroom instructional practices. The teacher has to utilize instructional materials and tools that will enhance students understanding that are consistent with current general principles of effective pedagogy for learning. These principles emphasize the importance of catering for students' individual learning needs, preferences and interest and drawing effectively on student's abilities in acquiring new knowledge that can solve logistic problems (Marlene Scardamalia & Carl Bereiter, 2009).

Technology-based instruction represents a new recent pedagogical paradigm that is rooted in the realization that younger generations are much more comfortable with, and excited about, new technologies. The rapid technological advancement over the past decade has fueled an enormous demand for the integration of modern networking, informational and computational tools with classical pedagogical instruments. Consequently, teaching with technology typically involves utilizing a variety of information and technology, and multimedia resources for online learning engagement, experimental, critical thinking, and assessment (Dinov & Sanche, 2006).

The researcher, as an educator for years, has observed a dramatic change in the learning styles of this generation considered as the 21st century millennial learners. The millennial learners operate on short attention spans, demand immediate gratification, and process information in short spurts; they are

also keen on multi-tasking and likely to dive into a project with fairly successful outcomes rather than spend time reading instructions. The traditional chalk and board techniques, which was proven effective and efficient only for attentive and motivated learners evidently showed less effective to the modern learners. The formats cannot hold the attention of the learners therefore; educators must integrate more interactive exercises in order to achieve satisfactory learning outcomes that include critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills (American Journal of Educational Studies, 2013).

Learners nowadays are exposed to a more complex, global, and diverse technological factors that make the teaching and learning process more challenging. Teaching pedagogy evolves and adapts to these types of learners to address the need.

Creating effective learning environments with technology remains a challenge for teachers. Despite the tremendous push for educators to integrate technology into their classrooms, many have yet to do so and struggle to find consistent success with technology-based instruction (Groff, 2008).

The Department of Education launched the computerization program to address the demands and challenges in delivering quality instruction to 21st century learners. The said program is supported and integrated in the Teachers Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) filled out by teachers during the end of the year. Each teacher commits to facilitate engaging lessons using ICT in every quarter. Likewise, inclusive in the IPCRF is the commitment to prepare instructional materials that will improve student's engagement, conceptual understanding and retention. These objectives require diverse or blended strategies of technology integration and visual materials.

The research was conducted to determine the effect of the traditional static visual materials and the use of multimedia-assisted instruction in the teaching and learning process. The study specifically focused on the English 4 classes, specifically on the attitude of the learner, engagement and conceptual understanding of the subject.

The findings of this study hoped to provide insights on the effect of the school-based training program on technology integration and its role in enhancing teachers' pedagogies and will serve as bases in improving the curriculum for students.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aimed to determine the relationship between the use of multimedia-assisted instruction and static visual materials on the pupils' attitude, engagement and understanding in English.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following sub-problems:

1. What is the pupils' attitude towards learning using multimedia-assisted instruction?
2. What is the pupils' level of engagement using the multimedia-assisted instruction as compared to visual static materials?
3. What is the pupils' level of understanding in English using:
 - a. static visual materials; and
 - b. multimedia-assisted instruction?
4. Does the use of multimedia-assisted instruction have a significant effect on the pupils' level of engagement?
5. Does the use of multimedia-assisted instruction have a significant effect on pupils' understanding in English?

HYPOTHESES

Ho1: The use of multimedia-assisted instruction has no significant effect on the pupils' level of engagement.

Ho2: The use of multimedia-assisted instruction has no significant effect on the learners' understanding in English.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Multimedia-Assisted Instruction refers to frequent use of printed, visual, audio, video and similar tools in the learning environment in a harmonious manner.

Visual Static Materials refers to printed materials used by the teacher as the primary source of instruction.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This literature review has examined the effects of technology integration in particular the use of multimedia presentations on students' attitude toward learning as manifested by their engagement in classroom interactions.

Enhanced Pedagogies

The Benton Foundation Communications Policy Program (2002) also emphasized that five factors must be in place for technologies to support real gains in educational outcomes: (a) technology use shall be anchored in solid educational objectives; (b) sustained and intensive professional development for teachers; (c) adequate technology resources in the schools; (d) recognition that real change and lasting results take time; and (e) evaluation that enables school leaders and teachers to determine whether they are realizing their goals and to help them adjust their practice to better meet those goals.

Waldrip, Prain, and Carolan (2006) asserted that effective pedagogy in English must entail engaging students' interest and enhancing their perception of real-world applications in their learning.

Technology Integration and Multimedia Presentations

Noeth and Volkov (2004) contented that technology should be a tool to help educators meet the educational needs of all children. Technology can serve as an enabler in teaching and learning to stimulate, visualize, and interact with scientific structures, processes, and models.

In addition, Garo (2011) set guidelines to follow in preparing multimodal presentations: (a) avoid too much text, (b) convert some texts to tables, bullets, and flowchart to enhance comprehension, (c) ensure readability, and (d) use labels frequently.

Multimedia-Assisted Instruction and Learners Attitude and Engagement

Morgan (2008) reported that the use of multimodal presentations stimulates students' interest and attention leading to increased motivation and engagement during lessons. Pupils engagement, as evidenced by behavior during lessons, is an essential component of learning.

Similarly, to Dunleavy and Milton (2010) multimedia and technology have proven helpful in engaging students in learning, in exploring ways to present their learning, and in helping students control their learning.

Influence of Multimedia Presentations on Learners Understanding

In a study of teacher perceptions in the use of multimedia presentations to support pupils learning in English, Waldrip, Prain, and Carolan (2006) reported that the teachers considered this approach to promote deeper learning. On the other hand, Noeth and Volkov (2004) asserted that the best way to enhance learning depends on the levels of planning, structure, preparation, and evaluation of the potential impact that technology will have on teaching, learning, and achievement. Experts believe that increasing capacity depends on enhancing the technology skills of teachers and administrators. Similarly, Wilson, (2002) envisions technology as offering endless possibilities to enhance educational experiences, expand academic opportunities, and develop critical employment skills. Furthermore, Fouts (2000) as cited in Noeth and Volkov (2004) reported general concurrence that: (a) when combined with traditional instruction, the use of computers can increase student learning; (b) the integration of computers with traditional instruction produces higher academic achievement in a variety of subject areas than does traditional instruction alone; (c) students learn more quickly and with greater retention when learning with the aid of computers; and (d) students like learning with computers and their attitudes towards learning and school are positively affected by computer use.

Indeed, research review shows that technology integration, in particular multimedia presentations, have great potential as a tool to enhance pedagogical practices in the classroom and ultimately improve student achievement. However, simply assuming that using this or any other technological tool can automatically enhance student achievement would be a mistake. As is the case with all powerful tools, teachers must use technology thoughtfully, that is in accordance with what we know about good classroom practices.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The concepts of social cognitivism and constructivism were the umbrella paradigms of importance to this study. Vygotskys (1978) as cited in Morgan (2008) posited that social interactions are fundamental to learning. Vygotskys stated that instruction is most efficient when pupils engage in activities within a supportive learning environment and when they receive appropriate guidance that is mediated by tools like computers and audiovisual materials.

The constructivist approach to learning theorizes that children construct new meaning and understanding from their prior experiences and new information through exploration, inquiry, and learning experiences inside the classroom. The teacher's role, from the constructivism point of view, is that of a facilitator who assists learners in constructing knowledge through dialogue, questioning, guided learning activities, and reflection. Constructivism, then, places the focus on the learner who actively participates in the learning process by engaging in meaningful experiences (Morgan, 2008).

Further, this study was also framed from the current theoretical accounts on the nature of science discourse like learning as representation and use of effective pedagogical conditions to promote student

learning. These perspectives are viewed as compatible in that they link theories of Science as a subject to how Science can be learned effectively and other affecting learning outcomes.

This study was also guided by current accounts of effective classroom pedagogy that aims to engage learners more than a traditional focus on restricted forms of representing scientific ideas evident in text books and usual classroom practices. This orientation is also consistent with recent research findings of Tytler and Waldrup (2002) that students learn most effectively in Science, and engage more with the subject, where they are challenged to develop meaningful understandings, where individual learning needs and preferences are catered for, and where the nature of Science is represented in its social, personal and technological dimensions.

The input of the study is the delivery of enhanced pedagogies as a result of using multimodal presentations. Then the expected outcomes are improved learners' attitude, engagement and understanding. It is believed that facilitating learning through enhanced pedagogies will lead to learners' high engagement in class activities which in turn will produce better conceptual understanding.

The conceptual framework of the study is illustrated in Figure 1.

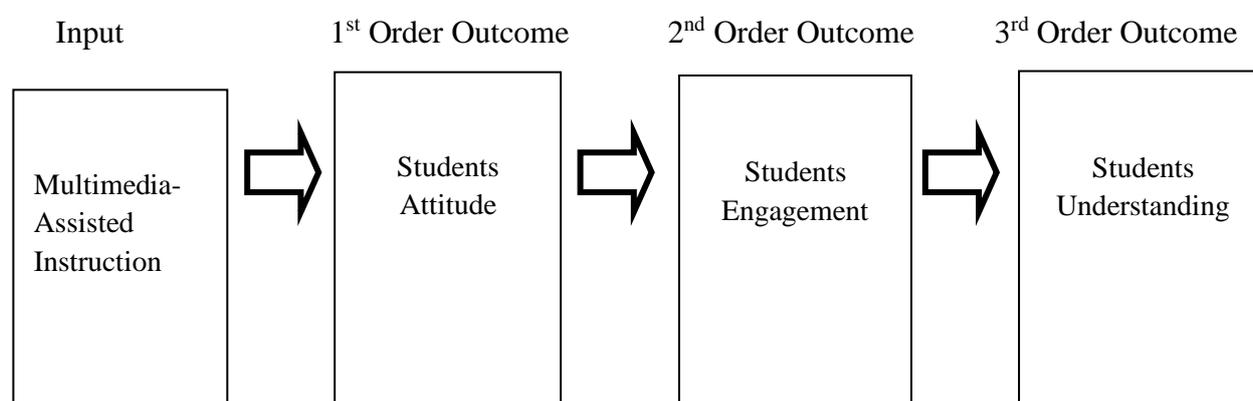


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design. Survey questionnaires were administered to determine the pupils' perceptions toward technology integration in the teaching and learning process. Learners' views were ascertained through classroom observations conducted by the Master Teacher, School Head and District Supervisor to determine if indeed pupils' responses correspond to their level of engagement during the different episodes of learning. Learners understanding were determined using the assessment result during the sessions being observed.

This study used the formative evaluation considering that the data were collected during the process of implementing evaluation interventions. This aimed to have necessary adjustment and enhancement in strategies along the way. A follow-up study before the end of the school year will be done in a form of summative evaluation to determine the over-all effect of this study and reflect necessary changes in curriculum planning and implementation. As defined by Noeth and Volkov (2004) formative evaluations (during the course of the program) track the implementation of the technology

while summative evaluations (at the end of the program) examine the impact of the technology application.

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted at Sto. Niño Central Elementary School, Sto. Niño, South Cotabato, the school where the research proponent is currently teaching.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were sixteen (16) males and 24 (24) females, a total of thirty five (35) Grade 4 pupils of Sto. Niño Central Elementary School, School Year 2018-2019. The same group of learners was involved in the use of static visual materials and use of multimedia presentations.

Data Gathering Procedure

The research proponent sought permission to conduct research from the Office of the Principal. Upon approval, the researcher conducted the research through the assistance of the Master Teacher, School Principal and District Supervisor as classroom observers.

Data Gathering Instrument

This study utilized varied instruments to gather the data needed. The Students' Attitude Survey was used to determine the students' attitude toward the utilization of multimedia presentations. The level of engagement in every learning episode was determined using the Observation Instrument. Observations or sweeps was done by the school Principal in each of the learning episode. Both the Students' Attitude Survey and Observation Instrument were adapted from Morgan (2008). While the students' conceptual understanding was measured using the quiz administered by the teacher at the end of the sessions being observed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 presents the mean level of pupils' attitude towards utilization of technology in particular the multimedia-assisted instruction.

Table 1
Pupils' Attitude towards Multimedia-Assisted Instruction

| Indicators | Mean | Description |
|--|------|------------------|
| 1. I enjoy classroom activities using Multimedia. | 4.5 | Most of the Time |
| 2. I can interact better on the lesson when multimedia is used. | 4.7 | Most of the Time |
| 3. I know that the multimedia gives me more opportunities to learn new things. | 4.7 | Most of the Time |
| 4. I can comprehend the lesson better when multimedia is used | 4.8 | Most of the Time |
| 5. Learning is more enjoyable when multimedia | | |

| | | |
|--|-------------|-------------------------|
| is used | 4.8 | Most of the Time |
| 6. Skills were developed using the multimedia. | 4.7 | Most of the Time |
| 7. I can learn more in multimedia than books. | 4.9 | Most of the Time |
| 8. I pay attention in class when multimedia is used. | 4.6 | Most of the Time |
| 9. I believe that it is important for me to be able to used technologies like computers. | 4.8 | Most of the Time |
| 10. I want to manipulate computers whenever I can. | 4.8 | Most of the Time |
| Overall Mean | 4.75 | Most of the Time |

The data revealed that the over-all mean of pupils' attitude towards utilization of multimedia presentations in facilitating learning is 4.75 described as *Most of the Time* which means that learners were highly engaged when multimedia presentations was used by the teachers in facilitating learning. The result indicates that the learners have consistent perception with regards to the positive influence of the utilization of multimedia-assisted instruction in classrooms.

Table 2

Pupils' Level of Engagement Using Static Visual Materials and Multimedia-Assisted Instruction

| | Visual Static Materials | | Multimedia-Assisted Instruction | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| | Percentage | Interpretation | Percentage | Interpretation |
| Motivation | 78.12% | High | 87.50% | Very High |
| Presentation of the Lesson | 75.00% | High | 93.75% | Very High |
| Activity | 84.38% | Very High | 96.88% | Very High |
| Analysis | 75.00% | High | 90.63% | Very High |
| Abstraction | 68.75% | High | 84.38% | Very High |
| Application | 71.88% | High | 84.38% | Very High |
| Over-all Mean | 75.52% | High | 89.59% | Very High |

As shown in Table 2, the over-all mean percentage of student engagement using the static visual materials is 75.52% which means that the students are highly engaged in general. It can be seen that the students demonstrated their highest level of engagement during the activity having a mean percentage of 84.38%. The other learning episodes only marked high engagement.

On the other hand, the same group of learners manifested 89.59% as an over-all mean percentage of pupils' engagement when multimedia-assisted instruction was used.

This implies that in totality of the learning episodes has demonstrated very high engagement. It is very noticeable, that all throughout the duration of the class, the students demonstrated *Very High Engagement*. This result supports the findings of Morgan (2008) stating that the use of multimedia presentations stimulates student's interest and attention leading to increased motivation and engagement during lessons.

Table 3
Pupils' Level of Understanding in English

| Approaches | Mean Score | %Equivalent | Difference |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| Static Visual Materials | 12 | 60.00% | 20.00% |
| Multimedia-Assisted Instruction | 16 | 80.00% | |

The table shows that the mean score of students using static visual materials is 12 with a percentage equivalent of 60.00% and the mean score of students when multimedia-assisted instruction was used is 16.00 with a percentage equivalent of 80.00%. There is a difference of 20.00%. This is an indication that students got better understanding of the concepts taught when multimedia presentations were used. This finding is parallel to the report of Fouts (2000) where students learn more quickly and with greater retention when learning with the aid of computers.

Table 4
Relationship between Multimedia-Assisted Instruction and Learners' Level of Engagement

| Approaches | Mean % | SD | t-computed | Interpretation |
|---------------------------------|--------|------|------------|----------------|
| Static Visual Materials | 75.52 | 4.92 | | |
| Multimedia-Assisted Instruction | 89.59 | 4.66 | 5.09 | Significant |

The mean percentage of 75.52% provides a preview of baseline of students' at task behavior during the classroom observation using the static visual materials while the mean percentage of 89.59% shows the effect of using multimedia presentations on pupils behavior.

The t-test analysis shows that the t-computed value of 5.09 at 0.05 level of significance exceeds the t tabular value of 2.571, thus the null hypothesis stating that the use of multimedia-assisted instruction has no significant effect on the pupils' level of engagement is rejected. This implies that the use of multimedia-assisted instruction significantly influence students level of engagement. As indicated in the previous table there is a consistent higher level of engagement in all learning episodes when multimedia presentations were used.

This result confirms Dunleavy and Milton (2010) who reported that multimedia and technology have proven helpful in engaging students in learning.

Table 5
Effect of Multimedia-Assisted Instruction on Students Understanding

| Approaches | Mean Score | SD | t-compound | Interpretation |
|---------------------------------|------------|------|------------|----------------|
| Static Visual Materials | 12 | 2.1 | | |
| Multimedia-Assisted Instruction | 16 | 2.20 | 7.3778 | Significant |

It can be gleaned in table 5 that the t-computed value of 7.3778 is higher than the t-tabular value of 2.042 at 0.5 level of significance. This means that the null hypothesis stating that the use of multimedia-assisted instruction has no significant effect on the pupils' understanding in English is rejected. This implies that using multimedia presentations has a significant effect on students' understanding. This result corroborates the findings of Waldrip, Prain and Carolan (2006) that the use of multimodal presentations supports student learning in English and promote deeper learning.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that using multimedia-assisted instructions have improved the pupils' attitude towards learning. It can also be inferred that the use of multimedia presentations has significant influence on students' engagement. Finally, the use of multimedia-assisted instruction has a significant effect on students understanding and produced better learning of English concepts among Grade 4 pupils.

Recommendations

Considering the different findings in this study, the following recommendations are hereby formulated.

1. Multimedia-assisted instruction may be used in all subject areas and grade levels.
2. Utilization of multimedia shall be integrated with traditional instruction then its effect shall also be evaluated.
3. Future researches to be conducted shall evaluate the effect of multimedia presentations across gender, ethnicity and different cognitive levels of learners.
4. Administrators and teachers shall receive tailored and continuing education about how to best integrate technology into their curriculum, and shall be evaluated on their proficiency in doing so.

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Students' Perceptions on the Application of e-CLIP Model

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Abstract: This research aimed to reveal students' perceptions on the application of e-CLIP Model. e-CLIP stands for content and language integrated pedagogy via electronic communication and is an educational innovation in Thailand. This research was conducted in two schools in Secondary Educational Service Area 39 Thailand for one semester long. One school was a large sized school located downtown, while another was a small-sized school situated uptown. The data were mainly collected through observations and focus group interviews. The collected data were analyzed through content analysis. There was reduction administered to opt which data were important. After that, the data were categorized into several groups. The findings exposed the diverse perceptions of the students. The students from each school showed positive responses to the deployment of e-CLIP Model. The students mostly attested appreciation for the teachers' application of content-based English and digital literacy. Nonetheless, there were several noticeably different perceptions between students from the big downtown School And those from the small uptown school.

Keywords-component; e-CLIP Model

INTRODUCTION

In 21st century, it is significant for the educational institutions in a country to generate graduates who own high mastery in operating computers, communicating in foreign languages, recognizing dynamics in the society, performing data analysis, and organizing their own businesses [2]. As a result, educational innovations are continuously established. In Thailand, there is an innovation called e-CLIP which works under the Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC) in the country. e-CLIP stands for Content and language Integrated Pedagogy via electronic Communication. It signifies the assembly of teaching materials and language performed through the deployment of information and communication technology [3]. This innovation is plotted to assist teachers' indelible development [5]

Ref. [3] pointed out that e-CLIP comprises of a number of principles including the comprehension on the course indicators, strategies of learning management, competence to utilize English associated with materials in the curriculum 4) English fluency skills of instructors 5) assessment to keep establishing the earlier four principles as teachers own a crucial role in deciding the quality of education [1] and they are also the roots from where good quality education grows [4]. Comprehending the benefits that this innovation, e-CLIP has been implemented in several schools around Thailand, including in Secondary Educational Service Area 39.

Secondary Educational Service Area 39 covers two provinces in Lower Northern Thailand, namely Phitsanulok and Uttaradit. E-CLIP has been utilized by instructors in the area to improve their teaching. This paper presents information about the perceptions of students of carefully selected teachers who applied e-CLIP in the area.

The students came from two different schools. One school was a large-sized school containing a total of 2155 students and was located downtown. The other school was a small-sized school with a total of 200 students and was situated uptown.

This paper points out the diverse perceptions of the students from each school. This research was the continuation of a prior research which focused on exploring the role modelling of the purposively selected e-CLIP teachers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

There was a total of 7 teachers who were previously selected. Four teachers instructed at Wangphikul Vittayasuksa School or School A. These teachers were labeled as Teacher A1, Teacher A2, Teacher A3, and Teacher A4 who taught Math, Biology, English, and Thai respectively. The three others taught at Janokrong School or School B. These teachers were labeled as Teacher B1, Teacher B2, and Teacher B3 and they were in charge of computer subject.

The teachers in each school were purposively chosen through recommendations from various sources such as Secondary Educational Area Office 39 Thailand, experts from Naresuan University, and Thai Teacher Council. A number of teachers also had received an award from Thai Government for their works. The students of these 7 teachers were the ones studied for this paper. The data were gathered through frequent classroom observations from November 2016 to February 2017. Focus group interviews were also administered to gain further data. The students who joined the focus group interview sessions were purposively selected in accordance with the observation results and the teachers' recommendations. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed. The collected data were analyzed through content analysis. There was reduction done to opt which data were important. The data were then grouped into three major topics in relation to e-CLIP, namely content, language, and pedagogy and electronic media. The following figure (figure 1) presents the concept of e-CLIP.

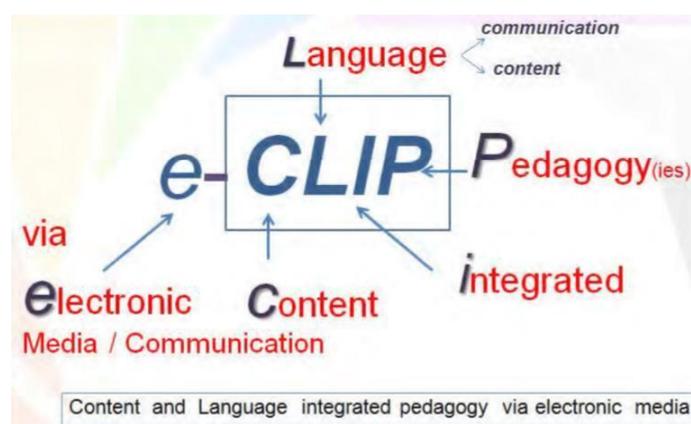


Figure 1

DESCRIPTIONS ON SCHOOL A AND SCHOOL B

School A and School B had several distinct characteristics. School A was a small-sized school, while School B was a large-sized school. School A was located in an uptown area, while School B was situated downtown. Both schools owned proper ICT infrastructure. Each room was equipped with at least one computer and one projector. Nonetheless, wifi in School A was available only in a few spots around the school, while in School B, internet was easily accessed. Students at School A were not

formally allowed to bring mobile phones to school, while it was permitted at the other school. Several students in School A did (do) not own a phone to begin with. School A was attended by students mostly from lower income families, while School B was full of pupils generally from middle class families. Even though it did not possess an English or international program, School B hired 4 foreigner teachers, while School A had none.

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AT SCHOOL A

Content

During the focus group interview, the students were asked to give their general thought about the subjects. A number of students said that several subjects were difficult especially Math.

Most participants stated that it was hard for them to comprehend content in Math subject. The fact that it was a tough subject did not necessarily mean that they hated the subject. In fact, most students stated that they liked it because the classes were fun. There were also a few students who shared that Mathematics was easy for them. During the observations, it was discerned that the responses of students varied, particularly in big classes. Big classes in School A meant 25 to 30 students. In big classes, there were students who were busy talking with their friends during the lesson. These students regularly sat at the last two rows in the room. In contrast to them the students who sat at the first three rows looked like they pay attention well. There was a considerable number of active students who asked and answered questions. In other subjects including Biology, English, and Thai, the students' reactions and responses were also varied. In each class, there were students who looked more interested and active than others. On the other hand, it was also noticed, particularly in big classes, that there were a few students who were not engaged to the lesson.

In case of small classes, the students had tendency to pay attention more during the presentation of the content. It was also easier for the teachers to supervise their pupils.

In relation to content, all the informants during the focus group interview stated that it was important for them to own textbooks. However, several stated that they enjoyed studying from the books, while others were unsure and said it was normal. A student pointed out that the books were necessarily as a guidance to find further media like videos online. Several students brought up online information. They informed that they enjoyed it when the teachers showed them other sources of information from the internet.

During classes, each teacher integrated other information which were not directly related to the lesson. For instance, Teacher A1 occasionally showed videos about Buddhism and meditation; Teacher A2, a3, and a4 sometimes brought up current issues and gave general advises to their pupils. During the focus group interview, the students stated that it was important for them to be presented those kinds of information. A number of students expressed that the added activities made them feel relaxed. One student further explained that she enjoyed it when the teacher played videos when they were tired.

Language

Based on the observations, the teachers tried to integrate content-based English in the classrooms. The teachers spoke English during certain parts of the lesson. In the classroom, the students looked interested when the teachers used English. For instance, when a teacher opened and closed the lesson in English, the students responded more loudly and powerfully. When asked about it, all respondents confessed that they liked the integration of English. Even though a number of students

admitted that English was difficult for them, they informed that the use of English was fun. Several students also said it excited them when the teacher spoke English.

A number of informants told that the use of English was among the most fun activities in the classroom. Others explained that when the teacher spoke English, they became awake and paid attention more. The informants also pointed out that they understood the English words and expressions that the teachers used. When they did not comprehend, they asked their friends or the teachers. The teachers would explain in Thai.

When asked whether or not they liked speaking English, a few students stated that they did not because it was difficult for them. Most said that they liked speaking English. They also brought up that the teachers made them less scared to speak English because they had become more used to it. A student further expressed that at that moment she felt like she did not care about making mistakes anymore when speaking English. In addition, the students mentioned that they became more motivated to speak English because their teachers used English.

When asked for their opinions on whether or not it was important for the teachers to speak English, all the students responded positively. In general, the students recognized that English was the international language and would be useful to use in ASEAN community. Most students agreed that through the use of content-based English in the classroom, they were able to learn and practice new English words. They were also more used to listening to English words and expressions and that lowered their anxiety to make mistakes. Several students said it made the class more fun. Therefore, they wanted the teachers to continue speaking English. One student even said that she wanted full English application. Another said that she wished other teachers applied English like the four teachers.

Pedagogy and Electronic Media

In addition to the use of English, when asked about the most fun activities in the classroom, the students mentioned a number of activities. For Math class, the students mentioned watching videos. For Biology class, the students preferred watching videos and having quizzes. For English class, the students said playing crossword puzzle, testing, remembering vocabularies, and watching their own recorded videos. For Thai class, the students enjoyed looking at beautiful power point slides as well as watching videos and movies. Out of all the activities, it could be seen that watching videos seemed to be enjoyed by all the key informants.

The students also brought up the use of internet in the class. In English class, the students informed that the teacher surfed the internet to translate words or find the right pronunciation of several words. Based on the observation, Teacher A1 also often utilized internet to play online videos. The students always paid attention well when videos were used. Teacher A3 was also found to seek for further information by using his mobile phone to show to the students. The students gathered around and paid attention carefully.

Because of the size of the school, the students and teachers knew each other well. As a result, most students had close relationship with the teachers. According to the students, it was important to have such a relationship. In the classroom, the students said that they were not afraid to ask questions or to simply interact with the teachers. During the observation, the same situation was also noticed. Nevertheless, the students informed that answering questions was a different case.

The communication between the teacher and the students also happened online outside the class occasionally. Several students stated that a number of teachers created a line group. A student further

explained that they regularly asked about their assignments. They also discussed their life problems sometimes. The informants stated that it was convenient to communicate online.

When asked whether or not they wanted the teachers to record their teaching and upload the videos to an online platform, the informants supported the idea. They further expressed that because they were used to using internet, it would be easy for them to access the videos and study.

At the end of the interview, the students were asked to point out the things they wanted the teachers to continue doing. In addition to English, several informants mentioned the use of videos and internet. They also pointed out that the teachers taught them well already.

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AT SCHOOL B

Content

The three teachers taught the same subject, computer. Teacher B1 taught the M5 students, while Teacher B2 and Teacher B3 separated responsibilities to teach M3 students. Each class was approximately 40 students. In the 2nd semester, Teacher B1 focused her class on studying about code block, while Teacher B2 and Teacher B3 instructed about CAI. During the class, the students of each teacher had diverse reactions and responses.

During the focus group interview, the students had varied ideas on whether or not the subject was easy. There were several students who said that it was easy. A student further explained that computer is a common thing and he was used to operating it on daily basis. Several students considered the class to be hard because they studied mainly code blocks. A student pointed out that he did not like the program. There were also a number of students who stayed neutral and expressed that sometimes it was hard, yet occasionally it was easy too. A student further expressed that at the beginning of a topic, it was easy, but the deeper they studied, the more difficult it got.

During the observations, it was discerned that while several students were paying attention, others were busy surfing internet to play games or watch videos. When asked about this issue, they expressed that occasionally they were disinterested because of the difficult content. They further blamed the teachers' speedy explanation. Nonetheless, several students stated that even though the teachers spoke fast, they explained step by step and they were happy with it.

All the materials for this subject was uploaded to Edmodo, a social network like Facebook, but specifically designed for teachers and students. As a result, the students did not have a printed-out book. When asked about this, the students stated that Edmodo made them more convenient to access the materials. They further explained that, through the use of the online platform, they were able to read the materials anytime and anywhere they preferred. Several students also highlighted that Edmodo was easy to use and they had operated it since their first year at the school.

Language

The students at School B had diverse ideas about the integration of content-based English during the lessons. Several students expressed that it was good that the teachers spoke English. A student said it was okay. An informant said it was difficult and they could not understand. She further explained that when they did not comprehend, the teacher asked them to find the meaning on Google translate. In some cases, it was the teacher who opened the Google translate. When asked whether or not the use of English

limit their understanding, all the students said no. They further stated that it was okay because English and computer were somehow related.

According to the students, speaking English was normal. A student explained that what made it hard might only be the fact that the structure of the language was different from that of Thai. When asked for their opinions about the teachers' application of English, the students said that they were used to it and that it was already something normal for them. However, they conveyed that they preferred the teachers to speak English partly in class rather than using Thai for the whole duration of the class. It was because several computer languages could not be translated to Thai.

When asked whether or not they were confident to speak English, a student informed that he was confident even though his grammar was not good. When asked whether or not the fact that teachers used English made them want to speak the language too, several students said yes and others said a little or sometimes. A student further informed that when the teachers spoke English, sometimes he also wanted to use the language orally.

The students were asked whether or not they wanted the teachers to continue to speak content-based English during her class. All informants answered in affirmative. One student even demanded the application of English completely. Several students pointed out the benefits of English mastery in the future and they said they were glad that Teacher B1 gave them chances to practice English in her class. When asked whether or not they wished other teachers to integrate English, they mainly supported it. They explained that if the other teachers did so, they would practice speaking more often.

Pedagogy and Electronic Media

Based on the focus group interview, the students stated that they generally enjoyed the learning activities in the classroom. They also were required to be active following the teacher's instructions. They explained that concentration was needed as they had to listen and type at the same time during the lesson. They informed that they were glad that the teachers taught step by step.

The informants were also asked whether or not they would enjoy if the teachers recorded her class and uploaded the video to an online platform. The students gave positive responses. They stated that it would be good. Another further explained that if they could not understand, they would simply watch and re-watch the videos. In short, they stated that they would be able to understand the content more easily.

The informants admitted they did not have close relationship with the teachers. However, they were not scared to ask questions during the class. It was also noticed that the several students asked questions frequently. However, they confessed that they were a bit scared when they were the ones being asked. They said that they were afraid to answer incorrectly.

During her class, Teacher B1 gave bonus points to students who could finish certain tasks the quickest. During this competitive session, the students looked serious. All of them seemed to work to gain the points. When asked about this, the informants confirmed that they were excited and interested during the session. They seemed to enjoy competition. In case of Teacher B2 and b3, the students were seen to enjoy Kahoot. Kahoot is a game-based quiz with exciting and engaging music and visuals. The students paid attention when answering questions on Kahoot and the discussion was full of laughter.

In relation to Edmodo, the students expressed that it was something normal for them already. They further explained that they had been using the online platform since M1. Nevertheless, they did

recognize the importance of it. They conveyed that it was important for their study as they could download materials about code block easily and quickly. Also, they could upload their assignments conveniently.

CONCLUSION

The students showed various responses to the use of e-CLIP Model. In general, the students at School A were found to be more excited than those at School B when it came to the use of content-based English and electronic media. Students at School A were mostly delighted to practice speaking English and learned through electronic media during the classes. Also, they demanded the teachers to continue applying the model and wished other teachers would do so as well. The students at School B indicated that they were alright with the model and were glad to practice their English as well as to use an online platform such as Edmodo and kahoot. Though they did not show much excitement, they did highlight that the integration of English and electronic media was important.

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Reading Comprehension of English Major Students: A Perspective Analysis

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Abstract: This research aims to know the level of comprehension of the students through reading. Driven by the result of a previous institutional research conducted in Talisay City College and directed towards graduated senior high school students where more than 50% from each cluster of students from the top 5 feeder schools are below average in both verbal comprehension and verbal reasoning, the researcher would like to know if the reading comprehension test yields the same result. Most of the respondents were average in almost all reading skills and they only differ in three areas namely background knowledge, sequencing event, and self-questioning. Students in section A were excellent in using their prior knowledge. However, they were found to be poor in arranging the events chronologically. On the other hand, section B was excellent in self-questioning skills. Even so, the Z-test result showed that there was only one skill that made a significant difference among the two groups. Program R.E.A.D.Y. or Reading Enhancement Activity and Development for the Youth is developed and proposed for implementation. Reading is a multifaceted process that develops only with practice. Having excellent reading comprehension skills is crucial. It increases the enjoyment and effectiveness of reading and helps not only academically, but also professionally, and in a person's personal life.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, perceptive analysis, professional development, academic excellence, personal growth

INTRODUCTION

Reading is the vital phase in the child's educational development. Reading skills and abilities determines the child's performance progress because proficiency in Mathematics, English and Science depends largely on the reading ability of a student.

Comprehension is the first thing that the student should develop because disability in it greatly affects the performance of the learners in answering and understanding the lesson, so it requires practice and support from teachers to improve their proficiency and make them a none valid activity. Understanding or comprehension is highly interactive, such that readers use a variety of skills and processes when encountering text. It is dependent upon some sort of construction. Additionally, evidence suggested that texts are organized, knowledge of the word strategies for fostering and monitoring comprehension. For example, The Kinch and Rouson Model (2005) this suggested that the text comprehension involves processing at different level according to Loiko and Dodler (2007), Jeffer, Chin and Marie (2007) MC Grew and Wendy (2010). In particular, this model suggested that readers build a semantic network of ideas as they attempt to determine the meaning of the text.

According to Grabe (1988) and Villanueva (2006), “Reading is not just extracting meaning from the text but a process of connecting to the information given by the text. Reading in this sense, is a communication between the reader and the text”. According to Lastrella (2010), Reading is essential to life and reading with comprehension is the chief justification why we read, understand what the text is all about. As stated by Dennis (2011). Reading comprehension is a complex balance between recognizing printed symbols and interpreting the meaning behind the symbols.

Furthermore, according to Worthy (1996), it is not sufficient to provide books that are geared solely to a student’s instructional reading level. When reading level is solely considered, below level basal readers are generally used for instructing struggling readers. Reading such as “baby works” often makes struggling readers feel more defeated. Focusing on student interests in selecting reading materials may be more beneficial in promoting reading success than a focus on level. It turns out that interest is far more significant in readability. When students have strong interest in what they read, they can frequently transcend their reading level.

Furthermore, for an individual to survive in today’s world. It is a requirement for him or her to know how to read with understanding. He/she would be capable for understanding simple text such as transportation documents which includes travel directions and road instructions, bills and contracts. According to some authors; the effect of not being able to comprehend could be disastrous (e.g. instructions on a bottle of medicine or chemical warnings) (Yale 2011 and Lastrella, 2010). They further said that with the ability to comprehend a text, people are able not only to live safely and productively, but also to continue to develop socially, emotionally and intellectually.

Likewise, reading is a very significant language skill for a student. Since they are subject to a continuous flow of information, they need to prepare themselves for the demands that reading in school and in the bigger society places on them. Reading also has been a segment of the entrance test in most colleges and universities. But there are cases by which students fail during the entrance examination because of lack of comprehension said Maggart and Zintz (1970); in addition Marquez (2008) stated that comprehension is the major purposes of reading-without comprehension, reading is a meaningless activity regardless of age or ability of a reader. There are levels of reading comprehension, namely: literal level (reading the lines), inferential or interpretive level (reading between the lines) and the critical level (reading beyond the lines) stated by: Romero (1987 in Marquez, 2008).

Since the respondents of this study are the first year BSED English student both section A and B the researcher assumed that the respondents’ reading comprehension is in the process of improving their capabilities in comprehending a particular story. Moreover, the researcher came up with a program called Reading Enhancement Program (REP) that could help the students in enhancing their reading comprehension skills. The researcher will seek support to the administration to provide the needs of the students upon implementing the said program.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This research reviews reading as an active process. In order to get text meaning, a reader always communicates his mind with the printed information, creates own thinking about what he is reading, what it means to him and relates to other things he knows according to (Liu, 2010). In the process of decoding text information, a reader is not only required to understand the words’ meaning but he is also demanded to share his prior information. Reading is one of the English skills besides speaking, listening, writing and viewing. It is the way to understand written messages. According to Nuttal (2000:2) reading

means a result of interaction between the writer's mind and the reader's mind. It is the way how the reader tries to get the message or the intended meaning from the writer. In this process, the reader tries to create the meanings intended by the writer, the reader can get the message, and the writer's meaning sense. The following are theories that have a huge part which supports the reading comprehension skills of the students.

In Gunning's Monitoring Theory (2006), he stated that monitoring occurs when the reader is aware that they do not understand what they are reading so the act of monitoring is knowing how to go back and find a way to gain understanding of the selection. Monitoring can be divided into three categories depending on when they take place: pre-reading, during reading and proofreading. According also to Gunning's pre-reading: collecting and defining vocabulary terms from the text will assist students in understanding words that otherwise may interrupt their reading. While during reading is guiding student's interaction with the text by asking questions about literary elements. And post-reading is summarizing. However, summarizing is the most difficult level of reading comprehension. Therefore, reading the selection frequently can be considered as one of the actions that can be taken to improve the reading skills of the reader.

On the other hand, Katim's Strategies Theory (1985) stated that strategy is how the reader approaches the task which is reading. According to him, strategies are also a technique or motives that enable students to learn to solve problems and complete tasks independently. So, reading comprehension therefore may vary the strategy of the reader towards the selection. Moreover, it is necessary to read over and over the selection to understand what does it imply and of course to gain understanding. Through reading selections, it can also help the students to improve their skills in sequencing event and summarizing. Under this Strategy Theory of Katim, four main types of comprehension strategies were identified, one of those is organization strategy. It is a process of selecting important details and building relationships from them. This strategy includes identifying the main idea and topic sentence, classifying information, deciding which information is relevant, sequencing and summarizing. Each of this strategies and methods are important for improving them and needs to be taught starting from basic ideas and gradually getting more difficult. So in this strategy, the learning of the student is organized. The learner will start picking from the most basic ideas and then progress to the most difficult one. Furthermore, the student will read the selection carefully then pick up from the most basic information to the most complicated that can be possibly found from the selection. In this strategy, the reader will be able to comprehend the text in a step by step process.

Payne (2001:35) states that reading comprehension is a process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. According to Dole et. al (2004), in the new tradition of reading, novice readers acquire a set of hierarchically ordered sub-skills that sequentially build toward comprehension ability. Having mastered these skills, readers are viewed as experts who comprehend what they read. According to Huhan (2002), reading in this view is basically a matter of decoding a series of written symbols into their aural equivalents in the quest of making sense of the text. He referred to this process as the bottom-up view of reading. According to McKurthy (2003), he called his view outside-in processing, referring to the idea that meaning exists in the printed page and is interpreted by the reader then taken in. This model of reading has almost always been under attack as being insufficient and defective for the main reason that it relies on the formal features of the language, mainly words and structure. Cognitively based views of reading comprehension emphasize the interactive nature of reading and the constructive nature of comprehension.

In addition, Dole et al (2004) have stated that, besides knowledge brought to bear on the reading process, a set of flexible, adaptable strategies are used to make sense of a text and to monitor ongoing

understanding. For literacy has been linked with poor self-esteem and maladaptive internalizing and behaviors (Alves-Martins et al. 2002; Willcutt and Pennington, 2006.) People who have a low level of literacy may encounter multiple situation where their inability to read draws the attention and possible failure of others. A person who struggles to read may thus struggles to feel a sense of self-worth (Alves-Martins et al, 2002) an inability to read has been to found to correlate with symptoms of anxiety and depression (Willcutt and Pennington, 2000 B).

According to (Hoover and Gough, 2000) decoding may be thought of as the process through which a reader can translate symbols or a page into language as a reader looks at page off print. Certain skills are called upon in order to recognize the symbols as letters and to then combine the letters into words that the reader can identify. Reading comprehension can be understood as the process through which the recognized words are transformed into a meaningful idea by (Hoover and Gough, 2000). It is a complex process that requires the activation of numerous cognitive skills said (Kintsch, 2003). There are also different depths of understanding according to (Perfitti et al, 2005) at the most basic level, reading comprehension may involve the picture that comes into the mind when reading the word, e.g. cat. The interactive-compensating model implies that the reader will rely on higher level processes when lower level processes are inadequate, and vice versa. Stanovich (2000) added that extensively reviewed research are devastating to such compensation in both good and bad readers. According to Rosenblatt (2000.p.1063) “every reading act is an event, or a transaction involving a particular reader and a particular pattern of sign, a text and occurring at a particular context. Instead of two fixed entities acting one another, the reader on the text is two aspects of a total dynamic situation. The meaning does not reside ready-made in the reader but happens or comes into being during transaction between reader and text. Thus, text without a reader is merely a set of marks capable of being interpreted as written language. However, when a reader transacts with the text, meaning happen.

Readily comprehensive is influenced by attitude according to Matthews Saris (2004) Model of Attitude, influence upon reading and learning to read is derived from the area of social psychology. This model attempts to explain the rules that affect cognition, in reading comprehension. The care of the attitude-influence model explains that a reader’s whole attitude while reading (i.e. prevailing feelings and evaluation beliefs about reading and action readiness for reading) will influence the intention to read in turn will result to fluency reading behavior.

Reader response theories of Stanly Fish (1967) and Louise Rosenblatt (1978) reminded us that comprehending literature was not only a cognitive practice but also an interpretative aesthetic, literary process, like Schema theory, readers’ response held that meaning in reading was not found in the printed symbols themselves, but in the meaning that readers brought to the text. Rather, it involved the readers’ ability-based on the text itself are his/her “reservoir of past experiences with language, literature and life”-to evoke responses, thoughts, feelings and images in the minds’ eyes. It may be as in depth as the symbolic representation of a cat as having good-life qualities, as is sometimes associated with ancient Egyptians. Comprehension is the revision for reading. It encompasses the learning, growth and evolution of ideas that occur as one needs. Piaget (1936) use the term ‘schema’ to refer to the cognitive structure by which individuals adapt to and organize their environment. It is an individual way to understand or create meaning about a thing or experience that includes creativity, intelligence and how people learn, understand and use language.

Reading according to E.L Thorndike (1917), is the application of thinking and reasoning skills as observation, prediction, verification in analyzing an author’s meaning. The concept of reading today has two important aspects, recognition and interpretation. Because of this broad concept of reading,

elementary schools adopted comprehensive program of the reading instruction, speed, comprehension, proficiency this to develop the interpretation, evaluation, and application of the learning.

Stanovich (2000) terms the latter kind of processing as interactive-compensatory, because the reader (any reader) compensates for deficiencies in one or more of the knowledge sources by using information from remaining knowledge sources. Those sources that are more concerned with concepts and semantics relationships are termed higher level stimuli. Sources dealing with print itself that sight words and other word-attack skills are termed lower level stimuli. In Edward William Dolch's (2001) book of Psychology and Teaching of Reading, reading was defined as "imagining, thinking and feeling about ideas and thoughts made from past experiences that is suggested by perception of printed words". In order for readers to attain this connection and fully comprehend the text that they have read, Dolch (2001) asserted that the process of reading requires the different capabilities of the mind, as the reader processes words and their meanings.

This processing of words and text can also be defined as "literacy" or as Castello and Charlton (2007) explained the cognitive processing of text information, a motivational attitude toward reading, and the integration of texts into everyday life. The authors asserted that through this cognitive process of reading, readers learn to apply the meanings of the words and sentences that they comprehend to their present knowledge. Castello and Charlton (2007) posited that readers can then incorporate and evaluate the content of these readings to their own lives and experiences as well as use the text as basis for future actions.

According to Vigotsky (1975) he believed that learning was the act of building on what was known, he diverged from Piaget's Cognitive Model asserting that learning is also inherently social and dependent on language (Smith, 1994). "In Thought and Language" (1986) and Vigotsky argued that language is a tool that makes higher mental function possible, for it serves as a way of organizing and recalling experiences and also as a way of communicating the internal thinking process. His theory emphasized that language plays an active role in children's development because thought and language are not developed separately from each other, but they are excitably related to a basic human need to know how signs of all kinds are not separate system but are jointly related are interpreted (cited in Smith, 1994,p290) Vigotsky (1975) believed that language promotes thought and that collaborative experiences and interaction with others, especially with those in mentor roles, both reinforce learning.

In addition, reading can easily be defined as the process in a person receives and interpret a message from printed materials. Reading is a process of how information is processed from the text into meanings, starting from the information from the text, and ending with what reader gains. Goodman (1976) and Smith (1973) indicated that reading is a language process, not merely the sum of various decoding and comprehension sub skills. In short, reading is the process of reconstructing the author's ideas and information.

Proficiency in reading involves many variables, for example, automaticity of word recognition, familiarity with text structure and topic, awareness of various reading strategies in processing a text. While a substantial body of literature has been accumulated on this issues in both first language (L1) and second language (L2) reading, the findings remain scattered in many diverse pieces of research, mainly within the fields of applied linguistics and cognitive and educational psychology. This paper reviews current theory and research on the topic and then presents a profile that summarizes the characteristics of good readers in both L1 and L2 contexts.

In L1 according to Vigotsky (1978), he believed that learning was the act of building on what was known, he diverged from Piaget's cognitive model, asserting that learning is also inherently social and dependent on language (Smith 1994).

READING STRATEGIES OR SKILLS

Perfetti, Marron, & Folz (1996) divided the factors that contribute the reading comprehension into two general areas: process and knowledge. Process involve decoding, working memory, inference-making, and comprehension monitoring. In contrast, knowledge factors include word meanings and domain knowledge related to the content of what is being read. These factors provide a framework for thinking about trends in reading comprehension instructional research. Most of the research over the past several years has focused on the teaching of specific comprehension strategies that reflect those used by good readers (Pressley, 2000) and this continues to be an important focus for researchers. However, there is renewed interest in other aspects of reading comprehension. For example, an area of interest in contemporary reading comprehension research relates to the importance of individual word knowledge and decoding and its contribution to text comprehension. Another current issue is how strategic processing interacts with specific domain knowledge in content area reading.

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE AND SCHEMA THEORY

Researchers examining the role of background knowledge have concluded that it is important for ongoing meaning (Anderson et al, 1984/2004). Theories such as this one fall under the schema theoretic view of reading. Schema theory implies that some individuals learn more than others because they are able to create a mental representation of the new learning that is linked to the knowledge structure that already exists in their memory. Psychologists believe that learning new information depends on relating the new to something already known. To make sense of the world, the learner attempts to relate new information to already known information by drawing a schema or framework. Schema theory explains how prior knowledge is stored in memory and grows to include other topics, creating larger and larger schemata. Interrelationships among schemata aid understanding and information processing when reading or listening.

The discussion was introduced by Richard Anderson, but the concept has been studied from as early as the 1930's (Richardson & Morgan, 2003). Anderson (1984/2004) explains that the conventional view of comprehension that only consists of making meaning of words to form the meaning of clauses, that in turn form the meaning of sentences, and then the sentences form the meaning of paragraphs and ultimately the whole text, is not sufficient in explaining what comprehension truly is. A person's schemata should be added into the view of comprehension as that supports development of understanding.

According to Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) suggest that we use text structure and content schemata to help us select important information when reading. A text structure schema includes the reader's knowledge of how authors structure their ideas. For example, narrative, comparison, problem/solution, description, and causation are some of the organizational patterns author's use. Content schemata, on the other hand, are defined by the reader's world, or background knowledge (Ohlhausen & Roller, 1988). In addition to the importance of content and structural schemata on text processing, Dole, Duffy, Roehler, and Pearson (1991) have added yet another type of schemata that relates to the knowledge of metacognitive skills a reader uses to process text. While some researchers consider these to be strategies, the reader needs to possess these metacognitive strategies in their

schemata to actually be able to apply them while reading. This allows the reader to access their metacognition schema when comprehension breaks down, and helps them find a strategy that would help fix it. For example, when reading sentences, if something does not make sense, the reader can access their meta-cognitive strategies to help them figure out the meaning, and specifically what does not make sense to them. The strategies Dole et al. (1991) suggest that classroom comprehension instruction should focus on include determining the important information in a text by identifying the text structure, summarization, drawing inferences, generating questions and comprehension monitoring. These strategies all relate to semantic processing.

THE PROBLEM

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research focused on reading comprehension skills in which it signifies the comparison of the BSED English 1A and 1B students in Talisay City College on their ability in reading through the proper application of the following reading comprehension skills.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of reading comprehension of the respondents in their reading skills in terms of:
 - 1.1 relating background knowledge;
 - 1.2 finding main idea;
 - 1.3 sequencing event;
 - 1.4 summarizing; and
 - 1.5 self-questioning?
2. Is there a significant difference between the reading comprehension skills of BSED English 1A and 1B?
3. Based on the findings, what reading program can be proposed?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is in significance with the reading comprehension. Reading comprehension develops as a result of practice reading into fluency of a high degree of success. This research helps the students and learners to develop proficiency and improving reading skills. It is critical that all students in the classroom including the least able have an easy access to books that they can read accurately with good comprehension. The researchers try to captivate the interest of learner to read, to comprehend and to understand the message of the topic.

Focusing on these variables the beneficiaries of the study are following:

The Teachers. Once teachers understand what is involve in comprehending and how the factors of readers, text and context interact to create meaning, they can more easily teach their student to be more effective readers and will be provided exercises for reading and applying systematic classroom instructional assessment to monitor the readers' progress in both rate and accuracy.

The Students. This will help them have interest in reading in order for them to boost their knowledge in so many things with the use of reading comprehension.

The Administrators. The findings of this study would make them more concerned about the reading needs and wants of the students.

The Parents. This study would enlighten them on the acquisition of reading skills and abilities in their children and give support to the teachers in monitoring their children.

The Society. This will give them awareness and more knowledge to the people the importance of reading comprehension in their daily life.

RESEARCH DESIGN METHODOLOGY

This chapter included operation about the description of the subject involved in the study that was being included in the information about: who will be the research respondents, where will be the location of the research to be conducted, and what are the research instruments used in gathering the data. There will be a discussion on how the data will be gathered and the procedure after gathering the data. This study employed descriptive method of research and comparative survey. The researcher-made questionnaire was used to gather the data in order to cater the needs of the researcher. The data were consolidated and analyzed statistically.

RESEARCH LOCALE

The study was conducted in Talisay City College at Poblacion, Talisay City, Cebu Philippines. The research was implemented inside the classroom of the respondents specifically room number one and five located at the academic building of the campus. The institution located at Poblacion Talisay City, Cebu composed of several buildings such as Academic Building, Graduate School Building, New Building and also some laboratories like Computer Laboratory, Science Laboratory, Mini Hotel and Drawing Room. The institution offers several courses such as: Bachelor of Elementary Education, Bachelor of Secondary Education, Bachelor of Industrial Technology, Bachelor of Hospitality Managements and it also offer Masters in Education and Diploma in Professional Education.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The instrumentation that was being used in this study is the researcher-made tool which was being comprised of the pre-reading, during reading and post reading questionnaires and it had a multiples choice tool. The pre-reading questions were about the relating background or the prior knowledge of the BSED English students particularly in the vocabulary that can be found in the story that the researchers will be providing. Next will be during reading questions which focused on the main idea and other ideas of the selection. Lastly was the post-reading that dealt with the summarizing and the sequencing of the event of the story.

DATA GATHERING PROCESS

Permission was performed in this study with Talisay City College First year English Students which was verbal and also the researcher provided a letter that was signed by the College President and College Dean of Education. Then the questionnaires were distributed to 68 respondents. The questionnaires were checked and were converted to number of respondent's answers into percentage. Afterwards, the percentage was interpreted according to the rubric that was provided which was "RUBRIC FOR ASSESSING THE LEVELS OF READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS." Finally, the researchers formulated a recommendation that was based on the interpreted data which is at the last chapter (summary, recommendation, conclusion).

RESULTS

The data shows that the BSED English 1-A has the higher percentage in terms of their BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE, FINDING THE MAIN IDEA, and SUMMARIZING while the English 1-B has the higher percentage in terms of SEQUENCING EVENT and SELF-QUESTIONING of their Reading Comprehension Skills. BSED English 1-A students got the average of 89% correct answers and 11% wrong answers while the BSED English 1-B students got only 55% correct answers and 35% were incorrect answers under the Background Knowledge; 51% were the correct answers of BSED English 1-A and 49% were the wrong answers while the BSED English 1-B students got 48% of the answers of BSED English 1-A were correct and 55% were the wrong answers while the BSED English 1-B got 57% correct answers and 43% were wrong answers under Sequencing Event; the BSED English 1-A got 60% correct answers and 40% were wrong answers while 80% of the BSED English 1-B's answers were correct and 20% were wrong answers under Self-Questioning; and 74% of the BSED English 1-A's answers were correct and 26% were wrong while the BSED English 1-B got 59% correct answers and 41% wrong answers under Summarizing of their Reading Comprehension Skills.

TABLE 2
The Level of Comprehension of Students

| Reading Comprehension Skills | BSED English 1-A | | BSED English 1-B | |
|------------------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|
| | Percentage | Level | Percentage | Level |
| Background Knowledge | 89% | EXCELLENT | 56% | AVERAGE |
| Finding Main Idea | 51% | AVERAGE | 48% | AVERAGE |
| Sequencing event | 45% | POOR | 57% | AVERAGE |
| Self-questioning | 60% | AVERAGE | 80% | EXCELLENT |
| Summarizing | 74% | AVERAGE | 59% | AVERAGE |

The table elucidated the corresponding level of the percentage and the comparison between the reading comprehension level of BSED English 1A and 1B. In the first skill, the BSED English 1A got 89 percent which was equivalent to an excellent level. It denoted that the respondents applied word structure origin and context clues in interpreting the meaning of the unfamiliar words while, the BSED English 1B had 56% which was in the average level. It signified that the respondents can decode unfamiliar words but not always able to interpret meaning context fully. The next skill is finding main idea, the BSED English 1A got 51% percent which correspond to average level. It intended that the person involved can determine the main idea, can support it with one to two details and can locate three details that can support the main idea – and the BSED English 1B got 48% which fell also into the average level. The third skill was sequencing event BSED 1A got 45% which fell into poor level. It does not mean that they do not understand the story but they have difficulty identifying the chronological order of the events in the story. On the other hand, BSED 1B got 57% it fell in average level which the students can recall parts of the text but encouragement is needed to recall information. The fourth skill was Self-questioning the BSED 1A got 60% which correspond to average level. The students can answer the implicit or explicit questions with little encouragement. While, BSED 1B got 80% which fell to excellent level- students can answer the questions correctly and have better knowledge on this skills.

The fifth skill was summarizing BSED English 1A got 74% and BSED English 1B got 59%. The students can summarize but does not use text evidence to support the conclusion.

TABLE 3
The significant difference of Level Reading Comprehension Skills of the Students

| Variables | Mean Difference English 11A | Level of Significance English 1A | P-Value English 1A | Mean Difference English 1B | Level of Significance English 1B | P-Value English 1B | Decision English 1A | Decision English 1B | Interpretation |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Background Knowledge | 30.4 | 1.96 | -0.21 | 22 | 1.96 | 0.01 | Accepted Ho | | No Significant Difference |
| F.M.I | 17.5 | 1.96 | -0.24 | 16 | 1.96 | -0.06 | Accepted Ho | | No Significant Difference |
| S.E | 37.2 | 1.96 | 0.11 | 36.8 | 1.96 | 0.07 | Accepted Ho | | No Significant Difference |
| S.Q | 22.8 | 1.96 | 0.18 | 24.5 | 1.96 | 0.15 | Accepted Ho | | No Significant Difference |
| Summarizing | 260 | 1.96 | 2.45 | 200 | 1.96 | 2.06 | Rejected Ho | | There is Significant Difference |

Among the four skills (background knowledge, finding main idea, sequencing event, self-questioning) of reading comprehension, there is no significant difference. Since, the P-value of each level is less than the level of significance (1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. On the other hand, the summarizing skill or variable have significant difference. Hence, the P-value (2.06) is greater than the level of the significance (1.96). So, the null hypothesis is rejected.

CONCLUSION

The BSED English Freshmen in Talisay City College shows that they have average level which means that they need to improve their level in reading comprehension. Therefore, the researcher will craft an enhancement program that will enhance and develop their capabilities in reading comprehension.

RECOMMENDATION

The proposed Reading Enhancement Program is intensely recommended and should be given supplementary attention and immediate implementation to improve the reading comprehension skills. The program will be called READY (Reading Enhancement Activity and Development for the Youth)

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Development and Validation of Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics for TVL Senior High School Students

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Abstract: This study primarily aimed to develop and to validate a contextualized remediation workbook in General Mathematics specifically for Technical-Vocational-Livelihood students to help improve their academic performance in the said learning area. The topics included in the Workbook were solving rational equations, graphs of rational functions, solving exponential equations and inequalities, graphs of exponential functions, solving logarithmic equations and inequalities, and graphs of logarithmic functions. This study employed a Research and Development (R & D) design. Three groups of validators such as ten Mathematics Teachers, ten Mathematics Master Teachers and ten Learning Resources Management and Development System (LRMDS) Members evaluated the contextualized remediation Workbook according to its level of validity and acceptability using an adopted validation tool. Mean and One-Way Analysis of Variance were used in the statistical treatment. Based on the results, the Contextualized Remediation Workbook was very much valid and very much acceptable. Moreover, there was no significant difference in the level of validity and acceptability among the mean responses of the three groups of evaluators. It was recommended that other teachers should also develop contextualized materials to help create more meaningful teaching and learning experiences.

Introduction

The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 was passed to provide Philippine education with enough time for mastery of concepts and skills, to develop life-long learners, and to prepare the K to 12 graduates upon entering at least one of the four exits - the tertiary education, middle-level skills development, employment, and entrepreneurship, in the rapidly changing and increasingly globalized environment. As stated in its declaration of policy, the state shall establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education that is relevant to the needs of the people, the country and society-at-large (Republic Act No. 10533, 2013).

The Senior High School curriculum of the Philippine K to 12 program offers four tracks. One of these is the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) Track which consists of four strands: Agri-Fishery Arts, Home Economics, Information and Communications Technology, and Industrial Arts. As part of the curriculum requirements, all TVL-Senior High School students should be able to satisfactorily pass General Mathematics as one of its core subjects. Hence, each student in the TVL, though not an academic track, should still be able to master all the competencies in General Mathematics.

However, according to the academic performance of Bawing National High School TVL students in General Mathematics during the first semester of School Year 2018-2019 and even of the

previous school years, a significant number of these students had some difficulties in solving mathematical problems and exercises due to the lack of basic skills in Mathematics, absenteeism and other factors that affect their school performance. This signifies that they have not mastered the basic learning competencies in Junior High School. Hence, the researcher endeavored to develop and to validate a Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics for TVL Senior High School Students for them to better understand and master the concepts and skills in the said subject area.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to develop and to validate a Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics for TVL Senior High School students. Specifically, this research sought to answer the following questions:

1. What were the mean responses of the Math Teacher-evaluators, Math Master Teacher-evaluators and LRMDS members to the level of validity of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook in terms of Lesson Objectives; Lesson Inputs; Lesson Application; and Lesson Enrichment?
2. What were the mean responses of the Math Teacher-evaluators, Math Master Teacher-evaluators and LRMDS members to the level of acceptability of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook in terms of Clarity; Usefulness; Suitability; Adequacy; Timeliness; Language, Style and Format; Illustrations; and Presentations?
3. Was there any significant difference in the level of validity of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook among the mean responses of the Math Teachers, Mathematics Master Teachers and LRMDS members?
4. Was there any significant difference in the level of acceptability of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook among the mean responses of the Math Teachers, Math Master Teachers and LRMDS members?

Related Literature Remedial

According to the Department of Education (2018), remedial is any form of organized instructional interventions provided to all learners who are having learning gaps, difficulties in the lessons or subject area deficiency. The Department of Education also stated that the remediation program can be conducted to all the learners "by giving them tutorial, mentoring, coaching, or any other ways of delivering the organized learning experiences." Many research studies have proven that remedial instruction programs have been effective and helpful to alleviate the academic performances of the learners.

The Department of Education (2005) also has given an official order through DepEd Order No. 27 saying that "public secondary schools all over the nation should initiate, organize and provide remedial instruction programs to the learners to increase the chances that all of them will all complete high school with sufficient mastery of its coverage".

The Department of Education (2018) ensured that all learners will be able to complete the basic education with mastery in the learning competencies and with necessary skills for higher education,

specialized skills development, employment or entrepreneurship. For this reason, the Department of Education recognized the need to provide remediation classes to the learners to help bridge the gap and to ensure their continuous moving up from one grade level to the next.

Learning Materials

As cited by Bungag (2018) in her study, within the various learning environments, there are many alternative teaching-learning strategies as pointed which the teacher can use in his class. Within the learning setting, how the teacher acts concerning his learning objective is very vital. Hence, a teacher as a facilitator of learning must be aware that lots of alternatives can be used and that several learning strategies must be employed to facilitate a more enjoyable learning. She also said that Mathematics teachers must be armed with physical devices such as workbooks for them to introduce new lessons in Mathematics. For this reason, she recommended that teachers must have proper training on bookmaking to reinforce the teaching process. This is because the use of workbooks promotes individualized learning.

According to Golding (2011), modules, workbooks and similar resource materials reinforce learning. She also stated that "self-activity is the way to go". It implies that the experience gained by students while answering the resource material is very crucial in improving their view and understanding of the lesson, and their performance.

Hence, students should be provided with enough necessary learning materials to aid them individually in the teaching-learning process. The provision of such learning materials is of great help since it allows the learners to learn better just by themselves. The use of these instructional materials allows the learners to individually apply their skills in solving mathematical problems. These appropriate contextualized instructional materials could also serve as a guide for the learners in understanding better the mathematical concepts and procedures.

Contextualization

Contextualization is the localization of instructional materials used in the teaching and learning process. This aids the learners to better understand and relate to situations or problems. This is done by using specific names, places, events or things that can be found in the locality.

The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 stated that "the curriculum should be flexible enough" to enable and to allow all schools in elementary and in secondary level both in public and in private to indigenize, to localize and to enhance classroom lessons and activities based on learners' respective educational and social contexts. This clearly means that the classroom teaching, and learning should be contextualized.

Many learners are challenged in Mathematics. They find it difficult to understand the concepts in mathematical problems. With this difficulty, one way to address this is through the provision of supplemental contextualized instructional materials that will aid the students to relate to the examples and presentations as they can relate these in their field of study and to their own lives. As mentioned by Baker, Hope and Karandjef (2009), Contextualized Teaching and Learning (CTL) is found to be a teaching strategy that could potentially enhance the academic ability of the students as it actively involves the learners and develop their skills. Berns and Erickson (2001) defines it as "conception of teaching and learning that helps teachers relate subject matter content to real-world situations."

Also, according to Carim (2018), the Department of Education may have claimed that it has made the K to 12 curricula contextualized and enhanced however the textbooks provided by the government and circulated by different publishing houses to aid the teaching of core subjects were still written generally. These textbooks could have been very useful as a reference books for students' learning and retention of different concepts. However, this could be further improved by specializing the instructional materials intended for different fields the learners take.

Development and Validation of Remediation Workbook

As cited by Cutamora (2016) in his study, there are stages involved in the production of a workbook. These four stages are design, construction, validation and revision.

During the design stage, the teachers identifies the topics or learning competencies that are included in the development of the Workbook. In the validation stage, the draft of the Workbook is evaluated and is rated by different groups of validators – the Mathematics teachers, the Mathematics master teachers and School Heads/Supervisors. The evaluation is directed on the criteria and features that makes a quality Workbook complying with the validity and acceptability of the materials. The assessment and validation of the Workbook is done with the use of the following: questionnaires and checklist with a portion for comments or recommendations. In the revision stage, the Workbook is revised according to the assessment procedures that are employed during the validation stage. The comments and recommendations of the evaluators are taken into consideration improving the Workbook developed.

Related Studies

Many studies have proven that the development and the use of remediation materials have improved the poor academic performances of the learners in school especially in Mathematics. This suggests that teachers should be more creative in doing interventions just to facilitate learners to develop the skills needed in every learning competency. Since the learners need more support for them to cope with every learning competency, the development and production of a remediation Workbook is considered.

Bungag (2018) developed a Mathematics Workbook for Grade 8 Remediation Classes in Glan School of Arts and Trades in Glan, Sarangani Province. The workbook contains lessons on special products, factoring and an introduction to probability. Her study concluded that there is no significant difference among the mean responses of the teachers, master teachers, and school heads/supervisors which implies that they agree on the objectives, concepts, skills, usability, appropriateness and adequacy of the developed workbook as they rated Very High. She recommended in her study that workbooks should be developed for remediation classes for other grade levels after having developed a workbook for Mathematics Grade 8. Also, she stated that the production of workbooks and other instructional materials should be given with more emphasis and budget allocation of school administrators.

In 2016, Cutamora was also able to develop a workbook for Grade 7 students enrolled in Open High School Program of Leonard Young National High School in Glan, Sarangani Province. The workbook contained skills and concepts on integers; operations on integers; rational numbers; forms, operations and properties of rational numbers which was validated by teachers, school heads and supervisors in Sarangani Province. The results in his study showed that the groups of validators agreed on their evaluation of the usability, appropriateness and adequacy of the workbook.

Galanida (2005) developed instructional materials for Basic Mathematics, aimed to determine the validity and applicability of his developed instructional material as perceived by experts in Mathematics. He conducted the study by following the three phases of research process which were (1) the planning phase, (2) the writing phase, and (3) the validation phase. As indicated in the findings, 71 out of 72 activities of the developed materials were satisfactorily applicable which implies that the materials were useful in teaching basic college Mathematics. Thus, the researcher recommended that school administrators should encourage and support teachers in developing more instructional materials.

Conceptual Framework

The input of the study is the set of learning competencies in General Mathematics which includes the concepts/topics skills that need to be developed in the students. These are the least mastered learning competencies that they should master before the end of the semester.

The process is the development of the first draft of the Workbook which includes the identification of the contents/topics and skills, construction of the exercises and activities and the validation of the first draft of the Workbook according to its validity in terms of: lesson objectives, lesson inputs, lesson application and lesson enrichment; and also, according to its acceptability in terms of: clarity, usefulness, suitability, adequacy, timeliness, language, style and format, illustrations, and presentations.

Finally, the output is the development of the final draft of the contextualized remediation Workbook in General Mathematics which contains the Introduction, the Table of Contents, Definition of terms, and the remediation exercises. It is in the output that all comments and suggestions of the evaluators and panel members are considered for the improvement of the Workbook.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined operationally for a better understanding of the study.

General Mathematics. This is one of the Core Subjects in the K to 12 Senior High Curriculum. This is one of the Mathematics subjects offered to Grade 11 students.

Contextualization. This refers to the using of examples, names, stories, places, events, illustrations, etc. that are based on local culture, history, and reality which makes lessons relevant to learners and easy to understand.

Evaluators. These are the experts who rated the first draft of the contextualized remediation Workbook according to its validity and acceptability. There are the three sets of evaluators: Math Teachers, Math Master Teachers and LRMDS members.

Math Teachers. These are Mathematics teachers who have positions from Teacher I to Teacher III.

Math Master teachers. These are Mathematics teachers who have a Master Teacher position.

LRMDS Members. These refer to individuals who have the knowledge and skills and are trained in making learning resources or instructional materials that are suited for K-12 learners.

Validity. This refers to the quality of an instructional material being valid as it satisfactorily meets the standards of the evaluators with regards to lesson objectives, lesson inputs, lesson application and lesson enrichment.

Acceptability. This refers to the quality of an instructional material being acceptable as it satisfactorily meets the standards of the evaluators with regards to clarity, usefulness, suitability, adequacy, timeliness, language, style and format, illustrations and presentations.

Remediation Workbook. This pertains to the instructional material that can be used for remediation classes. This Workbook consists of contextualized simplified samples, illustrations and exercises which can be easily understood by the students and which can help the students to better understand the lessons. The development of this workbook was based on the least mastered competencies of the TVL students in General Mathematics.

TVL Senior High School Students. These are students in Senior High School curriculum who are enrolled in one of the four strands in Technical-Vocational-Livelihood Track which includes Agri-Fishery Arts, Home Economics, Information and Communications Technology and Industrial Arts.

Research Design

This study utilized the Research and Development (R&D) scheme. To come up with the desired output of the study, this study went through several stages. Based on the content and skills that were incorporated and given emphasis in the learning competencies of General Mathematics as provided in the K to 12 Curriculum of the Department of Education, the Workbook was developed. The Workbook was evaluated to ensure its validity in terms of Lesson Objectives, Lesson Inputs, Lesson Application and Lesson Enrichment; and its acceptability in terms of Clarity, Usefulness, Suitability, Adequacy, Timeliness, Language, Style and Format, Illustrations and Presentations. After considering all factors and suggestions that were given by the evaluators relating to the principles of high-quality development of the Workbook, the final output was the validated Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics for TVL Senior High School Students.

Evaluators

The validation of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook is the heart of this study. There were three groups of validators who evaluated the first draft of the Workbook.

The first group was the Teacher-evaluators consisting of 10 Mathematics Teachers while the second group was 10 Mathematics Master Teachers. To further assure the quality and standardization of the Workbook, the third group of evaluators, 10 LRMS members, critiqued the Workbook using the criteria given for validation. The three groups of validators were from the different public schools and offices in the Division of General Santos City and Division of South Cotabato.

Statistical Treatment

Weighted Mean was used for problem numbers 1 and 2. To interpret the results, the following five-point scale was used:

| Rating | Description | Interpretation |
|-----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 4.50-5.00 | Strongly Agree | Very Much Valid/Acceptable |
| 3.50-4.49 | Agree Much | Much Valid/Acceptable |
| 2.50-3.49 | Moderately Agree | Valid/Acceptable |
| 1.50-2.49 | Disagree | Less Valid/Acceptable |
| 1.00-1.49 | Strongly Disagree | Least Valid/Acceptable |

To answer problem numbers 3 and 4, One-Way Analysis of Variance was used. Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussions

Evaluation on the Level of Validity of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics

Ten (10) Mathematics Teachers, ten (10) Mathematics Master Teachers and ten (10) LRMDS Members evaluated the level of validity of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics in terms of its lesson objectives, lesson inputs, lesson application and lesson enrichment.

The following table below presents the level of validity of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook according to the three groups of validators.

Table 1. Level of Validity of the Workbook According to the Three Groups of Validators

| Criteria | Mean | | | Average | Interpretation |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|------------------------|
| | Math Teachers | Math Master Teachers | LRMDS Members | | |
| Lesson Objectives | 4.80 | 4.98 | 4.63 | 4.80 | Very Much Valid |
| Lesson Inputs | 4.25 | 4.43 | 4.33 | 4.34 | Much Valid |
| Lesson Application | 4.53 | 4.71 | 4.46 | 4.57 | Very Much Valid |
| Lesson Enrichment | 4.33 | 4.59 | 4.35 | 4.42 | Much Valid |
| Overall Mean | 4.48 | 4.68 | 4.44 | 4.53 | Very Much Valid |

As presented, the group of Math Master Teachers strongly agreed and evaluated the Workbook's level of validity as very much valid as indicated by the mean of 4.68. However, the groups of Math Teachers and LRMDS members agreed as they evaluated it as much valid as indicated by their means of 4.48 and 4.44, respectively.

The lesson objectives got the highest average rating of 4.80 as evaluated by the evaluators for they know that the objectives are aligned in the Curriculum Guide of General Mathematics. This implies that the lesson objectives of the Workbook are very much valid. This is supported by the statements of some the validators, saying, "The learning objectives are relevant and measurable." Some said that, "The learning objectives of the Workbook are very relevant since the objectives are aligned in the Curriculum Guide." Also, one validator said that, "The learning objectives are indeed achievable." In the same manner, the lesson application of the Workbook is very much valid as indicated by the average rating of 4.57. This is also supported by the statements of one of the validators, saying, "The lesson applications are fitted to the strand of the students since the word problems are localized. Because of this, the students can really relate to the problems."

The lesson enrichment of the Workbook is much valid as suggested by the average rating of 4.42. Meanwhile, the lesson inputs section has the lowest mean of 4.34 among the different parts of the

Workbook. Though it falls on the category of much valid, along with lesson enrichment, there is still a need to improve this part of the Workbook.

Overall, the level of validity of the contextualized remediation Workbook is very much valid as indicated by the overall mean of 4.53. This implies that the lesson objectives, lesson inputs, lesson application and lesson enrichment of the Workbook are useful and very much related to the topics in General Mathematics. This is in concurrence to the findings of the study conducted by Tan-Espinar and Ballado (2017).

Evaluation on the Level of Acceptability of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics

The same three groups of validators evaluated the acceptability of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics in terms of clarity, usefulness, suitability, adequacy, timeliness, language, style and format, illustrations, and presentations.

Table 2 presents the level of acceptability of the first draft of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook according to the three groups of validators.

Table 2. Level of Acceptability of Workbook According to the Three Groups of Validators

| Criteria | Mean | | | Mean | Interpretation |
|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| | Math Teachers | Math Master Teachers | LRMDS Members | | |
| Clarity | 4.60 | 4.83 | 4.73 | 4.72 | Very Much Acceptable |
| Usefulness | 4.55 | 4.54 | 4.68 | 4.59 | Very Much Acceptable |
| Suitability | 4.38 | 4.63 | 4.65 | 4.55 | Very Much Acceptable |
| Adequacy | 4.43 | 4.59 | 4.37 | 4.46 | Much Acceptable |
| Timeliness | 4.77 | 4.93 | 4.67 | 4.79 | Very Much Acceptable |
| Language, Style and Format | 4.64 | 4.83 | 4.25 | 4.57 | Very Much Acceptable |
| Illustrations | 4.36 | 4.76 | 4.20 | 4.44 | Much Acceptable |
| Presentations | 4.80 | 4.93 | 4.57 | 4.77 | Very Much Acceptable |
| Overall Mean | 4.57 | 4.76 | 4.52 | 4.62 | Very Much Acceptable |

As presented, the groups of Math Teachers, Math Master Teachers and LRMDS members all strongly agreed and evaluated the Contextualized Remediation Workbook's level of acceptability as very much acceptable as indicated by the means of 4.57, 4.76 and 4.52, respectively.

The three groups of evaluators strongly agreed and evaluated the Workbook's level of acceptability in terms of clarity, usefulness, suitability, timeliness, language, style and format, and presentations as very much acceptable as indicated by the means of 4.72, 4.59, 4.55, 4.79, 4.57 and 4.77, respectively. While they agreed that its adequacy and illustrations are much acceptable as indicated by the means of 4.46 and 4.44, respectively.

The timeliness of the Workbook got the highest average rating which means that the development of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook is very much timely since the students don't have sufficient supply of learning materials. This Workbook could indeed help the students in understanding and mastering the least mastered learning competencies in General Mathematics.

On the other hand, the Workbook's adequacy and illustrations were the two least rated criteria. This suggests that more activities should be added to increase students' knowledge and skills on the learning competencies or the topics. The important terms should be defined for reinforcement. Since the Workbook is designed to provide remedial interventions to students who are less inclined to

Mathematics, the directions should be clear and simple. Moreover, the illustrations should arouse students' interest to make learning enjoyable.

Overall, the developed Contextualized Remediation Workbook is evaluated as very much acceptable as indicated by the overall mean of 4.62.

Comparison of the Evaluation of Contextualized Remediation Workbook According to Its Level of Validity

Table 3. Results of One-Way Analysis of Variance of the Responses of the Three Groups of Validators for Workbook's Level of Validity

| Source of Variation | SS | df | MS | F | P-value | F crit |
|---------------------|--------|----|--------|--------|---------|--------|
| Between Groups | 0.3204 | 2 | 0.1602 | 1.5138 | 0.2382 | 3.3541 |
| Within Groups | 2.8573 | 27 | 0.1058 | | | |
| Total | 3.1777 | 29 | | | | |

Based on the results, the $F_{computed}$ value of 1.5138 is not significant as indicated by the p -value 0.2382 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the mean responses of the three groups of evaluators in the level of validity of the remediation Workbook have no significant difference. Hence, Math Teachers, Math Master Teachers and LRMDs members all agree on their evaluations on the level of validity of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics.

Comparison of the Evaluation of Contextualized Remediation Workbook According to Its Level of Acceptability

Table 4. Results of One-Way Analysis of Variance of the Responses of the Three Groups of Validators for Workbook's Level of Acceptability

| Source of Variation | SS | df | MS | F | P-value | F crit |
|---------------------|--------|----|--------|--------|---------|--------|
| Between Groups | 0.3197 | 2 | 0.1599 | 1.5458 | 0.2314 | 3.3541 |
| Within Groups | 2.7925 | 27 | 0.1034 | | | |
| Total | 3.1122 | 29 | | | | |

As presented on the table, the $F_{computed}$ value of 1.5458 is not significant as indicated by the p -value 0.2314 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the mean responses of the three groups of evaluators in the level of acceptability of the remediation Workbook also have no significant difference. Hence, Math Teachers, Math Master Teachers and LRMDs members also agree on their evaluation on the level of acceptability of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics.

This is also in concurrence to the study conducted by Bungag (2018) wherein she concluded that there is no significant difference among the mean responses of the three groups of evaluators.

Conclusions

Based on the results and discussions of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

The level of validity of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics for TVL Senior High School students is very much valid. The level of acceptability of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics for TVL Senior High School students is very much acceptable. There is no significant difference in the level of validity among the mean responses of Math Teachers, Math Master Teachers and LRMDs members. Also, there is no significant difference in the level of acceptability among the mean responses of Math Teachers, Math Master Teachers and LRMDs members. Since the level of validity of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook is very much valid and its level of acceptability is very much acceptable, therefore, the second set of validation is no longer needed.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following are recommended:

1. After the final revisions of the Contextualized Remediation Workbook in General Mathematics for TVL Senior High School students, pilot testing should be done to measure the effectiveness of the developed Workbook in enhancing the learning of students and in improving their academic performance in the learning area as well.
2. More trainings or workshops on contextualization of lessons should be conducted by the school administrators and DepEd Division personnel to teachers for them to also be able to develop more quality contextualized instructional materials to improve the academic performances of the students.

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English Language Teaching in Qawmi Girls' Madrasas in Bangladesh: Problems, Challenges and Prospects

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Abstract: The research aims at identifying the problems, challenges, and prospects of English language teaching practice in girls' Madrasas. For the purpose of the investigation 5 Qawmi Madrasas for girls had been selected in Sylhet, Bangladesh. The Qawmi Madrasas have larger student base and more conservative curriculum than Alia Madrasas. Interviews of both teachers and students have been conducted with separate questionnaires to collect the necessary data that was analyzed using an inductive method. Based on the collected data, this paper presents a guideline for improving teaching practice in the girls' Madrasas that can benefit the teachers, students as well as the policy makers.

Keywords: Girls' Madrasa, English, Problems, Solutions, Teacher

Introduction

Any foreign language, including English, is difficult to learn if the learners are not exposed to the language in everyday life. The Qawmi Madrasa whose aim is to educate students in religious knowledge by using Arabic and Urdu as the medium of instruction, adopts a traditional system of teaching and learning based on text memorization and oral transition. They mostly overlook the necessity of learning English and thus creating a generation who are totally unaware of the perspective and practical aspects of learning English. This paper discusses the problems of teaching in Madrasas. The researcher also came up with some possible solutions while considering the challenges regarding implementing them. All the solutions mentioned here are possible to be realized only if the practitioners and policy makers are willing to do so.

Statement of the Problem

The main concern of Qawmi Madrasa is to teach students the Quran, the Hadith, and Tafsir. Although subjects like English, Bangla, and Science are included in the curriculum, they are considered as worldly knowledge and are often seen as a barrier to spiritual path. Moreover what I found while visiting girls' Madrasas is that the students are encouraged to adopt a submissive and meek behavior. Consequently these girls who are trained to learn passivity become inhibited to learn a foreign language.

Research Questions

- What are the main difficulties regarding teaching English in Qawmi girls' Madrasas?

<http://www.gentefl.org/gen-tefl-journal.html>

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- What are the causes of these difficulties?
- How to deal with these difficulties? What are some possible solutions?

Literature Review

Although there has been a rich body of work done that identifies and analyzes the problems of teaching English in Bangladeshi classrooms, there are very few works detailing these problems in the madrasas. When it comes to the Qawmi madrasas, no mentionable research exists that deals with the problems of teaching and learning in these institutions. A thorough search did not even reveal the presence of any research conducted with the girl students of these madrasas in focus.

This research therefore had to depend first on the theoretical works on the teaching of English as a second and foreign language, and then on the general body of research conducted on teaching English in Bangladeshi schools for a theoretical framework, methodology, directions and insights.

Teacher's English language proficiency level significantly impacts teaching (Nunan, 2003; Orafi and Borg, 2009). When the teacher is not proficient in English, it is impossible for her to conduct a class in English.

According to a study conducted in Bangladesh teachers have a tendency of slipping into Bangla after starting a sentence in English (Haider and Chowdhury, 2012). Teacher's training is one of the factors which cannot be ignored for the development of learners. According to Glynis (1999), the teachers need models of pronunciation, a scheme of work and teaching ideas.

Motivation is a very important factor for learning a foreign language. According to Corder (1967), given motivation, it is inevitable that a human being will learn a second language if he is exposed to the language data. Harmer (2001) distinguishes between two kinds of motivation- extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation is the result of outside factors. Intrinsic motivation, by contrast, comes from within the individual. A person who enjoys the learning process is intrinsically motivated. According to the majority of researcher's intrinsic motivation produces better result than extrinsic motivation.

For acquiring the necessary skills of language learning, there should be adequate classroom resources. Language competence grows incrementally through the interaction of reading, writing and talking (Discoll and Frost, 1999).

Kachru (1985) described English users/learners in terms of 3 circles. The inner circle indicates the countries where English is the first language, i.e. England, the USA, Canada, Australia. The outer circle refers to the countries where English is widely used and in many cases as the second language, i.e. India, Bangladesh. The last one is the expanding circle where English is learnt as a foreign language. For example, when people learn English in Japanese, it is considered as a foreign language. Looking into the circles, we find Bangladesh into the outer circle. Even though English is not officially the second language in Bangladesh, it is a mandatory subject in schools from class 1 to 12.

When we consider English as a subject to learn, we consider covering the basic four skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening and reading are the receptive skills whereas speaking and writing are the productive skills.

Listening is a skill often ignored and feared by the language learners as well as the teachers. Marc Helgensen (2003) identifies five principles for teaching listening. First one is exposing students to different ways of processing information. This can be either bottom up or top down, even in some cases a combination of both. Whereas the bottom up processing focuses on grammar, vocabulary; the top down processing relies on learner's background knowledge on a given situation.

The second principle is exposing students to different types of listening. That is listening for different purposes. The third principle emphasizes on teaching of a variety of tasks. For example, after listening students should not only be given one type of task such as multiple-choice questions or true-false. In fact, they can be given a variety of task to avoid boredom as well as developing multiple skills. While the tasks should not demand too much production from the learners, the students should be exposed to a wider range of task. The fourth principle suggests acknowledging the issues of difficulty and authenticity while choosing the text. The difficulty level of the text determines to what extent listening will be successful. At the same time an authentic text makes listening more purposeful. The final principle suggests teaching students certain listening strategies such as predicting, inferring, monitoring, clarifying etc before assigning them with listening tasks.

Teaching of the speaking skill is often considered simple and in many places speaking practice includes memorizing phrases and dialogues. However, for Kathleen M. Bailey (2003), this is much more than memorization. She mentions five principles for teaching speaking. The first principle draws attention on being aware of the difference between second language and foreign language learning contexts. Same techniques and methods of teaching cannot be applied in both contexts. The second principle emphasizes on giving students practice that demand both fluency and accuracy. A teacher must give students feedback on accuracy but at the same time they should be aware of not hampering the fluency.

The third principle is about limiting the teacher talk and increasing student talk by incorporating group work/ pair works in the classroom activities. The fourth principle suggests the teacher should assign students with those speaking tasks that demands negotiation for meaning, only through negotiation students build better understanding of the language. Finally, the fifth principle focuses on designing classroom activities covering both transactional and interactional speaking.

While reading, a reader uses certain strategies to accomplish a purpose. According to Neil Anderson (2003), a teaching practitioner should keep certain principles in mind while designing reading activities. The first principle suggests considering readers' background knowledge before setting up a task. If the readers are unfamiliar of the topic itself, they will not be able to complete the task appropriately. The second principle emphasizes on developing strong vocabulary base for the readers prior to reading. Unless the readers are familiar with the words, the reading activity will turn into a pointless commotion. Unfortunately, most of the reading classes focus on testing rather than teaching.

Therefore, the third principle advocates for teaching of the comprehension skills. The fourth principle recommends the teacher should work on students' reading rate while balancing between the fluency and accuracy.

The fifth principle implies that the readers should be taught a variety of reading strategies that can suit different reading tasks. The sixth principle suggests the teacher should encourage and guide the readers in transforming their strategies into skills so that reading becomes something natural to them. The seventh principle amplifies a successful reading program that must include both assessment and evaluation in the teaching. The final principle proposes the teacher himself should strive for continuous improvement by accepting his role as the facilitator.

Even though writing is that one skill which is most commonly taught and evaluated in a language classroom, most of the teachers are unaware of the underlying principles of teaching writing. Maggie Sokolik (2003) has come up with four principles for successfully teaching the writing skill. The first principle is about understanding the students' reasons for writing and then designing likewise tasks. The second principle suggests the teacher should create as many writing opportunities as possible for the students because writing improves with practice. The third principle implies that teacher should provide students with helpful and meaningful feedback of their writing. The students should be aware of their mistakes and how they can overcome these. The final principle says the students should be informed on how their writing will be evaluated to avoid any kind of confusion.

Methodology

To conduct this research, a qualitative exploratory approach was followed by the researcher. Interviews of 10 students and 10 teachers from 5 Qawmi Madrasas for girls using two separate questionnaires with 17 and 13 open ended questions were taken. An inductive method of data analysis has been used to obtain the results.

Findings

Based on the interviews, the researcher found the following problems concerning English teaching in girls' Madrasas:

Teachers' Qualification

None of the teachers whom I interviewed had a degree in English. Some of them were students of Zoology, Psychology and even Bangla. Moreover, they didn't receive any pre-service training. Although all of them said that they have the opportunity to attend in- service training, they couldn't precisely explain how the training had helped them to improve their teaching practice.

Medium of Instruction and Communication

In the girls Madrasas that I visited, the teachers use Bangla to conduct the lesson. They justify this action by saying students are from rural areas and they won't understand the class if instructions

are given in English. Moreover, students are not compelled to use English for communication. For them the idea of communication is merely repeating after the teacher.

The Tendency to Memorize

The teaching and learning in Madrasas is mostly dependent on memorization. Any inputs given in the class are memorized by the students. There is no real scope of showing creativity for the students.

No Real Exposure to Target Language

As the students of girls' Madrasas are detached from the outside world, there only sources of getting input in English are the teacher and textbook. However real acquisition of a second language only takes place when being exposed to it in more naturalistic ways or by using the language for serving some real life purpose. This could be done through reading English books, newspaper or magazine; by watching news or other programs in English; and by using the language for communicative purpose. Nonetheless in reality the students in Madrasas are devoid of all these facilities.

Failure to Develop the four Basic Skills

All the testing in Madrasas are more or less writing evaluation. All of the teachers who were interviewed claimed that their students are learning all four skills but when asked they could not clarify what activities are done to teach reading, listening and speaking or how these skills are tested.

Lack of Confidence

As the students in girls' Madrasas are growing up in a restricted environment they become very shy in nature. Their affective filter (an invisible psychological filter that can either facilitate or hinder language production in a second language) seems to be high and as a result they are not confident enough to use the language even to construct any sentence independently.

The Treatment of English as a Minor Subject

In the Madrasas English is considered a subsidiary subject. Therefore, the students' only intention is passing the exams rather than learning the language as there is no extrinsic motivation regarding developing English skill, students are quite indifferent toward the subject.

The Challenges

When I asked the teachers what changes they want to bring in English teaching at Madrasa, they had a variety of opinions. About the textbook it was suggested that there needs to be more grammar items and a diversity of content. Teachers also think if they had English board exam in class 8 and even after that it could motivate the students in learning English. However, to make these suggestions into reality, long term planning is needed as these ideas demand for a huge change in Madrasa board.

Therefore, this paper comes up with some suggestions which do not need long term planning and are practically applicable only if the teachers and policy makers in Madrasas are willing.

Recommendations

Teacher's Training

From the interviews, it is evident that although there is scope for teacher's training in the Madrasa, they are more like a formality than action. These trainings focus on explaining the curriculum instead of exploring the teaching methods. Hence my suggestion would be arranging teachers' training that will focus on different teaching approaches as well as the techniques to teach different skills. For arranging the trainings Madrasas should not rely solely on the Madrasa board; they can contact private organizations like British Council, UKBET for conducting the teachers' training.

Using English as a Medium of Instruction

From the collected data it is apparent that the teachers themselves who are teaching in girls Madrasas are not proficient in speaking English, as a result they cannot use English for instruction or explanation. To solve this problem Madrasas should come up with the rule that any candidate applying for the post of English teacher must have a language proficiency certificate from any language center. Moreover, while recruiting the Madrasa authority should look for candidates who have at least a B.A degree in English.

Giving Students Enough Opportunity to Talk

The teacher should try her best to maximize student talk in the classroom. The teacher should know how to utilize group work or pair work for this purpose. Instead of mimicking the teacher students should be engaged in sharing opinion, debating and solving problem in groups. Pair work or group work help to boost up students' confidence level by allowing them to remain in a comfort zone. When students are engaged in the pair/group work, the teacher can monitor them from outside while correcting them occasionally.

Designing Classroom Activities to Develop All Four Skills

Teachers should use interesting activities in the classroom that will motivate the students to participate willingly. Some techniques that can be used to practice speaking are:

- a. Short Speech: Students will get random topics and they have to give a speech on that topic. When they are done, the teacher may give feedback on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.
- b. Role Play: Students will have to make conversation in pair playing role of a given character, i.e. doctor-patient, waiter-customer etc. They will get some time to take preparation before performing in front of the whole class.
- c. Advice Giving: Here one student will come up with a problem and another student will give suggestions as a counselor. This activity enables students to practice functional language like requesting, advising etc.

- d. Job Interview: One group of students will be job seekers and another group will be interviewers. Interviews will ask various questions and job seekers have to answer them using correct vocabulary, grammar while maintaining proper etiquettes.
- e. Story Telling: One student will start a story and everyone will add up to the story when their turn comes, eventually the last person will finish the story. Although this is a speaking activity it helps to develop students' creativity.
- f. Describing Picture: In this activity teacher will show a picture related to the lesson and students have to describe it. Teacher can also assign with the task of guessing the storyline behind the picture.
- g. Classroom Debate: Students will be divided into small groups. They will argue for and against on a topic related to society, economy etc.

To develop listening skills, following activities can be used in the class:

- a. Answering Questions: Teacher will play a recording. When it's finished teacher will ask students various questions related to the recording.
- b. Filling up a Chart/Graph: Students will get a graph/chart prior to listening. Based on the listening students will complete the given chart/graph.
- c. Arranging Picture: students will listen to a story and based on the story they will arrange pictures which were given before chronologically.
- d. Taking down the Message: Students will listen to a message. They have to note it down correctly.
- e. Deducting Information: Students will listen to different people talking about their everyday lives in a recording. Based on the described activities students have to guess their occupation.

Some suggestions for practicing reading skill are given below:

- a. Describing Ads: Students will read an advertisement from newspaper and elaborate them in small narratives.
- b. Matching Instructions: Students will go through a set of jumbled instructions i.e. a recipe. They have to put the instructions in correct order.
- c. Predicting the text: Students will be given some words from a text. By seeing the words they have to guess predict what type of text they are going to read. After that they will read the text and find out whether their assumptions are correct.
- d. Matching Headings: Students will get some titles or headings. They have to match them with the correct paragraphs of the text.
- e. Making Information Chart: Students will read a text about any place or country and present the main information in a chart.

Even though writing is the only skill that is practiced regularly on Madrasas, some suggestions are given below to make writing more effective.

- a. Writing Letter: The class will be divided into two groups. Both groups will write a letter to each other while playing certain character.
- b. Writing a Review: Students will read an extract from a literary piece. After the reading they will write a review on it.
- c. Making a Poster: Students will prepare a poster based on a given text.
- d. Fast Writing: This activity aims to increase students' confidence about writing. They will be given a topic and they have to write on the topic as quickly as possible. They cannot stop for thinking and will keep on writing whatever comes to their mind.
- e. Writing from a Model: Students will get a text and they have to write an essay based on the text using similar structure but modified ideas. For example, they may get an essay called 'my mother' but they have to write an essay titled 'my father'

Setting up a Library:

The girls studying in these Qawmi Madrasas don't have the chance to explore outside world. Therefore, if each Madrasa set up a library containing English books, magazines and newspapers, then the girls will get some exposure to English. According to Keith (2004) school libraries help teachers to educate students in a better way. When students have access to library they can be in charge of their own learning. Therefore, having a library is an integral part of developing student learning.

Adopting a Humanistic Approach in the Classroom:

Teachers should follow a humanistic approach in the classroom in order to make students feel good about them. A humanistic approach in teaching concentrates on the learner's self-development. In the case of Madrasas, the girls do not have any extrinsic motivation to learn language but if it is possible to make them inwardly driven their learning rate can be higher as they will be able to reward themselves through achieving self-satisfaction.

Conclusion

Teaching a foreign language is not always an easy task. Especially in girls' Madrasas where English is a neglected subject, making the task even more challenging. This research was conducted with the purpose of identifying the challenges related to teaching and learning English in the Qawmi Madrasas for girls. I have suggested some solutions for the improvement of teaching practice which are easy enough to follow only if the concerned authorities are keen. I would like to conclude by saying that learning a language can never be a hindrance towards religious ways. Madrasa education is one of the main streams of our education system. Still in rural areas people prefer Madrasas over bangle medium schools. According to a report from the Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS) who conducted a first of its kind study in 2014, there were approximately

340,000 female students enrolled in over 1200 female Qawmi Madrasas across the country. It is imperative that these students are given proper opportunity to learn and practice the English language to prepare them to compete with fellow students from the mainstream educational system for jobs and other opportunities.

The recommendations made in this paper will not be of much help unless the concerned authorities realize the importance of learning English. As it is an issue that concerns the advancement of education as a whole, the Government, Madrasa education board, civil society and other organizations working in the educational sector should come forward to improve the teaching of English in the Qawmi Madrasas. We can't expect to get an educated generation by putting aside the Madrasa students. Therefore, the welfare of Madrasas should be the concern of the policy makers.

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Appendix 1***English Language Teaching in Girls' Madrasas: Problems, Challenges and Prospects***

Name of the participant:

Name of the institution:

Date:

Interview questions for teachers

1. Can you please tell me about your educational background?
2. Did you receive any training in teaching/ pedagogy?
3. Is there any scope for you to update your teaching through training?
4. What is the duration of the classes that you take?
5. What materials do you use in the class?
6. Do you use only English in teaching your class or do you also use Bangla?
7. Do you think your students enjoy learning English?
8. What do you find most challenging regarding teaching English?
9. How do you test students' level of learning?
10. Do you encourage students to memorize answers, or write creatively?
11. Is there any scope of creative writing for students?
12. Does the administration emphasize on following a particular teaching pattern?
13. What do you do to ensure that students are using English for communication?
14. Do you make students work in pairs or group?
15. Do you teach your students to acquire all the four skills of language? If not, why?
16. Do you think the students like the curriculum? What improvements in the curriculum do you suggest?
17. What are your suggestions for improving teaching English in Madrasas?

Appendix 2***English Language Teaching in Girls' Madrasas: Problems, Challenges and Prospects***

Name of the participant:

Name of the institution:

Date:

Interview questions for students

1. Do you enjoy English classes? If not, why?
2. What materials are used in the class?
3. Do you find them difficult? If so, why?
4. Do you think these can be improved?
5. What is the medium of instruction in class?
6. What do you find difficult about learning English?
7. How do you prepare yourself for the exam?
8. Do you get help from teacher/s outside the classroom?
9. Do you read anything in English other than the text books?
10. Do you get pair work or group work in classroom?
11. Does your teacher test your skills in writing, speaking, listening and reading?
12. In which skill/skills do you think you and your friends have the biggest lacking?
13. Do you think learning English is important for you?

SM-3T PROGRAM AND EFL TEACHERS' QUALITY: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract: This qualitative study aims at finding out whether or not Indonesian Government Program named SM-3T (*Sarjana Mendidik di Daerah Terdepan, Terluar dan Tertinggal*) is effective to improve Indonesian EFL teachers' quality. This SM-3T Program is a program designed by the Indonesian Government for fresh graduates to teach for a year in disadvantaged, foremost, and outermost areas throughout Indonesia. Additionally, it also seeks to reveal and identify the difficulties that they have encountered when they were teaching in those areas and how those challenges could be turned out to be good opportunities for their future teaching career. The selected informants are 10 SM-3T teachers who have been back from their teaching areas. Questionnaire and interview have been used as the instruments for data collection. The results reveal that these teachers faced many various physical, socio-economic and cultural challenges during their teaching period. They had to struggle to be able to adapt with the local culture to survive. However, they have also admitted that those challenges have changed their perceptions about the importance of education in general and the need to urgently improve themselves in EFL teaching in particular.

Keywords: SM-3T Program, EFL, Teachers' Quality, Opportunities, Challenges

Introduction

Indonesia is a big country which consists of 34 provinces, 416 regencies/98 cities, 7.094 districts, and 8.480 sub-districts/74.957 villages (as of 2018 July). Below is the map of Indonesia with its administrative division.



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subdivisions_of_Indonesia

122 out of 416 regencies have been designated by Mr. Joko Widodo as the President of Indonesia as underdeveloped regions during the period of 2015-2019 that has been officially stated in the Presidential Regulation, Number 131/2015, concerning Determination of Disadvantaged Regions in 2015-2019. The areas classified as underdeveloped ones are those whose regions and communities are less developed compared to other regions on a national scale. These 122 regencies are also known as disadvantaged, foremost, and outermost areas or in Bahasa it is called *daerah 3T (Terdepan, Terluar, dan Tertinggal)*.

This SM-3T term is particularly used in an education program established by Indonesian government as one of the efforts to improve the quality of education in Indonesia, especially in rural schools. The term 3T itself refers to disadvantaged, foremost, and outermost which is in accordance with the condition as well as the location where these areas are situated. Disadvantaged areas are those which are far behind in many ways compared to the ones in big cities or urban areas, in terms of teaching facilities, technology, and human resources (i.e. good qualified teachers). Foremost areas are the areas which are located in the front line of Indonesia. They are the borderline areas with neighboring countries, such as the Provinces of NTT (East Nusa Tenggara), Papua, Aceh, North Sulawesi, West Kalimantan and East Kalimantan. Outermost areas refer to the areas outside Java.

A Brief Description of SM-3T Program

The program of SM-3T is for fresh graduates majoring in *Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan* (the Faculty of Teacher Training and Educational Science). Its main aim is to overcome shortage of teachers in a short period of time (one year). The issue of educational equality has become another aim of this program, which is to solve the problem of educational inequality because everyone should have similar opportunities in life, including opportunity in getting education. Additionally, this program has also been designed to prepare all the teacher participants to become not only professional teachers but also high qualified educators in their future career.

All fresh graduates who graduated from the Faculty of Teacher Training and Educational Science are welcome to apply to be included in a competitive selection process. The process will cover several stages, namely administration test as the first stage, the second stage is testing and assessment of academic potential and the interview section will be held in the last stage.

Based on the data taken from various national newspapers, both online and offline, this program has already had more than ten thousand graduates who have joined and experienced teaching in 3T areas. There have been seven batches sent to 3T areas through this program before the government has finally decided to revisit the program to end in 2017. There were 2.465 participants in the first batch for academic year 2011-2012 and 2.670 participants involved in the second batch which started from 2012-2013. The third batch was sent in 2013-2014 and there were 2.803 participants and 3.000 participants were sent in batch four to teach in the academic year of 2014-2015. The last two batches were held in the academic years of 2015-2016 and 2016-2017. Batch five sent 3.000 participants and the last batch sent 1.000 participants.

No more SM-3T participants were sent to 3T areas after 2017 because the program no longer exists. However, The Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education has come to the decision of revising this program to change with a similar program with better effectiveness. Although this program has come to an end, various achievements have been recorded, such as: it has been recorded by World of Records Museum – Indonesia as the most successful program for sending many teachers to 3T areas; it is one of the most favorite programs for non-civil servants to empower the fresh graduates of undergraduate level; it has been designed to be able to create reliable and trustworthy teachers; despite

its temporary status, this program has already become the answer of the education inequality problem in Indonesia; and it has created more than 10.000 reliable and qualified teachers in which many of them have been selected as professional and certified teachers.

Based on the overview earlier, this paper aims at finding out whether or not Indonesian Government Program named SM-3T (*Sarjana Mendidik di Daerah Terdepan, Terluar dan Tertinggal*) is effective to improve Indonesian EFL teachers' quality. Besides, it also seeks to reveal and identify teachers' difficulties when they were teaching in those areas and how those challenges could be turned out to be good opportunities for their future teaching career.

Literature Review

The difficulty of teaching in rural schools has been a trending topic to be studied by many experts. They come up with many valuable results stating that generally, teaching in rural schools is difficult and teaching English either as a Second (ESL) or a Foreign Language (EFL) is even more complicated with all the challenges faced by both teachers and students (Holguin & Morales, 2016; Brown, 2003; Cruz-Arcila, 2013). This complexity has become the main reason why not many teachers want to teach in rural schools (UNESCO, 2011).

The issues of differences in cultural, tradition, socio-economic, environmental and education quality aspects between urban and rural schools are the causes of rural teachers' shortage (Brown, 2003; Cruz-Arcila, 2013; Perfetti, 2005; Moulton, 2001; Barley & Bringham, 2005) and this kind of problems also exists in rural schools in Indonesia. Most students in rural areas still use their local languages in daily communication (Nababan, 1991) and language differences also create problem for teachers, especially for those who do not share the same languages.

Those problems mentioned above have made many teachers reluctant to teach in rural schools and most of them choose to teach urban students. This phenomenon leads to the imbalance of educational opportunity and quality between urban and rural schools in Indonesia. Good qualified teachers tend to teach in urban areas and as a consequence the quality of education in rural schools tends to be poor.

It is generally believed that most rural school teachers do not have adequate competence to teach EFL because they almost never use effective teaching methods, such as, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This method is assumed to be quite hard to be implemented due to all the limitations in terms of situations and conditions of teaching and learning (Jarvis & Atsilarat, 2004; Lai, 1994; Tipka, 2004). Another critical issue is teachers' poor quality in English skill. The teaching and learning process will not become efficient if teachers use local languages as classroom language of instruction most of the time (Sullivan, 2011). The use of English as the medium of instruction is essential for students' language exposure. It can be started from giving simple instructions and asking easy questions during the lesson period (Nation, 2003). Students' motivation is another problematic issue in teaching and learning EFL in rural schools. As mentioned earlier, most rural students tend to use their local languages in their daily lives and this makes them have low motivation in learning English. Having no motivation to learn a language means having no effort nor willingness as well as no positive attitudes towards the language (Gardner, 1985) and this will create failure in learning.

Positive changes have to be made to change the classroom atmosphere which will eventually change not only EFL teaching and learning situation but also students' quality. The first change has to

be started from teachers as the executors. If teachers are good then they will teach well using great methods to create better students. This is why, the Indonesian government has established a program, called SM-3T to start the changes by sending fresh graduates whom are considered qualified to teach students in 3T/rural schools for one year.

Methodology

There were 10 EFL teachers which consisted of 6 teachers who taught in the provinces of North and East Kalimantan (Nunukan, Malinau and Kutai Barat Regencies) from November 2012 to October 2013 and the other 4 taught in the province of Papua (Deiya and Mappi Regencies) from November 2014 to October 2015 through SM-3T Program.

The instruments used to collect the data were questionnaire and interview. The questions in the questionnaire were focused on the teachers' motivations in joining the program of SM-3T; their impressions of several important aspects, namely, the places where they lived, the schools where they taught, the local teachers, the students, the teaching - learning atmosphere, parents of their students and local society; the students' motivation in learning English; and the most important question is about whether or not it was difficult for them to teach English in the schools in 3T or rural areas. In the interview section, they were asked further questions (elicitation) about their answers in the questionnaire (i.e. data triangulation) and also about how their teaching experience as SM-3T teachers had contributed to their teaching career after the program.

The answers to the questions of the questionnaire and interview have been qualitatively analysed and the explanation will be provided in a more detailed description based on the participant teachers' answers in the results and discussion part.

Results and Discussion

The results of this study will be divided into three parts in order to answer the research questions. The first part is about the difficult circumstances which are considered as challenges faced by the teachers during their one year teaching period, the next part relates to the strategies used by these SM-3T teachers to cope with the challenges and the last one is about teachers' opportunities achieved through the program.

Difficult Circumstances: Challenges

The results of this study have shown that each and every teacher had reason(s) why they were interested in joining SM-3T Program. It is believed that their reasons are important to be identified in order to measure their motivation and willingness to face the challenge they found during their teaching period in 3T schools. Although they had different ways in expressing their answers but it can be concluded that having a new and great experience has come up as the most dominant reason of joining this program.

All of them had known earlier that they would have faced various challenging situations but they still decided to accept those new challenging experience. They further explained that by accepting those challenges they would become better teachers in the future. They believed that their characters could be better shaped by traveling to new places far from home for quite a long time and adapting to new lives, cultures and traditions. Another dominant reason is that they had strong motivation to improve students' English skills by becoming English teachers for a year through this program.

The difficult circumstances have been expressed through their answers to the questions which relate to their impressions of their experience living and teaching in those disadvantaged, foremost, and outermost areas. These difficult circumstances had been seen as challenges they had to face during the teaching period. In this discussion part, what has been classified as challenges will be divided into three categories of aspect, they are, physical, socio-economic, and cultural.

Based on the data of questionnaire and interview, after spending their time living among the local community for about one year, these teachers then had various impressions on many things dealing with their main job as English teachers in those areas. They narratively expressed their impressions on the place where they used to live, the school where they used to teach, the local teachers, students as well as their parents as described below:

Basically, they had both good and bad impressions. They all had good impression about local people in the rural areas of Kalimantan and Papua. According to them, local people were nice and friendly. The locals really welcomed them as visitors to their villages and made them feel like home. In spite of the background differences related to ethnicity, religion, race, and social groups, the locals held tightly to issues of tolerance, solidarity and fraternity. Another positive impression was about the places where they lived and worked. They said those places were such great places with beautiful scenery. They were rich in natural resources with fertilized soil and productive land.

Despite the facts that there was warm welcome by the locals and that the places were such great ones as favourable impressions, the teachers of SM3T, on the other hand, also had unfavourable impressions while they were teaching in the rural areas in the provinces of Kalimantan and Papua. Having the experience to live in remote areas for one year was a precious but somehow suffering moment for these teachers. They had to get used to live in places where all kind of services were limited and difficult to access. This condition had never been faced by them when they were in their places of origin. Important services, such as clean water, power and sewerage supply, communications and community infrastructure were less widely available in these 3T areas.

The general condition of these 3T areas in Kalimantan and Papua is more or less similar, as mentioned here: there was lack of infrastructure; the quality of access to and from these areas was poor; there was limited access of transportation (there were so many big rivers, especially, in the provinces of Kalimantan that almost all people used the unique traditional slender boat called *ketinting* as the main transportation); there was lack of communication service (it was difficult to have full signal strength for mobile phones as well as internet connection); and there was limited access to both electricity and clean water. In this paper, all these challenges are grouped into the aspect of physical constraints. Other constraints relate to physical matters such as, lack of resources (text book, dictionary, et cetera) and the distance between their houses and schools which was considered too far to walk without having breakfast were also mentioned by these teachers.

The most dominant unfavourable impressions of theirs was about the issues of education, particularly, about EFL teaching and learning. The quality of human resources which is seen as the critical factor in education was still poor in these areas. People were not aware of the importance of education. In some places, going to school was not a 'must' but a 'choice' because for the locals, school was not a place to gain knowledge and be educated but only a place to get a certificate. Many students did not attend the class for days and even weeks because they had to help their parents to work in the rice fields and/or rubber gardens. In short, parents almost never provided support for their children in

education. They put all responsibilities in teachers' hands. This created many dropouts and led to early marriages.

In the process of teaching English, these teachers of SM-3T found difficulty in motivating and encouraging students to learn EFL as they had low motivation towards this subject. Some students even argued that they did not have to learn English because they had their own language to be used in communication. Other expressions given by the students as excuses to skip English class were; they did not have to be able to speak English because there were not any tourists from English speaking countries who would come to visit their places, and English was not really important for them because they were not western people and so they preferred to use their local languages. In this case, they did not see English as an important subject to learn and this made them lazy to attend English class. The use of the local language had become another problem which created communication breakdown between teachers of SM3T and their students. Students mostly used their native language in daily communication. Bahasa Indonesia was rarely used and could not be spoken well by most students. It made teachers difficult to explain the lesson in Bahasa Indonesia as a language of instruction. These teachers could not use the students' local language as the language of instruction because teachers did not speak the language. This kind of challenge is classified as the big cultural constraint in teaching English as a foreign language to the students in these areas.

Having low level or even no motivation at all in learning English made the students to not want to deal with homework. Both local teachers and teachers of SM3T kept giving them homework to do at home but only few students had motivation to do it. The students did not get used to study at home because they used their after-school time to help their parents to make a living. This can be included in the constraints of socio-economic aspect.

Before the teachers of SM-3T arrived, the students of several schools in Kalimantan had not had English lessons at all because no English teachers was available in the schools. Some teachers of other subjects, such as religious education, Bahasa Indonesia, et cetera had to teach English if this situation occurred. EFL teachers who were locals had different ways of teaching from the ones performed by SM-3T teachers. Most local teachers, either in Kalimantan or in Papua taught in a teacher-centered way and used their local languages as the medium of instruction (students just passively listened to their teachers), while student-centered way was used by teachers of SM3T in order to motivate students to be active in the teaching learning process in the classroom. Another difference was shown by the level of willingness to teach. Local teachers were not very serious and did not really prepare themselves to teach because they had already been familiar with the condition that students did not really want to learn English and join the activities in the classroom. On the other hand, SM3T teachers tried to find interesting ways to motivate and encourage the students in learning English.

All of the three aspects (physical, socio-economic, and cultural) contributed to the students' discouragement in education in general, and learning English in particular. The challenges described earlier have a great contribution to the poor quality of teaching learning process in the EFL classroom in these rural schools. English teachers of SM-3T program tried hard to cope with teaching English in a difficult situation in order to create better teaching atmosphere and give good motivation for their students.

Strategies to face the Challenges

Based on the results, it has been revealed that basically, all teachers of SM-3T program felt that it was hard for them for the first time teaching in 3T/rural areas of Kalimantan and Papua. They had to keep up with new living and teaching situations which were not easy. As teachers of English as a Foreign

Language, they had to convince their students that learning English was not useless as they thought but important for them and they also had to be able to show the students the importance of learning English. Their main job was to deal with the constraints of physical, socio-economy, and cultural aspects in the process of teaching and learning. It is clear to see the findings of the study through the questionnaire and interview that all these teachers had to use strategies in facing the challenges in their teaching period. The first strategy related to teaching methods. Student-centered method and simple tasks related to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) were provided by these teachers in teaching and learning process. They chose this strategy because they wanted to make the students active in the classroom. It did not work for the first two or three meetings, but it went well after that. The students could interact with both teachers and peers.

Positive feedback was considered as another effective strategy for these teachers to motivate the students. Giving motivation, reward, and compliment were included in their feedback and given to students in the classroom during teaching and learning process. By giving reward and compliment, the students would feel that their efforts were appreciated by their teachers and they would keep doing the good work.

The third strategy implemented by the SM-3T teachers were being creative in teaching by using interesting techniques and media, such as discussion, practice, question and answer, and games and songs. All of these techniques could make students interested in learning the lesson. In this case, teachers tried to create a fun learning situation by using interesting and fun teaching media. By doing this, students would not be aware that they were in teaching and learning atmosphere because the process of teaching and learning was not conducted in an official and serious way. After the students felt relaxed and started enjoying the lesson, the teachers would implement another strategy, which was to give homework to students. The teachers thought that no matter how lazy the students were in doing it, task in the form of homework had to be assigned to give them valuable work to do while they were home. If students did not want to study and do homework, teachers would make personal approach to them to find out what seemed to be the problem and tried to help them out.

There were several teachers who also made a good effort to establish an English club as an extra-curricular activity because they found out that students in those schools did not really like learning in the classroom in a formal teaching situation. They then used this club to teach these students in a different setting. Through this club, they could do various activities using English. The last strategy used by the teachers in facing the challenges was to visit the students and their parents in their free time. During the visiting time, teachers would take time to meet both students and their parents to share experience. In this case, teachers would emphasize more on the importance of education in general and the advantages of learning English in particular.

All the previously mentioned strategies were done by the SM-3T teachers in facing the challenges in order to change the teaching and learning conditions.

Transforming Challenges to Opportunities

All the hardships faced by the SM-3T teachers have become great experiences and life lessons for them after finishing the program. They came back home after one year teaching in disadvantaged, foremost, and outermost areas and started building their teaching career. They all had similar answers that all the challenges they have been through could finally be transformed into opportunities in their recent and even future career.

Their answers have indicated that by joining SM-3T program, they could gain many advantages which have been seen as opportunities, as follows:

When they were assessed and evaluated to become English teachers with the status of civil servant, they could achieve great score in the selection test. In this case, they have been admitted as qualified and professional teachers.

All of the ex-SM-3T teachers who applied for the position of civil servant passed in the selection and are now teaching in rural schools in several different provinces in Indonesia.

Teaching in rural schools is no longer a serious problem for them because they have already been able to cope up with the situation. They get used and can easily adapt to live in rural areas and teach in rural schools.

They have proved in the selection process that their teaching performance is better than other fresh graduates who never joined the SM-3T Program. They have good skills in creating teaching tools to be used in teaching.

They have better motivation in teachers' Continued Professional Development (CPD). They always join several Professional Development activities, such as attending workshops/seminar/conferences, publishing papers in national and international journals and pursuing their degree to higher education.

Looking at the results and discussion above, it can be clearly stated that Indonesian Government Program named SM-3T (*Sarjana Mendidik di Daerah Terdepan, Terluar dan Tertinggal*) is effective to improve Indonesian EFL teachers' quality. It is implied that although this program no longer exists, it has already proved itself as an effective program to create qualified and professional teachers. The important point to be noted here is the quality improvement of teachers will eventually lead to the better quality of students.

Conclusion

Teaching is not simply a matter of delivering information from teachers to students, and learning is not simply getting information from teachers. Many aspects have to become the main concern of teachers in creating a positive atmosphere in the teaching-learning process in the classroom. Teachers have a big responsibility in this process, no matter where they are teaching, either in urban or rural areas. All students have a similar need, that is, to gain knowledge under their teachers' control.

When they are given an option, then almost all teachers prefer not to teach in schools in rural areas which are considered poor and disadvantaged. However, it is challenging to teach in difficult circumstances where teachers can really use all their teaching power to be able to not only teach but also motivate and change the students' attitudes. This sensation can only be felt by those who are teaching in a real 'conflict' areas of teaching and learning process.

As a teacher, it is your individual call, either to deal with 'a single teaching activity' in cities, stay in the comfort zone and win yourself as a teacher or to deal with 'all in one teaching activity', be brave, move out of the comfort zone and create a winning team for you and your students!

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The CEFR Level of Undergraduate Students of a University in Northern Thailand for the Academic Year 2017

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Abstract: This study aims to gauge and compare the levels of English reading and listening of undergraduate students of a university in northern Thailand in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Comparisons were made on the levels scored by gender, cluster and faculty. The study was conducted on 7500 respondents from 17 faculties. The respondents composed of 2115 males and 5385 females who were students of Naresuan University Academic Year of 2017. It utilized the Cambridge English Placement Test which is an online CEFR Test developed and administered by Cambridge English. The findings of the study recorded respondents scoring from below A1 to C1 or above where only 0.2% scored C1 or above. The majority of male and female students scored A1 to A2. It is recommended that CEFR books such as Cambridge KET, Cambridge Preliminary and Cambridge First Books should be used to assist teachers and students. The second suggestion is to use CEFR tests to monitor the progress of students and continually gauge their level of English. This process acts as a checker or reminder to promote greater levels of English in higher education.

Keywords: CEFR, CEPT, English level, Faculty

Introduction

Literature related to EF English Proficiency Index survey showed that Thailand has low English proficiency ranking 64 out of 88 countries. It has dropped 11 spots in the proficiency rankings for non-native English speaking countries. Among Asians countries, Thailand ranked 16 out of 21. In Southeast Asian Nations, Thailand outdoes Cambodia and Myanmar (EF English Proficiency Index, 2018). There was no specific study on the level of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) among the students of a major university in northern Thailand. Thus, this study is aimed to identify the current levels of English found among the students of a major university in northern Thailand in accordance to the CEFR levels. This study utilised a simple quantitative approach and descriptive analysis on respondents from Naresuan University. The detailed literature review, method of the study and conclusions were provided below.

Literature Review

There were four literatures covered in this section. The first one is the English Language Reform in 2014 by the Ministry of Education in Thailand (The Ministry of Education, 2014). Next is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Thirdly, it elaborated on some information on English performance in Thailand that is related to the study. And finally, this is followed by information on Cambridge English Placement Test which is used by Naresuan University.

English Language Reform in 2014 by the Ministry of Education in Thailand

With the arrival of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015 and to solve Thailand's English language problem, the Ministry of Education introduced the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in 2014 in the Thai educational system and created guidelines for the implementation of the CEFR in English teaching reform. The decision was made as steps to lift the English proficiency of Thai students and improve the quality of Thai education.

The targeted area for this study is the CEFR for students particularly B2 which is equal to the ability of university students. This was to ensure every university student is proficient in the English language.

The Ministry of Education's latest policy was to boost all students' proficiency in English and to improve the standard of English learning and teaching in Thailand's schools. The aim was to provide a Thai labor force that will have economic competitiveness in the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015.

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is an international standard for describing language ability or proficiency developed by the Council of Europe. It describes language ability on a six-point scale, from A1 for beginners, up to C2 for those who have mastered a language. This makes it easy for anyone involved in language teaching and testing, such as teachers or learners, to see the level of different qualifications. It also means that employers and educational institutions can easily compare learners' qualifications to other exams in their country.

A candidate with a C2 level is highly proficient and can use English very fluently, precisely and sensitively in most cases while a candidate with an A1 level has a basic ability to use English language. According to CEFR experts these levels can be applied across schools, higher education institutions and in businesses. The scores ranging from 180 to 230 are for Proficient users of English. The scores ranging from 140 to 179 are for independent users of English and lastly scores ranging from 100 to 139 are for Basic users of English where the pupils or students who scored below 99 were required to study at a Pre A1 level for English.

In April 2014, the English Language Institute (ELI), a branch of the Ministry of Education (MoE) overseeing English language teaching in Thailand, had announced a policy of basing all aspects of English language curriculum reform on the CEFR framework. The CEFR framework will be wedded with the Communicative Language Teaching as a teaching method.

In a study conducted by Yan, Gu and Khalifa (2014) regarding the impact of CEFR Key English Test (KET) for Schools in Beijing, China, they found that the CEFR KET for Schools had exerted a positive impact on young learners' motivation to learn English. KET for Schools helped increased students' awareness of their own learning strengths and weaknesses and had assisted in their English proficiency. The parents interviewed revealed that the main factors contributing to this positive impact were the coverage of the four skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking) in KET for schools, the step-by-step learning approach offered by the examination, the relatively higher test difficulty of the

exam compared with the tests at school, encouragement of young learners' self-esteem, and the trained teachers' teaching methods.

Cambridge English Placement Test (CEPT)

The Cambridge English Placement Test (CEPT) is an online adaptive test which can be used to group learners by their English level, place them on the right courses, in the right classes, or enter them for the right exams (Cambridge Assessment English, 2018). The test covers Reading and Listening skills as well as Language Knowledge. The test features a variety of accents and texts from a range of English-speaking countries. The test can take as little as 30 minutes, and the questions formats are both multiple-choice and type-in items. When finished, accurate results are given instantly and presented in the form of total score out of 50 and the CEFR level.

English performance in Thailand

Research studies conducted after the implementation of the CEFR by the Ministry of Education revealed that most students and teachers averaged A2. A study by Sinlapachai, Surasin, and Augkanurakbun (2016) investigated the use of online standard tests as indicators of English Proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) at the English Program of Chonkanyanukoon School, Chonburi, Thailand. The study revealed that the average level of the students' proficiency was at A2 level using the Cambridge English Placement Test and Oxford Online Placement Test. A study by Chongdarakul (2015) measured English listening level of 42,712 English language teachers who were under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission. It was found that the majority of Thai teachers' average level was at A2 level. A study by Ketamon (2016) who measured senior high school students in the lower south of Thailand and teachers under the supervision of the Office of Basic Education Commission in Pattani Province revealed that most teachers and students' average scores were at the A2 level. A study by Franz and Teo (2017) found that the majority of English teachers in the south of Thailand had A2 level using an online placement test for teachers.

Research Methodology

The method of the study was a simple and straightforward quantitative study. The following sections described the respondents and the research design used for the study.

The respondents were the undergraduate students of Naresuan University Academic Year 2017 who had to take the CEFR Level test particularly CEPT. It was conducted in the Computer Laboratory of the university from August 2017 to July 2018. The research started with quantitative data collection of the respondents' online CEFR Test scores. The results calculated and generated by the online test were printed for analysis. The demographic information collected were gender and faculty. This is consecutively followed by the descriptive data analysis for frequencies. This is depicted in Figure 3.1 below.

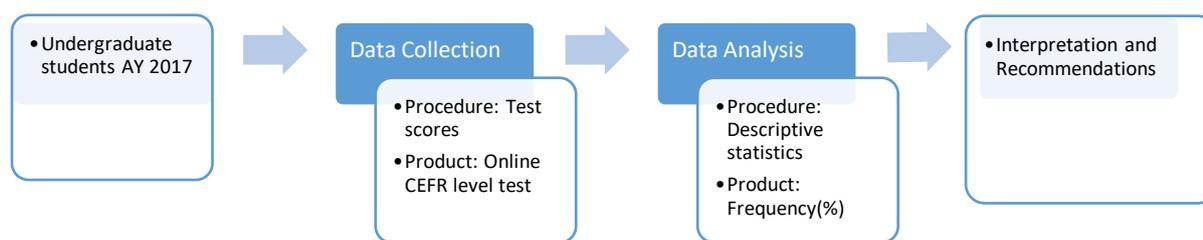


Figure 3.1: The research study

There is a need to gauge the CEFR level of English among the university students as previous studies in the past were conducted mostly on secondary schools and teachers. A good beginning towards it was to focus on one of the universities here in northern Thailand.

Once the general level of user of English is identified for these university students, a set of CEFR books could be suggested for the university students.

Findings, Analysis and Recommendations

This section reports and analyse the findings. It begins with details on the respondents followed by the findings and analysis that were guided by five research questions. These were as follows.

- (i) What are the CEFR levels of Naresuan University undergraduates Academic Year 2017?
- (ii) What are the CEFR levels between genders?
- (iii) What are the CEFR levels among clusters?
- (iv) What are the CEFR levels among faculties?
- (v) What are the CEFR levels between genders in each faculty?

The section ends with some recommendations before concluding.

The respondents

The respondents took the CEPT test from August 2017 to July 2018 in the Computer Laboratory of Naresuan University. The total attendance of the test takers was 7,500 from 3 clusters. All of the 7,500 respondents agreed to participate and attempted the CEFR level test. The 7,500 respondents for the study comprised of 2,349 from Health Sciences Cluster, 1,894 from Science and Technology Cluster and 3,257 from Social Sciences Cluster. There were 478 males and 1871 females in Health Sciences, 779 males and 1,115 females in Science and Technology and 858 males and 2,399 females in Social Sciences totalling to 2115 males and 5385 females. The details on the respondents are shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: The respondents

| Gender | Health Sciences Cluster | % | Science and Technology Cluster | % | Social Sciences Cluster | % | Total | % |
|--------|-------------------------|-----|--------------------------------|-----|-------------------------|-----|-------|-----|
| Male | 478 | 20 | 779 | 41 | 858 | 26 | 2115 | 28 |
| Female | 1871 | 80 | 1115 | 59 | 2399 | 74 | 5385 | 72 |
| Total | 2349 | 100 | 1894 | 100 | 3257 | 100 | 7500 | 100 |

The majority (80%) of the Health Science Cluster, (59%) of the Science and Technology Cluster and (74%) of the Social Sciences Cluster were females. It seemed that more females prefer to study here at Naresuan University.

4.2 English level of the test takers in the Academic Year 2017

This section responded to the five questions that guided the study. The first question is represented by Table 4.2. The second question is represented by Table 4.3 and the third and the fourth questions are represented by Table 4.4 and Table 4.5 respectively. The final question is represented by Table 4.6 to Table 4.23.

The CEFR level of AY 2017 test takers

The first question was on the CEFR levels scored in English by the test takers AY 2017 respondents.

Frequency count from Table 4.2 below showed that the percentage of C1 or above proficient users of English was 0.2% for the test takers AY 2017. The independent B2 users for the test takers AY 2017 were 1.3%. The B1 users of English were 7.8%. The A2 basic users of English were 42.8%. The A1 basic users were 44.2% and below A1 users were 3.7%.

Table 4.2: CEFR score and percentage of students

| CEFR Level | Undergraduate students AY 2017 | % |
|-------------|--------------------------------|------|
| C1 or above | 14 | 0.2 |
| B2 | 96 | 1.3 |
| B1 | 584 | 7.8 |
| A2 | 3210 | 42.8 |
| A1 | 3313 | 44.2 |
| Below A1 | 283 | 3.7 |
| Total | 7500 | 100 |

The CEFR scores shown in Table 4.2 indicated that there were very few C1 or above proficient users. There were more B1 users compared to B2 independent users. The majority of the test takers for AY 2017 was A1 to A2 basic users of English at 44.2% and 42.8%. The A2 users had an ability to deal with simple, straightforward information and begin to express oneself in familiar contexts. The A1 users of English had the basic ability to communicate and exchange information in a simple way.

The CEFR levels by gender

The second question was regarding the differences between male and female respondents' CEFR levels in their ability to use English. This is depicted in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: CEFR score and percentage between male and female

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|--------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| C1 or above | 8 | 0.4 | 6 | 0.1 |
| B2 | 41 | 1.9 | 55 | 1 |
| B1 | 184 | 8.7 | 400 | 7.4 |
| A2 | 860 | 40.7 | 2350 | 43.6 |
| A1 | 935 | 44.2 | 2378 | 44.2 |
| below A1 | 87 | 4.1 | 196 | 3.6 |
| TOTAL | 2115 | 100 | 5385 | 100 |

Data showed 0.4% of the males were at the C1 or above level, 1.9% at the B2 level, 8.7% at the B1 level, 40.7% at the A2 level, 44.2 at the A1 level and 4.1 at below A1 level. In contrast 0.1% of the females were at C1 or above level, 1% at B2, 7.4% at B1, 43.6% at A2 level, 44.2% at A1 level and 3.6% at below A1 level.

At the level B1 to C1 or above, the percentage of independent users to proficient English users was almost the same between genders. More females were at A2 level 43.6% than males at 40.7%. The percentage for A1 was the same between males and females at 44.2%. At below A1 there were 4.1% males compared to 3.6% females. The majority of males and females were at A1 at 44.2%.

In conclusion, based on the CEFR user levels in the finding, the majority of the respondents in this study were A1 to A2 users of English where the females were better than the male English language users.

The ability to use English among clusters

The third question was whether there was a difference in the ability to use English among clusters. In total there were 7,500 respondents from 3 clusters where 2,349 were from Health Sciences (HS), 1,894 were from Science and Technology (ST) and 3,257 were from Social Sciences (SS). The findings are displayed in Table 4.4 below.

At C1 level or above the HS and SS had the same proficient user of English language at 0.2%. The ST had 0.1%. At B2 level HS at 2%, ST at 0.2% and SS at 1.4%. At B1 level there were 10.9% for HS, 2.1% for ST and 8.9% for SS. At A2 level there were 47.9% HS, 60.7% ST and 46.6% SS. At A1 level there were 36.7% HS, 60.7% ST and 40% SS. There was below A1 level user of English for HS at 2.3%, 7.1 for ST and there was 2.9% for SS.

Table 4.4: CEFR score and percentage by cluster

| CEFR | Health Sciences Cluster | % | Science and Technology Cluster | % | Social Sciences Cluster | % |
|------|-------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| C1 or above | 5 | 0.2 | 1 | 0.1 | 8 | 0.2 |
| B2 | 47 | 2 | 4 | 0.2 | 45 | 1.4 |
| B1 | 256 | 10.9 | 39 | 2.1 | 289 | 8.9 |
| A2 | 1125 | 47.9 | 567 | 29.9 | 1518 | 46.6 |
| A1 | 861 | 36.7 | 1149 | 60.7 | 1303 | 40 |
| below A1 | 55 | 2.3 | 134 | 7.1 | 94 | 2.9 |
| Total | 2349 | 100 | 1894 | 100 | 3257 | 100 |

Overall the three clusters had 0.5% C1 or above proficient language users, 12.9% B1 to B2 independent users of English among HS Cluster and 12.6% on both ST and SS Clusters, and an 86.9% below A1 to A2: Basic English users in HS Cluster, 97.7% in ST Cluster and 89.5% in SS Cluster. Hence there is a difference in ability to use English among the three clusters and the majority of the students in the HS Cluster were the best users of English language among the three clusters.

The ability to use English among faculties

The fourth question was whether there was a difference in the ability to use English among faculties. There were 17,500 respondents from 17 faculties where 350 were from the Faculty of Agriculture, 135 from the Faculty of Dentistry, 312 from the Faculty of Law, 1,053 from the Faculty of BEC, 601 from the Faculty of Nursing, 329 from the Faculty of Medicine, 176 from the Faculty of Pharmacy, 809 from the Faculty of Humanities, 527 from Naresuan University International College, 806 from the Faculty of Science, 419 from the Faculty of Medical Science, 520 from the Faculty of Engineering, 220 from the Faculty of Education, 218 from the Faculty of Architecture, 417 from the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, 336 from the Faculty of Social Science and 272 from the Faculty of Public Health. The findings are revealed in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5: CEFR score and percentage among students in different faculties

| Faculty | CEFR | C1 or above | B2 | B1 | A2 | A1 | Below A1 | Total |
|---------------|------|-------------|------|------|------|-----|----------|-------|
| Agriculture | 1 | 0 | 5 | 76 | 234 | 34 | 350 | |
| % | 0.3 | 0 | 1.4 | 21.7 | 66.9 | 9.7 | 100 | |
| Dentistry | 0 | 4 | 31 | 84 | 16 | 0 | 135 | |
| % | 0 | 3 | 23 | 62 | 11.9 | 0 | 100 | |
| Law | 0 | 0 | 5 | 116 | 181 | 10 | 312 | |
| % | 0 | 0 | 1.6 | 37.2 | 58 | 3.2 | 100 | |
| Business Adm. | 1 | 0 | 30 | 430 | 541 | 51 | 1053 | |
| % | 0.1 | 0 | 2.9 | 40.8 | 51.4 | 4.8 | 100 | |
| Nursing | 0 | 2 | 13 | 230 | 328 | 28 | 601 | |
| % | 0 | 0.3 | 2.2 | 38.3 | 54.6 | 4.7 | 100 | |
| Medicine | 3 | 28 | 109 | 167 | 21 | 1 | 329 | |
| % | 0.9 | 8.5 | 33.1 | 50.8 | 6.4 | 0.3 | 100 | |
| Pharmacy | 0 | 8 | 35 | 109 | 24 | 0 | 176 | |
| % | 0 | 4.5 | 19.9 | 61.9 | 13.6 | 0 | 100 | |
| Humanities | 2 | 16 | 106 | 418 | 249 | 18 | 809 | |

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----|-----|------|------|------|-----|-----|
| % | 0.2 | 2 | 13.1 | 51.7 | 30.8 | 2.2 | 100 |
| International College | 5 | 24 | 115 | 324 | 57 | 2 | 527 |
| % | 0.9 | 4.6 | 21.8 | 61.5 | 10.8 | 0.4 | 100 |
| Science | 0 | 4 | 14 | 235 | 502 | 51 | 806 |
| % | 0 | 0.5 | 1.7 | 29.2 | 62.3 | 6.3 | 100 |
| Med. Science | 0 | 0 | 14 | 188 | 203 | 14 | 419 |
| % | 0 | 0 | 3.3 | 44.9 | 48.4 | 3.3 | 100 |
| Engineering | 0 | 0 | 14 | 193 | 283 | 30 | 520 |
| % | 0 | 0 | 2.7 | 37.1 | 54.4 | 5.8 | 100 |
| Education | 0 | 5 | 19 | 101 | 90 | 5 | 220 |
| % | 0 | 2.3 | 8.6 | 45.9 | 40.9 | 2.3 | 100 |
| Architecture | 0 | 0 | 6 | 63 | 130 | 19 | 218 |
| % | 0 | 0 | 2.8 | 28.9 | 59.6 | 8.7 | 100 |
| Allied Health Sciences | 2 | 5 | 46 | 248 | 113 | 3 | 417 |
| % | 0.5 | 1.2 | 11 | 59.5 | 27.1 | 0.7 | 100 |
| Social Science | 0 | 0 | 14 | 129 | 185 | 8 | 336 |
| % | 0 | 0 | 4.2 | 38.4 | 55.1 | 2.4 | 100 |
| Public Health Science | 0 | 0 | 8 | 99 | 156 | 9 | 272 |
| % | 0 | 0 | 2.9 | 36.4 | 57.4 | 3.3 | 100 |

There were 6 faculties at C1 or above namely: Agriculture at 0.3%, Business Administration at 0.1%, both Medicine and International College at 0.9%, Humanities at 0.2% and Allied Health Sciences at 0.5%. At B2 level there were 9 faculties namely: Dentistry at 3%, Nursing at 0.3%, Medicine at 8.5%, Pharmacy at 4.5%, Humanities at 2%, International College at 4.6%, Science at 0.5%, Education at 2.3% and AHS at 1.2%. There were below A1 to B1 levels from all the faculties.

Data showed that majority of the test takers in Agriculture were A1 level at 66.9%, A2 in Dentistry at 62%, A1 in Law at 58%, A1 in Business Administration at 51.4%, A1 in Nursing at 54.6%, A2 in Medicine at 50.8%, A2 in Pharmacy at 61.9%, A2 in Humanities at 51.7%, A2 in International College at 61.5%, A1 in Science at 62.3%, A1 in Medical Science at 48.4%, A1 in Engineering at 54.4%, A2 in Education at 45.9%, A1 in Architecture at 59.6%, A2 in Allied Health Sciences at 59.5%, A1 in Social Science at 55.1% and A1 in Public Health Science at 57.4%.

The ability to use English between genders in each faculty

The final question was regarding the differences between male and female respondents' CEFR levels in their ability to use English in each faculty. These are shown from Tables 4.6 to 4.22.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Agriculture

There were 350 students from this faculty. The male Agriculture represented 23% of the respondents and the female Agriculture represented 77%. The findings are shown in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Agriculture

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.4 |
| B2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B1 | 2 | 2.5 | 3 | 1.1 |
| A2 | 19 | 23.7 | 57 | 21.1 |
| A1 | 50 | 62.5 | 184 | 68.1 |
| below A1 | 9 | 11.3 | 25 | 9.3 |
| TOTAL | 80 | 100 | 270 | 100 |

At C1 or above there was only 1 female proficient English language user in Agriculture and no male user. Both had no B2 level or independent users in Agriculture. At B1 level there was 2.5% independent users among the males whereas there was 1.1% among female users in Agriculture. At A2 level there was 23.7% male users compared to 21.1% female users. At A1 level there was 62.5% male users compared to 68.1 female users. Lastly 11.3% male users were below A1 compared to 9.3% among the female users. Thus, there is a difference in ability to use English between the female and male respondents in the Faculty of Agriculture. The female Agriculture were better users of English compared to the male at proficient level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Dentistry

There were 135 students in this study. The male Dentistry represented 31% of the respondents and the female Dentistry represented 69%. The findings are shown in Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Dentistry

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B2 | 3 | 7.1 | 1 | 1.1 |
| B1 | 9 | 21.4 | 22 | 23.7 |
| A2 | 27 | 64.3 | 57 | 61.3 |
| A1 | 3 | 7.1 | 13 | 13.9 |
| below A1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 42 | 100 | 93 | 100 |

Both had no C1 or above and below A1 level in the Faculty of Dentistry. At B2 level there was 7.1% independent users from the male whereas 1.1% from the female. At B1 level there was 21.4% from the male users compared to 23.7% from the female. At A2 level there was 64.3% basic users of English among the male compared to 61.3% among the female. At A1 level there was 7.1% basic users in English among the male compared to 13.9% among the female users. Hence there is a difference in ability to use English between male and female in the Faculty of Dentistry since the majority of the male Dentistry were better users of English language than the female Dentistry at an independent level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Law

There were 312 students from this faculty. The male Law represented 36% of the respondents and the female Law represented 64%. The findings are shown in Table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Law

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B2 | | | | |
| B1 | 2 | 1.8 | 3 | 1.5 |
| A2 | 40 | 36 | 76 | 37.8 |
| A1 | 65 | 58.6 | 116 | 57.7 |
| below A1 | 4 | 3.6 | 6 | 3 |
| TOTAL | 111 | 100 | 201 | 100 |

Both had no C1 or above and B2 level in the Faculty of Law. At B1 level there was 1.8% independent users from the male whereas 1.5% from the female. At A2 level there was 36% basic users from the male compared to 37.8% from the female. At A1 level there was 58.6% among the male compared to 57.7% among the female. At below A1 level there was 3.6% from the male compared to 3% from the female. Hence, there is a difference in ability to use English between the male and the female in the Faculty of Law. The male Law were better users of English compared to the female Law at an independent level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Business Administration

There were 1,053 students from this faculty. The male Business Administration represented 27% of the respondents and the female Business Administration represented 73%. The findings are shown in Table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Business Administration

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 1 | 0.3 | 0 | 0 |
| B2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B1 | 9 | 3.2 | 21 | 2.7 |
| A2 | 117 | 40.9 | 313 | 40.8 |
| A1 | 142 | 49.7 | 399 | 52 |
| below A1 | 17 | 5.9 | 34 | 4.4 |
| TOTAL | 286 | 100 | 767 | 100 |

At C1 or above there was only male proficient English language user in Business Administration and no male user. Both had no B2 level or independent users. At B1 level there was 3.2% independent users among the male whereas there was 2.7% among the female users. At A2 level there was 40.9% basic users from the male compared to 40.8% from the female. At A1 level there was 49.7% male users compared to 40.8% female users. Lastly, 5.9% male users were below A1 compared to 4.4% female users. Thus, there is a difference in ability to use English between the female and male respondents in the Faculty of Business Administration. The male BA were better users of English compared to the female BA at proficient level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Nursing

There were 601 students from this faculty. The male Nursing represented 10% of the respondents and the female Nursing represented 90%. The findings are shown in Table 4.10 below.

Table 4.10: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Nursing

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B2 | 1 | 1.7 | 1 | 0.2 |
| B1 | 1 | 1.7 | 12 | 2.2 |
| A2 | 24 | 40.7 | 206 | 38 |
| A1 | 33 | 55.9 | 295 | 54.4 |
| below A1 | 0 | 0 | 28 | 5.2 |
| TOTAL | 59 | 100 | 542 | 100 |

Both had no C1 or above in the Faculty of Nursing. At B2 level there was 1.7% independent users from the male whereas 0.2% from the female. At B1 level there was 1.7% users from the male compared to 2.2% from the female. At A2 level there was 40.7% basic users among the male compared to 38% among the female. At A1 level there was 55.9% from the male compared to 54.4% from the female. There were no below A1 from the male whereas the female had 5.2%. Hence there is a difference in ability to use English between the female and male respondents in the Faculty of Nursing. The male Nursing were better users of English compared to the female Nursing at independent level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Medicine

There were 329 students from this faculty. The male Medicine represented 44% of the respondents and the female Medicine represented 56%. The findings are shown in Table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Medicine

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 1 | 0.7 | 2 | 1.1 |
| B2 | 12 | 8.3 | 16 | 8.6 |
| B1 | 43 | 29.9 | 66 | 35.7 |
| A2 | 73 | 50.7 | 94 | 50.8 |
| A1 | 14 | 9.7 | 7 | 3.8 |
| below A1 | 1 | 0.7 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 144 | 100 | 185 | 100 |

At C1 or above there was 0.7% proficient English language user from the male Medicine whereas 1.1% from the female. At B2 level or independent users there was 8.3% from the male compared to 8.6% from the female. At B1 level there was 29.9% independent users among the male whereas there was 35.7% among the female users. At A2 level there was 50.7% basic users from the male compared to 50.8% from the female. At A1 level there was 9.7% male users compared to 3.8% female users. Lastly 0.7% male users were below A1 and no female users. Thus, there is a difference in ability to use English between the female and male respondents in the Faculty of Medicine. The female Medicine were better users of English compared to the male Medicine from independent level to proficient level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Pharmacy

There were 176 students from this faculty. The male Pharmacy represented 19% of the respondents and the female Pharmacy represented 81%. The findings are shown in Table 4.12 below.

Table 4.12: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Pharmacy

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B2 | 5 | 14.7 | 3 | 2.1 |
| B1 | 8 | 23.5 | 27 | 19 |
| A2 | 18 | 52.9 | 91 | 64 |
| A1 | 3 | 8.8 | 21 | 14.8 |
| below A1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 34 | 100 | 142 | 100 |

Both had no C1 or above and below A1 level in the Faculty of Pharmacy. At B2 level there was 14.7% independent users from the male whereas 2.1% from the female. At B1 level there was 23.5% from the male users compared to 19% from the female. At A2 level there was 52.9% basic users of English among the male compared to 64% among the female. At A1 level there was 8.8% basic users in English among the male compared to 14.8% among the female users. Hence there is a difference in ability to use English between male and female in the Faculty of Pharmacy since the majority of the male Pharmacy were better users of English language than the female Pharmacy at an independent level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Humanities

There were 809 students from this faculty. The male Humanities represented 22% of the respondents and the female Humanities represented 88%. The findings are shown in Table 4.13 below.

Table 4.13: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Humanities

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 1 | 0.6 | 1 | 0.2 |
| B2 | 6 | 3.3 | 10 | 1.6 |
| B1 | 26 | 14.4 | 80 | 12.7 |
| A2 | 82 | 45.3 | 336 | 53.5 |
| A1 | 63 | 34.8 | 186 | 29.6 |
| below A1 | 3 | 1.6 | 15 | 2.4 |
| TOTAL | 181 | 100 | 628 | 100 |

At C1 or above there was 0.7% proficient English language user from the male Humanities whereas 0.2% from the female. At B2 level or independent users there was 3.3% from the male compared to 1.6% from the female. At B1 level there was 14.4% independent users among the male whereas there was 12.7% among the female users. At A2 level there was 45.3% basic users from the male compared to 53.5% from the female. At A1 level there was 34.8% male users compared to 29.6% female users. Lastly 1.6% male users were below A1 compared to 2.4% from the female. Thus, there is a difference in ability to use English between the female and male respondents in the Faculty of Humanities. The male Humanities were better users of English compared to the female Humanities at proficient and independent level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of International College

There were 527 students from this faculty. The male International College represented 23% of the respondents and the female International College represented 77%. The findings are shown in Table 4.14 below.

Table 4.14: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of International College

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 3 | 2.5 | 2 | 0.5 |
| B2 | 9 | 7.5 | 15 | 3.7 |
| B1 | 39 | 32.5 | 76 | 18.7 |
| A2 | 67 | 55.8 | 257 | 63.1 |
| A1 | 2 | 1.7 | 55 | 13.5 |
| below A1 | | | 2 | 0.5 |
| TOTAL | 120 | 100 | 407 | 100 |

At C1 or above there was 2.5% proficient English language user from the male International College whereas 0.5% from the female. At B2 level or independent users there was 7.5% from the male compared to 3.7% from the female. At B1 level there was 32.5% independent users among the male whereas there was 18.7% among the female users. At A2 level there was 55.8% basic users from the male compared to 63.1% from the female. At A1 level there was 1.7% male users compared to 13.5% female users. Lastly 0.5% female users were below A1 and no male users. Thus, there is a difference in ability to use English between the female and male respondents in the Faculty of International College. The male International College were better users of English compared to the female International College at proficient level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Science

There were 806 students from this faculty. The male Science represented 34% of the respondents and the female Science represented 66%. The findings are shown in Table 4.15 below.

Table 4.15: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Science

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B2 | 1 | 0.4 | 3 | 0.6 |
| B1 | 9 | 3.3 | 5 | 0.9 |
| A2 | 85 | 31.1 | 150 | 28.1 |
| A1 | 166 | 60.8 | 336 | 63 |
| below A1 | 12 | 4.4 | 39 | 7.3 |
| TOTAL | 273 | 100 | 533 | 100 |

Both had no C1 or above in the Faculty of Science. At B2 level there was 0.4% independent users from the male whereas 0.6% from the female. At B1 level there was 3.3% from the male users compared to 0.9% from the female. At A2 level there was 31.1% basic users of English among the male compared to 28.1% among the female. At A1 level there was 60.8% basic users in English among the male compared to 63% among the female users. Lastly there was 4.4% below A1 from the male

compared to 7.3% from the female. Hence there is a difference in ability to use English between male and female in the Faculty of Science since the majority of the male Science were better users of English language than the female Science at an independent level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Medical Science

There were 419 students from this faculty. The male Medical Science represented 16% of the respondents and the female Medical Science represented 84%. The findings are shown in Table 4.16 below.

Table 4.16: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Medical Science

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B1 | 2 | 3 | 12 | 3.4 |
| A2 | 28 | 42.4 | 160 | 45.3 |
| A1 | 33 | 50 | 170 | 48.2 |
| below A1 | 3 | 4.6 | 11 | 3.1 |
| TOTAL | 66 | 100 | 353 | 100 |

Both had no C1 or above and B2 level in the Faculty of Medical Science. At B1 level there was 3% independent users from the male whereas 3.5% from the female. At A2 level there was 42.4% basic users from the male compared to 45.3% from the female. At A1 level there was 50% among the male compared to 48.2% among the female. At below A1 level there was 4.6% from the male compared to 3.1% from the female. Thus, there is a difference in ability to use English between the female and male respondents in the Faculty of Medical Science. The female Medical Science were better users of English compared to the male Medical Science at independent level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Engineering

There were 520 students from this faculty. The male Engineering represented 68% of the respondents and the female Engineering represented 32%. The findings are shown in Table 4.17 below.

Table 4.17: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Engineering

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B1 | 8 | 2.3 | 6 | 3.6 |
| A2 | 129 | 36.4 | 64 | 38.6 |
| A1 | 194 | 54.8 | 89 | 53.6 |
| below A1 | 23 | 6.5 | 7 | 4.2 |
| TOTAL | 354 | 100 | 166 | 100 |

Both had no C1 or above and B2 level in the Faculty of Engineering. At B1 level there was 2.3% independent users from the male whereas 3.6% from the female. At A2 level there was 36.4% basic users from the male compared to 38.6% from the female. At A1 level there was 54.8% among the male compared to 53.6% among the female. At below A1 level there was 6.5% from the male compared to 4.2% from the female. Thus, there is a difference in ability to use English between the female and male respondents in the Faculty of Engineering. The female Engineering were better users of English compared to the male Engineering at independent level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Education

There were 220 students from this faculty. The male Education represented 30% of the respondents and the female Education represented 70%. The findings are shown in Table 4.18 below.

Table 4.18: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Education

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B2 | 2 | 3.1 | 3 | 1.9 |
| B1 | 5 | 7.7 | 14 | 9 |
| A2 | 29 | 44.6 | 72 | 46.5 |
| A1 | 27 | 41.5 | 63 | 40.6 |
| below A1 | 2 | 3.1 | 3 | 1.9 |
| TOTAL | 65 | 100 | 155 | 100 |

Both had no C1 or above in the Faculty of Education. At B2 level there was 3.1% independent users from the male whereas 1.9% from the female. At B1 level there was 7.7% from the male users compared to 9% from the female. At A2 level there was 44.6% basic users of English among the male compared to 46.5% among the female. At A1 level there was 41.5% basic users in English among the male compared to 40.6% among the female users. Lastly there was 3.1% below A1 from the male compared to 1.9% from the female. Hence there is a difference in ability to use English between the male Education and the female Education since the male Education were better users than the female Education at independent level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Architecture

There were 218 students from this faculty. The male Architecture represented 33% of the respondents and the female Architecture represented 67%. The findings are shown in Table 4.19 below.

Table 4.19: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Architecture

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B1 | 2 | 2.8 | 4 | 2.7 |
| A2 | 20 | 27.8 | 43 | 29.5 |
| A1 | 42 | 58.3 | 88 | 60.3 |
| below A1 | 8 | 11.1 | 11 | 7.5 |
| TOTAL | 72 | 100 | 146 | 100 |

Both had no C1 or above and B2 level in the Faculty of Architecture. At B1 level there was 2.8% independent users from the male whereas 2.7% from the female. At A2 level there was 27.8% basic users from the male compared to 29.5% from the female. At A1 level there was 58.3% among the male compared to 60.3% among the female. At below A1 level there was 11.1% from the male compared to 7.5% from the female. Hence there is no difference in ability to use English between the male and the female in the Faculty of Architecture since their differences are very close at independent level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

There were 417 students from this faculty. The male AHS represented 23% of the respondents and the female AHS represented 77%. The findings are shown in Table 4.20 below.

Table 4.20: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 2 | 2.1 | 0 | 0 |
| B2 | 2 | 2.1 | 3 | 0.9 |
| B1 | 12 | 12.8 | 34 | 10.5 |
| A2 | 57 | 60.7 | 191 | 59.1 |
| A1 | 19 | 20.2 | 94 | 29.1 |
| below A1 | 2 | 2.1 | 1 | 0.3 |
| TOTAL | 94 | 100 | 323 | 100 |

At C1 or above there was only male proficient English language user in Allied Health Sciences and no female user. At B2 level there was 2.1% independent users among the male whereas there was 0.9% among the female users. At B1 level there was 12.8% from the male whereas 10.5 from the female. At A2 level there was 60.7% basic users from the male compared to 59.1% from the female. At A1 level there was 20.2% male users compared to 29.1% female users. Lastly 2.1% male users were below A1 compared to 0.3% female users. Thus, there is a difference in ability to use English between the female and male respondents in the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences. The male AHS were better users of English compared to the female AHS at proficient level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Social Sciences

There were 336 students in this study. The male Social Sciences represented 28% of the respondents and the female Social Sciences represented 72%. The findings are shown in Table 4.21 below.

Table 4.21: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Social Science

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| B1 | 5 | 5.3 | 9 | 3.7 |
| A2 | 32 | 33.7 | 97 | 40.3 |
| A1 | 55 | 57.9 | 130 | 53.9 |

| | | | | |
|----------|----|-----|-----|-----|
| below A1 | 3 | 3.1 | 5 | 2.1 |
| TOTAL | 95 | 100 | 241 | 100 |

Both had no C1 or above and B2 level in the Faculty of Social Science. At B1 level there was 5.3% independent users from the male whereas 3.7% from the female. At A2 level there was 33.7% basic users from the male compared to 40.3% from the female. At A1 level there was 57.9% among the male compared to 53.9% among the female. At below A1 level there was 3.1% from the male compared to 2.1% from the female. Hence there is a difference in ability to use English between male SS and female SS since the majority of the male SS were better users of English language than the female at an independent level.

The ability to use English between genders in the Faculty of Public Health Science

There were 272 students from this faculty. The male PHS represented 14% of the respondents and the female PHS represented 86%. The findings are shown in Table 4.22 below.

Table 4.22: CEFR score and percentage between male and female in the Faculty of Public Health Science

| | Male | % | Female | % |
|-------------|------|------|--------|------|
| C1 or above | | | | |
| B2 | | | | |
| B1 | 2 | 5.2 | 6 | 2.6 |
| A2 | 13 | 33.3 | 86 | 36.9 |
| A1 | 24 | 61.5 | 132 | 56.6 |
| below A1 | | | 9 | 3.9 |
| TOTAL | 39 | 100 | 233 | 100 |

Both had no C1 or above and B2 level in the Faculty of Public Health Science. At B1 level there was 5.2% independent users from the male whereas 2.6% from the female. At A2 level there was 33.3% basic users from the male compared to 36.9% from the female. At A1 level there was 61.5% among the male compared to 56.6% among the female. At below A1 level there was only for female at 3.9%. Hence there is a difference in ability to use English between male PHS and female PHS since the majority of the male PHS were better users of English language than the female PHS at an independent level.

CONCLUSION

This study measured the ability to use English among undergraduate students in one of the northern universities in Thailand by using a reading and listening CEFR online test. The findings indicated that the males from the Faculties of Dentistry, Law, Business Administration, Nursing, Humanities, International College, Science, Architecture, Education, Allied Health Sciences, Social Sciences and Public Health Science had better English user ability level according to the CEFR test compared to the female. In other faculties, the females recorded better English user ability than the males in the Faculties of Agriculture, Medicine, Medical Science and Engineering. It also showed that the majority of the undergraduate test takers in the university were basic users of English at the A2 and A1 levels. This means they had an ability to deal with simple, straightforward information and begin to express oneself in familiar contexts and a basic ability to communicate and exchange information in a simple way. Thus, the most suitable CEFR books for the university students are probably the Cambridge

First series for B2 and above, the Cambridge Preliminary series for B1 and the Cambridge KET for A2 and below from the Cambridge's General and Higher Education sets of books.

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Integration of Memes in Contextualizing the Development of Communicative Competence of Grade 11 STEM Students

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Abstract: This study was conducted to assess the development of the contextualization of Communicative Competence of the Grade 11 students of Colegio de San Juan de Letran on the use of Internet Memes in classroom teaching which utilized Stephen Krashen's *Affective Filter* as a theoretical underpinning. A 50-item validated pretest and posttest were the primary sources in determining the development of the communicative competence of the 50 students in the four components of Communicative Competence namely; Linguistic Competence, Discourse Competence, Sociolinguistic Competence and Strategic Competence. Based on learning gains, a prominent and significant development took place relative to the performance of the students in the meme group as compared to the non-meme group. The results of the study revealed that the non-meme group has lower gain (mean= 7.34, S. D=5.32) as opposed to the meme group (mean=14.84, S. D=9.74). It is highly recommended therefore, to utilize memes in classroom teaching to bring forth authentic learning and promising results. Conclusively, it is advised that curriculum developers look into this study, to be able to acquire valuable viewpoints on how to engage students more in the classroom discussions.

Keywords: *Internet Memes, Communicative Competence, Contextualization, Learning Gains*

Introduction

The Philippines is reported by Digital in 2017 that Filipinos spend an average of 4 hours and 17 minutes per day on social media sites such as Facebook, Snapchat, and Twitter (Camus, 2017). It is also worth mentioning that the country has been taking the lead as of 2017 in the use of these sites as claimed by Rappler.com. In this connection, students have become more adept on the aforementioned medium thus; it gave rise to the exposure of different materials that could be found online.

In a study conducted by Jaucian (2014), it is asserted that a prominent example of online materials that students are exposed to are called Memes. Internet memes have begun to take part in many forms of social media. The Internet meme is a funny image, video or text that is spread rapidly by online users and like a virus it is contagious, traveling from one person to another until it takes on a life of its own. These are used to show emotion, humor, or portray something that people would understand in just a few seconds. Due to the many pressing issues the country is facing nowadays, the internet has been a home to various memes both political and educational as an array of memes to be posted and shared by its netizens. Students in turn, have been too responsive in making, sharing and posting memes. For example, millennials are known to be entitled of their own emotions, feelings and action. They specifically, are entitled to voice out matters regarding school, grades, depression and troubles via online. In most cases, students share a great number of memes according to "Social Chain" (2017). It has then become a part of the students' indulgence to social media sites.

In fact, a study by Chandler (2013) poses that internet memes are deserving of critical scrutiny since it prominently asserts a new communication form. He even reiterated that the effects and implications of the transmission of memes could lead to a systematic communication that is yet to be discovered. This study sought to reconcile clashing ideas on memes as a complete pastime versus an effective instructional classroom strategy in speech and oral communication classes. At present, memes have become the language of the students since most of the things they share online contain memes. This further opens a possibility that memes are “something” and can create and establish a large impact in the lives of the students. Equivalently, this motivated the researcher to venture on practices and ways to speak the language of the students in the classroom.

Correspondingly, this study determined the development in contextualizing topics on the four aspects of Communicative Competence namely, Grammatical Competence, Discourse Competence, Sociolinguistic Competence and Strategic Competence concerning students’ learning and how memes as a springboard in classroom instruction, can be of help to solve problems and issues in communication in terms of anxiety and nervousness. Moreover, another valuable concern of the study is the contextualization of topics in communication using memes for students to better fit into communicative contexts of communication. This academic undertaking further explored the effectivity of integrating memes in the development of the communicative development of the students in speech and oral communication classes.

As an underpinning of the study, Stephen Krashen’s Second Language Acquisition has established an anchor on the concept of acquiring a language. Nonetheless, it has been subjected to great scrutiny by both linguists and research enthusiasts. Singer (2016) stated that Krashen’s revolutionary work probes that the internet is truly the underground of education. This concept can be considered a thrust on explaining valuable concepts on second language acquisition as contextualized via technological education. The second language acquisition is divided into five hypotheses namely: 1) Acquisition Learning, 2) Monitor, 3) Natural Order, 4) Input and 5) Affective Filter. The most subtle point in Stephen Krashen’s Theory of Second Language Acquisition lies heavily on the *fifth hypothesis*, which is the Affective Filter. The affective filter cultivates focus on the real concept of language teaching and not language appreciation alone. It further explains that a debilitating anxiety on the part of the students makes acquisition of the language weak. It thus impedes language acquisition and the positive learning experience students must rightfully attain while in the classroom.

Lastly, affective filter advances the idea that motivating students go a long way in keeping them focused on their goal not to be more aware of grammatical rules, but on concepts that matter to them as far as language, acquisition is concerned. Further, the theory explains that when students experience meaningful interactions in the classroom that are relatable, they easily recognize it and eventually use these meaningful interactions on the production of meaningful language learning.

The History of Memes

The definition of Internet Memes relies on a concept in evolutionary biology. According to Oxford professor Richard Dawkins (1976) the idea that living beings are genetically compelled to behave in ways that are “good for the species” should be discredited. Dawkins accomplishes this by making one point clear: the basic units of genetics are not species, families, or even individuals but rather single genes—unique strands of DNA. He acknowledges that much of human behavior comes not from genes but from culture. Dawkins then proposed the term 'meme' (based on the Ancient Greek

word *mīmēma* 'something imitated') to indicate all non-genetic behavior and cultural ideas that are passed on from one person to another.

The first recognized Internet meme was credited to Scott Fahlman (2007), he created the first smiley emoticon which he thought would help people on a message board to distinguish serious posts from jokes. He proposed the use of :-) and :- (for this purpose, and the emoticon smiley spread quickly to other communities and it soon became a meme.

The researcher found out that there are limited studies on internet memes here in the Philippines. However, there is a considered example of the first modern internet meme traced from the website called *Bert Is Evil*. The website hosts images of the puppet Bert a character from *Sesame Street* which was created by Filipino artist and designer Dino Ignacio in 1997 to which the meme aims to collect according to the website "*incriminating images and documents that prove that Bert is not the lovable harmless geek he so successfully makes us think*". The popularity gained by the website went viral and due to the website's immeasurable popularity, it became too expensive for Ignacio to continue operating. Instead of shutting the site down, he proposed to allow anyone who was willing to mirror his original website the chance to host it. Many Filipinos saw potential with what they can do in terms of memes due to the success of the website Bert Is Evil. The more people who like and share, the stronger memes will be. Memes have apparently assisted in producing opportunities for many Filipinos, transforming nobodies into celebrities overnight. Memes became a great opportunity for online users to do communication by just using memes.

In a study of Baysac (2017), he cited that many teachers are already exploiting the trend of using memes not only in the Philippines but also in many parts of the world. He even specified that when humor is properly used and executed in the classroom with caution, it would truly influence the positive learning experience in a 21st century classroom. Baysac further revealed that humorous memes as an occurrence has undeniably limited literature and deserves further study. A quantitative design with larger number of respondents according to him would be recommended. This area in the literature even more propelled the researcher to venture on the use of memes to elevate students' motivation in learning and at the same time, develop their communicative competence.

Humor and Memes in Education

Few communication education investigations have concentrated on the use of humor as an instructional method/tool in the intercultural college classroom (Franks, 2018). This has been an almost untouched area in literature in the past decade. However, linguists and language enthusiasts are becoming more concerned on how students would be hooked in the lesson.

Humor is a very good meter in knowing the state of the class if they are prepared with the lessons as ventured by Ashipaoleye (2013). These determine the mood of the class. The class seems to become more relaxed because of the humor into the lectures. For instance, a study made by Baysac, (2017), found that when students are given the traditional way of lecture and old techniques employed in the classroom teaching, the students become restless and they get bored in the lesson.

Mememes have evidently marked the turning point of the 21st century education (Variety News Team, 2017). Being knowledgeable of what Mememes are, is a way of securing that students understand how the world communicates and will eventually allow them to become literate on practices more important than reading and writing alone (Knobel & Lankshear, 2005). Mememes, therefore, are claimed to be used in educational processes. According to Kariko, (2012), humor and creativity in utilizing

memes are largely related to student achievement in their studies. He further stated that using memes is a great way to teach English classes.

In the same stance, Serrano (2018) launched and uploaded via YouTube, the Math Meme Project which is a video compilation of the best works of memes in Mathematics of her students. This is a way of showing that her students enjoyed learning the subject though dubbed as difficult by the help of Memes. The project was compiled to benefit students learning in Mathematics. The meme project earned millions of views online. Since Memes have gained prominence, it can be considered as a useful educational device for both teachers and students to promote clarity, pedagogy, and humor.

Memes indeed travel on a digital highway (Shifman, 2013) since it has become an inevitable part of the changes in the possible techniques and new ways to connect a student in the learning process. On top of all these educational and social reforms, several academic institutions started to follow the trend to better adhere to 21st-century learning. The Cambridge University is one of the big universities across the globe, which believed that memes have its fair share of place in the education.

In this light, the University offered the course “Cambridge Journal of Memeology” wherein, applicants must display a good command and proficiency in making memes. More so, a revolutionary course on Memes has been made available at the Brown University with the subject title of “Memes and the Language of the Internet” (Stambler, 2017). Further, the University of California is offering a class called “Linguistics 135: Memes: When Language and Culture Go Viral as part of its 2016 winter quarter roster.

Seminal contributions have been made by, Knobel & Lankshear (2005) when they stated that, Memes are considered as a New Literacy or a Big Literacy of the century and that research on memes should not be prohibited nor undervalued for students must have to attend to “social-ness” nowadays. They point out that meming are largely invested in the generation of meaning, societal experience and finding out one’s identity in the world. The said assertion of Memes becoming a revolutionary literacy in education, is likewise a reminder to educators that memes are important in revising critical practices when they posed that meming is a helpful practice for teachers to give premium on when crafting new forms of social participation.

As has been previously reported in the literature, the venue for communication has been too accessible and students in turn, have been exploring means to create meaning and connect with people. Teachers, in the same manner, must also join in the collaboration happening online. The results of students, having the luxury of time in enjoying being online, can set forth both worst and positively promising results in the classroom only when guided by their teachers and instructors. Similarly, Hill (2017) stated that educators who are experts in the field said that techniques such as Memes in the classroom could successfully work for the students for, they are considered as digital natives of the century.

Humor takes on a great role in the teaching and learning processes inside the classroom. Memes are deeply rooted in humor. This goes to show that when teachers have fully achieved on how to use memes in their classroom teaching, it could possibly create and a memorable lesson with the students. Lastly, if the teaching and learning processes would possibly be done strategically with the use of memes, then, positive learning experience can be achieved.

Contextualization of Memes in Communication

The basic function of memes is to put forward a specific emotion and contextual message (Reime, n.d.). Since meme is one of the widely explored and highly valued aspects in the social media, it can further take its rightful place in education. Thus, contextualization must be done for a meme to bear meaning for students to connect, reconnect and find significance in the lessons delivered in the classroom. Likewise, he also posited that a visual meme lays a foundation of a context, for when memes become a part of something, it, therefore, reveals the truth or a concept.

More so, the modernity in meaning paves way for truth to be applied in new undertakings such as the digital culture. Kariko (2012) claimed that that internet memes serve as a way to have fun with context, words, images, meaning, symbols, culture, and pop culture. Furthermore, Caffier (2018) pointed out that memes are already playing a role in shaping history and will be put in scrutiny in the same gravity as other up-to-date topics. This is the reason why context seems to be the best approach when memes are subjected to academic scrutiny.

Previous research can only be considered a first step towards a more profound understanding of memes in communication. Shifman (2013) substantiates that until the 21st century, mass communication researchers felt comfortable overlooking memes. This was because memes were once seen as just a popular pastime and not for academic use. Moreover, he stated that in communication, people become knowledgeable of memes through senses. Understand them then “repackage” them. This assertion only proves that the study of memes could be exploited, and communication happens through information of such memes expressed as a language (Jiang, 2012).

Memes as an amplified application of humor may be a compelling way to deliver lessons in the classroom. Since memes are seemingly seen a thriving way to effectively deliver a lesson, teachers can scrutinize and experiment on these evolving aspects in educational reforms to better adapt to what student really need them to stay focused in the lessons. The literatures also revealed that memes evidently put a significant mark in the execution of newly planned and improved lessons in the modern classroom. Finally, these studies gained a considerable weight of importance and focus to give premium to the 21st century learning students must rightfully experience.

These literatures were seen beneficial and important in strengthening claims of the researcher that memes can ultimately take part in the education reforms in the educational process in teaching the English language. The studies both local and international were further used in the discussion of the results of the study to establish parallelism in highlighting the effectiveness of integrating memes in academic undertakings.

Methods

Design

For this study, the researcher used quantitative research. It was used to quantify data and generalize results from the findings. Moreover, the researcher utilized this process to measure the incidence of various views and opinions of the respondents on the use of memes to help them contextualize the standards of communicative competence through the internet memes.

Additionally, this academic undertaking made use of the Experimental Design. Experimental Design is based on comparison between two or more groups. These groups must be composed of subjects who are similar on all characteristics, which might influence the outcome of interest; otherwise,

it is impossible to rule out the possibility that any observed differences at the end of the experiment were due to baseline differences between the groups at the start of the experiment.

Sample

A purposive sampling technique in choosing the respondents of the study was utilized in this study. The researcher developed an informed consent form and contract as a written agreement of the researcher and the respondents. Since the purpose of the study was to know the integration of memes in contextualizing the development of communicative competence, the study set the qualifications and baseline in subsequence: 1) *currently enrolled as a grade 11 senior high school student of Colegio de San Juan de Letran*; 2) *pursuing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Strand (STEM)*, 3) *respondent has an average grade in English of 85-75*; and lastly, 4) *took a diagnostic test in Speech and Oral Communication*.

These qualifications were set since the Speech and Oral Communication in Context as per Department of Education's order must be taken during grade 11. Further, the researcher explained to the respondents the possible risks and circumstances the respondents might encounter in participating in the study. The researcher also discussed that confidentiality of all data given, videos taken, presented ideas and answers from the respondents after being kept, must all be destroyed and deleted six months after the study is completed. This is to make sure that direct identification given by the participants must be secured in the duration of the study. Benefits of the participation were also discussed.

Instrumentation

In testing the objectivity of the study, the researcher followed procedure and protocol of the standards of the research locale. Further, the instruments used in this study went through thorough testing and validation to bring forth unbiased results. The pretest and posttest were used as main instruments of the study to determine the performance of the students.

The pretest–posttest design involves obtaining a pretest measure of the outcome of interest prior to administering some treatment, followed by a posttest on the same measure after treatment occurs. Both groups were measured before and after the experimental group was exposed to a treatment. In this study, pretest and posttest were developed and used to pinpoint significant differences in the results of tests and the comparison of the results before and after the intervention process. Moreover, to avoid components that may affect and may threaten the internal validity of the academic work, pretest and posttest were rephrased to eliminate familiarity.

The researcher prepared a posttest and pretest in line with the mechanics given by the research locale. In validating the instruments and tools of the study, the researcher selected experts in the field to validate the pretest and posttest. Adjustments were made in terms of the proper distribution of the items per topic as advised by both validators. In terms of the lessons plans for the meme and non-meme group, the lesson plans were used in the study as a guide in teaching the lessons of the meme and non-meme group. The Lesson plans were approved and validated by the department's academic chairperson to make sure that all competencies were followed.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher wrote a letter addressed to the Letran Research Center (LRC) Coordinator and the Senior High School Department Principal, Academic Chairperson and Faculty teachers that were

involved in the process. This is to ensure that no protocols and established rules of the research locale were violated. After writing a permission to the people involved in the process, the researcher oriented the students, class advisers handling the students for both groups that all information remained private and confidential.

The next process was to ask the list of students who have an average grade in English of 85-75. The students who were chosen, read the contract and the informed consent given and explained to them by the researcher. Only 61 among 70 students signed the informed consent who were the same students who took the diagnostic test. After such, the scores of the 61 students were tabulated and the last 50 students who obtained the lowest grades were picked. Students in the odd numbers were assigned to the meme group and the even numbers were assigned to the non-meme group to ensure that students have almost the same abilities in the English language. The researcher explained thoroughly what the pretest was for and made sure that the respondents fully understood their right in the conduct of the study. The researcher taught the meme group first using the meme lesson plan incorporating memes starting from the motivation up to the evaluation part of the conduct of the study. In the end of all the lessons, the students in the meme group generated their own memes and posted it in Facebook. Finally, after all of the lessons were conducted in a span of one week, the researcher administered the posttest and utilized the same room and time of the day.

The results were computed and tabulated by the researcher. Further, the researcher made use of appropriate statistical treatments to determine the performance of the students. Moreover, the learning gains were put forward in the end of the discussion of this study to highlight the importance of memes in the classroom discussion.

Results and Discussion

Memes have taken its own rightful place in the everyday life of the students. Every meme carries with it a social construct and thus contextualizes its own form in the light of someone's understanding and comprehension. The user of memes also adjusts such meme for own his or her own benefit and shares whatever he or she sees applicable in terms of the situation or event. This study has taken advantage of the fact that students nowadays, tagged as millennials, undeniably have a life online. This paved way for the researcher to venture on the use of memes as a classroom technique in teaching the standards and strategies of communicative competence to the students.

Twenty-five respondents from the control group and 25 respondents from the experimental group were chosen in the study. Different teaching strategies were employed. In testing the strategies, pretest and posttest were administered to both groups and results were interpreted via statistical tools. In this chapter, the results of the data gathering are revealed to shed light if memes can ultimately be used in classroom instruction.

Before teaching the meme group and non-meme group, both groups took a 50-item pretest. The pretest is composed of the different standards under grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. Moreover, the students answered items on the different level of difficulties for each topic up to labeling the communicative competence used and meme generation through giving blurb or caption fitted for the meme.

Table 1 shows the frequency of the distribution of the pretest scores of the meme group and the non-meme group in terms of communicative competence.

Table 1 Frequency Distribution of the Pretest Performance of the Meme Group and the Non-meme Group in terms of Communicative Competence

| Scores | Non-meme Group | | Meme Group | | Verbal Interpretation |
|---------------------------|----------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------------------|
| | F | % | f | % | |
| 9-10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Advanced |
| 7-8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Proficient |
| 5-6 | 4 | 16 | 7 | 28 | Approaching Proficiency |
| 3-4 | 8 | 32 | 9 | 36 | Developing |
| 0-2 | 13 | 52 | 9 | 36 | Beginning |
| Total | 25 | 100 | 25 | 100 | |
| Mean | 2.96 | | 3.28 | | |
| Standard Deviation | 1.43 | | 1.24 | | |

Table 1 puts forward the frequency distribution of the scores of the meme group and the non-meme group in terms of their understanding of communicative competence. In the non-meme group, 13 or 52 percent of the students are in the beginning level while in the meme group, 9 students are in the beginning level or equivalent to 36 percent. Further, in the non-meme group, 8 students or 32 percent of the students are in the developing level whereas in the meme group, 9 or 36 percent of the students are in such level. In terms of approaching proficiency, 4 or 16 percent are in such level in the non-meme group while the meme group has 7 or 28 percent which falls under the approaching proficiency group. No student is under the proficient and advanced level in terms of communicative competence. Since both groups are in same stance, this means that students are almost on same level in terms of understanding the concept of communicative competence. Lastly, the non-meme group has a mean of 2.96 and a standard deviation of 1.43 while the meme group has 3.28 mean and a standard deviation of 1.48.

The results led the researcher to the understanding that students in both groups would need help in terms of learning communicative competence and that there is more to improve in terms of learning the language. The results also mean that the readiness of the students in advancing to a higher form of learning is to be able to concretize the concepts of communicative competence via authentic examples they will experience in the workplace.

It further shows that the respondents from both groups are still in the process of developing their communicative competence. The results also entail that there is still a lot to improve in terms of honing the respondents' competence in communicating.

It can be aptly stated that all the respondents in the study shared the considerable likeness of the competence in terms of knowledge of communicative competence and that, it opens possibilities of assisting the respondents in developing their communicative skills through the integration of memes in classroom instruction as claimed by (Baysac, 2017) when he mentioned that memes deserve further exploration as an important technique in motivating the students to learn and develop their understanding of concepts.

Further, table 2 presents the difference between the performance in the pretest of the meme group and the non-meme group in the four components of communicative competence.

Table 2 Difference between the Performance in the Pretest of the Meme Group and the Non-meme Group in the Four Components of Communicative Competence

| COMPETENCE | N | Mean | | SD | | Mean Difference | df | α | P-value | Decision |
|---------------------------------|----|----------|------|----------|------|-----------------|----|----------|---------|-------------------------------|
| | | Non-meme | Meme | Non-meme | Meme | | | | | |
| Communicative Competence | 50 | 2.96 | 3.28 | 1.43 | 1.24 | .32 | 48 | .05 | .402 | <i>Accept Null Hypothesis</i> |
| Grammatical | 50 | 2.96 | 3.44 | 1.40 | 1.36 | .48 | 48 | .05 | .224 | <i>Hypothesis</i> |
| Sociolinguistic | 50 | 4.00 | 3.92 | 1.38 | 1.42 | -.08 | 48 | .05 | .841 | |
| Discourse | 50 | 3.80 | 4.32 | 1.85 | 1.49 | .52 | 48 | .05 | .279 | |
| Strategic | 50 | 3.80 | 4.32 | 2.22 | 1.41 | .52 | 48 | .05 | .327 | |

Table 2 presents the differences of the pretest scores of the two groups in terms of the competencies. In communicative competence, the controlled group obtained a mean of 2.96 and SD of 1.43 as compared to the experimental group that has 3.28 mean and an SD of 1.24. Further, in grammatical competence, the control group acquired a mean of 2.96 and an SD of an SD of 1.40 while the experimental group obtained a mean of 3.44 and SD of 1.36. Moreover, in terms of sociolinguistic competence, the control group garnered 4.00 of mean and an SD of 1.38 whereas, the experimental group obtained a mean of 3.92 and an SD of 1.42. Also, the control group for discourse competence has a mean of 3.80 and an SD of 1.85. On the other side of the coin, the experimental group has mean of 4.32 and an SD of 1.49. Lastly, for the strategic competence, the control group has a mean of 3.80 and an SD of 2.22 while the experimental group got a mean of 4.32 and an SD of 1.41.

From the above table, the statistics clearly shows that there is no significant relationship between the pretest scores of the control group and the experimental group in terms of competencies. This puts forward that the respondents were properly chosen for the study and that the study would be great way for them to develop their competence.

Table 5 shows the frequency distribution of the post-test performance of the meme group and the non-meme group in terms of communicative competence.

Table 3 Difference between the Performance in the Post-test of the Meme Group and the Non-meme Group in the Four Components of Communicative Competence

| COMPETENCE | N | Mean | | SD | | Mean Difference | df | α | P-value | Decision |
|---------------------------------|----|----------|------|----------|------|-----------------|----|----------|---------|-------------------------------|
| | | Non-meme | Meme | Non-meme | Meme | | | | | |
| Communicative Competence | 50 | 3.36 | 4.44 | 1.47 | 1.36 | 1.08 | 48 | .05 | .01 | <i>Reject Null Hypothesis</i> |
| Grammatical | 50 | 3.48 | 4.20 | 1.46 | 1.26 | .72 | 48 | .05 | .058 | <i>Accept Null Hypothesis</i> |
| Sociolinguistic | 50 | 4.24 | 5.04 | 1.45 | 1.37 | .80 | 48 | .05 | .051 | <i>Accept Null Hypothesis</i> |
| Discourse | 50 | 4.36 | 4.88 | 1.68 | 1.42 | .52 | 48 | .05 | .244 | |
| Strategic | 50 | 4.48 | 5.36 | 2.02 | 1.50 | .88 | 48 | .05 | .087 | |

Table 3 presents the differences of the posttest scores of the two groups in terms of the competencies. In communicative competence, the controlled group obtained a mean of 3.36 and SD of 1.47 as compared to the experimental group that has 4.44 mean and an SD of 1.36. Further, in grammatical competence, the control group acquired a mean of 3.48 and an SD of 1.46 while the experimental group obtained a mean of 4.20 and an SD of 1.26.

Moreover, in terms of sociolinguistic competence, the control group garnered 4.24 of mean and an SD of 1.45 whereas, the experimental group obtained a mean of 4.24 and an SD of 1.37. Also, the control group for discourse competence has a mean of 4.36 and an SD of 1.68. On the other side of the coin, the experimental group has mean of 4.88 and an SD of 1.42. Lastly, for the strategic competence, the control group has a mean of 4.48 and an SD of 2.02 while the experimental group got a mean of 5.36 and an SD of 1.50.

The table shows that that there is no significant relationship between the four components of communicative competence namely; grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence and discourse competence.

Table 4 Difference between the Performance in the Pre-test and Post-test of the Non-meme Group in the Four Components of Communicative Competence

| COMPETENCE | N | Mean | | SD | | Mean Difference | df | α | P-value | Decision |
|---------------------------------|----|------|------|------|------|-----------------|----|----------|---------|-------------------------------|
| | | Pre | Post | Pre | Post | | | | | |
| Communicative Competence | 25 | 2.96 | 3.28 | 1.43 | 1.24 | .32 | 24 | .05 | .235 | <i>Accept Null Hypothesis</i> |
| Grammatical | 25 | 2.96 | 3.44 | 1.40 | 1.36 | .48 | 24 | .05 | .130 | |
| Sociolinguistic | 25 | 4.00 | 3.92 | 1.38 | 1.41 | -.08 | 24 | .05 | .784 | |
| Discourse | 25 | 3.80 | 4.32 | 1.85 | 1.49 | .52 | 24 | .05 | .279 | |
| Strategic | 25 | 3.80 | 4.32 | 2.22 | 1.41 | .52 | 24 | .05 | .193 | |

Table 4 presents the differences of the pretest and posttest scores of the control group in terms of the competencies. In communicative competence, the pretest obtained a mean of 2.96 and SD of 1.43 as compared to the posttest that has 3.28 mean and an SD of 1.24. Further, in grammatical competence, the pretest acquired a mean of 2.96 and an SD of 1.40 while the posttest obtained a mean of 3.44 and an SD of 1.36. Moreover, in terms of sociolinguistic competence, the pretest garnered 4.00 of mean and an SD of 1.38 whereas, the posttest obtained a mean of 3.92 and an SD of 1.41. Also, the pretest for discourse competence has a mean of 3.80 and an SD of 1.85. On the other side of the coin, the posttest

has mean of 4.32 and an SD of 1.49. Lastly, for the pretest, it has a mean of 3.80 and an SD of 2.22 while the posttest got a mean of 4.32 and an SD of 1.41.

The table shows that that there is no significant relationship between the four components of communicative competence namely; grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence and discourse competence.

Table 5 Difference between the Performance in the Pre-test and Post-test of the Meme Group in the Four Components of Communicative Competence

| COMPETENCE | N | Mean | | SD | | Mean Difference | df | α | P-value | Decision |
|---------------------------------|----|------|------|------|------|-----------------|----|----------|---------|-------------------------------|
| | | Pre | Post | Pre | Post | | | | | |
| Communicative Competence | 25 | 3.28 | 4.44 | 1.24 | 1.36 | 1.16 | 24 | .05 | .000 | <i>Reject Null Hypothesis</i> |
| Grammatical | 25 | 3.44 | 4.20 | 1.36 | 1.26 | .76 | 24 | .05 | .001 | |
| Sociolinguistic | 25 | 3.92 | 5.04 | 1.41 | 1.37 | 1.12 | 24 | .05 | .001 | |
| Discourse | 25 | 4.32 | 4.88 | 1.49 | 1.43 | .56 | 24 | .05 | .002 | |
| Strategic | 25 | 4.32 | 5.36 | 1.41 | 1.50 | 1.04 | 24 | .05 | .000 | |

Table 5 presents the differences of the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group in terms of the competencies. In communicative competence, the pretest obtained a mean of 3.28 and SD of 1.24 as compared to the posttest that has 4.44 mean and an SD of 1.36. Further, in grammatical competence, the pretest acquired a mean of 3.44 and an SD of 1.36 while the posttest obtained a mean of 4.20 and an SD of 1.26. Moreover, in terms of sociolinguistic competence, the pretest garnered 3.92 of mean and an SD of 1.41 whereas, the posttest obtained a mean of 5.04 and an SD of 1.37. Also, the pretest for discourse competence has a mean of 4.32 and an SD of 1.49. On the other side of the coin, the posttest has mean of 4.88 and an SD of 1.43. Lastly, for the pretest, it has a mean of 4.32 and an SD of 1.41 while the posttest got a mean of 5.36 and an SD of 1.50.

The table shows prominently that there is a significant difference in all the components of communicative competence and that memes when used in classroom instruction is ultimately seen effective to develop the competence of the students in contextualizing their learning. More so, the table shows that the study of memes must be give light and premium for it may open doors to new ways of learning the English language.

Table 6 Difference between the Learning Gains of the Meme Group and the Non-meme Group in the Four Components of Communicative Competence

| Group | N | Mean | SD | Mean Difference | Df | α | p-value | Decision |
|-----------------------|----|-------|------|-----------------|----|----------|---------|-------------------------------|
| Non-meme Group | 25 | 7.34 | 5.32 | 7.50 | 48 | .05 | .001 | <i>Reject Null Hypothesis</i> |
| Meme Group | 25 | 14.84 | 9.74 | | | | | |

Table 6 shows the learning gains the groups obtained after the pretest and posttest taken by the groups. In terms of the learning gains, the control group has a mean of 7.34 with a standard deviation of 5.32. On the other hand, the experimental group has a mean of 14.84 with a standard

deviation of 9.74. This exhibits that respondents in the experimental group obtained a way higher gain in terms of learning than, that of the control group which substantiates Shifman (2013) assertion that memes must not be overlooked and thus must take part in the many important aspects of learning of the students.

Further, the table reveals the outcomes of the difference of learning gains of in the control group and the experimental group. It evidently shows that the non-meme group has lower gain mean= 7.34, S. D=5.32 as opposed to the meme group mean=14.84, S. D=9.74.

Since it also shows that the P-value is .001 that is lower than the significant level, then the **null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted**. This implies that there is a significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group.

The last table significantly concludes that integration memes with caution are very important tool to aid a teacher in terms of developing the student's communicative competence.

This concept is held true when Kariko (2012) claims that memes can contribute to a students' learning of language in fun and meaningful ways.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, these conclusions in subsequence were drawn:

1. Students learning of communicative competence is very low and greater opportunities of learning are seen beneficial to help students develop the four components of communicative competence.
2. The students in both groups were equal in terms of their knowledge on communicative competence.
3. The use of traditional techniques such as pictures, board work, graphic organizers and discussions helped the students in developing his or her communicative competence.
4. The respondents for the meme group have the same level of knowledge on the four components of communicative competence.
5. The respondents for the non-meme group have the same level of knowledge on the four components of communicative competence.
6. The respondents in the meme group were able to contextualize authentic situations in learning the four components of communicative competence through memes and thus supports that fact that

humor could relatively take a big role in the students' enhancement of learning of the English language.

7. The internet memes helped in the development of learning as reflected in the learning gains on communicative competence of the students in the meme group.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn in this study, the following are recommended:

1. Speech and Oral Communication instructors should find the utilization of memes as a useful underpinning in teaching the English subject with both humor and enthusiasm especially in the topics that concern the communicative competence of the students.
2. Students must help themselves in practicing their communication competence through determining the standards involved and violated in the communicative competence through the

- array of memes they see while browsing.
3. Traditional techniques must still be utilized alongside with the 21st century techniques in teaching as it still seen very beneficial and vita part of classroom discussion.
 4. Students should expose themselves on authentic situations they would find online and must see it as opportunity to develop their communicative competence through the available online materials.
 5. Students must see memes as a way of understanding the authentic situations through the patterns and situations involved in the memes and must consider it as a way of understanding how one must develop his or her own communicative competence.
 6. Students and teachers must welcome the opportunity of learning new techniques in teaching the communicative competence via the use of memes in the classroom discussions.
 7. Future researchers should use this study to venture more on ways on how to incorporate humor and memes in discussion or in any ways or techniques the students would learn best.

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An Exploration of In-service EFL Teachers' Views Toward Mentoring in Indonesia

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Abstract: Mentoring helps teachers experience, learn and apply their knowledge as well as sharing their knowledge and experiences to their colleagues. Although mentoring for ELT in-service teachers has not been implemented formally in Indonesia, it has become popular in Europe, America, Australia and many other countries. In the United Kingdom for instance, mentoring has become one of the required ways for teachers to learn from each other and support other teachers. By using a qualitative exploratory study, an exploration towards mentoring as a term amongst EFL teachers in Indonesia was done. The data was collected by using questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to investigate 12 educational practitioners' views toward mentoring. The educational practitioners consist of three trainers of in-service teachers, five lecturers of EFL pre-service teachers and four EFL secondary in-service teachers in Indonesia. The findings showed different participants' understandings on the term mentoring. Furthermore, the result of this study may impact further research related to the implementation of mentoring scheme as the collaborative CPD in Indonesia.

Introduction

Mentoring has been widely acknowledged as a good practice in language teaching and education. As Bailey *et al.* (2001, p. 207) state, mentoring is a relatively new approach for language teachers, which serves a long-established way of imparting knowledge, skills and understanding with origins of the apprenticeship system in crafts and trades.

Mentoring provides a way for in-service teachers to have discussions and reflections with other teachers or more professional educational practitioners. By doing mentoring, teachers become good facilitators to help other teachers who become mentees by supporting and encouraging them – as less experienced or novice teachers – to meet students' needs.

It has been proven that successful mentoring is positive, whether for pre-service or for in-service teachers (Franke and Dahlgren, 1996; Hobson, 2002; Marable and Raimondi, 2007; Su, 1992). This is because through mentoring, experienced teachers who have developed some skills through experience could extend their knowledge by scaffolding the novice teachers' knowledge (Pitton, 2006). The mutual benefits between both mentor and mentee can therefore create sustainable development along their practices.

Research background

<http://www.gentefl.org/gen-tefl-journal.html>

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The roles of English in Indonesia

There are many factors in Indonesia, which affect the use and development of English. Laufer (2008) states that historical, political, socio-cultural and linguistics factors have shaped English's status and functions over the last century in Indonesia. In state education for example, English has developed in the context of post-colonial education to the current status of English as an international or global language. It could be seen from the use of English in a wide range of fields – especially in education – which keeps improving nowadays and shapes English as an important subject in schools. Moreover, the demand for the use of English in such job fields leads to education to provide qualified graduates who have English competence.

The importance of English in the educational system thereby guarantees that almost all school levels of education teach English subjects in their curriculum. Based on the national curriculum, students in elementary schools have started to learn English as a foreign language subject. English has also become more important to be taught for Junior High School and Senior High School level since it has become a national examination subject. Besides the national curriculum, the role of English in education has become more important in international schools, which implement English as a medium of teaching and learning. In these schools, English is taught based on an international curriculum.

EFL teachers in secondary schools of Indonesia

EFL teachers in secondary schools of Indonesia teach all grades of learners. For some schools, which have only one English teacher, the teacher therefore has to teach all levels, but other schools may have more than one English teacher, so the teachers work with only one level in each academic year. To some extent, this role of teaching depends on school policy.

Based on curriculum 2013, in the English subject syllabus for Senior High School Grade X, for example, there are 36 times 2 hours of time allocation to teach English in one academic year. Each hour in time allocation has duration for 45 minutes. Thus, in a semester, teachers have to teach English for about 18 to 20 weeks. When there is only one English teacher in a school, it means that the teacher has to teach for about 3 levels times 2 times 2 hours per week for 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders. The teachers working with different levels have a heavier workload, as more planning and preparation is involved. Additionally, when the teachers find some challenges, there will be no other English teachers to share with and discuss about teaching English issues in the classrooms and schools. One solution could be having sharing and discussion with other teachers from different subjects who teach the same classes. Therefore, focus of discussion might only be about classroom management and teaching methods but not about the English knowledge.

Teacher preparation (pre-service training/education)

Teacher preparation in pre-service training or education in Indonesia is held at the higher education level. After graduating from Senior High School, students who are interested to become English teachers could apply for studying in some universities, which have English Language Education study programmes. In the universities, pre-service teachers follow curricula, which are offered by the study programme. The duration for English language pre-service teacher education programmes is about 4 years. After they graduate from the university, they will have a qualification to teach English in secondary schools of Indonesia.

The curriculum for English Language Education in Indonesia consists of a number of modules, which have to be passed in order to attain the qualification. The curriculum also involves a teaching practice programme for all pre-service teachers called micro teaching in around 6th semester and a teaching practicum in some secondary schools usually in 7th semester. For microteaching, the pre-service teachers will be guided by their lecturers and when they do the teaching practicum in schools, they will have English teachers in their schools as their supervisors.

Mentoring in Indonesia

In Indonesia, mentoring for EFL teachers has not yet been implemented since many schools still focus on the examination results and school ranks rather than the process of developing teachers. Mentoring has become popular in Indonesia in some other areas such as business, sports, religion, health and Psychology but not yet in educational. According to Barret (2000), mentoring new staff is important for the operation of a corporation - business. In sports, many successful athletes in Indonesia shared their success stories, which are supported by their coaches as mentors. In religion, many people find their right ways to live this precious lives with guidance of mentors.

Therefore, in this research, I would like to find out teachers' perceptions on mentoring, their opinions about the implementation of mentoring and their critical views on how mentoring could be implemented in their practice. The next section will now move on to consider a peer dialogue model for mentoring alongside some of its possible benefits and constraints in the context.

Literature review

The concept of mentoring

Mentoring comes from the word mentor as a name of a wise captain who offers guidance to Odysseus's son. According to Eisenman and Thornton (1999, pp. 80-81) mentoring means a 'situation in which a knowledgeable person aids a less knowledgeable person'. Jeffrey and Ferguson (1992) state that 'mentoring is a process by which an older and more experienced person takes a younger person under his or her wing freely offering advice and encouragement.' Thus mentoring concept and principles can be seen through socio-cultural perspectives (Edwards & Collison, 1996; Rogoff, 1995; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Wertsch, 1991) since by doing mentoring both mentor and mentee builds their socialisation and acculturation into local (school) and broader educational contexts (Bullough & Draper, 2004; Edwards, 1998; Feiman-Nemser and Parker, 1992).

The process of mentoring implies an extended relationship involving additional behaviour such as counselling and professional friendship (Gardiner, 1998). This kind of relationship needs deeper interaction to know one another as mentoring is a complex activity deeply associated with the support of individual learning (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002) in broader counselling and support (Langsberg, 1996). Finally, the mentoring relationship is described by Hobson & Malderez (2013 p. 90) as "... one-to-one relationship between a relatively inexperienced teacher (the mentee) and a relatively experienced one (the mentor) which aims to support the mentee's learning and development as a teacher, and their integration into and acceptance by the cultures of the school and the profession".

Mentoring has been known as a way to support teacher trainees in doing their teaching practice and develop their teaching skills and knowledge (Eisenman and Thornton, 1999; Glover and Mardle, 1995; Wilkin and Sankey, 1994). However, Randall and Thornton (2001) highlight that mentoring on pre-service teacher education programme in the present system gives mentor responsibility to not only help professional or developmental growth of the mentee, but also give training and assessment for the

mentee. Thus, Glover and Law (1996) state that increasing use of mentoring is a way to give general and peer support for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) during an induction period, or support more experienced teachers for undertaking new or different responsibilities (p. 38). To develop a mentoring 'culture', teachers use a mutual support system to build reflection and 'a boost of morale' within a climate of 'entitlement' (*ibid*).

Related to teachers' practices, mentoring helps teachers to learn and develop their reflective practice (Dewey, 1993; Schon, 1983; Zeichner, 1994) since through the mentoring process, both mentor and mentee reflect more on their practice and find out the appropriate way to proceed. Thus, mentoring keeps teachers reflecting on their practices as well as learning from others' practices.

The aims and benefits of mentoring

Mentoring is designed to provide non-evaluative, non-threatening source of support and development to practising teachers (Bailey *et al.*, 2001). It aims to generate a positive impact on mentees' emotional wellbeing (e.g. Bullough & Draper, 2004; Marable & Raimondi, 2007) since mentoring processes aim to shape teachers' beliefs and values in a positive way. It is often considered as a longer-term career relationship from someone who has 'done it before' and a mentor is an experienced and trusted adviser who takes a custodial interest in the progress of another. A mentor will help to assess performance, to obtain confidential feedback in individual strengths and weaknesses, and to learn new skills and behaviours in a positive way as well. The mentor will help build a valuable network and might also introduce the mentee to their contexts. In many cases, mentors take a long-term approach and are likely to be older and more experienced. Thus 'mentoring appears to be a preferred support mechanism as it draws upon the expertise of existing school staff who can provide immediate benefits to the beginning teachers' (Hudson, 2012).

For EFL teachers where English is not used in daily life conversation, having the chance to implement English and used professionally is needed. This way can be acquired through mentoring which improves professional knowledge and skills base (e.g. McIntyre & Hagger 1996; Lindgren 2005), including subject and curriculum knowledge, ability to manage time and workload, classroom management, informed reflection and noticing. As the mentee could have professional improvement, the result of their practice will benefit learners, schools, government and the country.

However, it should be remembered that mentor-teachers do not aim to create clones of the mentors but to help mentees develop into the best teachers they can be (Pitton, 2006, p. 1). Thus, mentors could share best practices that they have achieved in their teaching to mentees but there is no rule that mentees should follow the same way to fix some problems in their practices. Mentees could absorb the values of the sharing and decide the best way to teach and meet their students' needs based on their competencies.

Related to collegiality collaboration, Gillmore (2016) proves that mentoring helps mentors and mentees become better teachers, as experienced teachers tend to keep doing the same things in their teaching practices, while new teachers expose themselves to current research and technology. By working together in mentoring, experienced teachers develop resources to use in the future and help with classroom management by providing a different perspective on students' behaviour. Thus, mentoring not only benefits the mentees but also the experienced teachers who are the mentors.

The needs for mentoring

Mentoring is needed as mentees need a guide, a supporter, a friend, an advocate, and a role model (Chapel, 2003; Tatum et al., 1999) to help them develop their professionalism. Mentoring helps teachers acquire teacher knowledge which consists of 'know about' as the head of teaching, 'know how' as the hand of teaching and 'know intuitively' to use that knowledge appropriately in action as the heart of teaching (Hobson, Malderez *et al.*, 2009). The 'know about' and 'know how' can be learnt in school and classroom, however for 'know to', this can only be learnt through experiences of planning, teaching, reviewing and learning from actual teaching which integrates knowledge-base, a personal practical knowledge, development (Malderez & Wedell 2007). Thus, when new teachers start their practices in schools, they need to convert their knowledge about theories of learning from university into practice and experiences in school. In this condition, the teachers need mentors to help them implement teaching practice based on some theories they have learned.

Roles and responsibility of mentors

Smith and West-Burnham (1993) state that 'the role of mentor is to act as a "wise counsellor", guide, and adviser to younger or newer colleagues'. Thus, mentors are experienced teachers who have received appropriate Initial Mentor Preparation through training programmes or short courses. This process shape mentors as peers for the mentees, not as line managers or assessors or someone who reports on the mentees' performances. If the mentors perform their roles in a wrong way, the results of the mentoring will not be in positive impacts but on the contrary. As Hobson & Malderez (2013) stated, someone who is called 'a mentor' may not, in fact, be supporting learning, and in the worst cases may be impeding a mentee's learning.

By having mentors in 'support', 'sponsor' and 'acculturator' roles, teachers are helped with issues related to emotions, relationships and identity, while in their 'model' and 'educator' roles teachers are enabled to see the practical, contextualised relevance to them of what they learn formally elsewhere (Hobson, Malderez *et al.*, 2009). These refer to the importance of experiences in teaching as valuable sources of learning for teachers. Teachers may have some views on teacher knowledge and learning, which proves ineffectiveness of 'theory-application' models in their practice. Thus, many perspectives on teachers learning emphasise the centrality of experience. For instance, constructivist views of learning, which refer to individual biographies and past experience influencing present meaning making and socio-cultural views, refer to participation in and experiences of communities of practice (Hobson, Malderez *et al.*, 2009). For teachers themselves, the experience of being in schools and actually teaching is being the most valuable single source of their learning. Additionally, mentors could help mentees through 'educator' role to support the on-going learning from the experiences of teaching. In 'acculturator' and 'sponsor' roles, mentors support a teacher's progress towards full participation in the communities (e.g. school, profession) they are joining - as only they are full practising members of such communities.

Fullerton and Malderez (1998) in Malderez & Bodoczky (1999) and Malderez & Wedell (2007) also present roles of mentors as a 'model' who are modelling how to be, rather than how to do and making some values visible to the mentees. They refer to 'support' as being a 'shoulder to cry on' and a listening ear and 'educator', scaffolding the learning of the skills of noticing, of learning from their own and others' experiences to develop an integrated knowledge-base. Supporters respond contingently to a range of emerging needs.

Roles and responsibilities of mentors are not easy to fulfil, thus lack of clarity regarding mentoring roles can lead to confusion and ineffective support mentees (Brooks, 2000; Chapel 2003).

For example, conducting reflective conversations are not straightforward so that to do this needs a trained mentor (Foreman, 2013). As Gillmore (2016) states mentors should have formal training about how to be good mentor as when giving feedback to mentees, it needs to be regular, thorough and constructive and focusing evaluations of specific aspects, like moving around the classroom or interacting with students.

Some issues of mentoring

Besides the benefits of implementing effective mentoring, there are some practices of 'judgementoring' and other threats which impact on mentoring (Hobson and Malderez, 2013). Some ways of 'judgementoring' according to (Hobson and Malderez, 2013) are being critical of mentees' work as novice teachers by giving negative judgements; belief that mentor's way is the right way to teach, and the use of restrictive feedback in post-lesson discussions.

However, mentoring is still a powerful tool to enhance skills in classroom management and self-reflection and to improve job satisfaction as teachers. Hobson and Malderez (2013) state that many shortcomings can be traced back to institutional and policy-level failings. Therefore, in mentoring schemes, the selection criteria for mentors should consider candidates' willingness, aptitude and expertise of being mentors. Hobson and Malderez (2013) add that ineffective or insufficient training leaves mentors ill-prepared, mentors are given insufficient time to meet procedural demands, schools task mentors with conflicting mentor or assessor roles and little effort is made to build effective partnerships with relevant higher education institutions.

Another issue is when some mentors do not have a clear idea of what mentoring is and believe in 'proceduralist-apprenticeship' rather than 'understanding-oriented' approach to professional learning and development (Hobson, 2003). Therefore, mentoring for effective teaching requires quality preparation and careful selection of mentors (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez & Tomlinson, 2009).

Methodology

In this part, the methodology and the outline of some approaches, which are used to select participants and data collection, are explored. These parts are then followed by a description of data collection procedure, which includes piloting and data analysis. At the end of this part, some issues and limitations existing in this study are addressed.

Research question

In the first part, the research question, which becomes the basis for the research aims, is presented; it consists of: What do teachers, lecturers, and trainers understand by the term mentoring?

Research approach

This study is based on a qualitative inquiry and interpretative paradigm or constructivist worldview (McKay, 2006). Qualitative inquiry seeks to understand individuals' views on the world (Bell, 2010). As this study explores and finds out what participants think and understand about mentoring, it is therefore a practitioner research, which is known as natural setting (Cohen, 2000; Robson, 1993; Wallen and Fraenkel, 2001). Therefore, the social context in which the study event appears is important (Neuman, 1994).

This qualitative study is an exploratory activity (Wellington, 2000, p. 133) and it is shaped by an interpretation process (Denscombe, 1998; Denzin and Norman, 2000). As Creswell (2014) states, qualitative research is 'the approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem' (p. 4). Allwright (2005) defines Exploratory Practice (EP) as an indefinitely sustainable way of language teaching and learning, to develop understandings of life in language. In particular, this study attempts to make sense of the collected data, question them and generate new insights from them (Wellington, 2000) to make them understandable (Neuman, 1994). By implementing a mixed methods approach, a more complete understanding on the topic of the study can be provided as this study uses qualitative and quantitative methodology (Johnson *et al.*, 2007; cited in Creswell and Clark, 2011).

Sampling and participants

As this study is an exploratory study, non-probability sampling is used. Non-probability sampling is more feasible and more informative in a qualitative research compared with probability sampling (Wellington, 2000). In this study, the participants are educational practitioners whom I know and had professional experience with. They are from the researched context and have experienced the researched event. Furthermore, participants have the chance to give further information about the data needed in order to gain a deeper understanding (Neuman, 1997, p. 206). The sample is also identified based on a sample of convenience in which a selected group is in some way representative of the larger population (McKay, 2006, p. 37).

In this study, the participants consist of three different groups of educational practitioners. The first group consists of 4 teachers (Tc1, Tc2, Tc3 and Tc4) who have been teaching English for secondary schools in Indonesia. The second group are 5 lecturers (Lr1, Lr2, Lr3, Lr4, and Lr5) who teach EFL teacher-trainees in some universities in Indonesia. The third group are 3 educational trainers (Tr1, Tr2, & Tr3) who have dedicated themselves to give some training for EFL teachers.

Data collection tools

In this research, questionnaire and interview are used to collect data as multiple methods. Use of multiple method helps to produce deeper information on the research topic and allows the researcher to see things from different perspectives and to understand the topic in a more rounded way, so it can improve the quality of the research (Denscombe, 1998, p. 84). A variety of instruments in the data collection process can also enhance the validity and reliability of the study (Wallen and Fraenkel 2001, p. 477).

Questionnaire

Through written questionnaires a good deal of information can be gathered in a short amount of time which makes it a very effective means for researchers (McKay, 2006, p. 35). The questionnaire, which is used in this research, is the combination of structured free-response or open questions which Craft (1996) states is good at exploring attitudes with highly structured or closed questionnaires. However, Cohen and Manion (1989) warn that open-ended questions may not necessarily bring a clear response but are still useful to explore someone's views.

Therefore, some types of information including factual information about participants' experiences, and attitudinal information about their feelings and opinions are provided (Dornyei, 2003, cited in McKay, 2006, p. 35). In order to explore participants' views about mentoring, both open-ended questions and closed questions were used in the questionnaire. Closed questions lend themselves nicely

to being quantified and compared (Denscombe, 1998, p. 101), while open-ended questions 'give more scope for respondents to supply answers reflecting the exact facts or true feelings on a topic'.

The questionnaire is divided into five parts. Part A is about participants' working experiences, which lead to some experiences of mentoring activities in Part B. In second and third parts, questions explore their experiences on mentoring in response to information from the literature. Part D is formulated to elicit participants' views on future implementation of mentoring in Indonesia. Finally, in part E participants respond to items related to their understanding mentoring. In this questionnaire, participants are made aware in the introduction of their rights such as confidentiality, and they are requested to give truthful answers to questions. Finally, they are asked about their willingness to take part in an interview session and to provide contact details.

Interview

In this research, a semi-structured interview (Nunan, 1992, p. 149) or an in-depth interview (Esterberg, 2002; Grix, 2004) is used to collect data. By implementing this data collection tool, rich insights into people's experience, opinions, attitudes and feelings are gained (McKay, 2006, p. 51). This type of interview consists of a list of pre-determined questions, which were asked for all participants, and it also includes some questions unique to each participants, based on their responses in the questionnaire (Nunan, 1992). It allows for follow-up questions to be asked in order to gain deeper understanding (Richards, 2003, p. 64-65) and is useful for exploring topics in detail (Esterberg, 2002, p. 87). In addition, this interview approach is useful when making comparisons between interview responses for analysis (Grix, 2004, p. 128).

The design of the study

Piloting and revision

Piloting is the process of creating, adapting, developing and trying out questionnaires or interviews (Oppenheim, 1992, p. 413). In this research, both the questionnaire and interview were piloted by three colleagues on the MEd TESOL programme and by one English teacher in Indonesia before they were administrated to the actual participants. The process of piloting identified ambiguous instruction and questions, which were difficult to answer (McKay, 2006, p. 41; Oppenheim, 1992, p. 413), so a few changes were made. Piloting interview questions helped the researcher to find out if the questions yielded the kind of data required and to eliminate any questions, which may be unclear to the interviewee (Nunan, 1992, p. 151).

Data collection procedure

The purposes of the study were explained to the participants and the ethical issues were informed to them before they took part in giving any information for the study. The questionnaires were distributed and after filling in the questionnaire, they are voluntarily interviewed. Each interview lasted about thirty minutes and was recorded by digital recorder. Subsequently, the whole data from interviews, which was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, was transcribed and translated into transcript works for further reading and analysis. The questionnaire was conducted in English but some participants may answer the questions in Bahasa Indonesia to avoid misunderstanding. Before the data analysis process, all the data collected from the questionnaire and interview were stored securely to ensure confidentiality.

Data analysis

The data analysis process in this study is based on a manual way in which data is marked and manipulated on paper (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; Richards, 2003) as an inductive analysis (Wallen and Fraenkel, 2001, p. 435). Particularly, the data collected from closed questions and open questions in the questionnaire were presented and analysed in the tables according to frequency (Creswell, 2007). The data collected from open questions in interviews were coded before they were reflected on, categorised and generated into concepts and themes (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; Richards, 2003).

As this research implemented qualitative and quantitative data analysis, the analysis process will be differentiated into two phases. Craft (1996) explains that in qualitative data analysis, after collecting data the researcher needs to carefully examine the data and start to identify recurrent themes, issues and categories then sort the data based on the categories. In this research, the researcher noted the patterns and find groups and subgroups of the issues. Then, the researcher related the issues with the research questions that needs to be answered. Craft (1996) describes the process of analysis of data through the following figure.

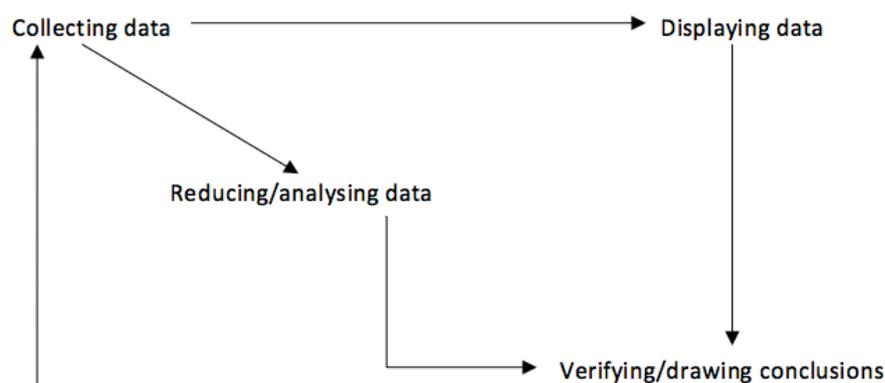


Figure 1: Components of data analysis
 Source: Based on Craft (1996)

Then, the quantitative data is analysed through measuring and counting the rating scales.

In this research, the researcher implemented a Chart (1996) described as discrete variables related to the place of in-service work and continuous variables consisting length of teaching experiences. Then, based on some categories in the questionnaire, the numerical and percentage forms of data are calculated into a mean. The data is presented next through some tables and charts followed by a simplified discussion of the principle issues.

Research issues: Credibility, trustworthiness, transferability, and ethical issues

Craft (1996) states that validation of the hypotheses and categories could be done through saturation and triangulation. In this research, saturation is held when the responses are grouped into each category and triangulation exists when comparing theories of mentoring towards the data (Cohen and Manion, 1989). Then, the data is interpreted to fit a valid category into the theory and research questions.

The use of questionnaire and interview might help to see things from different perspectives, corroborate findings and established credibility (*internal validity*) (Denscombe, 1998, p. 85). Besides, participants were asked to confirm their interpretation of their responses in the interview questions which experimenter bias and increase credibility (Mertens, 1998, p. 182; Cohen, 2000, p. 121) and

dependability (*reliability*) which is regarded as a fit between what a researcher records as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched (Cohen, 2000, p. 199-120). In addition, a thick description of context and participants for this study was provided which might enable readers to determine to what extent the findings might be applicable to other contexts, which achieves the transferability of this research (*external validity*) (McKay, 2006, p. 13; Mertens, 1998, p. 183). Together with this description, a provision of all steps taken to carry out the study and a careful selection of representative examples from the data used to illustrate particular conclusions can make this research gain more dependability.

Limitations

Although mentoring is commonly implemented for pre-service teachers, this study explores in-service EFL teachers' views on mentoring in Indonesia. Therefore, the participants are from the researched context and consist of three groups of educational practitioners. The participants represent teachers', lecturers' and trainers' voices in Indonesia since they teach and do their practice in different parts of Indonesia. However, any implications of the findings into a new context still need to be taken into consideration.

Results analysis and discussion

Participants' views on the term mentoring

There are several sub-questions in the questionnaire and interview session, which are answered in order to investigate participants' views on mentoring and compare their views with the literature. The questions are about participants' understanding of mentoring, how they know about mentoring and their experiences of participating in a mentoring scheme, whether as a mentor or mentee.

Participants' understandings of mentoring

In this sub-section, the results of the participants' understanding on defining the term mentoring from filling in the questionnaire Section C number 1 and answering interview Part B are presented, analysed and discussed. There are various understandings about mentoring addressed by the participants, which are divided into three parts.

First, mentoring is understood as the way of giving motivation, empowerment, feedback, advice, and help for a mentee or less-experienced teacher to reflect on their competence and take actions and control of their own teaching to reach needed competence, knowledge and skills. This understanding is in accordance with Eisenman and Thornton (1999), Hobson & Malderez (2013), and Pitton (2006), who state mentoring is helping less knowledgeable, less experienced, or inexperienced person. As Lr4 states 'mentoring is helping less-experienced teachers in enhancing knowledge and skills in teaching'.

Second, mentoring is also understood as a way of giving training, practice and guide for experienced teachers, friends, or colleagues to have a plan on strategy needed for quality improvement. This is in line with Bailey *et al.* (2001) and Glover and Law (1996) whereby mentoring also helps experienced teachers as professional relationship for undertaking different responsibilities and collaboration. As Lr1 states 'mentoring is a part of academic collegiality to help each other develop'.

Third, mentoring is a way of giving chances for mentors and mentees to reflect and attain positive values in their practices, share knowledge and learn together for the benefit of the mentee, the mentor and students. Dewey, (1993), Schon (1983), Zeichner (1994) relate mentoring with reflective practice, matching Tc3's response: 'mentoring is guiding, sharing, reflecting, giving feed-back, giving motivation and learning together'. In another view, Tr1 explains more: 'mentoring is a good way to enter deep reflection on professional practice as reflection plays the major roles to make meaning on the teacher's actions'. Thus, in mentoring, mentor's guidance to help mentee reflect on their actions is seen as crucial.

In the interview Part B, almost all of the teachers define mentoring same as Bailey *et al.* (2001), Craft (1996), and Glover and Law (1996), Lr4 successfully defines the term mentoring as 'a way to help less experienced teachers share as well as improve their competences. However, it is found that almost all participants see in mentoring, age is not a matter since the focus is on teacher knowledge and skills development as per Hobson, Malderez *et al.* (2009). Tr3 states 'whenever she has some difficulties or willingness to develop herself, she will open a discussion with certain people who are more professional and qualified than her, regardless of the age issue'. This finding then contradicts Jeffrey and Ferguson's (1992) ideas that in mentoring, older person takes younger person to offer advice and encouragement.

Tc1 affirms that 'mentoring happens between friends in the same profession' which specifies mentoring could be held in school community. Lr4 also explains more in the interview: 'mentoring is an expression of our love to education for the advancement of human knowledge and human education and mentoring is a matter of willingness to share with each other'. Their ideas can be related to the socio-cultural perspective as what Edwards & Collison (1996), Rogoff (1995), Tharp & Gallimore (1988), and Wertsch (1991) state in literature. This means that mentoring leads to socialisation and acculturation as stated by Bullough & Draper (2004), Edwards (1998), and Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1992). There is also something interesting from the interview session that Tr2 says 'in mentoring, mentors and mentees might not have found the way to reach their goals, therefore mentors and mentees have to work together to find the best way', which coincides with Gardiner's (1998) and Langsberg's (1996) perception that mentoring involves counselling and professional friendship to support individual learning (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002).

Below is a table about participants' response on some statements in the questionnaire section E number 1, 6, and 14, related to their view on the term mentoring by stating 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for agree and 4 for strongly agree.

| Statements | Results (N*=12) | | | |
|--|-----------------|---|---|----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| I understand the term 'mentoring' | | | 4 | 8 |
| I think knowledge and experience about mentoring would benefit teachers in their professional practice | | | 2 | 10 |
| I think having practices on mentoring would benefit pre-service teachers in their future practice. | | | 4 | 8 |

(N*: Number of respondents = 12 participants)

Table 1: Participants' understanding on the term 'mentoring'

From the table above, it can be seen that participants state their understanding of the concept of mentoring. However, more participants strongly agree that mentoring would benefit in-service teachers. Bailey *et al.* (2001) indeed state that mentoring is designed to provide a non-evaluative, non-threatening source of support and development to practising teachers. Thus, Tr3 states in the interview session that

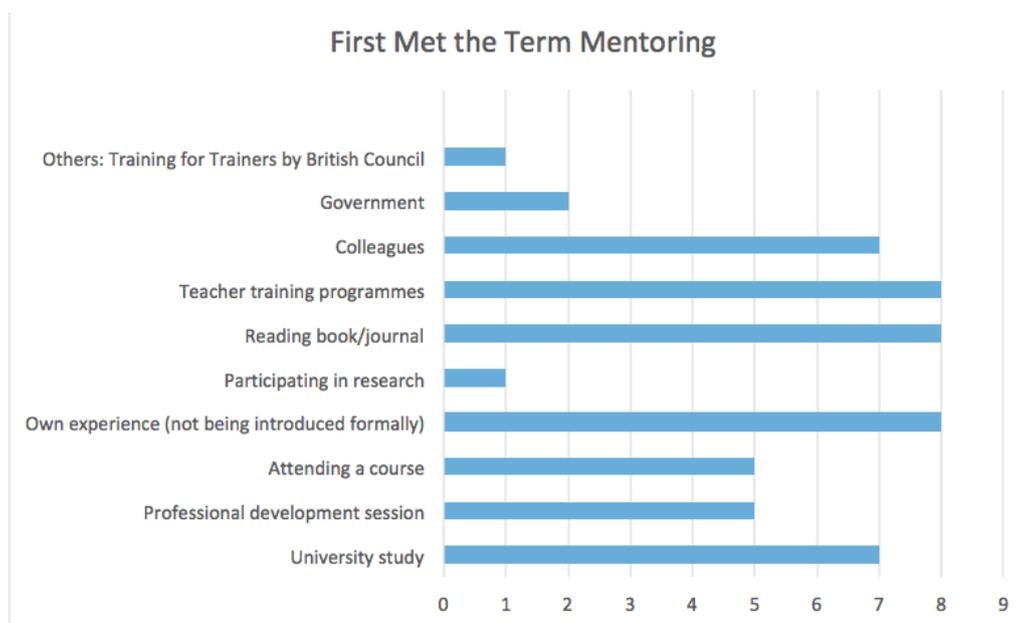
‘mentoring will benefit in-service teachers to become mentors and mentees for each other’. The reason for this could be linked to Randall and Thornton (2001) who state that in mentoring, teaching supervisor does not exist thereby creating a more informal collegiate support network.

Participants’ familiarity with mentoring

The results below show how the participants first met the term mentoring. In questionnaire Section C number 2, participants were asked where they had first met the term ‘mentoring’ and table below shows the results.



(N*: Number of respondents = 12 participants)
 Figure 3: Participants’ experiences on mentoring practices



(N*: Number of respondents = 12 participants)
 Figure 2: Participants first met the term ‘mentoring’

The data gathered shows most of the participants knew the term mentoring from teachers training programmes, reading books/journals and their own experiences or in other words they are not being introduced formally. More than half of the participants also knew the term mentoring from colleagues and university study. Although there is considerable awareness of mentoring in Indonesia, clearly there are still some gaps both in terms of theory and practice.

Participants' experiences in mentoring

The diagram below shows participants' experiences of participating in a mentoring scheme in educational aspect whether as a mentor or a mentee in questionnaire Section C number 3.

In response to the question, the data shows that two thirds – 8 participants out of 12 participants – have experienced mentoring and most of them who have become mentees then became mentors for other mentees in their practice. However, most of the participants' state that the mentoring schemes they have followed constitute informal mentoring since mentoring has not been implemented in Indonesia yet.

In interview Part B, Lr4 states: 'my participating on mentoring activity is not in a particular program, but in term of sharing what I know. At that experience, I became mentor and mentee as well who did mentoring informally without any schemes'. Tr3 adds 'I have become a mentor for 3.5 years and done assessment, guidance, visit, observation and discussion related to teachers' competency in pedagogy and knowledge based on teachers' needs through interview session'. In other experiences, Lr1 shares his experience of doing mentoring when he found a role model who is inspirational, senior and expert to find his strengths in accordance with his goals (Chapel, 2003; Tatum et al., 1999). Tc2 shares her mentoring experience and concurs that an informal procedure is prevalent: 'I have done mentoring by sharing with other teachers who are more professional about class management, teaching methods, technology in teaching, teaching experiences and also for the administration in my school or other schools'.

Implications and conclusion

In this part, the implications of the study to some educational aspects will be delivered. Some recommendations on the future implementation of mentoring in Indonesia will be addressed and finally conclusions on the study will be drawn.

Implications and recommendations

Based on the findings, it seems that all participants have already understood the term mentoring with some perspectives through this exploratory study. Even though a mentoring scheme has not been implemented in the educational system, especially in EFL in-service teachers, all participants could share deep views on mentoring and some. This is because the participants informally have implemented mentoring in their lives. The mentoring they followed naturally occurred in their career as a response to their needs. However, there is a limitation since mentoring has not been implemented formally in their practice. Therefore, it is still important to explore participants' views on formal implementation of mentoring schemes in Indonesia through this research. Their views in this research become basic knowledge for the future implementation of mentoring scheme for EFL in-service teachers. Based on the discussion, there are some aspects to be considered in future including the roles of mentors and mentees, and also some issues related to previous mentoring programmes in other contexts.

First, it is essential for participants to fully understand the rationale of mentoring. It seems that all participants have understood the term mentoring, but it does not mean that all participants know the real goals of mentoring. It is proven by the findings that the participants still put mentoring skills for mentors and the goals of mentoring into their consideration to be learned through training or short courses. Therefore, in regards to the future implementation of mentoring in Indonesia, some training programmes or short courses are recommended to be held in order to prepare the mentors and mentees to be ready for the mentoring scheme. Not only the teachers, it is also important for educational department, institutions, and government to be introduced to the mentoring as well as the theory, practice, aims, strategy and nature of mentoring to ensure that mentoring can be sustainably maintained as authentic in Indonesia.

The findings of this study will contribute to further research on the implementation of mentoring scheme in Indonesia, especially for EFL in-service teacher. The implications will also contribute to the design of mentoring schemes as well as mentors and mentees training programmes which could be appropriate in Indonesian contexts.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has attempted to find out some views about conceptions and perceptions that lecturers, teacher trainers and in-service EFL teachers hold about mentoring. Even though in this study has a small group of participants which consisted of 12 participants, with limited time of conducting the research, some views on mentoring represented by the participants could give wide understanding and perceptions related to mentoring in Indonesia.

The findings may have limited generalizability as this study may offer valuable evidence on practitioners' reflections regarding mentoring and its future implementation. It is hoped that this study will help more teachers, schools, educational institutions and departments to be more aware on the importance of mentoring and persevere in finding the best way to reach individual and institutional growth in their teaching practice, especially through mentoring.

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Introducing Literacy to Young English Learners

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Abstract: The study of ENL children's (children whose native language is English) literacy development enables the exploration of how to introduce reading to EFL students (children who learn English as a foreign language) in Japanese elementary school. The final goal of this study is to discern effective ways to introduce literacy. As reading is the first part of literacy education, this paper mainly focuses on reading. The first part of this study discusses literacy development and the difficulty of written language for ENL children. Then, the study shifts to literacy development and the difficulty of written language for EFL children, compared to their counterparts in ENL environments. The implications of this study help explore and improve efficient literacy education in English in Japanese elementary schools.

Introduction

In 2020, English will be taught as an official subject in Japanese elementary schools. Since 2011, as part of a curriculum called "foreign language activities," English has been taught. But in 5th and 6th grade classes, students (ages 10–12) have only been expected to become familiar with English sounds and some expressions by speaking and listening, without ever being encouraged or required to learn the written language. A new curriculum provided by the MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) in Japan, which will be enforced in 2020, shows that 5th and 6th graders will learn English, including the written language. That means that literacy in English will be newly introduced to the curriculum.

For the past decade in Japanese elementary schools, teaching English has been a big challenge for most teachers who are neither well trained nor ready to teach English due to their lack of teaching skills and English proficiency. A new challenge they face is to teach reading and writing in English in a way that instructs students to effectively employ the English sounds they have previously learned. Currently, 2019 marks the middle of the curriculum shift for a new start in 2020. Elementary school teachers in Japan are experiencing a process of trial and error from scratch. Therefore, it is highly necessary for Japanese English as a foreign language (EFL) researchers to discern and explore paths to literacy introduction in English that are cognitively and physically appropriate for EFL children and feasible for elementary school teachers.

Difficulty of written language

Learning a written rather than an oral language is a more demanding and complex task for children. Nevertheless, this is a must as a global citizen in the current advancing global society. Literacy skills are critical to every aspect of our lives. They are fundamental skills for education, employment, navigating the Internet, and performing various daily activities in society. Becoming capable readers and writers in English enables children to be socially and culturally literate and empowers them to be economically independent, providing career stability and success in the future. Therefore, literacy development has been getting much attention in early childhood education regardless of nation.

In complexity, however, no development process compares to that of learning to read and write a language. Written language plays a symbolic role, representing meanings just like a spoken language. In spoken language, meaning is made by sounds or phonemes. By undergoing many experiences with the language used in the environment, children gradually discover which symbols stand for which meanings and they connect these meanings to word sounds. This is a completely natural part of child development.

There must be multiple reasons for the difficulty of the English written language. However, here, we will see two of the cognitive aspects to consider for the goal of this study.

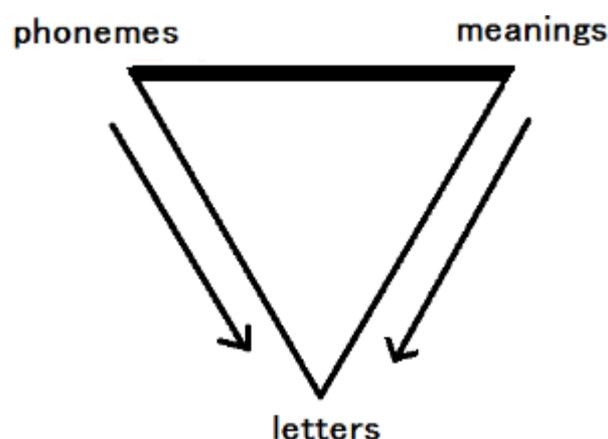


Figure 1. Attention to letters

First, what happens during reading? As seen in Figure 1, in written language, it is necessary to simultaneously pay attention to a word's phonemes as well as the meanings and sequences of letters. This is a huge burden on human cognition. In the case of English as a native language (ENL) children, they build a connection to the words' phonemes and meanings first, then learn to pay attention to the letters. By undergoing many experiences with English words and sentences used in the environment, children gradually discover which symbols stand for which concepts, connecting with the sounds in English. This is quite a natural part of child development. Reading and writing in English requires them to raise their awareness of words' phonemes and the letters of the alphabet. When children are engaged in speaking and listening, they sequence the phonemes in spoken words on an unconscious level; however, in written language, paying simultaneous attention to the phonemes and sequences of letters that represent the meanings are requisite to be an independent reader and writer.

Second, written language is decontextualized since a written communication, in most situations, goes beyond time between the writer and the reader. That requires readers to have a lot of imagination and knowledge to comprehend the meaning. That makes readers feel that written language is difficult because the smooth connections in Figure 1 are not guaranteed without context: readers sometimes cannot identify the meanings.

Literacy development

Regardless of the complexity of written language, emergent literacy is considered a natural part of child development. Early literacy development occurs as children become increasingly proficient in the cognitive processes that support skilled reading (Blair, Protzko, & Ursache, 2011). In the case of English as a native language (ENL), children cannot avoid all the natural input of their living environments' alphabets. Many things such as food packaging, magazines, and billboards written in English are everywhere in their surrounding environments. Children naturally start paying attention to the letters they see with interest and curiosity when they are cognitively mature enough to understand the function of written language.

Henderson (1981) suggests a model of literacy development. The rest of this section describes the five stages suggested in his model. The first stage is "Emergent," in which children pretend to read and write. It is a common sight for a child to hold a book and mumble something while flipping pages, as if they are reading aloud. They mimic the behavior of their caretakers, who read picture books aloud to them.

In the second stage, "Beginning," children try to read aloud to themselves and engage in word-by-word and finger-point reading. In this stage, they actually read rather than just pretend. Their word identification speed is still very slow, and reading takes much attention and concentration.

The third stage is "Transitional." In this stage, children are quite independent as readers and approach fluency in phrases or expressions in oral reading. Children can read most single-syllable words and many two-syllable words. Based on their word knowledge, they can read unfamiliar words with modest fluency. Their reading partly shifts from oral to silent and at the end of this stage, they mostly read silently. In the Transitional stage, a reader's word knowledge is sufficient for fluency in reading (Bear & Smith, 2016). In this stage, writing skill also approaches fluency with more organization and several paragraphs.

From the fourth stage, "Intermediate," to the fifth stage, "Advance," readers become fully fluent with expressions as they learn to develop a variety of reading styles. Finally, it can be said that children are full-fledged readers.

This developmental model elaborates on a normal and smooth literacy development that holds true only for ENL children without reading disorders. Promoting these stages takes about 5–6 years after children develop interest in letters at the ages of 4–5.

English literacy for Japanese EFL students in elementary schools

With normal literacy development for ENL children in mind, the case of EFL children, like that of elementary school children in Japan, should now be considered. In Japan, English is taught only once a week for 45 minutes. By the new guidelines to be enforced in 2020, this will be increased to twice a week but still amounts to only 90 minutes. Therefore, children have very limited input in English. They are usually only exposed to English sounds, meanings, and letters in English classes, except in the case where they personally take English lessons outside school. Reading and writing will be taught until the 5th grade, which is 10–11 years old.

In most English classes, instructors teach English words by displaying picture cards to show the words' meanings and letters. Seeing the picture cards, students learn how to say things in English. This is a typical way of teaching in Japan. According to the present curriculum, which started in 2011, alphabetical letters should play a supporting role in the phonological approach. This means that how to read and write are not taught, but the letters of words are shown to assist students' listening and speaking in terms of recall and memory.

As previously discussed, in 2020, reading and writing will be included in the new curriculum, so it is time to think about literacy development for EFL children. When Japanese children expand their interests and attention to English written words, what happens? They fully know what reading and writing are in Japanese, so they jump to the beginning level of literacy development, skipping the first emergent learners' level: they attempt to do word-by-word reading and identify words by connecting meanings, sounds, and letters. Thus, the typical way of teaching in English classes suits their learning style, considering Japanese children's cognitive development: they see English words on picture cards that show the meanings.

Are there any problems? EFL learners acquire word sounds and meanings first. Unlike ENL children, for EFL students, the connection of word sounds and meanings are not solid and are unstable. Sometimes, they learn the sounds and meanings of a word and, soon after, they must learn the letter sequence. So for EFL students, it is triple the work to learn to read words. They must remember the word sounds that represent the meanings of things and see the whole word, which consists of several letters.

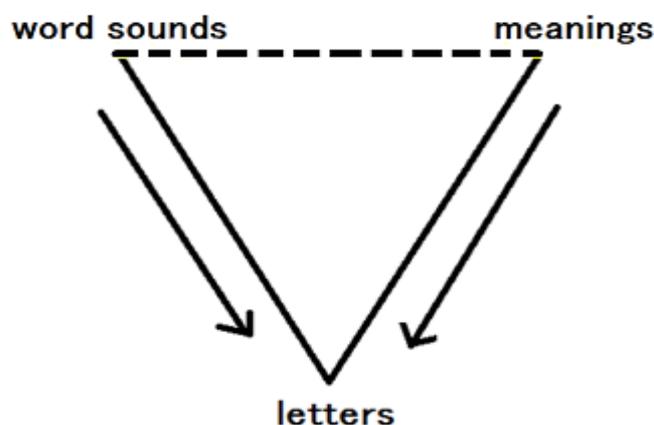


Figure 2. Triple work in a weak connection for EFL learners

Therefore, we must consider whether there are any advantages for 5th graders, aged 10–11, to learn to read in a new language. The first and foremost advantage is that they can already read and write in Japanese. Having literacy in a native language has a facilitating effect on the acquisition of literacy skills in another language since learners know what writing is and how written words function to make sense (Cummins, 2000). Japanese elementary school students are expected to raise learners' awareness to the written words in alphabets. Children of these ages are so cognitively developed that they easily recognize alphabetical letters and remember their sequences. (Blair, Protzko, and Ursache, 2011).

In Japan, children learn Roman letter reading and writing in the 3rd grade, so they are familiar with the shape of alphabets. When it comes to reading in English as the 5th grader who learn English as a subject, first they must know that reading English is different from Roman letter reading. That could be confusing for some children, while others take advantage of their knowledge of Roman letter reading and utilize it to identify the common sounds and pay attention to the differences.

The differences between ENL and EFL with regard to literacy introduction

The difference between ENL and EFL should be thoroughly considered to adopt the introduction of literacy education in ENL for undeveloped literacy lessons in EFL. This section summarizes the differences in six factors influencing their learning, shown in Table 1.

As previously mentioned, Japanese EFL students start learning reading and writing in English at the ages of 10–11. They are much older than their ENL counterparts and are cognitively mature enough to understand what reading is and to know reading tips. Of course, they must learn how to follow the letters in a different way. For example, they must learn to move their eyes from left to right to read English instead of top to bottom in Japanese. But the age factor for EFL learners is still a strong advantage in starting reading and writing, which are cognitively hard work.

However, Japanese EFL students' level of familiarity in English sounds is much lower than that of ENL children, although they are familiar with a limited number of word sounds they learned in previous foreign language activities classes when they were in 3rd and 4th grade.

As for phonemes, they are not fully understood by many teachers. As a result, systematic phonemes instruction is not introduced in many schools. On the other hand, ENL children usually start with well-developed and systematic phonics instruction in their English classes.

As for meanings, EFL children know the meanings of some words because they have learned them in foreign language activities since 3rd grade. However, that does not mean they always remember them because memorization is not a requirement in English class for 3rd and 4th year students. Conversely, ENL children naturally know the meanings of words through their everyday lives.

Regarding letters, EFL children are barely exposed to English letters, while ENL children are surrounded by English sounds and letters in their living environments. Therefore, EFL children have only limited knowledge of letters, which makes it hard for them to connect letters with sounds.

Table 1. Differences between ENL and EFL in introductory literacy

| | ENL | EFL |
|------------------|-----|-------|
| Age | 4-5 | 10-11 |
| Sounds | ⊙ | △ |
| Phonemes | △ | × |
| Meanings | ⊙ | △ |
| Letters | ○ | × |
| Reading Behavior | △ | ⊙ |

Note: ⊙ advantageous ○ relatively advantageous
 △ less advantageous × disadvantageous

The process of learning to read

Unless children have dyslexia problems, they follow the typical process of learning to read by being given phonics lessons. Next is the normal way ENL children learn to read, suggested by LoGiudice (2015). In the phonemic awareness process, shown in Figure 3, ENL children acquire the recognition of letters as symbols that represent sounds. Then, they raise their awareness of the sounds each letter makes as well as how those sounds are blended and used within each word. Finally, they acquire the ability to hear, speak, and process the sounds of the language and also develop the ability to accurately perceive letters and letter sequences. In the second process, whole word recognition, children learn to have an automatic and instant recognition based on a word's shape. This recognition enables fluency, but phonics is not used in deciphering words. In the third process, full comprehension, children achieve the end result and ultimate goal of reading and understanding, remembering, and applying the information contained in written text.

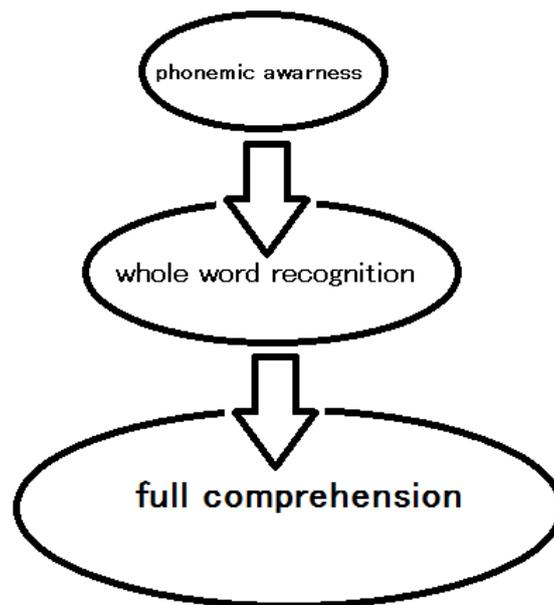


Figure 3. Process of learning to read in ENL children given phonics lessons
(modified model of LoGiudice 2015)

Many children with dyslexia are likely to fail to become aware of the sounds of letters and words in their phonics lessons. Therefore, they are encouraged to have a different approach, starting with whole word recognition because phonics lessons are ineffective and can even be counterproductive for them. Can this approach also be applied to EFL children?

The reasoning behind this question comes from the fact that EFL children, as mentioned in the previous section, do not take effective phonics lessons: they do not hear many English sounds in everyday life and find it difficult to connect letters and sounds to meanings. Furthermore, phonics lessons are not as systematic as in ENL schools. The present phonics lessons cannot benefit EFL children in Japan as much as is generally expected. As a result, EFL children may not be able to start the process, depending on their phonemic awareness for learning to read. Instead, they cannot help but start with whole word recognition. This idea is shown in Figure 4.

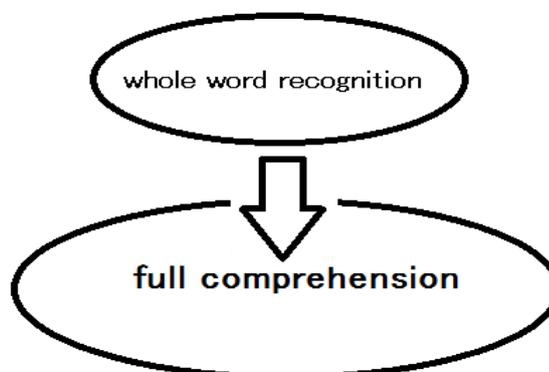


Figure 4. Process of learning to read in EFL children

Survey

To grasp the reality of actual teaching in English classes, a small-scale survey was conducted on 43 elementary school teachers in Japan to discover how they introduce reading and writing to students in class. Multiple answers were possible. As in Table 2, the research result shows that all the teachers surveyed use picture cards with letters. Twenty-two teachers use alphabet songs to teach alphabetical names. Four teachers use an alphabet chart posted in the classroom. Only 18 teachers use phonics, and only 3 use an English bulletin board.

Table 2. How to introduce literacy in elementary English classes in Japan

| Ways of introducing reading and writing | Number of respondents |
|---|-----------------------|
| Nothing special | 0 |
| Picture cards with letters | 43 |
| Alphabet song | 22 |
| Alphabet chart in classroom | 4 |
| Phonics | 18 |
| Bulletin board in English | 3 |
| Others | 5 |

In fact, phonics is getting a lot of attention in Japan, and many boards of education nationwide are encouraging elementary school teachers to use phonics in class. However, phonics has yet to be properly understood among elementary school teachers in Japan. Although there are many phonics materials available and adopted by many teachers, most, if not all, materials are based on analytic phonics, starting with, a, b, c, and so forth, in alphabetical order. In this manner, learners see a word and then understand the sound of a letter. A typical example is showing the word “apple” and teaching the sound “a.” Among the 18 teachers who answered that s/he uses phonics, 17 use analytic phonics, in particular to introduce only the very beginning level, from a–z. Only 1 teacher adopts synthetic phonics after taking a course on phonics teaching. It is necessary to notice that analytic phonics are only fully effective for those who live in English environments or when learners know many words, as native English speakers do. Thus, learners in EFL contexts cannot benefit from analytic phonics lessons as much as those in ENL or ESL (English as a second language) contexts.

In addition to enhancing phonemic awareness, Japanese EFL children also need to try a whole language approach to become familiarized with English words. An English environmentally rich approach, such as using English bulletin boards, should be adopted in their classroom environments. In this research, only 3 teachers reported using them. English words can be displayed in bulletin boards in

various devised ways, for example, class goals, mottos, newsletters, or artwork. In particular, sight words that are used daily should be visually provided in students' living environments.

The present research shows that many elementary school teachers do not take much care in the phonemic awareness process. Instead, they make use of "whole word recognition" from the very beginning, even if they do not know the approach. As the research showed, all the teachers we asked use picture cards with letters to teach students to recognize word sounds and letters. This way is not wholly ineffective in learning to read the words they have learned. Whether it is effective enough, it can be said that Japanese EFL learners are likely to start with whole word learning, as was suggested in Figure 4, but the question is: Are students really reading "whole" words?

Development of word recognition

Figure 5 is based on Frith's (1985) model, which shows the development of word recognition and is widely accepted. It explicates three stages of development. The first stage is called "logographic," which relies on rote memory of words connected to graphic symbols that are visually oriented and cued for reading. The second stage is termed "alphabetic," which takes a more analytical approach than the logographic stage, with a main focus on word components and the sounds of letters. The third stage is called "orthographic," which requires analyzing groups of words and promoting "sight reading" for efficient readers.



Figure 5. Word reading for EFL students (the figure is based on Frith's model in 1985)

Some studies examine the mutual influence of the major constituents of word-reading skills: phonology, meaning, and orthography (Nation & Castles, 2007; Shahar-Yames & Share, 2008). In the orthographic depth principle, orthographies vary from shallow orthographies with transparent grapheme-phoneme relations to deep orthographies, in which these relations are opaque (Irit & Zvia, 2014). It is found that the development of word-reading skills in a deep orthography language such as English is slower than in a shallow orthography language (Florit & Cain, 2011).

According to the principle, unlike the deep orthographic system in languages such as English, French, and Arabic, the Japanese language belongs to a shallow orthographic system language in which *hiragana* has a one-on-one correspondence between phoneme and letter. Therefore, the cross-language transfer of orthographies never occurs to Japanese EFL learners. It is often the case that Japanese English learners have much difficulty reading English regardless of whether they have any genetic problems, such as dyslexia. This is another reason why EFL learners, especially Japanese learners with a different orthographic system from English, should be carefully introduced into English literacy skills. This is

also one of the reasons why the use of alphabetical letters in Japanese elementary school English was limited in its function as a subsidiary to communication, according to the old guideline enforced by the MEXT in 2011. The difference in orthographic systems explains this cautious stance to literacy introduction in English. Japanese elementary school students were expected to at least be in the “logographic stage” of word recognition since the previous guideline enforced in 2011 required them not to read words but just to be exposed to them and to be familiar with alphabetical letters, which give hints to the sounds in recalling words and speaking.

Facing written words, some students may try to match the sounds and letters using speculation based on their previously learned words and knowledge of Roman letters. The acquisition of reading and writing skills with Roman letters is said to have positive and negative influences on letter-sound correspondence. Paying attention to the beginning letters of words raises students’ awareness of alliteration, which is often used for beginning literacy education for native English speakers (Leeper, 2008). Variety in the letter-sound combination in English words can be a source of confusion to learners who just acquired Roman letter familiarity.

The crux of the problem in this stage is that learners’ attempts to read words, however, remain guesswork. It is assumed that Japanese elementary school students are likely to be somewhere between the logographic and alphabetic stage, going back and forth in the continuum but hardly reaching the orthographic stage because of the lack of integrative knowledge of words and systematic spelling rules.

Without phonemic awareness, what ultimately happens to EFL children in Japan? A lack of experience in systematic phonics instruction makes it difficult for Japanese elementary school students to have a rigid linkage between phonemes and the sequences of letters and to be able to correctly read the word. In contrast to the unavailability of this systematic association, their attempts to read a word are made by paying attention to only a part of the word, such as initials that are visually well-recognized. It is a so-called “logographic reading,” which takes an analytic rather than a holistic approach, based on the presence of a few of the word’s letters (Genisio & Bastien-Toniazzo, 2003). In this sense, Japanese EFL students might be said to be at the “logographic stage” in word recognition development.

What is necessary for Japanese EFL children? In the present commonly used way of teaching, they have no choice but to remain at the logographic stage in which they focus on the words’ initials. It should be noted that this way of reading is actually even emphasized by phonics instruction, showing only the initial letter and the sound in alphabetical order, as was previously mentioned.

Although the “word reading” approach is used by Japanese EFL children without strong phonemic awareness, they see the word and instantly focus on just the initials. They can barely develop to the alphabetic or orthographic stage. In the new guideline to be enforced in 2020, the expectation is that students acquire a strongly-built basis of reading and writing that leads to an advanced level in junior and senior high school. This means that they should be able to read the words they come across for the first time. Word reading, stagnated in the logographic stage, will be a problem in the advanced reading levels in junior and senior high school, since students are expected to be able to read many newly encountered words.

Suggestion for feasible and effective literacy introduction

Phonemic awareness is one of the concepts that emphasize raising the awareness of words' sound components using an auditory approach (Leeper, 2008). To create a foundation of literacy, instructions based on the importance of phonemic awareness go through seven steps to train auditory perception through listening, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of phonemic awareness by Leeper (2008)

| | |
|---------|--|
| Step1. | Rhyming: Pay attention to the ending sound of a word Words ending with the same sound, c.g. king/ring/sing |
| Step2. | Alliteration: Pay attention to the beginning sound of word Words beginning with the same sound, e.g. Sumiko sits in the seat |
| Step3. | Syllable & Onset Rhyme: Group the sounds of word Syllable: Divide word by vowel groups Onset Rhyme: Divide word by the first vowel. A group of consonant before the vowel is onset. A group of the vowel and the consonant is rhyme. e.g. post: p(onset), ost (rhyme). green: gr(onset), een (rhyme). |
| Step4. | Blending: Connecting sounds to make a word e.g. c+a+t=cat |
| Step5. | Pay attention to the beginning sound, middle sound and ending sound e.g. boat: consider "b", "oa", "t". |
| Step6. | Segmentation/counting sounds: segment the sounds of the word and count them e.g. pig: /p/i/g/, 3sounds |
| Step 7. | Manipulate sounds: Convert the beginning and ending sounds |

Through these steps, children perceive sounds from different angles and realize that spoken words consist of sounds and groups of sounds. The instruction enhances their perception of the phoneme. This process makes it easier for children to advance to the next stage of education in phonics, in which they are required to connect sound and letter. It also leads to solid reading and writing abilities.

On top of phonemic awareness, visual stimuli should also be considered. Many children are likely to learn most easily when material is presented in a way that is related to visual things. The problem is, as in the previous discussion, EFL students are also less likely to have experience with visual inputs of English words. The visual presentation of words is studied and practiced by many English teachers, using their ingenuity, showing words and meanings in pictures, such as "SnapWords[®]," which are stylized to look like what they mean (Major, 2012). These materials visually appeal to children's

recognition and effectively help their memory. The scientific evidence on the efficacy of this kind of visual materials in EFL research has been thin. This kind of devised materials in literacy instruction is often discussed and researched among the scholars and practitioners who are engaged in research and education for children with disabilities, such as dyslexia. However, visual learning can be useful and effective even for children without disabilities because it goes without saying that all children have different cognitive styles, and reading is no exception. Some children are more visually skilled than others and benefit from visual stimulation. They acquire the word shape and meaning kinetically and proceed to connect them with the sounds. Although the effects on EFL children have not yet been widely found, it is worth adopting visual materials such as “SnapWords[®]” to draw students’ attention to whole words.



Figure 6. An example of “SnapWords[®]” by Major (2012)

The idea stems from using not only the left brain but also the right brain for the benefit of right-brain users. With exposure to visually stimulating materials, the meanings are simultaneously taught with teachers’ motions, which give learners kinesthetic stimulations and a story connecting to the meanings to strengthen the memory. It is important to consider how learners learn a language depending on their brain dominance. The left brain is in charge of analyzing texts, logic, and objective information, while the right deals with processing visions, affects, and imaginations. People use both sides of the brain, although they all are likely to use one side more dominantly (Oflaz, 2011).

It is not necessarily important to comprehend each learner’s learning style with regard to brain use; however, it is worth trying a variety of ways of presenting and teaching letters, because different ways of teaching can possibly match different learners’ styles.

Conclusion

This study argues the difficulty and development of literacy with a special focus on the difference between ENL and EFL learning environments. Children in EFL environments, like in Japan, completely lack in words they know and have a weak bond between word meaning and sounds. This make it difficult for them to connect to letters and develop phonemic awareness. Regardless, they still do not have a systematic learning process that leads to English literacy in their English classes. The survey on Japanese elementary school teachers reveals that, even in the case where phonics lessons are partly given, these practices often fail to meet the needs of Japanese children and prevent their advance to the next level in word reading. At present, it is not inaccurate to say that English lessons in Japanese elementary school do not exhibit educational effects in terms of literacy introduction.

Phonics lessons must be thoroughly and properly understood by teachers: many teachers, if not all, teach only the beginnings of phonics by teaching the letters and sounds in words' initials. The research also clarifies that the majority of teachers use picture cards to show the meaning and the whole word. This is an instant way of learning to read; however, it also limits reading in a way: students can only read the words they know. Thus, it is necessary to find other ways to deal with reading unknown words. The survey shows that only a few teachers are aware of the effects of visual learning in literacy. In addition to phonics lessons, it is necessary to expand their perspective to the use of images. This enables EFL children in disadvantaged learning environments without much written English to visually learn the alphabetical letters. Visual learning in English has much more potential than is realized.

It must be admitted that this study is still in progress; hence, it is necessary to do further research on a larger number of subjects to grasp the reality of English teaching in Japanese elementary schools. It is also necessary to explore ways to enhance phonemic awareness using both an auditory approach and visual learning based on a whole language approach. The suggestion here is still not specific enough to be fully practiced in an actual classroom setting. Therefore, future research is urged to make specific and feasible suggestions to EFL teachers for better literacy teaching in English.

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