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Editorial

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first issue of the Journal of Language and Education (JLE), a quarterly publication designed for the scientific enquiry in Linguistics, Psychology, Language Teaching and Learning; providing new understanding of old phenomena through an interdisciplinary approach.

With JLE, you will have regular updates and special feature segments of varying topics: psycholinguistics, communication gap, language and speech, mental health treatment, and cognitive processes. We hope you enjoy reading JLE and that it will prove to be an effective, as well as reliable reference for you and your colleagues.

The opening part of the first issue of JLE began with the article presented by Melody Joyce Maasin-Ceballos and Roel Famat Ceballos and devoted with its essence to the learner-centered approaches and their effects on speaking fluency. This article, representing a research on the cooperative learning approach to have an essential impact on the oral fluency of the participants in terms of speed, pause, and repetition/hesitation in speech using the second language, indicates a new vector in ways and methods to enhance the speaking fluency of the students. Furthermore, this study sheds new light on the field of experimental studies with random sampling.

Johana Ennser-Kananen in '"That German stuff": Negotiating Linguistic Legitimacy in a Foreign Language Classroom' explores the issues regarding the complexities learners of German face when claiming legitimacy for using their target language in their German classroom. The rationale of previous research reflects the foundations of linguistic legitimacy and language classrooms, that are characterized by overt or covert language policies. The obtained results open fascinating perspectives for further research on this issue and the development of a comprehensive model of linguistic legitimacy, which can then be used to analyze the experience of multilingual learners in various contexts.

In 'Incidence and Nature of Negotiations for Meaning during Uncontrolled Speaking Practice in English as a Foreign Language Classrooms', Edgar Emmanuell Garcia-Ponce and Irasema Mora-Pablo investigate the questions arising from the negotiation for meaning as interactional processes which advance language acquisition. They present how NfM under experimental conditions may influence the negotiated interactions that might take place in real English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms; the development of the incidence and nature of NfM is regarded as the cornerstone of the development of teacher- and learner-led speaking tasks. A qualitative analysis of the interactional data that was applied by the authors in the course of the experiment is claimed to be so far the optimum way to test the NfM across proficiency levels. The results signal how perceptual factors can limit the incidence and nature of NfM.

In 'The Effects of Mnemonic Vocabulary Instruction on Content Vocabulary Learning of Students' Parima Fasih, Siros Izadpanah and Ali Shahnavaz focuses on an investigation about the effects of mnemonic vocabulary teaching to improve content vocabulary learning in EFL classrooms. All the findings in this article further our understanding of mnemonic strategies that can be used with all students in inclusive settings in order to learn content information. The overview of current

discussions in learning and teaching is the mnemonic vocabulary technique, which plays a key role in learning a second or foreign language, have revealed a need for further research into mnemonic devices or techniques, which are mental aids that assist us in remembering distinctive sorts of items and information.

Marina Kovalenko's paper 'The Validation Process in the IELTS Reading Component: Reading Requirements for Preparing International Students' establishes IELTS reading component to be investigated as a subject of academic reading through interpretations of validity. The paper focuses on the IELTS-related research activities to be coordinated under a framework for ongoing test development and validation. She finds out that the test-wiseness and washback are subjects of high significance due to the growing number of available exam materials and preparation techniques.

The paper 'There is no Alternative! Student Perceptions of Learning in a Second Language in Lebanon' by Mike Orr and Samer Annous assesses the value of a multilingual pedagogy that develops and makes use of their students' full range of language and literacy skills, including Arabic, in the teaching of all curriculum subjects. The authors focus on the issue that the implementation of such a pedagogy in selected schools across the diversity of contexts existing in Lebanon is seen in teaching students to identify coordinates in the process of establishing multilingual classroom practices.

The article 'Influence of L1 Properties and Proficiency on the Acquisition of Gender Agreement' by Pierre-Luc Paquet is directed onto the influence of L1 properties and proficiency level on the acquisition of the Spanish gender agreement system. The proposed multi-tiered methodology enables to examine whether L1 properties and proficiency level influence learners' explicit and implicit knowledge of the Spanish gender agreement. Through the analytical statements and illustrations the author shows that certain types of L2 knowledge may or may not be accessible during metalinguistic tasks and during real-time comprehension, depending on the levels of proficiency.

The research on 'EFL Reading Metacomprehension from the Developmental Perspective: A Longitudinal Case Study' provided by Renata Šamo and Alenka Mikulec brilliantly proves the stated hypothesis that extended exposure would result in better awareness of comprehension during the reading process. This investigating is unique in its professional study of metacomprehension through terms of reading strategy and prolonged exposure to EFL.

The book review 'Gender, Power and Political Speech. Women and Language in the 2015 UK General Election. Deborah Cameron and Sylvia Shaw. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-137-58752-7' by Elena Gabrielova assumes a highly claimed rationale of the correlation between gender and public speaking technologies. A deeper analysis of linguistic behaviour of the party leaders within and between gender groups strategies is spectrally decomposed and illustrated through women's behaviour, turning out to be potentially controversial.

We really appreciate the contribution of all the authors and would like to thank them for the quality papers they submitted to Issue 1 of Volume 4. Their papers present the phenomenon of language and communication not only form a wide variety angles, ranging from language teaching methods to cognitive semantics; the authors also further consolidate connections among these fields and demonstrate the efficiency and effectiveness of an interdisciplinary approach. We are happy to observe the Journal of Language and Education becoming a forum for both sharing knowledge and academic debates, and are looking forward to new contributions.

Editor-in-Chief of Issue 1
Tatiana Baranovskaya

Website: https://www.jle.hse.ru

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Learner-Centered Approaches: Their Effect on the Oral Fluency of Students

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The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of learner-centered approaches on the oral fluency of the second-year students in English 202-Communicative English. The study employed a quasi-experimental method, particularly the pre-test and post-test experimental group design. Two groups of students were utilized as the experimental groups of the study. The findings of the study revealed that both groups acquired the same level of oral fluency before the intervention but acquired different levels of fluency after. Based on the result, the conclusion was that the level of speaking fluency of the participants exposed to cooperative learning improved significantly more than those exposed to task-based teaching. An experimental study conducted over a longer period of time and employing randomization could be considered to further investigate the possible results.

Keywords: language teaching, speaking fluency, quasi-experimental method, learner-centered approach, oral fluency, cooperative learning

One of the most signficant challenges that language teachers face is to how to make students fluent in the target language, such as English (Miller, 2013; Alam, 2012; Enad, 2010; Limen, 2008). It is very common for second language learners to have disfluency in speaking the target language, with incomplete words, hesitation, and repetition of some words while speaking (Maletina, 2014; Adda-Decker et al., 2003; Laver, 1994). At times, students would choose to be speechless inside the class because of this problem. This problem is indeed apparent internationally (Alam 2012, de Jong & Perfetti, 2011; Wood, 2007) and nationwide even here in the Philippines (Enad, 2010; Limen, 2008). Conversely, fluency is the absence of fillers while speaking, such as "mm", "er", "ah"; no silence or filled pauses, and many others that interrupt continuous speech (Maletina, 2014; de Jong, 2012; Wood, 2007; Laver, 1994). Speed in speaking is also included as part of being fluent in speaking the target language. This is commonly the goal of language teachers for their second language learners – fluency, which is a component of oral proficiency (Cummins, 2014; Solis 2014). Fluency is easier to be achieved depending on one's exposure to the target language than proficiency because the latter requires more time, depending on one's exposure to the target language and this also means that the speaker uses the target language with accuracy just like the native speaker (Cummins, 2014; Solis, 2014, CAL, 2014).

Drawing from previous research that argued that learner-centered approaches, like cooperative learning and task-based learning, could help improve students' fluency in speaking the target language, I was eager to explore these approaches with my language classes. Learner-centered approaches like the ones aforementioned encourage language learners to use the target language while in classroom activities for language learning (Xue, 2013; Alam & Udin, 2013; de Jong & Perfetti, 2011; Enad, 2010). Specifically, cooperative learning enables students to

have peer collaboration in learning the target language (Colorado, 2015) while task-based learning gives them an avenue to use the language communicatively by doing certain tasks either individually, in pairs, or in larger groups (Nunan, 2009). This paper aims to investigate if cooperative and tasked based learning could significantly improve students' speaking fluency. The null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the speaking fluency of students exposed to cooperative learning method and tasked-based method is tested.

Literature Review

In a learner-centered approach, students are encouraged to discover for themselves whatever new learnings they will be exposed to. The culture in the student-centered classroom is that the students are made to construct knowledge through collaboration with others, ynthesizing and reconstructing new information. Students, as the core of the learning process, engage in problem solving and do interactive activities which will make them actively and productively participate, while the teachers are the coaches and facilitators of the learning process (Mascolo, 2009; Allen, 2004; Huba and Freed, 2000). In relation to language teaching and putting the students at the center of the learning process in the classroom, where students should do some communicative activities in learning a language, task-based learning and cooperative learning are highlighted in this study based on previous research. Both approaches were recommended for they give attention to giving opportunities to students to use the target language in the classroom and were found out to be effective in second language acquisition (Colorin Colorado, 2015; Xue, 2013; Dincer, 2012; Alam and Uddin, 2003; Grundman, 2002). In order to highlight the differences between the two approaches, we will explore their main features below.

Task-based teaching has seven principles: scaffolding, task dependency, recycling, active learning, integration of form and function, reproductive and creative language use, and the place of reflective learning. These principles allow the teacher to pre-teach some useful items to students before they do tasks that give them an opportunity to be active in the learning process, particularly in using language in communicative activities. Meanwhile, the use of language focuses more on meaning than form; however, form is learned subconsciously. This is done by students reproducing the language model handed by the teacher. After the task, students have the chance to reflect on what they have done (Nunan, 2009). This is rooted in the theory of comprehensible input of Krashen and comprehensible output hypothesis of Swain (cited in Nunan, 2009).

Cooperative learning, on the other hand, has the key features when implemented in the classroom. These are positive interdependence, individual and group accountability, promote interaction, appropriate use of social skills, and group processing (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 2013). This approach is rooted in Kurt Koffka's social interdependence theory (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 2013). Cooperative learning constitutes the class into small groups where students work together to accomplish a task by being dependent to the group's success. The member's success is the group's success (SERC, 2012). This is recommended as advantageous in second language learning also in higher education because of teamwork or group discussion in language learning through activities where students are more confident in expressing themselves and those group members who have higher competence help other members (Colorin Colorado, 2015; Xue, 2013; Grundman, 2002).

In this study, cooperative learning had provided greater improvements to the speaking fluency of the students. The positive interdependence which is an element of cooperative learning as well as the collaboration of the members had been proven to be more effective in enhancing the speaking fluency of the students.

Methods

This study aimed to determine the effect of learner-centred approaches: of task-based learning and the cooperative learning on the oral/speaking fluency of the students. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

1) What is the level of speaking fluency of second year students in the experimental group exposed to task-based and cooperative learning before the intervention?
2) What is the level of speaking fluency of the second year students under the experimental group exposed to task-based and cooperative learning after the intervention?
3) Are there significant differences in the level of speaking fluency of the second year students in the experimental group exposed to task-based and cooperative learning approaches before and after the intervention?
4) What approach is more effective in improving speaking fluency of second year students?

Tools

The study employed a quasi-experimental research design to investigate the effectiveness of an intervention (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002).

Specifically, it used the pre-test and post-test (see Appendices B and C) experimental group design on two groups. This is a type of quasi-experimental research which does not require a control group. The pre-test was given to the experimental groups, each group was exposed to a treatment and then both groups were given a post-test to measure the effect of the treatment (Sekaran, 2003). Accordingly, this study used nonprobability sampling or the non-random assignment. Specifically, purposive sampling, a type of nonprobability sampling, was utilized because the subjects are the specific target of this study. The subjects conformed to the standards set by the researcher. In particular, the type of purposive sampling that was used was judgement sampling wherein the subjects were the specific people that the researcher wanted to study with a particular treatment (learner-centered approach).

The study was done through conducting an oral test which is describing a picture (pre-test and post-test) before and after the intervention was implemented. The data gathered were recorded and computed. The results were analyzed and interpreted with the use of T-test of independent sample and paired T-test.

Participants

The subjects of the study were second year students taking English 202 – Communicative English in academic year 2014-2015 at University of Mindanao Panabo College. The total number of the participants in the first experimental group was twenty-five (25), while the second experimental group was also twenty-five (25). Each group composed of both females and males. Their ages range from 18-30 years old.

Procedure

First, I designed two sets of four lessons for the two experimental groups (task-based teaching group and the cooperative learning group). These lesson plans (see Appendix D) were checked and approved by the three professors. Second, a variety of pictures (see Appendices B and C) was prepared for the participants to describe, interpret or explain through speaking as their oral fluency test. Third, there was pilot testing with a different class to determine the rater's reliability. Fourth, a pre-test on oral fluency was conducted in the class. There was a different picture for every participant and each participant was given three minutes to speak about the picture. Their voices were recorded. Fifth, the participants' oral fluency was assessed using the researcher-made rubric validated by the three professors (see Appendix A). The rubric was an integration of the theories of Schulz and Bartz in describing fluency as cited by Linder (1977) in her book and also cited by Ascione (1993) and other related studies on oral fluency, such as Wood (2007) on fluency development. The sixth step was the intervention. The lesson plans were used in the class of fifty students for each group. One set of lesson plans for one group that used task-based teaching and another set for the other group that used cooperative learning. Seventh, the post-test on oral fluency was conducted with the same process in the pre-test with different pictures. Finally, three professors assessed the recorded voices of the participants using the researcher-made rubric.

Results and Discussion

The statistical test was conducted to assess and compare the speaking fluency of students before the interventions. The results reveal the participants from the two experimental groups had the same level of speaking fluency as there was no significant difference between their average scores on the speed, pause, repetition/hesitation and, most significantly, the average overall score of their speaking fluency before the intervention or the experiment (See Table 1).

The data suggests that the level of speaking fluency

Table 1
Speaking Fluency of Students before the Exposure to Task-based Teaching and Cooperative Learning Approaches

Indicator	Group	Mean	t	df	p	Remarks
Speed	Task-based	2.25	-1.106	48	.274	Not significant
	Cooperative	2.43				
Pause	Task-based	1.93	-.838	48	.406	Not significant
	Cooperative	2.07				
Hesitation	Task-based	1.87	-.572	48	.570	Not significant
	Cooperative	1.95				
Overal	Task-based	6.04	-1.003	48	.321	Not significant
	Cooperative	6.45				

Note: t-value is significant if p<.05

of the two groups of students was statistically similar before the intervention. Their speed of speech, pause in the speech, and their repetitions/hesitations in the speech were statistically similar before the exposure to the intervention.

After the intervention, the cooperative learning approach had a greater impact on the oral fluency of the participants in terms of speed, pause, and repetition/ hesitation in speech using the second language. The data clearly shows that the participants from the cooperative learning group had a greater incrase in their average scores compared to the participants from the task-based learning group (Table 2).

This suggests that the students' performance in speaking fluency improved greatly when using cooperative learning approach. Compared to the task based learning, cooperative learning has shown greater improvements on lessening the repetition/ hesitation in speech, reducing unnecessary/unnatural pauses in speech and enhancing the speed of speech.

Both teaching approaches have given a positive gain or advantage to the students; however, the cooperative learning approach appeared to provide greater statistical advantage (Table 3).

The data could suggest that collaborative work between members in the group with a communicative activity, which was the difference between the two approaches, helped the participants to confidently practice their speaking skills using the second language inside the classroom that contributed to the improvement of their oral fluency.

For further analysis of the data, a paired-test was used to determine the effectiveness of the teaching approaches in enhancing the speaking fluency of the students. It demonstrates that there is a significant difference in the speaking fluency scores in the pre-test and post-test of the students treated with cooperative learning approach (Table 4).

This implies that cooperative learning approach is more effective in enhancing the speaking fluency of the students.

Conclusion and Implication

The cooperative learning approach and the task based approach were effective in improving the level of speaking fluency of the students. However, the students exposed to the cooperative learning

Table 2
Speaking Fluency of the Students after the Exposure to Task-based Teaching and Cooperative Learning Approaches

Indicator	Group	Mean	t	df	p	Remarks
Speed	Task-based	2.37	-3.594	48	.001	Significant
	Cooperative	2.85				
Pause	Task-based	1.96	-3.121	48	.003	Significant
	Cooperative	2.36				
Hesitation	Task-based	1.79	-3.455	48	.001	Significant
	Cooperative	2.23				
Overal	Task-based	6.12	-3.802	48	.000	Significant
	Cooperative	7.44				

Note: t-value is significant if p<.05

Table 3
Mean Gained Scores of the Students on Speaking Fluency Test before and after the Exposure to Task-based and Cooperative Learning Approaches

Indicator	Group	Mean	t	df	p	Remarks
Speed	Task-based	.12	-1.962	48	.056	Not significant
	Cooperative	.43				
Pause	Task-based	.03	-1.811	48	.076	Not significant
	Cooperative	.29				
Hesitation	Task-based	-.08	-2.719	48	.009	Significant
	Cooperative	.28				
Overal	Task-based	.08	-2.530	48	.015	Significant
	Cooperative	0.99				

Note: t-value is significant if p<.05

Table 4
Paired T-test between Pre-test and Post-test Scores of the Students on Speaking Fluency in Task-based and Cooperative Learning Approaches

	Pre-test Mean	SD	Post test Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Cooperative						
Speed	2.43	0.77	2.85	0.43	5.58	0.003*
Pause	2.07	0.76	2.36	0.61	2.83	0.002*
Hesitation	1.95	0.80	2.23	0.67	2.62	0.010*
Overall	6.45	2.34	7.44	1.70	3.42	0.024*
Task-Based						
Speed	2.25	0.84	2.37	0.77	1.19	0.230
Pause	1.93	0.74	1.96	0.60	0.33	0.740
Hesitation	1.87	0.76	1.79	0.68	-1.02	0.300
Overall	6.04	2.34	6.12	2.05	1.04	0.439

Note: t-value is significant if p<.05 as indicated with *

approach had performed better than those exposed to the task-based learning approach. The former had gained significantly higher than the participants exposed to task-based teaching. The participants exposed to cooperative learning had improved significantly higher in their repetition/hesitation in speech than the participants exposed to task-based teaching. Statistically, the mean level of speaking fluency of the participants exposed to the cooperative learning approach improved more than the students exposed to the task-based learning approach. The study shows that there is a statistical improvement in the speaking fluency scores of the students treated with the cooperative learning approach. The result of this study could be employed by language teachers and curriculum developers, especially in higher education to enhance speaking fluency through collaborative tasks and this could also be further considered for experimental studies with random sampling.

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Appendix A

Second Language Speaking Fluency Rubric

	4 Very Good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Needs Improvement
Speed	All throughout the speech, the speed is natural and the thoughts were expressed clearly and effectively.	In a very few instances in the speech, the speed is unnatural but the thoughts were still expressed clearly and effectively.	In several instances in the speech, speed is unnatural that made the thoughts unclear and expressed ineffectively.	Almost all throughout the speech, the speed is unnatural--- very slow or very fast that made the thoughts unclear and expressed ineffectively.
Pause	All throughout the speech, the pauses are natural. Their occurrence is necessary to facilitate comprehensibility of the meaning conveyed.	Only very few of the pauses are unnatural. Their occurrence makes loss for words a bit obvious but still they do not affect the comprehensibility of the meaning conveyed.	Several of the pauses are unnatural. Their occurrence makes loss for words and thoughts very obvious thus negatively affecting the comprehensibility of the meaning conveyed.	All of the pauses are unnatural. Their occurrence makes loss for words and thoughts take a very long time thereby making the speech incomprehensible.
Repetition/ Hesitation	Almost all of the repetitions are necessary to emphasize a point. Hesitations are not obvious.	A very few of the repetitions are not necessary to emphasize a point and in effect utterances are not an ear sore. Hesitations are a bit obvious but they are not bothersome.	Several of the repetitions are not necessary to emphasize a point and in effect utterances are an ear sore. Hesitations are obvious but not bothersome.	All of the repetitions are not necessary to emphasize a point and in effect utterances are an ear sore. Hesitations are obvious and bothersome.

Appendix B

Pre-test pictures

Figure 1. A man sitting at the back row (Geronimo, 2013).
Source: Geronimo, J. (2013). Aman sitting at the back row. Retrieved from https://www.rappler.com/move-ph/issues/education/44146-asean-2015-philippine-higher-education or Geronimo, J. (2013). The road to ASEAN 2015: Why are PH colleges lagging behind? Retrieved from https://www.rappler.com/move-ph/issues/education/44146-asean-2015-philippine-higher-education

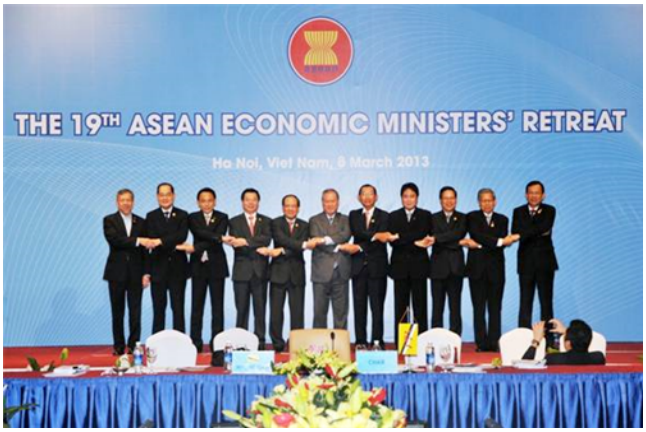

Figure 2. ASEAN is making efforts to build up the ASEAN Community by 2015. In the photo, ASEAN Economic Ministers meet at their 19th Retreat in Ha Noi, March 8, 2013 (Hanh, 2013).
Source: Hanh, H. (2013). ASEAN is making efforts to build up the ASEAN Community by 2015. Retrieved from http://www.mpi.gov.vn/en/pages/tinbai.aspx?idTin=21672&idcm=133
or Hanh, H. (2013). AEM19 speeds up construction of ASEAN Community. Retrieved from http://www.mpi.gov.vn/en/pages/tinbai.aspx?idTin=21672&idcm=133

Figure 3. Running with Tigers at the 51st PMAP Annual Conference (Thenewsguy, 2014).
Source: Thenewsguy. (2014). Running with tigers at the 51st annual conference. Retrieved from http://thenewsmakers.info/2014/08/running-with-tigers-at-the-51st-pmap-annual-conference/

Appendix C

Post-test pictures

Figure 4. Businessman and businesswoman standing chatting (k6713068 Fotosearch Stock Images Photograph Royalty Free, 2017).
Source: Fotosearch Stock Images Photograph Royalty Free. (2017). Businessman and businesswoman standing chatting. Retrieved from http://www.fotosearch.com/CSP671/k6713068/

Figure 6. Small group (Synchronoose, 2014).
Source: Synchronoose. (2014). Small group. Retrieved from http://synchronoose.blogspot.com/2014/04/chapter-11-12-13-leaders-in-small-group.html

Figure 5. Operations (Nybbles and Bytes, 2017).
Source: Nybbles and Bytes. (2017). Operations. Retrieved from http://nybblesandbytes.ca/2017/06/02/operations/

Appendix D

Lesson Plan: Cooperative Learning

Lesson 1: A Good Conversationalist

Introduction

The art of conversation takes practice and is not as hard as one might think. It will take some knowledge, practice and patience, and one can learn to relax and enjoy a great conversation. Here are the tips that a good conversationalist should follow:

1. Listen
2. Find out what the other person is interested in.
3. Ask questions
4. Forget yourself
5. Practice active listening skills
6. Ask clarifying questions
7. Paraphrase what you have heard, using your own words.
8. Consider your response before disagreeing
9. Consider playing devil's advocate - which requires care.
10. Do not panic over lulls.
11. Know when the conversation is over.
12. Make a good first impression.

Objectives:

At the end of the lesson, the students will be able to:

- Create closed-ended and open-ended questions for a conversation.
- Converse using the English language comprehensively.
- Perform a public presentation in a form of a talk show with the group using the English language.

Procedure:

Group Size: 4

Method Used to Group Assignments:

Informal group selected at random

Roles:

Director, Scriptwriter, Timekeeper, Checker

Room Assignments:

The students will sit closer to each other forming a circle.

Materials:

Pen and Paper, Reference Book, Criteria for Rating

Activity:

The group will discuss and plan making a talk show focusing on a good and meaningful conversation.

Explaining Task and Cooperative Goal Structure:

1. Task:

Each group will discuss and plan on producing a talk show, demonstrating a good and meaningful conversation. They will come up with a script that should be submitted to the teacher.

2. Criteria for Success:

Each group will have a talk show presentation in the class after the discussion and planning. The talk show should present a good and meaningful conversation based on the criteria for rating.

3. Positive Interdependence:

Each group will have a director, scriptwriter, checker and timekeeper.

- Director- assigns roles of the members in the talk show, organizes the presentation of the show, formulates the concept.
- Scriptwriter - writes the script for the talk show.
- Checker - checks the script to see if there is any confusing idea or grammar mistakes, asks the teacher if there are any concerns.
- Timekeeper - checks the time and reminds everyone to be aware of the time.

4. Individual Accountability:

All members of the group must do and focus on their responsibility in the task. They will also be responsible for learning the topic.

5. Inter-group Cooperation:

The members will ask questions and listen to each other. They will also cooperate to achieve the objective.

6. Expected Behaviors:

The members will cooperate, contribute, and master the language that they are going to use for the activity.

Monitoring and Intervening:

The teacher will observe each group while discussing and planning. The teacher will answer questions and check the script.

Assessment:

The group will have the talk show presented in the class without the script. The group will be rated with the criteria:

Meaningfulness of the topic	----------	30%
Attitude and Behavior of the Speakers (Every member has to speak)	----------	20%
Correctness of the constructed sentences	----------	30%
Smoothness of the conversation	----------	20%
Total		100%

LESSON PLAN: Tasked-Based Learning

Lesson 1: A Good Conversationalist

Introduction

The art of conversation takes practice, and is not as hard as one might think. It will take some knowledge, practice, and patience, and one can learn to relax and enjoy a great conversation. Here are the tips that a good conversationalist should do:

1. Listen
2. Find out what the other person is interested in.
3. Ask questions
4. Forget yourself
5. Practice active listening skills
6. Ask clarifying questions
7. Paraphrase what you have heard, using your own words.
8. Consider your response before disagreeing
9. Consider playing devil's advocate—which requires care.
10. Do not panic over lulls.
11. Know when the conversation is over.
12. Make a good first impression.

Objectives:

At the end of the lesson, the students will be able to:

- Create closed-ended and open-ended questions for a conversation.
- Converse using the English language comprehensively.
- Perform a public presentation of a conversation with a partner using the English language.

Pre-Task

Teaching aid: White board and marker, textbook, sample questions

Directions:

a. The teacher will ask the students for ideas on "good and meaningful conversation".
d. The teacher and the students will discuss on how a good and meaningful conversation can be realized using the target language.
c. The teacher will ask the students for some samples of language phrases or sentences in constructing a

question (open-ended and closed-ended). The teacher will check the grammar whether it is correct or not.

d. The teacher will tell the students to find a partner to have a conversation with. The topic of the conversation must be meaningful. The teacher will also remind the students to be careful in noting past forms and present forms of the verbs.
e. The teacher will tell the students to prepare for public presentation of their conversation. The teacher will provide criteria for rating the public presentation of the conversation.

During Task

Teaching aid: teacher's close observation of the conversation partners, paper and pencil (optional to the students)

Directions:

a. The students will find a partner and plan the conversation they are going to have. The students will submit a sheet of paper with their names on it to the teacher.
b. The students will construct sentences for the conversation they are going to have.
c. The students will have their conversation practice on their seats and prepare for the public presentation.
d. The teacher will observe the students while doing the task.
e. The teacher will answer questions that the students may ask.

Post Task:

Materials: Microphones, chairs for the conversation partners

Directions:

a. The teacher will collect the sheets of paper from the students with their names on it.
b. The teacher will call each pair to come in front of the class and show the class their good and meaningful conversation. The students will use microphones for their conversation.
c. The teacher will give feedback to the students through the criteria for rating.
d. The teacher will pose some erratic sentences or phrases from the conversations and correct them.

Assessment:

Criteria for Rating the Conversation		
Meaningfulness of the topic	----------	30%
Attitude and Behavior of the Speakers	----------	20%
Correctness of the constructed sentences	----------	30%
Smoothness of the conversation	----------	20%
Total		100%

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"That German Stuff": Negotiating Linguistic Legitimacy in a Foreign Language Classroom

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This qualitative case study of one German suburban high school classroom in the Midwestern United States examines how learners of German negotiate their linguistic legitimacy, which is defined as discursively constructed acceptance or validation for their language use. Specifically, it investigates how the students negotiated legitimacy for using their target language German in their classroom. Based on the premise that linguistic legitimacy is crucial for the maintenance and development of speakers' languages, data was collected by employing classroom recordings, semi-structured interviews, and participant observations. Findings revealed that, while English dominated the lessons as the default legitimate language among the students, using German was accepted and valued under certain circumstances. Such instances of linguistic legitimacy included the use of German for entertainment or in role plays, a pattern which points to the students' desire to mitigate investment and display "uninvestment" in learning or using German. Implications for foreign language (FL) pedagogy and teacher education are discussed.

Keywords: foreign languages, language learning, linguistic legitimacy, German foreign language (FL), foreign language (FL) pedagogy

For language learners, engaging in conversations with first language (L1) speakers can be daunting, as the weight of language ideologies – for example the notion that L1 speakers are the only rightful users of a language – bear down on them and can impede their willingness to use that language (e.g., Norton, 2000; Pomerantz, 2002). This, in turn, can limit students' language output and thus interfere with their target language development (Swain, 1995). Given the relatively low performance of U.S. high school students in the acquisition of foreign languages (FL) – most only reach novice-high or intermediate-low levels within a four-year FL program, regardless of the language (CASLS, 2010) – obstacles like this, which stand in learners' ways to high FL proficiency, cannot be ignored.

This paper offers an analysis of the experience of language-majority learners of German in a US high school classroom as they were balancing societal power structures, the teacher's expectations, and their relationships with their peers. More specifically, it examines their (in)ability to establish a sense of acceptance and validation for their practice of using German, or their linguistic legitimacy as learners of German. In order to promote language learners' language use and development, it is crucial to gain an understanding of how students do (not) establish linguistic legitimacy as language learners and identify strategies to promote their linguistic legitimacy.

Literature Review

Linguistic legitimacy. In this study, I viewed interaction in a foreign language (FL) classroom through the lens of linguistic legitimacy. In the following section, I briefly introduce the theoretical foundations of this work, the concepts of investment, legitimate language, and legitimation. Linguistic legitimacy draws on both notions, but also extends them in important ways. The concept discussed here is distinct from "linguistic legitimacy" as defined by Reagan (2016), who understands linguistic legitimacy as unjust and unjustified claim of the superiority of one language over another one. Although my stance

is similar in that I aim to uncover and challenge discriminatory ideologies, linguistic legitimacy as I understand it refers to the acceptance and validation of a linguistic practice that is negotiated in discourse.

Foundations of linguistic legitimacy: Investment. Linguistic legitimacy is closely related to Norton's work on investment (e.g., Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton, 2000, 2013; Norton Pierce, 1995), which, from its beginnings in the 1990s, has evolved into an influential line of scholarship in applied linguistics that spans a wide range of disciplines and contexts (see Pittaway, 2004 and Darvin & Norton, 2015). In her well-known critique of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory at that time, Norton shifted the focus of the field from learner-immanent characteristics to contextual processes that influence language learners' commitment to and/or engagement in the learning process. As Norton (2013) explains,

> [t]he construct of investment offers a way to understand learners' variable desires to engage in social interaction and community practices … [I]t signals the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language and their often ambivalent desire to learn and practice it. If learners 'invest' in the target language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic resources (language, education, friendship) and material resources (capital goods, real estate, money), which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital and social power (p. 6).

Norton points out that learners' investment occurs in anticipation of resources that eventually contribute to their gains of cultural capital and power. The possibility for acquiring these resources, and consequently the degree of investment, is in part dependent on the perceived or declared value of learners' language practices in a particular context, in other words, on the linguistic legitimacy language learners negotiate with their environment.

I argue that the concepts of investment and linguistic legitimacy shed an important light on aspects of FL education in the U.S. Rather than subscribing to popular arguments that explain U.S. students' lack of FL competencies with a lack of motivation, it would make for a more fruitful debate if we, like Norton, insisted that a motivation orientation does not suffice to address this problem. This study sets out to describe FL learners' linguistic legitimacy and identify strategies to increase it.

It is important to note that the concept of investment cannot be applied uncritically to foreign language contexts. Most learners of German or other foreign languages in U.S. high school classrooms certainly do not face the same pressure to acquire "a wider range of symbolic resources (language, education, friendship) and material resources (capital goods, real estate, money)" (Norton, 2013, p. 6) as the learners in the foundational studies on investment. However, just like Norton's (2000) participants, whose investment depended on conversational opportunities they were granted by first language (L1) speakers of English, the students in this study had to negotiate entry into new linguistic and cultural communities and sought to acquire resources that would facilitate this entry.

Foundations of linguistic legitimacy: Legitimate language and legitimation.-The present study focused on the opportunities for target language use that FL learners negotiated within a German classroom. It asked how their use of German was interactively accepted or validated within this context, how learners were (or were not) able to negotiate this validation or acceptance, in essence, how the students were able to be or become speakers of a "legitimate language" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 650). Although several scholars have developed the concepts of legitimate language and discursively constructed legitimation, as noted by Norton (1995), the foundation for the concept was laid by Bourdieu, who defines it as follows:

> [I]t is uttered by a legitimate speaker, i.e. by the appropriate person …; it is uttered in a legitimate situation, i.e. on the appropriate market … and addressed to legitimate receivers; it is formulated in the legitimate phonological and syntactic forms (what linguists call grammaticalness), except when transgressing these norms is part of the legitimate definition of the legitimate producer (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 650, emphasis removed).

Bourdieu addresses a critical aspect of legitimacy, its contingency on context. Thus, legitimacy is not intrinsic to a language but contextually and socially constructed and dependent on the alignment of speaker, receiver, situation, and linguistic form to what is deemed socially acceptable and appropriate in a particular context.

Heller's work (1995, 1996, 2006) emphasizes another important aspect of legitimate linguistic practices, their dynamic nature. In her sociolinguistic ethnography of a Toronto school, she documents how ideas of what is a legitimate language at school can shift and depend on the social power structures in a particular context. For example, the Francophone Canadians in her study, while advocating for their own linguistic legitimacy in an English-dominant context, push speakers of Canadian French vernaculars and

migrant students to the margins of legitimacy, thus indicating the ever-shifting nature and power-ladenness of linguistic legitimacy.

Van Leeuwen uses his concept of legitimation, the process through which legitimacy is discursively claimed, to analyze political speeches on migration and unemployment (Van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999; Wodak & Van Leeuwen, 2002). According to him, legitimation occurs in four different ways, as: (a) authorization, the speaker's reference to a personal or impersonal authority; (b) moral evaluation, the invoking of a particular set of values; (c) rationalization, such as through the speaker's emphasis on purposes or goals; and (d) mythopoesis, the quoting of narratives (Van Leeuwen, 2007, 2008).

The present study builds on the existing work by Bourdieu, Norton, Heller, and Van Leeuwen, who emphasize the contextuality and dynamic nature of legitimate linguistic practices. However, they do not provide an analysis of how linguistic legitimacy is negotiated in discourse. Van Leeuwen's work, for instance, focuses on legitimation as legitimacy claims. However, when legitimacy is claimed, it can and often does undergo a process of negotiation or even rejection, which can be interactively repeated and rescripted. It is important to understand these processes of negotiating linguistic legitimacy in order to understand and influence how power and resources are distributed.

In contrast to Van Leeuwen's theory of legitimation, the present study seeks to understand how legitimacy is interactively claimed, negotiated, and constructed. In addition, it differs from Van Leeuwen's concept in that it focuses specifically on the legitimation of *linguistic* practices. Specifically, it asks how FL learners construct linguistic legitimacy for (not) speaking German in their classroom. Rather than examining institutional-level shifts in linguistic legitimacy like Heller's study, this study analyzes legitimacy negotiations in classroom interaction.

Classrooms as Sites of Legitimacy Negotiations

Language classrooms are characterized by overt or covert language policies which often identify a societal or school-wide language or variety as the norm and, as a consequence, may consider those who do not abide by this norm to be deficient. In these environments, establishing linguistic legitimacy is often synonymous with adapting to the dominant linguistic norm, and failure to adapt can be met with social and/or academic sanctions. As Bourdieu (1977) already pointed out, *what* is linguistically legitimate (language) relates to *who* receives legitimacy (speaker) and thus oftentimes becomes a matter that is examined within the framework of language users' identities (e.g., Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004).

Many examples of negotiated and negotiating language learner identities come from second language (L2) learning contexts or bilingual education contexts with students from a minoritized-language background. In these settings, learners seek to acquire the societally dominant or powerful language, which is often presented to them or imagined by them as a direct pathway to the acquisition of social and cultural capital (Norton, 2013).

For example, Leki (2001) and Morita (2004) analyze opportunities and failed attempts of English learners (ELs) to participate in lesson activities "as legitimate and competent members of their classroom communities" (Morita, 2004, p. 573) within their U.S. American and Canadian schools. Similarly, work by Chen (2010) and Talmy (2008) examine how English learners rejected the narrow and low-status identities that the school had reserved for them and carved out spaces of increased legitimacy for themselves.

As language learners seek to improve their status through the languages they learn, the roles of both teachers and students in this process have been highlighted. Teachers participate in deciding what is linguistically legitimate in educational contexts and thus can be complicit in the production of restrictive discourses around second language learners' legitimacy. For example, based on his analysis of Turkish-heritage youth's linguistic practices in Germany, Hinnenkamp (2005) reported on teachers referring to these practices as "double semilingualism" (pp. 57-58), suggesting that they speak neither Turkish nor German in a proficient or legitimate way. Hinnenkamp calls for a recognition of migrant youth's "linguistic code in its own right" (p. 15) and highlights the important role teachers could play in legitimizing these linguistic codes. Palmer's (2008) examination of interactions in a second grade two-way English-Spanish immersion classroom in California showed that teachers can support language minoritized students by helping them build positive academic identities claim space and legitimacy for their language practices.

In addition to teachers, students have also been shown to drive legitimation processes. For instance, De Costa (2011) reports that "Jenny," an English learner, legitimized herself as a proficient speaker of academic English by distancing herself from "Singlish" (p. 353) and instead engaging in "literate talk" (p. 354). Although this process that can be seen as empowering, it points to a problematic dynamic that pressures language-minoritized students to adapt to normative discourse that may ultimately harm their multilingual development and identities.

All these studies illustrate how L2 learning is a site of negotiation for legitimacy. In this paper, I argue that this notion can also be applied to the foreign language classroom.

Linguistic Legitimacy in Foreign Language Contexts

As Kinginger (2004) has pointed out, foreign language classrooms have not traditionally been described as spaces where identity work is common or necessary, which is certainly also true for legitimacy. One problematic assumption seems to be that foreign language learners, who, in the U.S. K-12 context, are taught in classrooms populated predominantly by white middle-class children and youth, acquire foreign language as a skill that does not require them to re-imagine their identities but is merely added onto their already legitimate identities as members of the dominant social group. For instance, a U.S.-born white high school student learning French is rarely thought of as a language learner who has to negotiate the "right to speak" the target language or undergo identity shifts and negotiations throughout the acquisition process – in contrast to a second language learner, whose social status and relationships are heavily dependent on the ability to establish linguistic legitimacy.

It is important to point out the unique role English as a foreign language (EFL) education plays in this respect. The majority of studies that address FL learners' identities or legitimacy stem from EFL contexts where English plays a dual role: on the one hand, it is identified, problematically, as language-sina-qua-non, an essential skill and door-opener to professional success (e.g., Kubota, 2011; Park, 2010). On the other hand, it is also a tool of empowerment and agency that allows learners to reinvent themselves (Gao, Cheng & Kelly, 2008; Gu, 2008; Trent, 2008). Due to this status of English as power language and empowering language, the negotiations of power, cultural capital, and identities that have been described in EFL contexts resemble those that have commonly been reported in ESL environments. Such negotiations are not typically associated with learning less dominant foreign languages in traditional settings, like French or German FL classrooms in the U.S. Despite the prominent role of identity-related scholarship in heritage language, indigenous, and postcolonial contexts, traditional FL education seems hesitant to catch on. The neglect of non-English FL classrooms in this line of scholarship is evidence of a rather limiting view of foreign language education: foreign languages are not commonly associated with negotiations of identities or legitimacy as language users.

Few studies have challenged the view of FL education as a space that is void of identity and legitimacy negotiations. For example, Pomerantz (2002) has shown how language use interacts with academic student identities. She analyzes the language ideologies and academic identities of U.S. college students in an advanced Spanish course, focusing on how her participants enacted and negotiated good language learner (GLL) identities. Examples from classroom discourse showed that using English or not knowing a Spanish word in the classroom could be a serious threat to one's GLL identity and result in being identified as incompetent and illegitimate Spanish speaker. Pomerantz' study illustrates how students created their "right to speak" (Norton, 2000) or linguistic legitimacy by drawing on linguistic ideologies and constructing social hierarchies in an FL learning environment.

Another rare examination of foreign language learning through the lens of identity construction is Kinginger's (2004) four-year study of "Alice", which analyzes the experience of an American woman in the U.S. who immerses herself in French learning endeavors at home, in Quebec (four weeks), and France (two years) in order to advance her cultural competence and consciousness. Kinginger's analysis of the process, during which Alice negotiates and reconstructs her "social and linguistic, but also gender and class identity" (p. 240), demonstrates how FL learning can deeply affect and drive FL learners' ways of being in the world.

In addition, Rampton has made important contributions to the emerging scholarship of FL learning and identity construction. His work on language crossing (e.g., 1999, 2014) analyzes how students legitimately used foreign languages and linguistic features (stylized Asian English, Creole, and Panjabi) for various purposes including relationship and identity building. In addition, his analysis (Rampton, 2006) of the language practices of multiethnic working-class youth in "Central High", an urban British secondary school, show how students not only appropriated a foreign language, but also reorganized classroom hierarchies by doing so. Rampton's work counters the traditional sociolinguistic perspective that perceives foreign language communities as remote and thus insignificant to students' social identities (e.g., Trudgill & Giles, 1983, cited in Rampton, 2006). He found a considerable amount of German chunks in his participants' speech in and beyond the German classroom. For example, students used performances of impromptu German to signal shared meaning among themselves, mock teachers, establish a sense of collectiveness, and interrupt the rigid Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) discourse of the German classes. Research outside of school contexts, for example in the Montreal Hip-Hop community, has further highlighted how youth challenge and adapt language norms and policies (e.g., using "Good French", see Low, Sarkar & Winer, 2009, pp. 65ff). The latter works along with Rampton's studies powerfully illustrate that the legitimacy of

foreign language practices is subject to processes of negotiation and appropriation informed by students' own social, academic, and communicative needs.

In all, although foreign language contexts have begun to be discovered as spaces of identity and legitimacy negotiation, no studies to date have investigated how FL learners construct spaces for their legitimate language use and negotiate their "right to speak" (Norton, 2000) the language they learn, i.e. their target language. Only by knowing how they do this can we leverage their existing strategies and develop methods for teachers and students to claim and negotiate legitimacy for their language use. Unless language learners are able to establish this linguistic legitimacy, their opportunities for using and developing their target languages will be severely restricted.

Therefore, the present study poses the following overarching research question: How do high school students in one German classroom negotiate linguistic legitimacy for their languages in their classroom? Focusing specifically on the students' target language use, this question contains the following sub-question: How do students negotiate and create linguistic legitimacy for using German? The following section provides an overview of how data was collected and analyzed in seeking to answer these two questions.

Materials and Methods

The data presented here was gathered during a semester-long qualitative case study of a German FL classroom at a U.S. Midwestern suburban high school. Ethnographic methods (see below) were employed to gather interactive constructions of linguistic legitimacy in this classroom.

At the time of data collection, Clearwater High School (a pseudonym) served a population of 1183 students, 60 of whom were enrolled in the German program. Spanish, Mandarin, and American Sign Language were also offered. The teacher, Frau Zeller (a pseudonym) was in her fifth year of teaching German and had been an ESL teacher for 10 years before accepting the position in the German Department. She was the only full-time German teacher at this school and taught German to a group of 34 students every morning from 7.30 to 8.20 am. The students were in their 3rd or 4th year of learning German. Three spoke home languages other than English (two Latvian, one Hmong), and all the other students identified English as their first language. As I have noted elsewhere in more detail (Ennser-Kananen et al., 2016), some of the students reported learning German in order to connect with their familial heritage, while others were hoping to set themselves apart from the majority of students who chose to learn Spanish.

As in an earlier study in a very similar setting (Ennser-Kananen, 2012), I used video and audio recordings, participant observation, and open-ended, semi-structured interviews to gather information about how students construct and negotiate their linguistic legitimacy in this German classroom. Visiting the classroom two to five times a week for one to five hours throughout one semester amounted to a total of approximately 145 hours of observations. As a participant observer, I engaged in classroom conversations with the participants, walked up and down the hallways with them, and occasionally joined them for lunch. I interviewed 32 of the 34 students as well as the teacher, on topics revolving around their language learning experiences, classroom activities, and language use. I recorded approximately 38 hours of classroom time, with approximately twice as much footage due to multiple camera use. These recordings gave me important insights into the moment-by-moment negotiations of linguistic legitimacy that occurred during German class. I kept a field log of my daily observation notes and transcribed data from interviews and classroom recordings.

About a third of the data underwent a process of open coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) which produced 26 initial codes, each with two to six sub-categories. Throughout the deductive coding process, I collapsed these codes and the corresponding data into 10 larger themes in order to obtain answers to the research questions.

Results and Discussion

Findings revealed that, while German was not the legitimate linguistic norm among the students in the classroom, they accepted and even valued it under certain circumstances.

The Illegitimacy of German

As the data analysis showed, German was rarely identified as a legitimate linguistic practice among the students in the classroom. Rather, English was the default language. This is evidenced by the following excerpts, which are examples of typical interactions in this classroom.

In the first one, three students were collaborating on the task of comparing their homework, which was to fill in the blanks in a cloze activity with the appropriate words labeled a-j. The conversation consisted almost entirely of students reading aloud the letter of the respective answer as they filled in each slot. (Italics

indicate that words or sentences have been translated from German. For better readability, only students who spoke three times or more in on excerpt were given names. Numbers (S1, S2 ...) represent different students in different excerpts. For more transcription conventions, please refer to the Appendix.)

Example 1: What you got?

1. T: *Now, you should read the text in the group and compare the answers,*
2. *now, in the group, first read, read aloud and then compare answers.*
3. S1: Mkay, so first one. I got e.
4. S2: Yeah.
5. S1: First this and, second one, I got c.
6. S2: That's what I got.
7. S3: Yeah.
8. S2: {I got b.
9. S1: What you got? Second one?}
10. S2: B yeah.
11. S1: I got c 'cause I thought that the third one would be b 'cause it makes,
12. she can't use, she isn't allowed to use her dad's car.
13. S2: Yeah, that's right.
14. S1: And uhm fourth one, I got, I uhm, and fifth one I got d, yeah.
15. S2: Then?
16. S1: H, yeah, then f and j for the last one. Okay, so I got for, I got e, c, b, i,
17. d, h, f, j.
18. S2: Okay.

(Classroom recording, October 3, 2012)

What is noteworthy in this excerpt is that all students seemed to be in agreement with the unspoken rule of using English. Despite Frau Zeller's (T) instructions, which were given in German and asked the students to read the German text out loud, they chose to complete the task by reading merely the letter that corresponded to each answer in English. This could be due to the students' attempt to be efficient and goal-oriented, which would also explain their use of minimal English characterized by deixes, staccato rhythm, and the repetition of short and simple chunks ("I got"). In lines 11-12, S1 deviated from this efficiency policy. When more input became necessary because S1 and S2 had different answers, S1 provided a summary/translation of the German sentence from the text. Given the students' familiarity of the text and the fairly low linguistic and cognitive level of the task, ensuring understanding might not have been the main reason for this language choice. In addition, as the false starts in lines 11 and 12 signal, translating/summarizing the sentence was apparently not the most efficient way of communicating. Thus, it seems that the students' unspoken policy of using English overruled their wish to be efficient in this moment.

In contrast to the youth in Rampton's (2006) study, in this instance, the Clearwater students refrained from appropriating German for their own purposes. Rather, their shared reluctance to deviate from the default English identified English as the legitimate language in this situation. The resulting illegitimacy of German was further consolidated in instances where being good at or being invested in learning German were marked as unacceptable.

In example 2, four students collaborated to list the responsibilities of a soccer coach. The extract stems from the beginning of their conversation, in which one student rejected the idea of being "good at that German stuff":

Example 2: That German stuff

1. S1: Okay, so what are we doing?
2. S2: We're writing a list, a to-do list for a football coach.
3. S3: Soccer.
4. S2: Soccer coach.
5. S1: Get the balls. [*laughs*]
6. S3: Okay, do you know how to say that?
7. S1 [*to S2*]: Do you know how to say that? You're quite good at that German stuff.
8. S2: Whaaat? [*shakes head angrily*]
9. S4: [*eagerly*]: Yeah, yeah you are.

(Classroom recording, October 3, 2012)

In this excerpt, S2, who at the time of data collection was indeed one of the most fluent German speakers in the class, was identified by S1 as being "quite good at that German stuff" (line 7), an identification S2 rejected, but S4 confirmed. S1's choice of words ("that German stuff") and S2's reaction suggest that, at least in this moment, being an invested German student was not valued. Insofar as they delegitimized "good language learner" identities (Pomerantz, 2008), the students in this example went beyond defining legitimate language practices. Delegitimations like this one of either using German or showing investment in learning it occurred frequently throughout the semester, which suggests that the illegitimacy of German among the students was not only momentary, but rather indicative of an established classroom norm, that of using English and avoiding German as well as avoiding the public perception of being invested in learning it.

Interestingly, this contrasts with language learners in previous studies; for example, Jenny (De Costa, 2011), Evan (Chen, 2010) and participants in Pomerantz' (2008) study, all of whom claimed or constructed positive student identities by displaying or striving for high proficiency or high investment. While identifying English as the default legitimate language, data also showed that this norm was suspended in particular situations, especially when narrow spaces

for language output were clearly defined, during role plays, and for the purpose of entertainment.

The Legitimacy of German

Under particular circumstances, speaking German was legitimate for the students in Frau Zeller's classroom. In these moments, students deviated from their unspoken English policy and often appropriated classroom discourse for their own purposes, similar to the youth in Rampton's (2006) work.

Vocabulary or grammar practice thinly disguised as communicative activities was a common occurrence in Frau Zeller's classroom and was usually highly scaffolded. For example, in order to practice the structure "was fürein(e/es)" [what kind of], she provided sentence frames, on the board as well as orally, which left very limited slots (for one verb and one noun) for the students to fill in. In the following excerpt, six students were performing the required conversation. (Italics mark translations from German, bold print marks language that was provided by the teacher.)

Example 3: What kind of?

1. S1 [*to S2*]: ***What kind of music do you*** *listen to?*
2. S2: [*unintel.*] *Uhm, I have no idea. {Not rap, and I have a little bit of German*
3. S4 [to S3]: ***What kind of sport do you*** *do?}*
4. S2: *Music* [*unintel.*] *and a little, little, little, little, bit rap.*
5. {[*All laugh.*]
6. S2: *Little, little, little.} Uhm and I* [*unintel.*]
7. S3: *I don't like* sport but I like going for walks, hm.*
8. S1 [*to S3*]: ***What kind of pizza do you like to*** *eat?*
9. S3: *Uhm all* pizza.*
10. S1 [*to S3*]: *Uhm* ***what kind of music {do you like to*** *listen to?*
11. S3: *Uhm classic* rock}*
12. S2: ***What kind of*** *uhm* ***what kind of instru-instrument do you like* to*** *play?*
13. S5: *Saxophone.*
14. S2: Okay.
15. S3 [*to S6*]: Hello, *uhmuhmuhm,* ***what kind of* film do you like to*** *watch?*
16. S6: Uhm [*unintel.*]. ***What kind of book do you like to*** *read?*
17. S3: *Uhm I like* realistic fiction *and uhm* [*unintel.*].

(Classroom recording, October 8, 2012)

Although during group work English was usually the legitimate language among the students, mini-dialogues like the one above were often performed in German if Frau Zeller provided extensive linguistic support. In these cases, the teacher's instructions acted as what Trent (2008) termed "tightly controlled script" (p. 37), an over-scaffolded framework that leaves very little space for student output. Such scripts seemed to have two effects: (a) they minimized the linguistic effort students needed to make to complete a task in German; (b) they helped them to participate in the activity without displaying much investment in learning German. Given the previous observations about illegitimate good German learner identities, this was a very attractive option in the classroom because it alleviated the tension between complying with Frau Zeller's expectations and the students' own language and investment policies. Put differently, such narrow structures acted as a vehicle of linguistic legitimacy by making it acceptable for students to use the target language.

The analysis of classroom discourse revealed another recurring context of legitimation, namely role-plays. In contrast to the scripts presented above, role-plays were highly under-scaffolded. Frau Zeller limited her directions to assigning the roles and offering German words when students were stuck. In the following abbreviated excerpt, one student, Christopher (a pseudonym) played the German minister of traffic. A picture of a busy junction projected onto the board acted as a prompt for the rest of the class, who assumed the role of townspeople to direct questions at him.

Example 4: Why the car not go?

1. T: *We want to know a lot now. What is going on here with this construction*
2. *site? Yes?*

[…]

3. M: Mister President, Mister President!
4. S1: *Which town?*
5. C: Uh *Berlin.*
6. [*laughter*]
7. C: *Yes.*
8. S2: *Why the car not go?**
9. C: *It dead is.**
10. S2: *Oh no.*
11. S3 [*quietly*]: *It is broken.*

[…]

12. S5: *Who in the car b- who in the car be?**
13. C: Uuhmm *Germany's* president.

[…]

14. S7: *How late are you?*
15. [*T laughs.*]
16. C: Uhm.
17. S4: No, the car.
18. C: Oh.
19. T: *Oh, do you mean the car or the tramway?*
20. S5: *The car.*
21. C [*quietly*]: Did she ask me how late I was?
22. S4: Yeah.
23. C: Uh *fifteen minutes.*

[…]
24. S7: Uhh, *how fast are the train going?**
25. C: *Uh, one hundred kilometers an hour.*
26. [*laughter*]
27. S6: *The tramway is fast.*
28. S8: *Where is the tramway going?**
29. C: *Uhm his parents' house.**
30. [*laughter*]
31. S8: Alright.
32. S9: *Uh what kind of car is that?**
33. T: *Aha*.
34. C: Uh, Mazda, uh.
35. M: Just call it a Prius.
36. [*laughs*] Just call it a Prius, *it is too big for a* Prius.
[…]
37. T: *Two more questions.*
38. S10: *Where is the car going?**
39. C: Nowhere right here [*points at curb*]. *Do you have {another question?*
40. T: *One more question}, one more question.*
41. […]
42. M [*yells*]: Minister of traffic!
43. C [*rolls eyes*, *annoyed*]: *Yes,* hi.
44. S11: *How many years old is this car?*
45. C: *Uh, twenty or twenty-one*.
46. S12 [*quietly*]: How do you say what happened to the car?
47. S13 [*quietly*]: *What happens*
48. S12: *Uh okay, what happens with the car?**
49. C: *Uh Uh the* [*circular motion*]
50. T: *Wheels?*
51. C: *The wheels are* [*explosive sound and hand motion*]
52. [*laughter*]
[…]
53. S14: *How old is the street?*
54. C: *How old?* Uh [*quietly*], based on the construction say [*to class*] *ten years old.*
55. T: *Thank you, thank you Mister Minister.*
56. [*applause*]

(Classroom recording, October 15, 2012)

In contrast to most data, this excerpt features a large amount of German spoken by the students. In total, 16 students were actively involved in this role-play, and 11 questions (lines 4, 8, 12, 14, 24, 28, 32, 38, 44, 48, 53) were asked by the "townspeople". English occurred mostly as a tool for scaffolding and clarifications outside of the actual plot; for example in lines 46-47, when a student (S12) prepared for his question to Christopher by asking his neighbor for language support. Miles (M) was the only student in the class who maintained English throughout this sequence. His English interjections were ignored (lines 3-4), ridiculed (line 36), and evaluated negatively through an eye-roll (line 43). The students' engagement, the amount of German that was voluntarily offered, and the delegitimation of Miles' statements indicate that German was considered the legitimate language for this activity.

What may have facilitated students' language choice was the story Christopher created around the picture of a German politician with a broken car stuck in traffic. Similar to the narrow scripts Frau Zeller provided for mini-dialogues, this plot did not only act as linguistic scaffolding, but also as a tool of legitimation. Assuming their roles as inquisitive townspeople allowed the students to use German in a face-saving way, protected by their roles, rather than running the risk of displaying identities of invested German learners or users. This finding shows that in a context where using a foreign language is generally associated with awkwardness and embarrassment – feelings that were also observed by Rampton (2006) in his study of FL German learners – role-play can reverse the norms of legitimacy, at least for a short period of time. Although the importance of both form-focused and meaning-focused language and role play have been recognized in the field of SLA (Bushnell, 2009; Broner & Tarone, 2001; Cook, 1997), this data points to a new aspect of language learners' play, as legitimizing tool.

Apart from narrowly scaffolded scripts and role-plays, legitimate use of German occurred for the purpose of entertainment. In the following excerpt, a group of four male students volunteered to act out the story of a high school couple, Stefan and Maria, who were attending their homecoming dance. The class was familiar with the story and the students had the text in front of them as well as projected onto the board. The main actors were Christopher (C), Miles (M), Liam (L), and Tom (To) (all pseudonyms).

Example 5: I love you
1. T: *Maria and Stefan wanted to go to the homecoming ball.*
[…]
2. T [*to L*]: *And what do you say? {You want to go to the homecoming ball now.*
3. L [*emphatic*]: *I love you.*} [*takes To's arm*]
4. C: *I love you.*
5. [*laughter and cheering*]
6. C: *I love you.* [*laughs*]
7. M: *I love,* shame on my boy!
8. [*laughter*]
9. T: *Beautiful, he loves her, so what? Hey, but they could not go there*
10. *because Maria, her father's car, wasn't allowed* to have, so, Maria, you*
11. *have to ask your* father.*
12. L [*plays Maria*]: *You have to ask your* father.*
13. T: *Liam, ask your* father if you can have the car.*
[…]

14. L: Hey Dad, *your car have*?*
15. T [*shouts loudly*]: *No! What do you say?*
16. [*loud laughter*]
    [...]
17. C: *You are an* irresponsible *driver, and yes.*
18. [*laughter*]
    [...]
19. To [*puts his hand on his chest*]*: I* will take one for the team.
20. [*loud laughter and talking*]
21. To: *Hello, mother.*
22. M: *Hello,* no wait [*high-pitched voice*], *hello*.
23. [*laughter*]
24. To: *May I, may I, your* car?
25. M: *No.*
26. T [*loudly*]: *What is it? What is it?*
27. [*laughter*]
28. To: *Uhm car, your car uhm* [...] *May I your car uhm?*
    [...]
29. T [*very loudly*]: *Shhht the story goes on. Now they wanted to dance the*
30. *whole night, but they couldn't, they had to return the car.*
31. [*L and To make dancing moves.*]
32. To: *Oh shame, we must go at home.**
33. L: Boom boomboom.
34. [*To makes high-pitched sound of squealing tires.*]
35. [*laughter*]
    [...]
36. T: *Then Stefan and Maria said next year we shall?*
37. [*C and To hug.*]
38. C: *Shall we in a cab go up?**
39. [*laughter*]
    [...]
40. [*clapping and high-fives*]
41. T: *So that is the story of Stefan and Maria.*

(Classroom recording, October 3, 2012)

Several points are noteworthy about this excerpt. First, the power balance in the room shifted during this activity. Miles, Christopher, Tom, and Liam (pseudonyms) managed to navigate the activity in a way that allowed them maximum of control of the situation, while at the same time staying on task enough to avoid reprimands from the teacher or a premature end of the activity. They reacted to Frau Zeller's corrective feedback (e.g., lines 13-14) and to her attempts of redirecting them to the plot of the story, but they did so by exploiting the opportunity for humorous interpretations and comments. For instance, Frau Zeller's narrating of the plot ("You want to go to the homecoming ball now", line 2) and her elicitation of output ("What do you say?", line 2), prompted Liam and Christopher to produce with a German phrase ("I love you."), which was not only a very liberal embellishment of the text, but also did not require much linguistic effort on the students' part to produce. However, the answer seemed to be enough for Frau Zeller to refrain from correcting or scolding the students. The student actors walked this fine line between the teacher's and their own agenda throughout the whole skit, a balancing act Pomerantz and Bell (2012) have termed "calibration" (p. 152).

Second, the realization of the activity suggests that five actors and their audience were pursuing the goal of entertaining and being entertained. For example, Liam and Christopher's use of "I love you", possibly and problematically amplified by two boys playing a heterosexual couple, had the hoped-for entertaining effect on the audience: it elicited laughter and cheering. This was a common occurrence. In fact, laughter and/or cheering were present throughout almost all of this activity and frequently dominated the room (lines 5, 8, 16, 18, 23, 27, 35, 39, and 40). These indications of entertainment were almost always sparked by the actors' use of ungrammatical German. For instance, in line 14, Liam undertook an attempt to independently produce a German sentence ("Hey Dad, deine Auto haben*?" – "Hey Dad, your car have*?"), which was met with loud protest from the teacher (line 15) and excessive laughter from the audience (line 16), most likely because of its inaccurate grammar. Later, Christopher's "Sollenwir in ein Taxi auf gehen?*" ("Shall we in a cab go up?*", line 38) failed to become a meaningful sentence and, again, elicited laughter from the audience (line 39).

The general pattern to be observed here is that the German produced by the five actors included switches to English even for very basic words (car in line 14, I in line 19) and barely comprehensible or even meaningless sentences (line 38). This is surprising considering that Christopher, Liam, and Tom were three of the higher-level students in the class. This finding further contrasts with those of Palmer's (2008), Chen's (2010), and Pomerantz' (2008) studies, which describe multilingual students' or language learners' claims of linguistic legitimacy through striving for high proficiency. In the context of this skit, grammatical and lexical accuracy or complexity were not priorities for the students. Quite the opposite, incorrect German appeared to be the legitimate language of this activity, which was established and confirmed through laughter, cheering, and supportive gestures (high-fives, line 40) among the actors and from the audience. This finding relates to Pomerantz and Bell's study (2012) in a college-level Spanish classroom, in which they conceptualize humorous peer interaction as "spaces in which students can experiment with particular classroom identities, critique institutional/

instructional norms, and engage in more complex and creative acts of language use" (p. 149). In addition to experimenting with new identities and language use, I argue that the Clearwater students also used humor to challenge existing standards of linguistic legitimacy.

This finding can also be understood through the lens of Norton's (2013) concept of investment, which suggests that learners invest in language learning with the expectation of gaining symbolic and material resources in return. Here, the situation seems to be more complex: rather than fully investing in the German lesson, the students seem to carefully weigh potential gains (e.g., language, credentials) with potential losses (e.g., face, status) and navigate this tension with the help of performances of (low level) German.

In sum, the analysis of data from this German classroom shows that German was legitimate when it was highly scripted, produced in role-plays, or used with the purpose to entertain. All of these are features of performances, which students used to construct their "uninvestment". Whether through scripts, roles, or humor, an important goal for the students was to construct identities of non-commitment or non-investment, which severely limited their opportunities for complex and rich output, language use and development, and building of their own identities as legitimate and multilingual users of German.

These observed dynamics in Frau Zeller's classroom have to be understood within the wider context of societal discourses that delegitimize FL learning and education. As Kinginger (2004) explains,

> [i]n the United States, foreign language learning is normally construed as an academic pursuit which is optional at best, and is not seen as a matter of survival … Perhaps this occurs because of a widespread and deeply held suspicion toward multilingualism per se …, since a foreign language education policy would require an unambiguous and unbiased statement on the value of multilingual competence. (p. 221)

As long as multilingualism or the use of non-English languages remains indexed as "foreign" or even "non-American" to the greater society (Kinginger, 2004; Pavlenko, 2004), FL learners will find it difficult to use their languages flexibly and legitimately and build legitimate multilingual identities. This idea is also echoed by Kramsch (2012), who adds monolingualism to the list of social factors that determine one's legitimacy in the U.S.,

> a country in which supposedly "anything is possible" but conversely anything can also become impossible at any time, depending on how one is perceived along the usual axes of race, ethnicity, social class, geographical origins, political learnings, gender and sexual orientation - and, we would now have to add, *monolingualism* (p. 112).

That being said, classroom discourses are not merely at the mercy of societal ideologies and hegemonies, they are also sites of opposition and non-conformity. Given the strategies the students already have in establishing legitimacy for their language use, bringing those to the fore, building on them, and educating teachers to do so, is both possible and necessary to promote FL learners and multilingual students' linguistic legitimacy in their immediate or larger environment.

Conclusions and Implications

The findings of this study illustrate the complexities learners of German face when claiming legitimacy for using their target language in their German classroom. In regard to theoretical implications to be inferred from this study, the concept of linguistic legitimacy was well suited to capture the processes of negotiation that the Clearwater students engaged in to establish acceptance and validation for their (target) language use. The study illustrates negotiations of linguistic legitimacy, but more research is needed to expand this work and establish a comprehensive model of linguistic legitimacy, which can then be used to analyze the experience of multilingual learners in various contexts. As a next step, what is needed is a concept of linguistic legitimacy that outlines its intersections with race, ethnicity, gender, religion, class, ability, sexual orientation, and other social factors. Understanding these connections would prepare the way for building language curricula that promote linguistic legitimacy for all language learners.

The findings of this study also have important implications for teaching and teacher education. In order for students to be successful FL learners, they need to be able to claim legitimacy for their language use. This goal is distinct from acquiring proficiency and, as the data of this study shows, can even run counter to it.

Teaching linguistic legitimacy can occur on several levels. The following list is a starting point for teachers and teacher educators who seek to encourage their learners to establish linguistic legitimacy and make use of their linguistic resources:

1. *Explicit teaching and practice of legitimacy claims*

in interaction.
In situations when target language use seems illegitimate, it is helpful for language learners to have strategies for claiming that legitimacy. Legitimacy-based language instruction could, for instance, provide learners with language for legitimacy claims and granting legitimacy and practice such strategies in order to equip them for challenging discourses and policies of linguistic illegitimacy in interaction.

2. *Critical analysis of language ideologies and policies within relevant contexts.*
The more language learners become aware of the ideologies and policies that permeate their language learning environment, the better they will be equipped to critically evaluate them and adjust their language practices accordingly. For example, a higher awareness of their own implicit English policy, or the hegemonic role of English in the United States might have allowed or even encouraged the Clearwater students to step outside these confines and find a new approach to using German.
3. *Fostering identity-building in the FL classroom.*
Students in FL classrooms can greatly benefit from pedagogical approaches which promote investment and legitimacy through identity work. Recognizing foreign languages as avenues that can lead to new identities or gaining access to new (imagined) communities can encourage students to step out of their (performed) non-investment and thus push them into a space of investment and legitimacy that is more conducive to language acquisition.
In all, this study provided evidence that FL classrooms are spaces where identities are constructed and linguistic legitimacy is negotiated. In addressing these processes in ways that empower FL learners, FL teachers and teacher educators can help them to become confident and competent users of their target languages.

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Appendix A

Transcription conventions

Abbreviation/Sign	Meaning
S1, S2, etc.	student one, student two, etc. (Only students who spoke three times or more within one segment are represented by pseudonyms.)
T	teacher
!	increased volume
?	rising intonation, e.g. in a question
{ }	Overlap
[laughter]; [eagerly]; [shakes head], etc.	additional information about the speaker, e.g. non-verbal cues, tone, action, or motion
Italics	words or sentences that have been translated from German

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Incidence and Nature of Negotiations for Meaning during Uncontrolled Speaking Practice in English as a Foreign Language Classrooms

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The past three decades have seen an increasing interest in negotiation for meaning as interactional processes which advance language acquisition. Motivated by this claim, a number of studies have set out to determine the tasks that best promote negotiations for meaning (NfMs). However, this research has mostly tended to investigate NfM under experimental conditions, leaving considerably unexplored the negotiated interactions that might take place in real English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms. In response to this, the present study sets out to investigate the incidence and nature of NfM in three uncontrolled EFL classrooms. In examining several teacher- and learner-led speaking tasks at basic, intermediate and advanced levels, the findings indicate that the amount of NfM is lower than those reported in previous studies. Moreover, a qualitative analysis of the interactional data suggests that the NfM across proficiency levels was limited in nature, and thus did not provide learners with all the learning benefits inherent in negotiation for meaning. These findings raise intriguing questions as to teachers' and learners' opportunities to negotiate meaning during EFL classroom interactions, and ways through which they can promote negotiated interactions in their EFL classrooms.

Keywords: English as a foreign language, negative evidence, negotiation for meaning, speaking practice

For more than three decades, interactionist research has drawn attention to the interactional processes inherent in *negotiation for meaning* (NfM) because these conversational adjustments are claimed to encourage L2 acquisition (Long, 1996; Pica, 1996). However, this construct has been surrounded by controversy (Garcia-Ponce, Mora-Pablo, Crawford Lewis & Lengeling, 2017). Firstly, it has been found to be scarce in the language classroom (Foster, 1998; Foster & Ohta, 2005; García Mayo & Pica, 2000; to name just a few). Secondly, despite the importance attributed to NfM, its nature and potential effects on language acquisition have been mostly investigated under controlled conditions which do not reflect the interactions that are commonly initiated in real language classrooms (see, for example, Hull & Saxon, 2009; Yi & Sun, 2013).

In response to the above, the present study set out to investigate the incidence and nature of NfMs during uncontrolled interactions in three EFL classrooms in a Mexican university, aiming to respond to Foster's (1998) call for studies which investigate NfMs during

classroom interactions which are not intentionally modified. In contrast to other studies, we focus on NfMs during speaking practice in particular, rather than teaching and learning practices in general, since these interactions (should) provide EFL teachers and learners with opportunities to focus on the development of speaking skills "through meaningful communication by expressing, interpreting, and negotiating meaning" (Burke, 2011, p. 9). This thus allows us to understand – from naturalistic and exploratory perspectives – the incidence and nature of negotiated interactions which arguably take place in the EFL classroom. By doing this, the study aims to enhance our understanding of the extent to which uncontrolled interactions in EFL classrooms are conducive to promoting opportunities for teachers and learners to negotiate meaning and thus foster language acquisition. The study is guided by the following research questions (RQs):

1. How often do EFL teachers and learners engage in negotiation for meaning during uncontrolled teacher- and learner-led speaking tasks?
2. What is the nature of the negotiation for meaning during these EFL interactions?

As implied in the research questions, the present study adopts a naturalistic perspective of the tasks, interactions and the NfMs that were initiated. This involved not only counting frequencies of negotiations and the triggers that initiated them, but also exploring their qualitative characteristics with the help of transcribed data.

This paper begins by reviewing literature concerning negotiation for meaning. After outlining the study, participants, and data collection and analysis, it will then go on to discuss the findings of the interactional data. It concludes by suggesting some implications, and further research areas to consolidate and generalize from these findings.

Negotiation for Meaning During Classroom Interactions

The construct of NfM is founded on Krashen's (1982) claim that second language acquisition is fostered when learners are exposed to comprehensible input. Long (1996) agrees with Krashen (1982) that the provision of comprehensible input is fundamental, but maintains it is not a sufficient condition for second language acquisition. According to Long (1996), learners benefit from greater language learning opportunities when input is modified interactionally rather than solely being exposed to great amounts of comprehensible input. These opportunities are facilitated during NfM which serves the comprehension, feedback, and production needs of language learners (Long, 1983, 1996). Specifically, during these conversational adjustments, input is made comprehensible by teachers and learners working together towards co-constructing meanings (Walsh, 2013), ensuring that the classroom discourse progresses smoothly by checking, repeating, clarifying, or modifying problem utterances in phonological, morphosyntactic, lexical and syntactic manners (Foster & Ohta, 2005). Besides increasing input comprehensibility, NfM provides learners with opportunities to receive negative evidence (i.e., language data concerning the correctness of their utterances) (Long, 1996), and modify their output towards greater comprehensibility, complexity and accuracy (Swain, 2000, 2005).

Motivated by the above, a considerable number of studies since the mid-1980s have set out to determine the classroom conditions and tasks that best encourage learners to engage in NfM. In particular, groups of non-native speakers rather than teacher-led discussions, and information gap tasks performed in dyads have been claimed to promote opportunities for NfM (Doughty & Pica, 1986). Nevertheless, research evidence has shown that NfM tends to be short (Foster, 1998), and performed at word level (Foster & Ohta, 2005; Shi, 2004), that is, negotiation for vocabulary or expressions rather than content or grammar structures. Furthermore, it has been found that teachers and learners engage in negotiated interactions to increase comprehensibility rather than the accuracy of learners' messages (Pica, 1996). Besides the limited nature of NfM, there is also statistical evidence indicating that the incidence of NfM is scarce during classroom interactions (see Foster, 1998; Foster & Ohta, 2005; García Mayo & Pica, 2000; Van der Zwaard & Bannink, 2016). For example, Foster (1998), motivated by the claim that small group work promotes learner interaction, coded and compared the incidence of NfM in dyads and small groups during tasks involving required and optional information exchanges. She found that the incidence of NfM in both groups was generally low. Surprisingly, in exploring the distribution of NfM within the groups, she found that some learners dominated the NfM moves, whereas others were not overtly engaged in negotiating meaning. Similarly, Foster and Ohta (2005) explored the frequency of NfM moves in dyads and triads during information exchange tasks. They found that the incidence of NfM was low across their datasets.

Reasons for the scarcity of NfM in the language classroom are still not clear. Long (1996) acknowledges that the opportunities for NfM are often unnoticed by language teachers due to the fast pace of classroom interactions. Foster (1998) explains that holding up the interactions every time there is a message difficulty may be a way of making the interaction or task frustratingly slow. It has also been suggested that teachers and learners may avoid these interactional

adjustments if they perceive them as face-threatening (Foster, 1998; Naughton, 2006, Van der Zwaard & Bannink, 2016), or as a sign of incompetence (Foster & Ohta, 2005). Due to the fact that NfM is "a rare commodity in classrooms" (Pica, 1996, p. 254), these interactional adjustments have been investigated in experimental conditions, e.g., a tighter design of tasks, laboratory settings, and a narrow number of participants who volunteer, etcetera. Due to the fact that previous research has controlled classroom conditions in order to investigate NfM, it is possible to suggest that such findings may not relate to teaching and learning practices which are commonly initiated in real language classrooms. Moreover, the fact that learners in these studies tend to volunteer their time raises questions about the extent to which their interactional behaviour in an experimental setting is the same during uncontrolled classroom interactions (Foster, 1998). In EFL contexts, this becomes a problem for teachers and learners because it is still not clear whether classroom interactions where mostly non-native teachers and learners interact are environments where comprehensible input and comprehensible output through negotiated interactions are facilitated.

The above highlights the need to explore the quantity and quality of NfM during uncontrolled interactions in order not to disrupt the classrooms and compromise the data (see Foster, 1998). In response to this, the present study attempts to investigate to what extent NfM is promoted when EFL teachers and learners and learner peers engage in interactions to practise speaking during normal classroom conditions. The decision not to control classroom conditions responds to Jakobovits and Gordon's (1974) suggestion that research should not be conducted in controlled conditions if the purpose is to understand and enhance teaching and learning practices. This decision, in turn, enables an understanding of the opportunities that EFL teachers and learners in this context have to negotiate meaning and thus benefit from input that is made comprehensible interactionally during classroom interactions which reflect their common teaching and learning practices. In order to attain this, we examine the incidence and nature of communication breakdowns that lead to NfM by identifying and quantifying NfM moves in three classrooms at basic, intermediate and advanced levels.

Materials and Methods

Research Context

The present study was carried out in a state university in Mexico. Learners in this teaching and learning context are expected to learn English to a proficiency level that enables them to work as EFL teachers upon completing a five-year teacher training programme. Specifically, the study was conducted in three English classes: basic, intermediate, and advanced levels. Classes at basic and intermediate levels involve six hours of English study per week, where three hours are centred on learning vocabulary and grammar and the other three on practising the language. In English classes at advanced levels, learners study vocabulary and grammar for two hours per week, and practise the language for three hours per week.

Participants

All the learners enrolled in the three English classes participated (17 at the basic level; 26 at the intermediate level; and 20 at the advanced level). A small survey conducted to identify their backgrounds indicated the following: 1) they were all Mexicans; 2) their ages ranged from 18 to 24 years; 3) they all spoke Spanish as an L1. Their educational backgrounds were mainly from state schools, where exposure to the second language is normally five hours per week in classrooms of approximately 30-40 learners. A small number of learners had educational backgrounds from private schools, where exposure to English ranges from 15 to 20 hours per week. Three female teachers participated in the study, all of whom were originally from Mexico and shared Spanish as a mother tongue. They all stated that they had been learning English for 14 or more years, and teaching it for seven or more years.

Procedures

According to Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991), recorded classroom interactions can provide a detailed and comprehensive description of participants' interactional behaviour and patterns in an unrestricted way because of the naturally occurring nature of the data. Following this claim, classroom interactions were recorded during speaking practice because, as previously discussed, these interactions (should) provide opportunities for teachers and learners to express, interpret, and negotiate meaning (Burke, 2011). The teachers and learners knew that they were being recorded, but after several minutes they seemed to forget about the presence of the recorders and carried on with the speaking practice. One researcher was present during the recorded classroom interactions in order to take notes about the teaching and learning practices, but he maintained an onlooker role in order not to disturb and influence the classroom interactions.

In line with the exploratory and naturalistic approach adopted in the study, the teachers' individual teaching style, speaking tasks, structure of the classes, number of learners, and class time were neither modified nor controlled during the recorded classroom interactions. As summarised in Table 1, speaking practice at the three proficiency levels was led by the teachers, i.e., teacher-led interactions (TLIs) defined as discussions led by teachers which serve the purpose of practicing speaking, and by the learners, i.e., learner-led interactions (LLIs) described as interactional discourse constructed by learners in pairs or, in a few instances, in trios to practise speaking. We were particularly interested in exploring NfMs the LLIs because they are believed to provide a non-threatening atmosphere and encourage negotiated interactions among learner peers (Foster, 1998). Moreover, the TLIs and LLIs comprised speaking tasks that focused on meaning and accuracy, as described below.

Table 1
Focus of speaking tasks at the three proficiency levels

	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
Meaning	2 TLIs 3 LLIs	3 TLIs 6 LLIs	0 TLIs 6 LLIs
Accuracy	3 TLIs 3 LLIs	1 TLI 0 LLIs	2 TLIs 0 LLIs

TLIs and LLIs requiring learners to use language communicatively, with an emphasis on meaning and to attain a real-world objective, were classified as following a *focus on meaning*, whereas TLIs and LLIs during which learners practised specific grammar structures or vocabulary were classified as following a *focus on accuracy*. In total, 600 minutes of classroom interactions were recorded, 200 minutes approximately from each proficiency level.

All participants were informed about how the data were going to be treated in this study, and of their right not to participate or to withdraw at any time. They all stated their willingness to participate, and provided signed consent forms. In order to protect their privacy, the learners' names and identities were carefully rendered anonymous in the data. Instead of real names, abbreviations and pseudonyms are used. The words 'Teacher' (or letter 'T') and 'Learner' (or letter 'L' and an identification number, e.g., Learner 5) are used to refer to these teachers and learners in the extracts, analysis and discussions.

Measures

The analysis of the incidence and nature of NfMs in the TLIs and LLIs at the three proficiency levels followed the idea in cognitive research that the more often learners negotiate meaning, the better for their language development (Foster, 1998). This firstly involved examining the communication breakdowns that lead to NfM through the identification and quantification of NfM moves, which are outlined in the two tables below. Secondly, NfMs were explored from a qualitative perspective with a view to understanding their nature during classroom interactions at the three proficiency levels.

Table 2
Negotiation moves

Check Moves	Specification
1.Comprehension checks	These are *any* expressions, mostly in the form of questions, initiated to establish whether a preceding utterance has been understood by the interlocutor (Long, 1980).
2.Confirmation checks	These are initiated to elicit confirmation that a preceding utterance by the interlocutor has been correctly understood or heard by the speaker (Long, 1980).
3.Clarification requests	These are mostly wh- or bipolar questions initiated to elicit clarification of the interlocutor's preceding utterance(s). These questions require the interlocutor to either furnish new information or recode information previously given (Long, 1980).

According to Long (1996), NfMs are also a source of negative evidence, i.e., explicit or implicit information that is provided to learners concerning (grammatical) errors in their oral production (Gass, 2003). Negative evidence during NfMs can take several forms, including grammar explanations, explicit feedback, recasts, and communication breakdowns followed by repair sequences (Long, 1996). In order to explore learners' opportunities to receive and provide negative evidence during NfM, we also coded and explored *corrective repetitions* (explicit feedback) and *recasts* (explicit feedback), as detailed in Table 3.

Because the purpose of the study was not to test hypotheses, but to explore the incidence and nature of NfM in EFL classrooms, the data were calculated using simple total, ratios and averages. Firstly, the total numbers were obtained by counting the occurrences of NfMs and the moves that triggered them. Secondly, ratios between NfMs per minute were calculated by dividing the total number of NfMs in each TLI or PLI per the total number of minutes of each interaction.

Table 3
Negative evidence moves

Move	Specification
4.Corrective repetitions	These serve the purpose of reshaping another speaker's utterance. These are the most common types of feedback to provide negative evidence which usually contain an additional feature, for example, stress or lengthening of a segment, questioning intonation, etc. (Chaudron, 1988).
5.Recasts	These are ways in which participants reshape, reformulate or refine all or part of others' utterances (Long, 1996; Walsh, 2006). The criteria to consider a recast are: 1) they contain content words of a preceding incorrect utterance; 2) they reshape utterances in a phonological, syntactic, morphological or lexical way; and 3) they focus on meaning rather than on form (Long & Robinson, 1998).

Results and Discussion

Incidence of Negotiation for Meaning

In addressing RQ1 (i.e., how often do EFL teachers and learners engage in negotiation for meaning during uncontrolled teacher- and learner-led speaking tasks?), the findings in this section show that the incidence of NfMs was varied but generally low during the TLIs and LLIs at the three proficiency levels, and mostly initiated by confirmation checks and clarification requests. The findings into the scarcity of NfMs during the TLIs and LLIs were not expected because there is research evidence which suggests that NfM tends to occur in NNS interactions (Varonis & Gass, 1985), two-way exchange tasks (Foster, 1998), more frequently in peer- than in teacher-led discussions (Ellis, 2012), and in dyads rather than small groups (Foster, 1998).

Table 4 shows that the basic teacher and learners engaged in two to eight NfMs during the TLIs, with a range of 0.7 to 2.2 NfMs per minute. As shown in this table, meaning was negotiated through checking confirmations and requesting clarifications. NfMs involving corrective repetitions tended to be frequent in these interactions, but recasts were the scarcest. It is possible that the basic teacher was compelled to provide negative feedback and correct the learners' turns by repeating their contributions due to the learners' beginner proficiency level. However, as we shall see, these NfM moves were absent in the TLIs and LLIs at the intermediate and advanced levels. Across these TLIs, comprehension checks did not trigger any NfM due to their function as discourse markers rather than to initiate NfMs. In the next section, we provide interactional evidence that illustrates how the three teachers' comprehension checks typically served a purpose as discourse markers, not triggering NfMs across the datasets.

Table 4
Negotiation for meaning in the TLIs (basic level)

	TLI 1	TLI 2	TLI 3	TLI 4	TLI 5	Average
Time of activity	1:24	5:20	7:20	5:13	2:45	
No. of NfMs	3	3	8	5	2	4.2
NfMs per minute	2.2	0.5	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.0
Comprehension check	0	1	1	2	0	0.8
Confirmation check	2	1	6	1	1	2.2
Clarification request	2	1	1	4	1	1.8
Corrective repetition	0	2	0	2	1	1.0
Recast	0	0	1	0	1	0.4
No. of NfM moves	4	5	9	9	4	6.2

TLI=Teacher-led interaction; NfMs=Negotiations for meaning

In the case of the LLIs, Table 5 shows an increase of NfMs compared to the NfMs in the TLIs (an average of 1.5 NfMs per LLI compared to 1.0 NfMs per TLI).

Table 5
Negotiation for meaning in the LLIs (basic level)

	LLI 1	LLI 2	LLI 3	LLI 4	LLI 5	LLI 6	Average
Time of activity	3:20	5:47	2:53	9:03	9:03	9:03	
No. of NfMs	4	8	8	13	12	13	9.6
NfMs per minute	1.2	1.3	2.8	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.5
Comprehension check	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Confirmation check	4	5	6	7	5	12	6.5
Clarification request	2	4	2	14	7	6	5.8
Corrective repetition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recast	0	4	2	4	1	0	1.8
No. of NfM moves	6	13	10	25	13	18	14.16

LLI=Learner-led interaction; NfMs=Negotiations for meaning

Learners engaged in four to 13 NfMs across the LLIs, ranging from 1.2 to 2.8 NfMs per minute. As in the TLIs, the NfMs were mostly initiated to check confirmations and request clarifications. Interestingly,

the learners engaged in a higher number of NfMs involving recasts in the LLIs than in the TLIs, during which the teachers may have avoided them in order to maintain the learners' face. In these LLIs, NfMs triggered by comprehension checks and corrective repetitions were absent.

Unlike at the basic level, Tables 6 and 7 show that the TLIs at the intermediate level promoted a greater number of NfMs than the LLIs (an average of 1.1 NfMs per minute in the TLIs compared to 0.5 NfMs per minute in the LLIs), and more than the TLIs at the basic and advanced level (see Tables 4 and 8, respectively). However, as in other interactions at the other two proficiency levels, NfMs were mostly initiated by confirmation checks and clarification requests.

Table 6
Negotiation for meaning in the TLIs (intermediate level)

	TLI 1	TLI 2	TLI 3	TLI 4	Average
Time of activity	6:16	7:20	12:55	5:21	
No. of NfMs	9	10	13	4	9.0
NfMs per minute	1.4	1.3	1.0	0.7	1.1
Comprehension check	0	0	3	4	1.7
Confirmation check	8	7	10	1	6.5
Clarification request	4	5	6	4	4.7
Corrective repetition	0	0	0	0	0
Recast	0	1	2	0	0.7
No. of NfM moves	12	13	21	9	13.7

TLI=Teacher-led interaction; NfMs=Negotiations for meaning

Table 6 shows that the teacher and learners during the TLIs engaged in a range of four to 13 NfMs, 1.0 to 1.4 NfMs per minute. Again, most of these NfMs involved a greater number of confirmation checks and clarification requests than comprehension checks. NfMs to provide negative evidence were not frequent in these TLIs.

Table 7 shows that the learners in the LLIs engaged in three to seven NfMs, 0.3 to 0.8 NfMs per minute, mostly initiated by confirmation checks and clarification requests. As in the basic LLIs, there is a slight increase of NfMs triggered by recasts in the LLIs compared to the TLIs (an average of 0.8 recasts per LLI compared to 0.7 recasts per TLI). Moreover, comprehension checks and corrective repetitions were absent in these LLIs.

At the advanced level, Table 8 shows that the teacher and learners in the TLIs engaged in only one NfM.

This NfM, initiated in TLI 1, involved one confirmation check. As pointed out previously, the seven comprehension checks did not initiate any NfMs due to their function as discourse markers. However, the NfMs increased in the LLIs, as shown below.

Table 7
Negotiation for meaning in the LLIs (intermediate level)

	LLI 1	LLI 2	LLI 3	LLI 4	LLI 5	LLI 6	Average
Time of activity	8:31	8:31	8:31	13:02	13:02	13:02	
No. of NfMs	7	6	3	7	7	7	6.1
NfMs per minute	0.8	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Comprehension check	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Confirmation check	3	5	3	7	5	4	4.5
Clarification request	2	1	0	1	2	5	1.8
Corrective repetition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recast	4	0	0	0	1	0	0.8
No. of NfM moves	9	6	3	8	8	9	7.1

LLI=Learner-led interaction; NfMs=Negotiations for meaning

Table 8
Negotiation for meaning in the TLIs (advanced level)

	TLI 1	TLI 2	Average
Time of activity	1:50	5:40	
No. of NfMs	1	0	0.5
NfMs per minute	0.5	0	0.2
Comprehension check	0	7	3.5
Confirmation check	1	0	0.5
Clarification request	0	0	0
Corrective repetition	0	0	0
Recast	0	0	0
No. of NfM moves	1	7	4

TLI=Teacher-led interaction; NfMs=Negotiations for meaning

Table 9 shows that the advanced learners engaged in three to seven NfMs, 0.2 to 0.7 NfMs per minute. As at the basic and intermediate levels, these NfMs mostly involved confirmation checks, clarification requests and recasts. In comparing the LLIs at the three proficiency levels, it is evident that the advanced learners engaged in the lowest number of NfMs. The immediate issue that emerges from this finding is that the advanced learners in both TLIs and LLIs had the most limited opportunities to negotiate input, and receive and provide negative evidence across proficiency levels.

Table 9
Negotiation for meaning in the LLIs (advanced level)

	LLI 1	LLI 2	LLI 3	LLI 4	LLI 5	LLI 6	Average
Time of activity	11:42	11:42	11:42	6:20	6:20	6:16	
No. of NfMs	5	7	3	4	5	4	4.6
NfMs per minute	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.5
Comprehension check	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Confirmation check	3	2	2	2	5	5	3.1
Clarification request	2	3	0	2	1	3	1.8
Corrective repetition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recast	0	3	1	0	0	0	0.6
No. of NfM moves	5	8	3	4	6	0	4.3

LLI=Learner-led interaction; NfMs=Negotiations for meaning

As indicated by the above interactional data, the learners during the TLIs and PLIs at the three proficiency levels engaged in NfMs which ranged from zero to 13, from 0 to 2.8 NfMs per minute. These figures indicate that the incidence of NfMs was significantly varied and generally low at the three proficiency levels, as consistent with previous research (Foster, 1998; García Mayo & Pica, 2000; Walsh, 2002; to name just a few). Zero to 13 NfMs in this study are found to be lower than in other empirical studies (see, for example, Foster, 1998; Foster & Ohta, 2005). Despite claims that classroom communication should be conducive to promoting negotiated interactions (Long, 1996), these figures suggest that uncontrolled classroom interactions during speaking practice may not promote opportunities for teachers and learners to negotiate meaning and thus benefit from its inherent learning conditions. The findings into the low incidence of NfMs during the LLIs are somewhat surprising since learners are thought to engage in a higher number of NfMs in peer- than in teacher-led discussions (Ellis, 2012; Pica, 1996). Moreover, despite claims that NfMs tend to occur in tasks requiring a two-way exchange of information (Foster, 1998), the intermediate and advanced LLIs, which met this requirement, did not appear to promote NfMs. As we will see in the remainder of this paper, the interactional data show that the NfMs across proficiency levels were limited not only in number but also in nature.

Nature of Negotiation for Meaning

In addressing RQ2 (i.e., what is the nature of the negotiation for meaning during these EFL interactions?), the interactional data show that the NfMs were typically performed around lexical forms rather than syntactic structures or learners' wider meaning or intention. In other words, the teachers and learners across proficiency levels engaged in interactional adjustments to negotiate meaning of single words or expressions in response to misunderstandings or mispronunciations. The following two extracts illustrate how the teachers and learners in the TLIs and learner peers in the LLIs typically engaged in NfMs at word level:

Extract 1
A negotiation for meaning in TLI 2 (basic level)

13. T: //so let's move on to exercise 2// … //what are the instructions L6?//
14. L6: ((4)) [inaudible]
15. T: //Speak up L6// … //again but speak up//
16. L6: //Listen egain// →
17. T: //**LisTEN!//**
18. L6: //Listen egain// →
19. T: //**Again!//**
20. L6: //**Again//** … //complete the sentence with words … from the box//
21. T: //Ok// … //let's look at the words … from the box// … // you have … 'a man' 'by bus'// … what else?//

T=Teacher; L#=Learner and its number in the interaction; //=AS-unit boundary; <>=clause boundary

In Extract 1, an NfM is triggered in turns 16 and 18 by L6's mispronunciation of the words /listen again/. In turns 17 and 19, the teacher corrects the learner's mispronunciation by repeating her words. The NfM finishes with L6's uptake in turn 20 and the teacher's signal of acceptance in turn 21. In Extract 2 (below), L4 triggers an NfM in turn 227 as a result of her lack of knowledge of the Spanish word /saco/ in English. In turns 228 and 229, L13 and L2 provide L4 with the unknown word. The NfM ends with L4 repeating and taking up the word.

Extract 2
A negotiation for meaning in a LLI (intermediate level)

227. L4: Wear- //**wear u:h … *saco*?**//
228. L13: //Blazer?//
229. L2: //Blazer?//
230. L4: //Blazer?//
231. L13: //Yeah//

L#=Learner and its number in the interaction; //=AS-unit boundary; <>=clause boundary

As shown in the above extracts, the teacher and learners engaged in NfMs which involved adjustments of mispronunciations, or a lack of knowledge, regarding individual words or expressions. The nature of these NfMs at word level support previous empirical studies

(Foster, 1998; Foster & Ohta, 2005; Sheen, 2004; Shi, 2004), which also found that NfMs tended to be short and answered briefly, and normally performed for adjusting lexical items rather than larger stretches of discourse or grammatical morphology. However, as discussed below, the present study goes further to suggest that the limited quantity and quality of NfM may be in response to the teachers' and learners' perceptions and beliefs.

Moreover, the interactional data indicated that NfMs were mostly triggered by confirmation checks and clarification requests, as illustrated in the interactional data in Extract 3.

Extract 3
A negotiation for meaning in TLI 1 (basic level)

38. T: […] okay what other things you take with you?
39. L16: //Take a brik// [*sic*]
40. T: **Take a?**
41. L16: //Brik// [*sic*]
42. T: **Brik?** [*sic*]
43. L16: //Break//

T=Teacher; L#=Learner and its number in the interaction; //=AS-unit boundary; <>=clause boundary

As shown in Extract 3, the teacher and L16 engage in an NfM initiated by the mispronunciation of the word /break/. In order to correct L16, the teacher initiates two confirmation checks that assist L16 in focusing her attention on the mispronunciation, which is corrected by L16 in Line 43. The recurrence of NfMs triggered by confirmation checks and clarification requests may be explained by the teachers' and learners' possible perceptions and beliefs about them as more effective interactional strategies to provide or elicit target-like language forms without involving a loss of learners' face. This suggestion is supported by the interactional evidence itself which showed that NfMs initiated by corrective repetitions were scarce across the datasets, and NfMs triggered by recasts were more frequent in the LLIs than in the TLIs. From a social perspective, NfMs to provide negative evidence during the TLIs may have been perceived by the teachers and learners as face-threatening, motivating them to avoid engaging in them in order not to involve a loss of face. This suggestion is supported by Foster (1998), Foster and Ohta (2005) and Naughton (2006), who suggest that NfMs which involve a potential loss of face and/or discouraging detours may be avoided by teachers and learners. In contrast, the LLIs at the three proficiency levels appeared to encourage the learners to engage in NfMs to provide each other with negative evidence, at least implicitly. The following extract illustrates how the learners in the LLI typically engaged in NfMs involving recasts:

Extract 5
A recast in PLI 1 (intermediate level)

15. L2: //=Yes// (2) a::h //for the third picture// … //I think// <> // tha:t it's a:: girl <> who in he:r childhood was a: … little:: … a little:: (1) older person// <> … //but her lifestyle changed many many=//
16. L1: //=**So much?**//
17. L2: //Yes// … a:h …

L#=Learner and its number in the interaction; //=AS-unit boundary; <>=clause boundary

In Extract 5, L2 describes a picture in turn 15 and incorrectly say /her lifestyle changed many many/, whose last part L1 restructures in turn 16. The NfM finishes with L2 signalling comprehension in turn 17. As illustrated in Extract 5, the learners during the LLIs were able to reformulate each other's utterances into more target-like forms. This implies that the LLIs, a more intimate and less face-threatening environment than TLIs (see McDonough, 2004), may have encouraged learners to engage in NfMs to provide and receive negative evidence. This suggestion is supported by previous empirical studies (Figueiredo, 2006; Foster & Ohta, 2005; García Mayo & Pica, 2000), in which NfMs to perform recasts or provide negative evidence were found to be recurrent in peer-led discussions, enabling learners to push their utterances towards target-like structures. However, this evidence in turn highlights the limitations of TLIs to promote NfMs during which negative evidence is facilitated to the learners. Comprehension checks were only initiated by the teachers during the TLIs. However, they did not trigger any NfM since they appeared to be used as discourse markers rather than NfM moves.

The following extract illustrates how the teachers typically used these moves during classroom interactions across the data:

Extract 4
Comprehension checks in TLI 2 (advanced level)

28. T: [..] //what's the difference between 'siesta' and 'snooze'?//
29. L5: //The first factor … it's intentionally//
30. T: //It is intentional// and //it is usually a habit [1]// **okay?** [1] //well you have a siesta after lunch L4?//
31. L4: //Yes//
32. T: //And 'snooze' is probably one day// <> //that you feel tired// … //you snooze … **okay?** Well 'snore'?// [2] //it's to make these sounds// heheh **okay**?//
33. L5: Ah!

T=Teacher; L#=Learner and its number in the interaction; //=AS-unit boundary; <>=clause boundary

In Extract 4, the teacher and learners (advanced level) define and explain some verbs related to sleeping habits. As shown in turns 30 and 32, the teacher explains the meaning of /siesta/ and /snooze/. In these turns, the teacher contributes with several 'okay?' expressions which appear to check the learners' comprehension. However, none of these checks

triggered NfMs. Instead, it seems that they served the purpose of organizing and managing what the teachers were saying. That is, comprehension checks, like the above, functioned as discourse markers rather than moves that triggered NfMs.

As discussed above, the interactional data indicated that NfMs across proficiency levels had the following characteristics: (1) were scarce in number; (2) were performed for negotiating lexical forms rather than syntactic structures or general meaning; (3) were mostly initiated by confirmation checks and clarification requests; (4) were limited in negative evidence in the TLIs. This interactional evidence suggests that in general the uncontrolled TLIs and LLIs in which the teachers and learners engaged to practice speaking did not entirely facilitate learners with opportunities to do the following: firstly, negotiate meaning; secondly, provide and receive negative evidence; thirdly, modify their output towards greater accuracy and potential L2 learning. These findings highlight the interactional limitations of the EFL classrooms, which are believed to be learners' sole opportunity to practice and develop linguistic as well as interactional skills (Dinçer & Yeşilyurt, 2013; Philp & Tognini, 2009; Yoshida, 2013).

This interactional evidence raises intriguing questions as to the factors that are hindering the EFL teachers and learners from engaging in negotiated interactions and thus fully benefitting from their learning conditions. Based on the findings of this study that NfMs to provide negative evidence were limited during classroom interactions, the study suggests that EFL teachers' and learners' opportunities for negotiated interactions may be limited by their own perceptions and beliefs concerning NfMs as interactional processes which might potentially involve a loss of face. If this is the case, then our investigation signals how perceptual factors can limit the incidence and nature of NfM. Thus, further explorations of the interplay between negotiated interactions and teachers' and learners' perceptions and beliefs would be useful to help design action plans through which NfM can then be promoted in the EFL classroom.

Conclusions and Implications

The primary aim of this study was to explore the incidence and nature of NfMs during uncontrolled interactions in which the teachers and learners practiced speaking in EFL classrooms. The study was motivated by the claims that NfMs are essential for language acquisition (Long, 1996, Pica 1996), yet scarce during classroom interactions (Foster, 1998). The explorations of the NfMs resided in a naturalistic as well as explanatory inquiry. This involved examining NfMs in three on-going English courses without modifying classroom conditions, such as interactions, number of participants, structure and time of lessons, speaking tasks, and teachers' and learners' interactional behaviour.

In response to Foster's (1998) call for studies which investigate NfMs during normal classroom conditions, the findings of this study indicated that the NfMs were varied but generally low in the TLIs and LLIs across proficiency levels. These findings are contrary to previous studies which have suggested that NfMs tend to occur more frequently in NNS interactions (Varonis & Gass, 1985), predominantly in learner- rather than teacher-led interactions (Doughty & Pica, 1986), and in dyads rather than small groups (Palma, 2014). In exploring the nature of the NfMs from a qualitative perspective, the data revealed, first, that the meaning of individual words or expressions were mostly negotiated by the teachers and learners and learner peers. Second, NfMs were mostly triggered by confirmation checks and clarification requests. Third, NfMs to provide negative evidence were scarce in the TLIs and LLIs, but more frequent in the LLIs than the TLIs. Based on the evidence that input tended to be modified through confirmation checks and clarification requests, and the higher scarcity of negative evidence in the TLIs than in the LLIs, we put forward the possibility that the NfMs can be perceived by teachers and learners to involve a potential loss of face. This in turn suggests that teachers' and learners' perceptions and beliefs concerning these interactional adjustments are playing a significant role during their classroom interactions. If we want classroom interactions and tasks that encourage opportunities to negotiate meaning where comprehensible input, comprehensible output and negative evidence are available, it is first necessary that teachers and learners are assisted in becoming aware of the effects of their perceptions and beliefs, and can then align these cognitive factors with practices that are more beneficial for negotiating meaning and thus developing the target language.

Taken together, these findings highlight the need to conduct more research into NfM in order to consolidate and generalize from these findings. Firstly, it would be interesting to explore EFL teachers' and learners' perceptions and beliefs in order to understand their impact, if any, on negotiated interactions. In so doing, we would be in a better position to understand ways through which they can be assisted in promoting NfM during normal interactions in EFL classrooms. Secondly, due to the fact that the interactional data were collected in two sessions over two weeks, further research needs to explore NfMs over a longer period with a view to better understanding the incidence

and nature of NfMs in EFL communication. However, it is hoped that this small-scale study paves the way for future research into NfM in EFL classrooms whose teaching and learning practices were not deliberately modified.

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The Effects of Mnemonic Vocabulary Instruction on Content Vocabulary Learning of Students

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The present article is an investigation about the effects of mnemonic vocabulary teaching to improve content vocabulary learning in EFL classrooms. A major issue with the most of the past studies was that they paid little or no attention to the effects of using mnemonic strategies to improve content vocabulary learning. The purpose of this paper is to investigate how key word mnemonic vocabulary teaching can improve the comprehension and learning of the content vocabulary for the students. To this end, 256 third year senior high school students from 6 senior high schools in Zanjan (Iran) were selected through a multistage cluster random sampling method and based on the Cambridge placement test (2010), 230 students proved to be upper intermediate. A quasi-experimental design was used to determine the effects of a mnemonic vocabulary intervention on content vocabulary learning. In this article there were one control group (A, n=115), and one experimental group (C, n=115) all of which were male and there were selected randomly. This study was done in May 2017, and over four weeks, in two thirty-minute sessions per week, group C received key word mnemonic instruction. In order to test the effects of mnemonic vocabulary teaching on content vocabulary learning, the covariance analysis was employed and the results demonstrated that by eliminating the covariance factor of the pre-test, mnemonic vocabulary instruction improved content vocabulary learning for students. The use of keyword mnemonics as a means to differentiate instruction is an educational result that can assist teachers.

Keywords: mnemonic vocabulary teaching, content vocabulary learning, EFL classroom, quasi-experimental design, mnemonic instruction, covariance factor

One of the most significant current discussions in learning and teaching is the mnemonic vocabulary technique, which plays a key role in learning a second or foreign language because it connects new learning to prior knowledge through the use of visual or acoustic cues (Abdullah, Mokhtar, Mohamed, Rawian & Yahaya, 2017). The utilization of mnemonic dates back to 500 B.C and the word mnemonic (pronounced as “ni-mon-iks”) is derived from the Greek word “Mnemosyne” or “mnemon”, which means mindful,

alluding to the antiquated Greek goddess of memory (Pillai, 2017; Yates, 1966). The initially utilized mnemonic device was an earlier form of the current technique for loci and from that point forward, various devices have been produced (Amiryousefi & Ketabi, 2011; Higbee, 1987; Pillai, 2017). Atkinson (1975), the pioneer on this issue, believes that mnemonics is an instructional strategy, that is, techniques or devices intended to help students enhance their memory of vital information that includes teaching students to connect the new data to the information that they already know. Additionally, he believed that our mind is like the London Underground. By this he implies that information stored in the brain is linked in various ways and mnemonics have been proven to be extremely effective in helping people remember things that are linked to each other. One important factor that affects the ease of L2 vocabulary learning involves committing the link between the word's form and its meaning to memory. Accordingly, the general picture of the mental vocabulary is one in which there are varieties of connections between some strong and weak words that we call the weak words "mnemonics" (Amiryousefi & Ketabi, 2011).

To help language learners tackle this difficulty, several studies about mnemonic strategies have been proposed and used in vocabulary teaching and learning, such as the keyword method, the method of loci, the peg word system, grouping words, words according to semantic relationships, and analyzing the word's structure, studying its affixes and root (Dresler, Fernández, Greicius, Konrad, Müller, Shirer & Wagner, 2017; Hunt &Worthen, 2011). The basic types of mnemonic strategies rely on the use of key words, rhyming words, or acronyms. Teachers may develop mnemonic techniques or have students come up with their own. Also, more general studies on this issue were done by several researchers. Wei (2015) tested the effectiveness of the word part technique in comparison with the keyword method and self-strategy learning on university students and the results showed that the keyword method was inferior to the word part technique and self-strategy learning on the translation test format. Pillai (2017) provided information on how visual mnemonics, physical mnemonics and other mnemonic devices can be used in the ESL classroom to improve vocabulary, boost memory, enhance creativity and show that these mnemonic devices help increase the students' self-esteem as well as their learning and using these strategies to make them an independent learner was an ultimate goal of this study.

It is generally agreed that an important part of learning a foreign language is learning its vocabulary. One cannot read, write, speak or comprehend a language without knowing its words. Vocabulary is the most important influence on reading comprehension and student performance. When readers know many content words, they can read more complex texts and they can compose more sophisticated documents. For decades, the value of vocabulary was evident in content standards and most states or provinces typically had a standard related to vocabulary. Content vocabulary are: a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases enough for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; represent independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. Content words are words that have meaning like nouns, main verbs, adjectives and adverbs and they can be compared to grammatical words, which are structural. Also content words refer to terms, concepts or vocabulary having explicit meaning, and are important to understanding particular content. (Baumann, Kame'enui, & Ash, 2003).

According to Krashen (1993), when students travel, they do not carry grammar books but instead they carry dictionaries. Despite this importance, it seems that from about 1945 to the late 1970s and early 1980s, almost all methods and approaches of language teaching gave vocabulary learning little or no prominence. They saw vocabulary as secondary as something that could simply be left to take care of itself. In other words, little emphasis was placed on the acquisition of vocabulary, a domain largely ignored by most researchers. Since then, however, because of the growing awareness of the importance of vocabulary and vocabulary learning, many studies have tried to deal with different vocabulary learning strategies (e.g. Brown & Perry, 1991; Fan, 2003; GU & Johnson, 1996). Some of these vocabulary learning strategies achieved high levels of popularity at different moments in time but then were replaced by other strategies which were claimed to be based on newer or more appealing ideas and theories. What is important here is that whatever these vocabulary learning strategies are, they have one thing in common: all of them, like any other kinds of strategies, are designed to facilitate the acquisition of new information. According to Nation (1982), "what learners do while studying words is more important than how motivated they are, how hard they work, how much time they spend and the number of repetitions of each word" (p. 25). This simple statement can vividly confirm the importance of applying strategies in learning new vocabulary items.

A wealth of research has been documented about mnemonic vocabulary and content vocabulary learning. So far, however, a major limitation of all these studies is that they have not investigated the effects of using mnemonic strategies to improve content vocabulary learning. This article seeks to fill that gap by focusing on the effectiveness of using mnemonic

vocabulary strategies to content vocabulary learning in the EFL classrooms on 230 third year senior high school students in Zanjan.

The issue of mnemonics (memory improvement techniques) in language learning received some interest in research over 20 years ago but it was not then a modern art. However, in the last 5 years, in particular, the topic has rekindled both theoretical and empirical research interest and yet there is no general agreement about to what extent teaching mnemonic vocabulary would improve students' reading comprehension.

Vocabulary learning was an important component, yet a challenging task, in increasing reading comprehension. This issue requires researchers to undertake investigations in order to find out more about their relationships. An important question overlooked by research is: What kinds of vocabulary learning strategies are more to the benefit of learners who think that the acquisition and recall of vocabulary is their greatest source of problem in learning a foreign/second language? Although an extensive number of studies until now have been conducted to explore this issue, the specific techniques or strategies to teach with are still a matter of considerable controversy. The need for further investigation to fill the remaining gaps in this area remains. To this end, the present paper seeks to investigate the nature of mnemonic vocabulary teaching and its effects on content vocabulary learning by raining the following question, "Does the use of a mnemonic vocabulary instruction improve content vocabulary learning for students?"

Materials and Methods

Since written material supplies one of the significant sources of knowledge, the capability to comprehend the content material of a written text is vital in the pursuit of academic achievement. Regardless of the current sensitivity in writing at a discourse level, applied linguists have paid very little attention to the content vocabulary itself. It was given that everybody had the ability to read different texts, comprehend the content vocabulary, and also understand its meaning by different methods, so why should this area require research? However, writing forms a complex linguistic system, which is significant to all educated language users, and which must be achieved by all capable individuals in both the first language (L1) and second language (L2) (Cook, 2001). The significance of content vocabulary and understanding written texts requires capable individuals to find out more about different vocabularies, which is especially difficult to master in English.

Mnemonics

Mnemonics (mnemonic devices or techniques) are mental aids that assist us in remembering distinctive sorts of items and information; for example, new word forms, names, historical dates, numbers, formulas, and various rules and lists. Regularly, they include recoding or breaking down formal segments of a target (to-be-remembered) item in a manner that makes these segments more familiar, abbreviated, or somehow less demanding to recall (Atkinson, 1975).

Origins, History and Characteristics

The term mnemonic had its origins in the ancient Greek term *mnbmonikós*, meaning "related to or of memory" (Mnemosyne was the goddess of memory in Greek mythology). The ancient Greeks had effectively recognized two different types of memory, one that was inborn and "natural" and another that was "artificial" and prepared by means of mnemonic techniques. The history of keyword strategy goes back to 1975, when Atkinson the pioneer of this subject, used it for teaching Russian vocabulary. Through this experimental study, the strategy expanded to use in schools, particularly to support students with learning disabilities in the 1980s and beyond (Atkinson, 1975). Mnemonic devices can be arranged as "artificial," given the typically arbitrary connection between specific components of a given target item and how they were recoded.

Mnemonic Instruction

Mnemonic instruction links new information to earlier knowledge by utilizing visual or acoustic cues (Kuder, 2017). Many different strategies are utilized in mnemonic instruction, which are designed to enhance students' memory of new information. The keywords, peg words, and letter strategies work with various combinations and thought processes, but all of them can be utilized to manage facts and information. These distinctive methodologies can be found under different names, such as: imagination, association, and location, however they all have a noteworthy impact in recalling and retrieving new information (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2017).

Keyword Method

Keyword strategies make use of concrete, similar sounding words to help students in the recall of new vocabulary words. For instance, for the term Cold War, the word "hold" could be utilized. This new keyword

would be associated to an interactive representation that depicts the definition or concept and the keyword as they relate to one another (Marshak, Mastropieri, & Scruggs, 2011; Piribabadi & Rahmany, 2014). This type of strategy utilizes earlier knowledge to facilitate meaning of unknown words. Keywords are combined with interactive illustrations that make evident the meaning of the new word (Davoudi & Yousefi, 2016; Lin, 2014).

Iranian Studies about Mnemonic Vocabulary Teaching and Content Vocabulary Learning

A wealth of internal studies was done about mnemonic vocabulary teaching and content vocabulary learning, however many queries are as yet unanswered. These examinations have tried to determine the adequacy of a mnemonic strategy to facilitate learning. Davoudi and Taheri (2016) investigated the effect of the keyword method of vocabulary teaching on the learning and long term retention of vocabulary in a normal EFL classroom context. Fifty elementary EFL students were chosen and divided into experimental and control groups. The experimental group received mnemonic keyword vocabulary instruction and the control group received conventional memorization-based instruction of the same vocabulary items. For each group two post-tests were administered, one test immediately after instruction and one two weeks later. Paired and independent samples t-tests were run on the data and the results showed that participants in the keyword group outperformed the memorization group significantly in both their learning and retention of the vocabulary items. The results of the study confirmed the effectiveness of using mental links and images, through the utilization of mnemonic strategies, for vocabulary learning and retention of elementary level EFL learners.

Keysan, Hasani and Zarei (2013) investigated the effects of selected presentation techniques including the keyword method, the peg word method, the loci method, argument mapping, concept mapping and mind mapping on L2 vocabulary comprehension and production. For this purpose, a sample of 151 Iranian female students from a public pre-university school was chosen on the basis of accessibility. They were divided into six groups. Each group was randomly divided into one of the afore-mentioned treatment conditions. After the experimental period, two post-tests in multiple choice and fill-in-the-blanks formats were administered to estimate the participants' vocabulary comprehension and production. Two independent one-way analysis of variance (Anova) procedures were utilized to investigate the acquired data. The results demonstrated that the differences among the impact of the above-mentioned techniques were statistically important in both vocabulary comprehension and production. These findings can have implications for learners, teachers, and material developers.

Azmi, Najmi and Rouyan (2016) examine the effectiveness of using mnemonic techniques in learning English vocabularies by investigating students' perspectives and points of view of the mnemonic technique in teaching and learning English vocabularies. The selected participants were students learning English in a primary school. Their English teachers instructed them about English vocabulary with and without using the mnemonic technique. A questionnaire was designed by the researchers and administered to the students. The result received from the questionnaire demonstrated the effectiveness of using mnemonic techniques in learning English vocabularies as well as the students' response towards the technique.

Azin, Biriya, Sardabi (2015) investigate the effect of inferring the meaning of new words from context on vocabulary retention by Iranian EFL learners. 67 Iranian university students of Tehran Islamic Azad University participated in this study. They were sophomore English translation students who had participated in a reading comprehension course in two different classes. In order to homogenize the participants, all students took a language proficiency test. One group was assigned randomly as the control group (CG) and the other as the experimental group (EG). A pretest was administered to ensure that the new words were unfamiliar to them. During the 6 sessions of treatment, 48 selected items were presented to the control group in the conventional way. The vocabularies were taught through giving clarification, definition, synonyms or antonym, but in the experimental group, the students inferred the meanings from the context and wrote down their inferences. Afterwards, the surprise post-test was administered in order to evaluate both groups' vocabulary retention. After applying the t-test, the results demonstrated that the experimental group did much better on the final test.

Ashoori and Yazdani Moghadam (2015) attempted to find out the effectiveness of mnemonic devices as a memory strategy on the learners' vocabulary retention. For this purpose, 60 Iranian EFL acquirers at pre-intermediate level of language proficiency were chosen and participated in this study. There was no limitation regarding their age. In order to homogenize the participants, the researcher implemented Preliminary English Test (PET) as a pretest. The participants were assigned into two groups of 30, experimental and control. Eighty pre-selected words through mnemonic devices were used for the experimental group, while the same vocabularies were taught to the control group through traditional vocabulary instruction.

To answer the first research question, the mean

scores of both experimental and control groups on the immediate post-test were compared. The result showed that mnemonic devices are more influential than the traditional methods. To answer the second research question, the researcher analyzed the mean scores of the experimental group on the immediate and the delayed post-tests. The result demonstrated that learners' delayed recognition of second language vocabulary is not influenced by the passage of time, implying that words learned via mnemonics instruction were retrieved effectively both in the process of immediate and delayed retention. This study showed that memory strategies like mnemonics are of great application and importance in the process of short and long term retention of EFL learners. Thus, mnemonic devices should be given prime attention by both EFL material developers and instructors as a potentially efficient technique for vocabulary instruction, acquisition, and long term retention in foreign language improvement.

Aidinlou and Mahalle (2013), aimed to study the effects of G5 mnemonic technique on Iranian English language learners' retention of vocabulary items. To do so, 40 Iranian English language learners at the intermediate level were randomly chosen for the study. They were randomly divided into one experimental group and one control group. In order to homogenize the learners, a pre-test was administered and a same test was repeated as post-test after 9 weeks. Both groups were taught about 360 vocabulary items. These vocabulary items were instructed with mnemonic technique (G5) to the experimental group while the control group did not receive any technique. Detailed analysis demonstrated that, there was a significant contrast between experimental and control groups in retention of vocabulary items.

As demonstrated above, most of the previous studies investigated the impact of mnemonic strategies instruction on vocabulary achievement and retention, on the immediate and delayed information retrieval of vocabulary learning, vocabulary improvement, on the learning and long term retention of vocabulary. They also investigated the effect of direct vocabulary learning strategies on reading comprehension skill for university students, and examined two different methods of vocabulary learning, namely the keyword method and context method to investigate their possible effects on vocabulary knowledge, retention, pronunciation and attitudes, to find out the effectiveness of mnemonic devices as a memory strategy on the learners' and retention of vocabulary over the long term. They did all of these investigations on EFL elementary learners, in a normal EFL classroom context, on low-intermediate Iranian EFL learners and on fifth grade primary school students. By contrast, this study investigates the effects of mnemonic and direct vocabulary teaching on the content materials learning of the upper intermediate high school students.

International Studies about Mnemonic Vocabulary Teaching and Content Vocabulary Learning

Abdullah, Mokhtar, Mohammad, Rawian and Yahaya (2017) identify types of learners based on their VLS preferences and discuss the impact of their preferences on the acquisition of English vocabulary. Seven vocabulary learning strategies – namely metacognitive regulation, guessing strategies, dictionary strategies, note-taking strategies, rehearsal strategies, encoding strategies, and activation strategies – were examined. 360 first- and second-year students of University Technology MARA, Perlis, from five degree programmes participated in the study. A vocabulary learning questionnaire developed by Gu and Johnson (1996) was applied to collect the data. Before using the questionnaire, it was first translated into the Malay language and pilot-tested. Results demonstrated that the participants preferred guessing and dictionary strategies the most; the other five strategies were preferred less.

Philips (2016) examined the effects of picture word pairing and semantic mapping strategies on the vocabulary understanding of second grade students. Fourteen second grade students were provided with an instructor-created pre-test on vocabulary words found in their story for the week. At that point, the instructor improved the usual vocabulary guideline with two visual strategies, picture word pairing and semantic mapping strategies. Lastly, they were given a post-test to assess how much they had improved. Results showed that the intervention enhanced all participants' scores by 15%. Eight out of fourteen had a score of over 80% on the post-test, suggesting that the visual strategies helped the participants to learn vocabulary.

Basibek and Saricoban (2012) investigated the comparison of the impact of utilizing mnemonics technique by preparing some keywords for students and of the context method on the retention of the vocabulary items. For the purpose of this study, 84 upper-intermediate English students from the Electrical and Electronics Engineering Department at Selcuk University participated in the experiments. The students were divided into two groups to form the experimental and the control groups. Twenty target vocabulary items were utilized in the study. Each group was given a pre-test before the introduction of the new words. The vocabulary items were instructed with mnemonics technique for the experimental group and the control group was introduced with the context method. Immediate recall and recognition tests were used for each group after the treatment. In order to measure long-term retention, delayed recall and

recognition tests were given to the groups five weeks after the immediate tests. To analyze the distinctions between the mnemonics technique and context method, t-test calculations were used with the results of the pre-tests, immediate and delayed tests. As indicated by the results, the mnemonics technique is more efficient than the context method in immediate and delayed recall and recognition of the vocabulary. Thirteen first year Spanish students enrolled in a rural Midwest school took part in the study.

Bell (2008) set out to determine if the implementation of a specific mnemonic technique would increase foreign language vocabulary recall. A keyword method was implemented in this study as a mnemonic technique. Students' foreign language recall data was analyzed from archival assessments and compared to post-assessments following the implementation of the keyword method. Results showed that students demonstrated an increase in vocabulary recall, particularly when the keyword and the foreign language word were imagined interacting together.

Condus, Marshall and Miller (1986) investigated the effects of the keyword mnemonic strategy on vocabulary acquisition and maintenance by learning disabled children. Sixty-four 12-year-old students identified as learning disabled poor readers were chosen to participate in this study designed to test the efficacy of using an imposed keyword strategy to teach 50 word meanings. Results of the three-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) demonstrated that keyword condition students essentially outperformed students assigned to all other conditions.

Most of the previous studies used mnemonics for vocabulary understanding by different mnemonic strategies on the motivation of the learners and in order to teach different words of different fields and to see the impact of mnemonic devices on attainment and recall in basic knowledge acquisition in different fields like nursing. However, there is not much focus on how keyword mnemonic instruction can improve reading comprehension of upper intermediate students and understanding the content materials. Our study explored teachers' and students' attitudes and ideas about using direct or mnemonic vocabulary teaching, while previous studies have been more focused on students' results and di not teach about mnemonic or direct vocabulary teaching.

Participants

The participants of this study were 230 third year senior high school students in Zanjan. Zanjan province has 8 cities, with Zanjan city chosen for this. Zanjan city has 2 districts, with district two was chosen randomly. In district 2 there were 433 schools that among them senior high schools were randomly chosen. There were 47 senior high schools in district two, 24 of them were for boys and among them, 8 were non-profit. The third level students of 6 senior high schools included: Sama, Shams, Sourosh, kharazmi, Taha and Daneshmand junior high schools were randomly chosen. There were 3 third year classes in each of them and two classes of each were randomly chosen for this study.

The statistical population of this study was 1650 third year junior high school students in the second district in Zanjan. According to Cochron's formula, 245 participants were selected and, in order to increase the accuracy of the study and to have homogeneous groups, 10% or 10 more participants were added for a total of 256 students participating in this study. Their ages ranged from 15 to 16, and all were male students. The type of sampling in this study was multistage cluster random sampling. Because of some restrictions due to the rules of the Zanjan Department of Education, and because the researchers needed to have related licenses for performing their research in different schools of Zanjan city, the researchers could only gain the related licenses for male students.

In order to guarantee the homogeneity of the participants of this study and to fulfill the objectives of the study, a Cambridge placement test (2010) by Cambridge University Press was distributed among all the students to determine their level of proficiency. The aim was to select those students with the upper intermediate level of proficiency. Out of 256 students, 230 students were proved to be upper intermediate. After that, the Student's Consent Form was distributed among students in order to make them familiar with the processes of the study. Finally, in order to motivate the students to participate in this study, a notebook was provided to them as a gift.

Pilot Study

The Cold War Vocabulary Pre- and Post- Assessment and Civil Rights Vocabulary Pre- and Post-Assessment were piloted on 30 students with similar educational backgrounds in order to obtain the reliability for the test. The test-retest reliability of these with the one-week interval was .82 which showed an acceptable reliability value, because tests that have scores with a reliability of .80 or higher are considered sufficiently reliable for most investigative purposes (Gay, 1992, as cited in Chen, 2006).

Instruments

1. Cambridge placement test (2010) by Cambridge University Press
2. Cold War Vocabulary Pre- and Post- Assessment

3. Civil Rights Vocabulary Pre- and Post-Assessment

Cambridge Placement Test

To have a homogeneous group of participants, to neutralize any effect of proficiency level on participants' performance, and to fulfill the objectives of the study, a Cambridge placement test (2010) by Cambridge University Press was distributed among all the student participants. The aim was to select those students with an upper intermediate level of proficiency.

Vocabulary Tests

Vocabulary pre-tests, post-tests, and corresponding answer keys were developed by the researcher and the validity and reliability were checked by another researcher with expertise in mnemonics research in Nutt's investigation (2015). These tests were very simple in format. Content words that have been historically difficult for students were chosen by the teachers, in collaboration with the researcher. Twenty words that were to be taught via the mnemonics or traditional vocabulary instruction were included in the vocabulary pre-assessment. This test was in a chart format with the vocabulary word on the left and three blank columns to the right of the word. The first column was labeled, "this means…" The second column was labeled, "I think it means (or is)…" The third column was labeled, "I don't have a clue." Students were instructed to fill in the definitions of the words they knew in the first column. If they thought they knew the definition, but were unsure, they were instructed to fill in the second column. If they did not know the definition, they were instructed to put a check mark in the third column. The answers were considered to be complete and correct if they matched the full answer on the answer key. Those correct answers were awarded one point. A partially correct definition was awarded a half-point. Partial credit was given if enough information was included in the answer so that it could be inferred back to the vocabulary word. Incorrect or blank answers were not awarded any points. The vocabulary post-test was identical to the pre-test.

Procedure

In this study, two classes from each of the six senior high schools (Shams, Sorosh, Kharazmi, Taha, Daneshmand and Sama) were chosen and assigned randomly into two groups, one control group (A) and one experimental group (C). The English teachers of these six senior high schools assisted the researchers in this study and the researchers showed the teaching procedures of mnemonic method for this study. The teaching materials covered during this intervention was the Cold War era and the Civil Rights movement vocabularies that were validated by Nutt (2015). Then, with the help of the English teachers and the researchers, sessions were held over four weeks, meeting every week in two thirty-minute sessions, with students in experimental group C receiving the key word mnemonic instruction (n=115) and how to use this technique in reading. For all of the classes, the same pre-tests were used to inform and guide the instruction, focusing on the areas of weakness demonstrated by the students on the assessment. After the students took the pre-tests, results were used to guide content instruction, through the use of PowerPoint slides for all of the experimental groups and they participated in whole group instruction.

Instructional Procedure: Control Group

During this four-week study, control group A did not receive treatment by the researchers and was then used as a benchmark to measure the other tested subjects' treatment. Like other participants of this study, they were provided with pre- post tests and the results were used to compare the participants of groups A and C and to examine the effects of using key word and direct method instruction on content vocabulary learning.

Instructional Procedure: Experimental Group (Key Word Mnemonic Instruction).

In experimental group C, the EFL teachers of these classes with the help of the researchers and key word mnemonic instruction introduced vocabulary words each session. In key word mnemonic instruction, some cards were presented as a PowerPoint presentation with the teacher introducing each vocabulary word along with the illustration that connected pictorial images of concrete keywords with an action that represented the vocabulary word's definition (Fontana, Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2007). After that, these cards were printed and given to the students for further studies. Students were directed to take notes in their notebooks, and to ask questions or pose comments. Before the initial mnemonic strategy instruction, at the beginning of class, teachers provided content information with a discussion of material covered previously. The focus of the mnemonic vocabulary instruction was students learning key words in order to understand and learn about the meanings of the words in a reading.

Results

"Does the use of a mnemonic vocabulary instruction improve content vocabulary learning for students?" To address this question, covariance analysis was used to identify possible correlations between students' performance across the vocabulary pre-test and post-test. The result of covariance analysis was recorded in Table 1.

Normality of the Scores

One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests were conducted in order to check the normal distribution of the data. The results are demonstrated in Tables 2 and 3.

Considering the Sig values obtained in Tables 2 and 3, all of which were more than 0.05, H0 that was the normality of the variables in the pre and post-test scores being studied at the significance level of 0.05 was accepted.

Homogeneity of the Variances

In this study, Levene's test was an inferential statistic used to assess the equality of variances for a variable calculated for two or more groups. Some common statistical procedures assume that variances of the populations from which different samples were drawn are equal. In this research, the Levene test was used to check the homogeneity of the variances and the results were presented in Tables 4 and 5.

Considering the Sig values obtained in Tables 4 and 5, all of which were more than 0.05, the H0

Table 1
Descriptive statistics of the comprehension of content materials in control and experimental groups on pre and post –tests

Descriptive Statistics						
Group		**N**	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Control	Pre.V	115	.00	5.00	.6391	.80445
	Post.V	115	.00	2.50	.7739	.71710
	Valid N (listwise)	115				
Experiment	Pre.V	115	.00	5.00	.6826	.92795
	Post.V	115	10.00	18.50	15.0978	1.97676
	Valid N (listwise)	115				

Table 2
The normality of the pre-tests scores in control and experimental groups

Variables	**Sig**	**Decision**	**Results**
Content vocabulary learning scores of control group	Acceptance of H0	0.20	Distribution is normal
Content vocabulary learning scores of experimental group	Acceptance of H0	0.20	Distribution is normal

Table 3
The normality of the post-tests scores in control and experimental groups

Variables	**Sig**	**Decision**	**Results**
Content vocabulary learning scores of control group	Acceptance of H0	0.20	Distribution is normal
Content vocabulary learning scores of experimental group	Acceptance of H0	0.20	Distribution is normal

Table 4
Homogeneity of variance between control and experimental groups in pre-test

Variables	**Sig**	**Decision**	**Results**
Content vocabulary learning scores	0.705	Acceptance of H0	Acceptance of the homogeneity of variances

Table 5
Homogeneity of variance between control and experimental groups in post-test

Variables	**Sig**	**Decision**	**Results**
Content vocabulary learning scores	0.13	Acceptance of H0	Acceptance of the homogeneity of variances

that was about homogeneity of the variances at the significance level of 0.05 was accepted and therefore the assumption of the homogeneity of the variances of the subjects in the pre and post-tests scores was accepted with the 0.05 level of error.

Covariance Running before Beginning the Study

This presupposition was followed and the pre-test has been performed before the implementation of the independent variable (mnemonic vocabulary instruction).

Homogeneity of the Regression Slope

To analyze the homogeneity of regression slope, the F value was calculated between covariance and independent variables the results, which are presented in Table 6, show that this index was significant (Sig> 0.05).

Considering the Sig values obtained in Table 6, all of which are more than 0.05, H0 assumed regression line slope homogeneity between covariance and independent variable was accepted at the significance level of 0.05.

The Linearity of the Correlation of Covariance Variable and Independent Variable

In order to analyze the linearity of the correlation of the covariance variable and independent variable, the F value of the covariance variable was calculated and the results, which are presented in Table 7, show that this index was significant (Sig> 0.05).

Considering the Sig values obtained in Table 7, all of which were less than 0.05, the H1, namely the assumption of linearity of the correlation between covariance and independent variable, was accepted at the significance level of 0.05.

Hypothesis

For data analysis of the hypothesis, as mentioned before, covariance analysis was used. The necessary assumptions for analysis of covariance were investigated and these assumptions were confirmed. The result of covariance analysis was demonstrated in Table 8.

As shown in Table 8, the value of F in covariance analysis for meaningful comprehension of comprehension scores was significant and the H0 was rejected. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference between the mean of two groups (control group and experimental group) in the post-test after the adjustment of the pre-test scores. According to the Table 1, the mean of control group in the pre-test was 0.64 and in the post test was 0.77, while

Table 6
Regression slope homogeneity test between covariance and independent variable

Variables	Sig	F test statistics	Results
Content vocabulary learning scores	0.73	0.24	Acceptance of the regression slope homogeneity

Table 7
The test of linearity of the correlation of covariance and independent variable

Variables	Sig	F test statistics	Results
Content vocabulary learning scores in pre-test	0.13	Acceptance of H0	Acceptance of the homogeneity of variances

Table 8
The test of linearity of the correlation of covariance and independent variable

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: Post.V					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	11856.936[a]	2	5928.468	3026.358	.000
Intercept	8270.019	1	8270.019	4221.670	.000
Pre.V	59.403	1	59.403	30.324	.000
Group	11748.047	1	11748.047	5997.130	.000
Error	444.680	227	1.959		
Total	26786.563	230			
Corrected Total	12301.617	229			

[a]. R Squared = .964 (Adjusted R Squared = .964)

the mean of experimental group in the pre-test was 0.68 and in the post-test was 15.10. Considering the significant difference between the post-test scores in the control and experimental groups, it was concluded that by eliminating the covariance factor of the pre-test, mnemonic vocabulary instruction improves the content vocabulary learning of the students.

Discussion

The research question of this paper was: "Does the use of a mnemonic vocabulary instruction at the upper intermediate level improve content vocabulary learning for students?" In the current study, students in experimental group C received the key word mnemonic instruction (n=115) and how to use this technique in reading. Students in comparison to the control group demonstrated gains on all measures from pre-test to post-test and all students demonstrated improvements, which was the overarching goal of this study. The overall findings determined that there are significant differences in student performance for condition on the pre- and post-tests on both the Cold War and Civil Rights Vocabulary tests.

Content words, or lexical words, are words that carry the content or the meaning of a sentence. In linguistics, content words are words that name objects of reality and their qualities. They signify actual living things, family members, natural phenomena, common, characteristics, etc. They consist mostly of nouns, lexical verbs and adjectives, but certain adverbs can also be content words. Mnemonic vocabulary strategies include keyword tactics that utilize concrete, phonemically similar words to recall new vocabulary words. This paper investigated the effects of mnemonic vocabulary instruction on content vocabulary learning of students.

The methods in the previous papers compared to the methods used here may explain some of the differences in outcomes. Previous mnemonic vocabulary interventions within secondary classrooms were primarily delivered in a one-to-one setting, or small group, while the current paper delivered mnemonic vocabulary instruction among a wide range of students. For example, in the 2007 study by Fontana, Scruggs and Mastropieri, and the 2011 investigation by Marshak and colleagues, the researcher delivered instruction of a researcher developed intervention while in this paper the researchers and the teachers of the classes delivered the instruction which was derived from Nutt's (2015) research and they did not show the effects of mnemonic vocabulary teaching on content vocabulary learning of the third year students.

In another study, Mastropieri, Scruggs, and Fulk (1990) delivered individualized instruction to twenty-five students in the sixth grade in a two-group design study. The investigation demonstrated the use of keyword images that stratified students by grade level, and randomly assigned them to either the treatment or control condition. The results showed that students in the treatment groups significantly outperformed the students in the control groups. However, the current study demonstrated the use of keyword mnemonic vocabulary in order to understand and learn the content vocabulary.

In another study in the areas of vocabulary development and content knowledge, Seifer and Espin (2012) conducted a research utilizing a within-subjects design. The researchers examined the effects of text reading, vocabulary learning, and combined approaches to instruction. The vocabulary learning intervention was intended to enhance information of text-specific terms used in a content curriculum class. Because of this direct instruction, when students received instruction that focused on vocabulary learning, performed better on the vocabulary knowledge measures. The results of our research demonstrate that students in comparison to the control group demonstrated a gain on all measures and the effectiveness of mnemonic vocabulary instruction over the direct vocabulary instruction, which the previous studies did not show.

Previous investigations in vocabulary advancement and content vocabulary learning did not yield statistically critical results but the current paper demonstrates the existence of a correlation between mnemonic vocabulary instruction and improvement of content vocabulary learning for students. The practical significance of this research question was to use mnemonic vocabulary technique as a way to improve content vocabulary learning for students in the third level of high school, and to see if it can be used for different levels in different academic places.

Conclusion

This paper presents an investigation about the effects of using mnemonic vocabulary instruction on content vocabulary learning and shows that the use of a key word mnemonic vocabulary instruction improved content vocabulary learning for third year senior high school students who were very satisfied to use this technique for learning new content vocabulary. Students also showed greater gains on assessments during the mnemonic condition. More importantly, mnemonic vocabulary instruction increased student engagement and motivation toward new vocabularies. Our research adds to the body of literature on the

use of mnemonics vocabulary strategy instruction and its effects on content vocabulary learning within a wide range of high school students in classrooms. While a large amount of research has been done using mnemonics strategies over the past forty years, further inquiry into the efficacy of this type of intervention in a whole group setting may be valuable. The use of keyword mnemonics has helped different groups of students regardless of whether or not they have a disability. Therefore, mnemonic strategies can be used with all students in inclusive settings in order to learn content information. Teachers require creative strategies they can use in class to help students digest and learn large amounts of content information. The use of mnemonic vocabulary strategies was an excellent tool for delivering content information in a manner accessible to all students.

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Appendix A

Cold War Mnemonic Teacher Script

Iron Curtain

T: The Iron Curtain was the term used to describe the political and economic separation between communist and free countries. What is the Iron Curtain?
SR: The Iron Curtain is…
T: The keyword for Iron Curtain is a curtain. What is the keyword for Iron Curtain?
SR: The keyword…
T: To remember what the Iron Curtain is, think of the keyword curtain and the strategy illustration of curtains. When I ask what Iron Curtain means, think of the keyword and what is happening in the picture.
What is the Iron Curtain?
SR: The Iron Curtain is…
T: Good! What is the keyword for Iron Curtain?
SR: The keyword…
T: What is the picture strategy?
SR: The picture…
T: What is the Iron Curtain?
SR: …
T: Great!
T: What is the Iron Curtain?

Appendix B

Civil Rights Mnemonic Teacher Script

Integrate

T: Integrate means to end separation of races that any person can go “into” a school, a restaurant, a bus, a movie theatre. Integrate = desegregate. What does integrate mean?
SR: Integrate means…
T: The keyword for integrate is “into”. What is the keyword for integrate?
SR: The keyword…
T: To remember what integrate means, think of the keyword “into” and the strategy illustration of the children from different races holding hands. When I ask what integrate means, think of the keyword and what is happening in the picture.
What does integrate mean?
SR: Integrate means…
T: Good! What is the keyword for integrate?
SR: The keyword…
T: What is the picture strategy?
SR: The picture…
T: What does integrate mean?
SR: …
T: Great!
T: What does integrate mean?

Appendix C

Cold War Vocabulary Pre- and Post-Assessment

Vocabulary Word	1- This means…	2- I think it means	3- Not a clue
Iron Curtain			
Containment			
Cold War			
Harry S. Truman			
Fair Deal			
Dwight D. Eisenhower			
George C. Marshall			
Desegregate			
Cease Fire			
Demilitarized Zone			
Senator Joe McCarthy			
Arms Race			
Geneva Summit			
Taft-Hartley Act			
Joseph Stalin			
Berlin Airlift			
Communism			
Berlin Wall			
NATO			
USSR			

Name: _____ Date: _____ School: _____

Directions:

- In the chart above, you will find names and vocabulary that are essential for the unit of study.
- Write your answer in the first box.
- If you are not sure, write what you think the answer is in the second box. If you do not know, put a check mark in the last box.

Appendix D

Civil Right Vocabulary Pre- and Post-Assessment

Vocabulary Word	This means…	I think it means	3- Not a clue
Freedom Riders			
Boycott			
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)			
Thurgood Marshall			
Brown vs. Board of Education-Topeka, Kansas			
Rosa Parks			
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.			
Integrate			
Civil disobedience			
Lyndon B. Johnson			
Great Society			
Civil Rights Act of 1964			
Malcolm X			
Feminist			
Equal Rights Amendment			
Sandra Day O'Connor			
Cesar Chavez			
Montgomery Bus Boycott			
Sit-in			
diverse			

Name: _____ Date: _____ School: _____

Directions:

- In the chart above, you will find names and vocabulary that are essential for the unit of study.
- Write your answer in the first box.
- If you are not sure, write what you think the answer is in the second box. If you do not know, put a check mark in the last box.

Appendix E

Cambridge Placement Test (2010)
Proficiency Test

1) Where _____ from?
I'm from Russia.
A) you are B) you C) are you

2) We have _____ house in Moscow.
A) any B) a C) an

3) I have two _____ , a boy and a girl.
A) sons B) daughters C) children

4) I work in a_____ . I'm a doctor.
A) hospital B) hotel C) supermarket

5) This is my brother. _____ name's Paul.
A) Her B) His C) He's

6) _____ five people in my family.
A) They are B) There is C) There are

7) I get up _____7 o'clock in the morning.
A) for B) at C) in

8) I like apples, but I_____ bananas.
A) don't like B) like C) do like

9) Excuse me, _____ speak French?
A) do you B) you do C) you

10) How much are _____ shoes?
A) this B) these C) that

11) Where are my glasses?
They're_____ the table.
A) at B) on C) in

12) My sister_____ tennis very well.
A) plays B) play C) playing

13) I usually go to work_____ train.
A) on B) with C) by

14) I don't see my parents very often_____ they live in South Africa.
A) so B) but C) because

15) Rosie stayed_____ home yesterday afternoon.
A) in B) at C) to

16) Last night I_____ to the cinema.
A) went B) did go C) was

17) The ___ is quite expensive but the food there is excellent.
A) film B) restaurant C) book

18) Do you want to listen to music or_____ TV?
A) see B) look C) watch

19) _____ were you at the weekend?
I was in Scotland.
A) When B) Where C) What

20) _____you have a good time at the party?
Yes, it was fun.
A) Did B) Were C) Had

21) Are you_____ English teacher?
A) Maria B) Marias' C) Maria's

22) Bob will meet _____at the airport.
A) us B) we C) our

23) I'm going to a concert tonight. _____ you like to come?
A) Do B) Are C) Would

24) _____ use your dictionary? Sure. Here you are.
A) Could I B) Could you C) Do I

25) I like this apartment but the _____ is too expensive for me.
A) money B) rent C) cost

26) Excuse me, how do I_____ to the bus station?
A) come B) get C) arrive

27) Do you sell stamps?
Yes, we do. How_____ do you want?
A) any B) many C) much

28) Sorry I'm so late. That's_____ .
A) OK B) great C) right

29) I'd like _____milk in my coffee, please.
A) some B) any C) a

30) _____ a bus stop near my flat.
A) It's B) Here's C) There's

31) Is this a good time to talk? Sorry, no. I_____ dinner.
A) cook B) am cooking C) cooking

32) I think cycling is more dangerous_____ driving.
A) as B) like C) than

33) We _____ going to the theatre next Saturday.
A) will B) do C) are

34) _____ meet for coffee some time soon.
A) Let's B) Do you C) Shall they

35) Kamal has got a holiday home near _____sea.
A) a B) the C) some

36) If you've got a headache, you_____ go home.
A) should B) did C) had

37) _____ ever been to New York?
A) Have you B) Are you C) Did you

38) I only get about five hours' sleep a night.
That's not_____ .
A) enough B) lot C) too much

39) Did Amina finish the report?
No. She_____ it tomorrow.
A) finishes B) is going to finish C) finished

40) Paula _____ loves working with children.
A) very B) really C) much

41) Is Ottawa the capital of Canada?
I think_____ .
A) is B) yes C) so D) right

42) We never_____ a television when I was a child.
A) have had B) hadn't C) had D) didn't have

43) We paid the restaurant bill _____ credit card.
A) to B) with C) on D) by

44) The last time I_____ Joanna was in Paris.
A) have seen B) saw C) see D) was seeing

45) If you_____ money from a friend, you should always pay it back promptly.
A) borrow B) earn C) spend D) lend

46) Can I make myself a cup of coffee? Of course. You_____ to ask.
A) haven't B) mustn't C) needn't D) don't have

47) I_____ a lot of sport in my free time.
A) do B) practise C) make D) exercise

48) _____ anywhere interesting recently?
A) Do you go B) Have you been C) Are you going D) Will you go

49) It's Walter's birthday on Friday. He_____ be 30, I think.
A) should B) can C) will D) shall

50) Learning the piano isn't as difficult _____learning the violin.
A) like B) so C) than D) as

51) If the weather_____ bad tomorrow, we can go to a museum.
A) will be B) was C) is D) would be

52) About a billion cans of Coca-Cola_____ drunk around the world every day.
A) is B) are C) was D) were

53) My mum's not very well. Oh, _____.
A) it doesn't matter B) I do apologize C) sorry to hear that
D) not bad, thanks.

54) Hans isn't here. He_____ to see his grandmother. He'll be back tomorrow.
A) has gone B) had been C) has been D) had gone

55) Would you mind changing my appointment? _____ time on Friday is fine.
A) Next B) All the C) Every D) Any

56) When I was a child, I_____ climb the wall and jump into our neighbors' garden.
A) would B) did C) have D) used

57) Have you finished_____ the wall yet?
A) paint B) to paint C) painting D) painted

58) Can you help me? I've tried_____ hotel in the city and can't find a room.
A) many B) any C) every D) all

59) Lena used to find work boring_____ she became a nurse.
A) unless B) until C) if D) since

60) If I_____closer to my office, I could walk to work.
A) lived B) would live C) had lived D) live

61) I_____ outside the cinema when suddenly a police car arrived.
A) stood B) was standing C) have stood D) am standing

62) Shall we go to The Riceboat for dinner? It_____ be fully booked. They're sometimes busy on a Monday.
A) will B) may C) can D) must

63) We've_____ come back from a trip to India. It was amazing.
A) already B) yet C) just D) only

64) I've got to be at work in five minutes. Don't worry, I_____ you a lift if you want.
A) give B) am giving C) 'll give D) 'm going to give

65) My doctor advised me _____more exercise.
A) take B) taking C) having taken D) to take

66) I couldn't_____ up with the noise in the city, so we moved to the countryside.
A) put B) live C) set D) take

67) There's no name on this dictionary. It_____ be mine then. Mine's got my name on the front.
A) might not B) mustn't C) won't D) can't

68) Julia_____ married since she was 20.
A) is B) was C) has been D) is being

69) Don't worry if I _____late tonight. I'm going to the gym after work.
A) am B) will be C) would be D) was

70) I've got a terrible headache, and it won't go away.
Have you tried _____some aspirin?
A) to take B) take C) took D) taking

71) Boxing is a sport_____ requires a lot of speed and fitness.
A) it B) that C) what D) where

72) Jon_____ working on this project for a couple of months so he hasn't made much progress yet.
A) is only B) has only been C) was only D) had only been

73) I was wondering_____ I could ask you some questions.
Sure, go ahead.
A) what B) if C) that D) how

74) What clothes should I pack for a trip to Boston?
Well, it depends_____ the time of year that you go.
A) on B) with C) up D) to

75) I've finished this salad and I'm still hungry. I_____ ordered something more filling.
A) must have B) would have C) should have D) may have

76) Do you ever ask your neighbours to do favours _____ you?
A) for B) to C) with D) about

77) Some married couples seem to get more_____ over time.
A) alike B) same C) like D) equal

78) I don't know how much this card costs. The price label's ___off.
A) gone B) taken C) done D) come

79) Ben got the job because he_____ a very good impression at his interview.
A) made B) did C) put D) took

80) Salsa music always _____me of my trip to Cuba.
A) remembers B) realizes C) recognizes D) reminds

81) I_____ to be picking Tom up at the station but I've lost my keys.
A) am supposed B) am requested C) am intended D) am obliged

82) How about going to Colors nightclub? There's no_____ I'm going there. It's awful!
A) hope B) way C) time D) opportunity

83) By the age of 18, I_____ not to go to university.
A) had decided B) decided C) have decided D) was deciding

84) I'm afraid your car_____repaired before next week.
A) hasn't been B) wasn't C) wouldn't be D) can't be

85) The amount of organically grown food on sale has_____ enormously in recent years.
A) raised B) lifted C) increased D) built

86) Can you believe it? A woman has been _____for hacking into the computer of her online virtual husband.
A) accused B) suspended C) arrested D) suspected

87) You may borrow my laptop_____ you promise to look after it.
A) unless B) in case C) as long as D) although

88) It's a huge painting. It_____ taken ages to complete.
A) must have B) can't have C) should have D) won't have

89) Pierre tends to put_____ dealing with problems, rather than dealing with them immediately.
A) down B) off C) over D) away

90) If the taxi hadn't stopped for us, we_____ standing in the rain.
A) were still B) would still be C) are still D) will still be

91) My mother's Italian, so _____the language has been quite easy for me.
A) to learn B) learn C) having learned D) learning

92) _____I had the talent, I still wouldn't want to be a movie star.
A) In case B) Even if C) Provided that D) However much

93) The factory workers threatened_____ on strike if they didn't get a pay rise.
A) going B) to go C) that they go D) to have gone

94) I was about to go to sleep when it_____ to me where the missing keys might be.
A) remembered B) happened C) appeared D) occurred

95) There's going to be a new department at work. They've asked me to _____it up.
A) take B) set C) put D) bring

96) If the film is a_____ success, the director will get most of the credit.
A) big B) high C) large D) good

97) By the end of today's seminar I will _____to each of you individually.
A) speak B) have spoken C) be speaking D) have been speaking

98) This is a photo of my little sister _____ice cream on the beach.
A) eat B) eating C) was eating D) having eaten

99) Our students take their responsibilities very_____ .
A) considerably B) thoroughly C) seriously D) strongly

100 Pia was _____delighted with the birthday present.
A) very B) completely C) fairly D) absolutely

101) People were amazed that the burglary took place in _____ daylight.
A) wide B) broad C) large D) open

102) She invested a lot of time_____ researching the most appropriate university course.
A) to B) for C) with D) in

103) The police claimed that they acted in self-_____ .
A) interest B) confidence C) defense D) discipline

104) I_____ remember putting my briefcase down on that shelf.
A) deeply B) entirely C) clearly D) strongly

105) He turned_____ to be considerably older than I had imagined.
A) over B) up C) out D) round

106) The windows in this house are in urgent _____of replacement.
A) need B) help C) want D) demand

107) Speed cameras_____ shown to reduce accidents.
A) have B) were being C) have been D) are being

108) Life is a _____deal easier for immigrants who can speak the local language.
A) far B) huge C) big D) great

109) The experiment_____ testing people's responses before and after drinking coffee.
A) contained B) incorporated C) involved D) consisted

110) We may be a bit late. We're_____ in a traffic jam.
A) buried B) stuck C) blocked D) surrounded

111) Having _____his driving test several times, Paul finally passed at the fourth attempt.
A) taken B) made C) had D) attended

112) Gospel music has been a major influence _____other musical styles, especially soul.
A) with B) to C) about D) on

113) Maintaining an accurate balance sheet is essential, _____ business you're in.
A) however B) wherever C) whatever D) whenever

114) It's _____likely that this novel will win a literary prize.
A) totally B) deeply C) strongly D) highly

115) It's no _____for me to get Brad's phone number – I'll be seeing him tonight.
A) point B) wonder C) secret D) problem

116) I'd lived in Australia, so I was used to _____on the left side of the road.
A) driving B) drive C) having driven D) drove

117) I don't think the colours in Julia's outfit_____ together.
A) fit B) suit C) match D) go

118) Very rarely_____ here in July.
A) it rains B) does it rain C) is it raining D) it is raining

119) I prefer to buy CDs_____ download music from my computer.
A) in contrast to B) as opposed to C) rather than D) in comparison to

120) The number of turtles on the island_____ by 70% over the last decade.
A) has declined B) has been declining C) has been declined D) is declining

English Unlimited Placement test

Written Test Key

Starter	Elementary	Pre-int.	Intermediate	Upper Int.	Advanced
1 C	21 C	41 C	61 B	81 A	101 B
2 B	22 A	42 C	62 B	82 B	102 D
3 C	23 C	43 D	63 C	83 A	103 C
4 A	24 A	44 B	64 C	84 D	104 C
5 B	25 B	45 A	65 D	85 C	105 C
6 C	26 B	46 D	66 A	86 C	106 A
7 B	27 B	47 A	67 D	87 C	107 c
8 A	28 A	48 B	68 C	88 A	108 D
9 A	29 A	49 C	69 A	89 B	109 C
10 B	30 C	50 D	70 D	90 B	110 B
11 B	31 B	51 C	71 B	91 D	111 A
12 A	32 C	52 B	72 B	92 B	112 D
13 C	33 C	53 C	73 B	93 B	113 C
14 C	34 A	54 A	74 A	94 D	114 D
15 B	35 B	55 D	75 C	95 B	115 D
16 A	36 A	56 A	76 A	96 A	116 A
17 B	37 A	57 C	77 A	97 B	117 D
18 C	38 A	58 C	78 D	98 B	118 B
19 B	39 B	59 B	79 A	99 C	119 C
20 A	40 B	60 A	80 D	100 D	120 A

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The Validation Process in the IELTS Reading Component: Reading Requirements for Preparing International Students

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Although IELTS is coordinated under a framework for test development and validation, there is some controversy about exam results' correlation with students' post-admission intellectual, academic and professional performance. The theoretical part of the research aims to investigate the extent to which the IELTS reading component relates meaningfully to interpretations of validity. The empirical part addresses questions about perceptions of the impact of the IELTS reading preparation on adjustment to the challenges of academia and further academic performance and variances in these perceptions depending on the area of study and the level of language mastery. While having quite different views on assessing IELTS validity, the researchers agree that academic success is enhanced through and based on extensive substantive reading. The methodology relied on both qualitative and quantitative data derived from an anonymous online questionnaire: 133 international students with Russian citizenship, Global Education Programme (GEP) finalists, participated in the survey in summer 2017. Five different result interpretations were taken into account: overall results, those for sciences and humanities, higher and lower achievers' results. The discussion is built around test-takers' opinions on the IELTS exam, the reading component and scores. The issues discussed include, but are not limited to: reading strategies, information sources required at university, tasks effectiveness, exam preparation usefulness to academic adjustment and its influence on academic achievement, its resourcefulness for the formation of linguistic capabilities, and respondents' perception of extra factors for exam success. Potentially increasing jeopardy of negative washback is shown as an emerging problem. Although test-taking ability is not depicted as a crucially important factor affecting exam success, it is increasingly significant and its harmful effects may be expressed in illusionary higher levels of validity due to visually improved results. Quality preparation for the reading test can train a number of essential skills required in academia; however, preparation itself does not appear to be a significant factor for smoother adjustment to academic challenges, as it is highly dependent on preliminary linguistic background. There is a necessity to communicate broader information to learners through the IELTS handbook, website and other communication channels. EAP tutors should encourage their students to make efforts to cover the subject without framing it within boundaries of measurement, but with a clear understanding of future academic and professional challenges.

Keywords: IELTS reading component, academic reading, interpretations of validity, higher and lower achievers

IELTS is supposed to assess skills for following instructions, finding the main ideas and the relationships between them, identifying the underlying concept, and drawing logical inferences. According to Alderson (2000), IELTS's strength is in using multiple methods of text understanding of any passage as in real life readers typically respond to reading texts in many ways (p. 206). By tradition, there have been two main approaches to the nature of the reading process. Bottom-up "information processing" focuses on the

processing of more micro-level constituents of texts such as letters, words, phrases, sentences. Top-down "analysis-by-synthesis" centers around macro-level principles such as genre, text structure, as well as the role of background schematic knowledge (Moore et al., 2012, p. 8).

Weir (1993) proposes four types or levels of reading: reading expeditiously for global comprehension (summarize the core ideas independently and distinguish a specter of texts related to the subject), reading expeditiously for local comprehension (primary comprehension of core ideas of a text), reading carefully for global comprehension (identify the objective of an author, critically evaluate the ideas in a text and highlight ideas from various texts to maintain one's own reasons), reading carefully for local comprehension (understand an idea with the objective of using it) (Alderson, 2000; Grabe, 1999, as cited in Liu, 2010, p. 155; Moore et al., 2012, pp. 40-41). Urquhart et al. (1998) distinguish between five kinds of reading: scanning, skimming, search reading, careful reading and browsing. Careful reading appeared to be favored by many educationists and psychologists to the exclusion of all other types (Liu, 2010, p. 155). They noted the defining features of careful reading (global, i.e. obtaining an overview of the text in skimming versus local, i.e. locating specific information within a text in scanning): attempts to handle the majority of information in the text in a non-selective manner and build up a macrostructure, adopt a submissive role and accepts the writer's organization.

In its entirety, the absence of necessity to have background proficient knowledge on the given subject is regarded as a strong advantage and a justification of the IELTS claim to be unbiased. However, according to Khalifa and Weir (2009) knowledge stored in long-term memory indicates the efficiency of the reading process, which is enhanced from both "literal" and "interpretative" types of engagement with the text. This creates a remarkable limitation of the test itself, which is balancing between measuring higher order skills that require only a certain amount of creativity in order not to "over-interpret" the text and go far beyond it, but not too far from just "going outside it".

There is a certain amount of inconsistency and controversy about the exam results, mainly their correlation with student intellectual, academic and professional potential. Research indicates that the IELTS test "did not accurately predict test-takers' competence in the academic activities expected for university study" (Hyatt & Brooks, 2009, p. 35). Concerns emerged around the qualitative value of judgments made on a global score and their influence on post-admission academic performance. A vague description of the context behind the band score was highlighted and "a desire for a more in-depth evaluator picture" (Hyatt & Brooks, 2009, p. 35) was expressed as potentially beneficial.

Although IELTS scores are supposed to broadly predict student language behavior in academic contexts, another paper indicates that "a number of factors must be considered, particularly with regard to … students whose language proficiency meet, but do not exceed, required entry levels" (Ingram & Bayliss, 2007, p. 54). Balancing the need for income, course quality (content, delivery and grading) and reputation with the need to be competitive, was stated as a difficult task for universities (Ingram & Bayliss, 2007, p. 54).

IELTS-related research activities are coordinated under a framework for ongoing test development and validation. Cambridge English Language Assessment has responsibility for specific research and development (ielts.org, IELTS Academic Reading description). Test data is regularly analyzed to ensure that IELTS remains fair and unbiased and that it encourages, reflects and respects international diversity.

The theoretical part of the research aims to investigate the extent to which the IELTS reading component relates meaningfully to interpretations of validity. The empirical part addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the impact of IELTS reading preparation on the adjustment to the challenges of academia and further academic performance?
2. How different can these perceptions be depending on the area of study and the level of language mastery?

Hypotheses: Questions 7 and 10 were supposed to correlate notably with each other. Exam performance was expected to affect the amount of skepticism of the reading component and preparation effectiveness. The area of study was expected to influence mainly question 5, asking about the most relevant information sources at university. Generally, all the questions were anticipated to clarify test-takers exam perceptions and their commentaries were gently requested in order to shed light on the quantitative data outcomes.

Materials and Methods

In the past, models of reading have usually been developed with only careful reading in mind (Hoover and Tunmer, 1993; Rayner and Pollatsek, 1989, as cited in Weir et al., 2009). However, some IELTS tasks (i.e., section-summary match and gapped summary)

require skimming skills, which are not based on careful reading models. Khalifa and Weir (2009) suggest that along with comprehension the speed of reading is of significant importance. Weir et al. (2009), found that "for many readers reading quickly, selectively and efficiently posed greater problems than reading carefully and efficiently" (p. 162) and drew attention to the underestimation of the cognitive processing required to carry out test tasks by the majority of researchers.

Weir et al. (2009) identify potential limitations of the reading component in that "the major focus of… IELTS… test appears to be on careful reading" (p. 178). Their survey data suggest the necessity of expeditious skills and strategies for university students and the urgency of engaging both strategies in processing large amounts of information. A literature review can be a clear example of engaging various strategies. At the first stages, while careful searching is required within a restricted timeframe, students have to be selective and possess rapid reading skills. This can be exemplified in the Trinity College Dublin Master in Education handbook in recommendations for writing assignments: "A small number of well-chosen sources, which can be carefully analyzed, are preferable to a lengthy description of a broad range of literature (p. 39). Thus, not time- and length-consuming descriptions, but a "careful" approach to literature searching through scanning and then skimming appears to be an essential preliminary stage to further careful reading, promising insightful perceptions.

These strategies are hard to teach and learn in high school, as they require a trial and error method and thorough feedback as a means of assessment for learning. In addition, washback appears to be extremely harmful in practice. The test can narrow the text to an artificial structure, as its results must not be misinterpreted in order to reach a higher level of validity. Special concern should be pointed out for future students of the arts, humanities and the social sciences, as they definitely need to develop a critical literacy paradigm and engage in texts interpretatively, which requires the ability to cover, evaluate and summarize numerous sources of information as well as create authentic pieces of writing based on extensive reading. This ability goes far beyond test-wiseness and should be enhanced through high-quality teaching and learning practices.

Validation Process of Test Assessment Results

"Validity refers to the degree to which evidence and theory support the interpretations of test scores for proposed uses of tests" (Plake & Wise, 2014, p. 11). It is not validity itself but the constant process of validation that is supposed "to provide a sound specific basis for the proposed score interpretations" (Plake & Wise, 2014, p. 11). Thus, these interpretations should be evaluated. Nitko & Brookhart (2007) define validity as, "the soundness of … interpretations and uses of student assessment results" (p. 38). They emphasize the requirements for evidence from a variety of sources that demonstrate these interpretations. The uses should be adequate and no serious negative consequences should follow as a result.

Principles of validation identified by Messick (1989, 1994, as cited in Nitko and Brookhart, 2007, p. 38) should be based on evidence, interpretation and use of test results supported by appropriateness and correctness. The consequences of the assessment results should be coherent with assigned values. Along with knowledge, achievement assessments should require important thinking processes and combinations of skills and knowledge to work on "real-life" applications as defined by the curriculum framework and state standards. Appropriate tasks should require higher-order thinking processes and skills, as the ability to solve sophisticated problems is vital for academic progress. The requirements that illustrate these points are emphasized by Nitko and Brookhart (2007), who include a detailed description of the processes and abilities being assessed; a clear demonstration of tools and measurements for the assessment and evidence of expected thinking processes and skills application for successful assignment implementation (p. 50).

Kane & Bejar (2014) draw attention to a developmental model of academic performance, "where the achievement levels are intended to represent qualitatively different levels of sophistication in the discipline" (p. 120). The cognitive model is also exemplified as an alternative, indicating a student's current state of mastery versus non-mastery of a topic. According to the cognitive model, individual learning progression should be measured by its task-requiring performances, indicating the level of achievement students are capable of mastering (Kane & Bejar, 2014, p. 120). The IELTS scale introduces results by the same principles: from a non-user (0 score, non-mastery) through to modest and competent users (5-6 scores) up to an expert user (9 score, mastery) with 0.5 increments (the IELTS scale). O'Loughlin (2012) points out that after reading the IELTS Guide (2009), all stakeholders generally find it to be informative. However, some wished "it could have included more information about the meaning and interpretation of IELTS test scores" (O'Loughlin, 2012, p. 34).

For instance, the level of independent functioning in an unfamiliar language environment and the level of operational command in the English language (the IELTS scale) as grading criteria cannot measure the full capacity of language mastery in a restricted timeframe precisely. There are a number of other components

that contribute to success, including: luck, guessing, anxiety levels, the speed of decision-making and test-taking capacity. In contrast, the absence of these components risks a decreasing chance for positive outcomes which can be illustrated by lower grade indicators such as occasional inaccuracies and the frequency of misunderstanding of problems (the IELTS scale). Consequently, the fluency between grades, even with 0.5 increments appears to be noticeable and inevitable. Kane & Bejar (2014) point out that, "large-scale assessments… are designed to produce scores that reflect each student's position on some continuum reflecting overall achievement in some domain" (p. 122). While understanding the practical use of "assessment of learning", which IELTS turns out to be, these authors question the limitations of the resourcefulness of these systems as "assessment for learning".

However, the differences between the levels linguistic capabilities of applicants to higher education are presented as rather vague assumptions, i.e. "some (Level 6) misunderstandings" or "occasional (Level 7) inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings", disinguish a *competent user* from *a good user*. Ingram and Bayliss (2007) regard it as a difficulty for "university admissions staff and faculties to determine whether students are linguistically equipped to fulfill the task requirements of study disciplines" (p. 54). They also highlight the total absence of any applicants' linguistic uniqueness, as IELTS scores provide only generic comments. Examples of abilities to "write 3,000-word discursive essays" or "understand culturally-specific lectures or subject-specific journal articles, medical histories or legal arguments" (Ingram & Bayliss, 2007, p. 54) are not reflected in scores. This restricts the predictability of a student's academic trajectory. Kane and Bejar (2014) also offer to include differentiation within levels to distinguish between clear mastery and approaching mastery as evidence is required "to the attributes used to characterize each student's achievement" (p. 120).

These achievements tend to be strongly hierarchical and consistent. The researchers do not take into account that there may be exceptions for adjacent levels, which is more relevant to humanities than STEM subjects. The researchers' critique raises the question of IELTS validity in terms of its main mission – providing an indication of student capability in continuing further education in the non-native linguistic environment. Moreover, IELTS claims not to assess any discipline-specific knowledge gained for the exam preparation purpose that can be a strong argument against these kinds of "accusations".

Although assessments "for learning" and "of learning" are supposed to be interrelated, this is not always the case, especially when there is the obvious pursuit of visually accountable results. Messick (1996) highlights the phenomenon of *washback* as a huge influence on language teaching and learning as "teachers might come to overemphasize those constructs that are well-represented [on the test] and downplay those that are not" (p. 252).

Washback is regarded as deleterious when there is a serious disconnection between a test's construct of reading and the broader demands of real world perception through language. It is essential for test developers claiming their tests are valid to strive to decrease construct underrepresentation and construct-irrelevant variance. Both test-developers and teachers could benefit from providing relevant resources to enhance test framework integration via the teaching and learning process, taking into account test-wiseness and other artificial restrictions on students' representations. In contrast, valid low scores resulting from poor teaching or limited opportunities to learn are not supposed to be test makers' responsibility. Such adverse consequences of validating assessment represent problems not of measurement, but rather of teaching and of educational or social policy.

Previous Study. Analysis of IELTS Academic Reading Component Validity

Moore et al. (2012) researched the IELTS academic reading construct validity. This study, which was awarded a grant in 2007, is an official IELTS report, is of high quality and its implications seem realistic and thought provoking. A decent level of criticality was noticeable, i.e., findings revealed that the majority of tasks required "mainly a basic comprehension of relatively small textual units" (Moore et al., 2012, pp. 2, 37).

In order to reinforce and encourage reading mastery, the subject-specific claim of becoming deconstructive readers was expressed as desirable (Moore et al., 2012, p. 59). The ways in which the meaning is created, how the words used in a text can carry particular nuances and how images create special impacts were mentioned as features of a sensible reader every student is supposed to emulate. Arguing against texts as "repositories of information and facts" and expressing the need for a definite seeing and constructing the world (Moore et al., 2012, p. 62) are an epistemological challenge for reading skill formation.

The lecturers that participated in the research commented most favorably on the relationship between the IELTS reading component and study on their courses and identified a relatively strong interdependence between some task types, indicating the multiple-choice format as the most common for tests. Another important finding for several informants was that the test showed "unexpected complexity" in

the science-based articles that required to be read more than once (Moore et al., 2012, p. 60). Khalifa and Weir (2009), indicating that efficiency of the reading process is largely enhanced by knowledge stored in the long-term memory, can support this.

Participants

The anonymous 10 question survey was conducted on the SurveyMonkey platform with 133 postgraduate (master and PhD level) Global Education Programme (GEP) finalists (global education, official documents) in July and August 2017. GEP is an innovative government funded programme offering Russian citizens an opportunity to do full-time courses at leading foreign higher education institutions. The most common countries for study are Australia, the UK, the USA and Germany. Russian citizenship is the compulsory condition of sponsorship. GEP finalists were selected for the research as they represent a group of contemporary Russians who were purposefully funded to study at universities with high expectations from students. The majority of the finalists had to take the academic module of IELTS (some universities accepted other language proficiency certificates) in order to get a non-conditional offer of acceptance.

According to the conditions of GEP, finalists are offered to choose the five priority areas of training, potentially beneficial to the challenges of the Russian economy. Overall, 79 respondents (59.4%) represented scientific specialties (Engineering, Health care and Science) and 54 respondents (40.6%) represented humanities (Education and Social work). All the participants took the exam no longer than 4 years before the time of the research; the vast majority of them took the exam in summer 2016. 72 participants were female and 61 were male. The age range was 22-31 years old. 24 participants were PhD students, while 109 were doing their Master degree. Age, gender and the study level were known beforehand via both the GEP handbook and online profiles. They were not requested in the survey, as they were not considered to be of any particular significance.

Research Design

The research design relied on both qualitative and quantitative data derived from the survey results. Five different result interpretations were taken into account, where overall results were unfiltered. Two interpretations were filtered by Q1: "Your specialty" where five areas of training were divided into sciences and humanities. Two second ones were filtered by respondents' exam scores, requested in Q2, "What is your IELTS overall score?" and Q3, "What is your IELTS reading score?" (5.5, 6.0 and 6.5 versus 8.0, 8.5 and 9.0). There were 19 (14.29%) higher IELTS achievers and 26 (19.55%) lower achievers.

Procedure

All the participants were sent personal emails offering consent forms and inviting them to consult with the author in case of difficulties with formulation clarity or emerged interest in the subject matter. Everybody had open access to the survey intermediate outcomes, which appeared on the screen after the survey was finished. The 10 compulsory survey questions featured three question types (see Appendix A) including matrix grading scale, multiple choice and scale range labels. All matrix grading scale labels and multiple choice questions included an extra option, *Other (please specify)*. The survey took 5-15 minutes depending on the respondents' enthusiasm to fill in the option *Other*. Matrix grading scale labels and multiple choice questions allowed choice from either many options or the only one option from a set. *Survey select rate* provided the opportunity to download question summary data in 3 formats: PDF, PPT or Excel. Options for analysing individual responses and question summaries as well as filtering and comparing answers were used extensively in order to identify and interpret trends.

Results

Test-Taker Exam Scores

The first three questions requested general information about the respondents including their specialization and IELTS overall and reading component scores (Figures 1 and 2). The correlation between reading scores and overall scores was investigated by comparing and individual responses analysis.

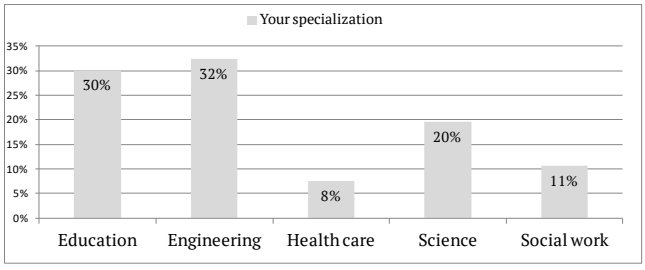
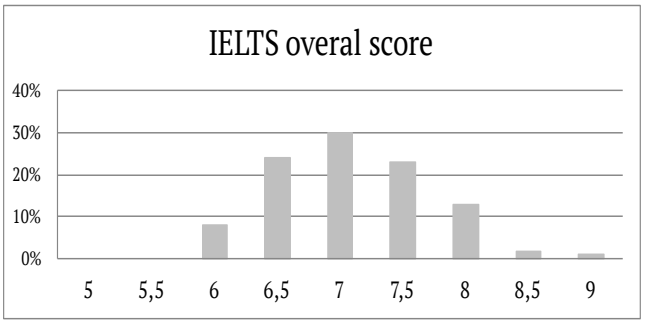
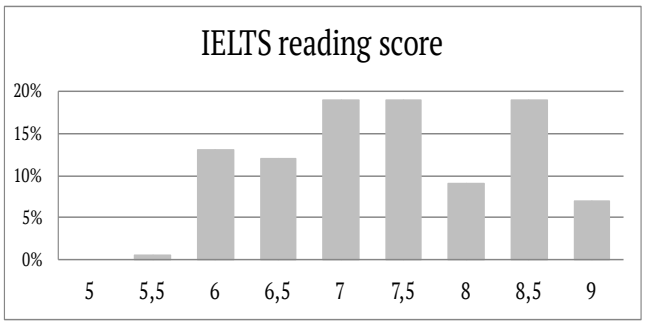


Figure 1. Specialization of all the respondents.

Figure 2. Overall results for Questions 2 and 3.

There is an impressive diversity in reading results: they range from 5.5 while overall scores are a lot more





localised at 6.5, 7.0 and 7.5 (Figure 2). The respondents with 5.5, 6.0 and 6.5 overall received from 5.5 (one Engineering respondent) to 9.0 for the reading component. Although lower achievers range was broader (Figure 3) than higher achievers range (Figure 4). In the vast majority of cases, reading scores are higher than overall scores by 1 band, as individual response analysis clearly illustrates. If reading results are lower than overall, the difference still lies within 1 band with extremely few exceptions (see the right picture on Figure 3). Comparing sciences and humanities exam performances there are no noteworthy differences in scores, although a wider range of higher overall scores is more noticeable for humanities respondents, while 1/3 of sciences respondents achieved 7.0, which is a purely average result.

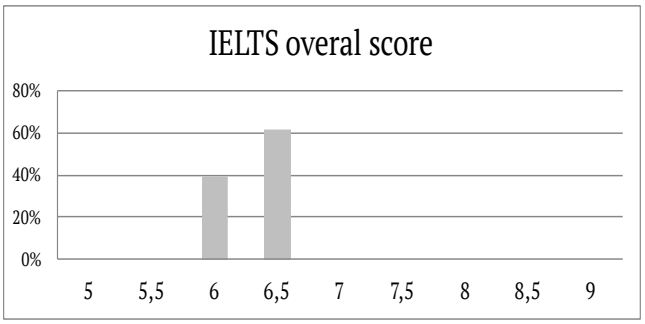
Reading Strategies Most Applicable to Academic Challenges

The fourth question examined the applicability of the five kinds of reading strategies (scanning, skimming, search reading, careful reading and browsing) identified by Urquhart et al. (1998) to academic challenges. All the respondents chose search reading and scanning as "the most applicable" reading strategies. Careful reading and skimming appeared to be "very applicable", although fewer respondents identified them as "the most applicable". Browsing appealed to the respondents as well: 72.44% of them thought that it is either "somewhat applicable" or "very applicable".

Higher achievers were remarkably more generous in evaluating the importance of all the strategies. There were much fewer opting for "not very applicable" and "not applicable". None of the respondents considered search reading to be "not very applicable" or "not applicable" and only 5.26% said that scanning was "not very applicable". A slight underestimation of skimming, careful reading and browsing was also of little significance. Lower achievers tended to be noticeably more skeptical about all the strategies: their most preferred option was "somewhat applicable" while "the most applicable" was the third prevalent option. Overall results demonstrate similar results for higher and lower achievers. The most widespread definition for all the strategies is "very applicable", "somewhat applicable" comes second" and "the most applicable" third. Some respondents also chose underestimating options, but their proportion does not neglect the significance of any strategy. The specialty did not affect respondents' choices to any worthy of note extent.

Information Sources Needed at University

The fifth question intended to clarify how relevant to academic studies 10 types of information sources, derived from the author's observation, were. The choices of higher and lower achievers were only slightly different from the overall responses. The four most demanded sources were the same: journal



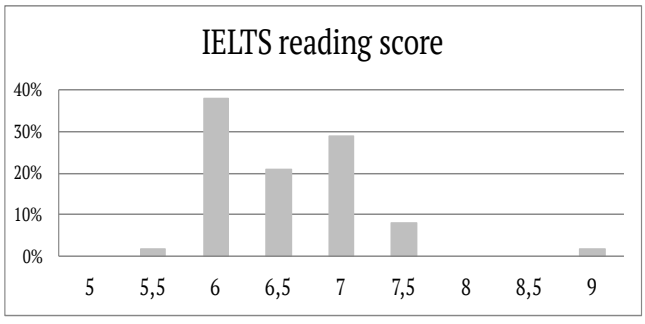


Figure 3. Overall scores for Questions 2 and 3 for lower achievers.

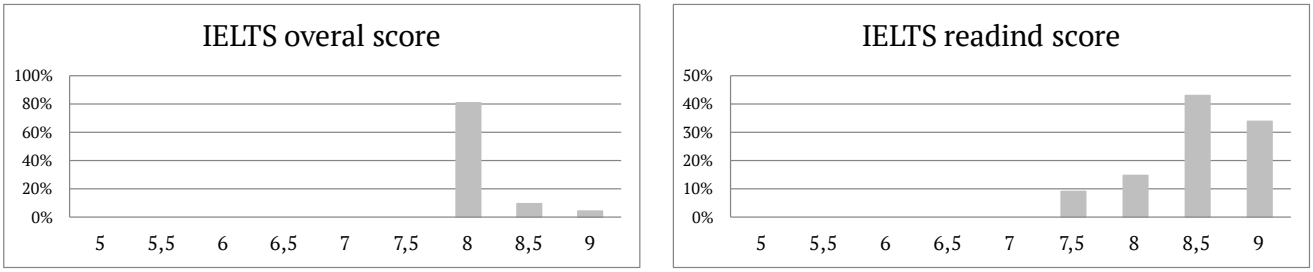


Figure 4. Overall scores for Questions 2 and 3 for higher achievers.

articles, online sources, course materials and textbooks with markedly lower primacy. Legal documents, social network news and public press appeared to be the least informative sources as approximately half of respondents said that they "quite rarely" or "hardly ever" use them. Personal correspondence demonstrated the most dissimilar reaction as, roughly speaking, each of five time options was chosen by 1/5 of all the participants.

Journal articles were the most valuable source for humanities respondents. They used online sources and course materials consistently, but with a lower level of frequency. However, respondents from the sciences indicated course materials, online sources and journal articles as three substantial sources. Approximately 75% of sciences respondents said that they use them "very often" or "quite often". Reference books and textbooks come fourth and fifth which indicates that almost all the respondents use them with a stable level of frequency.

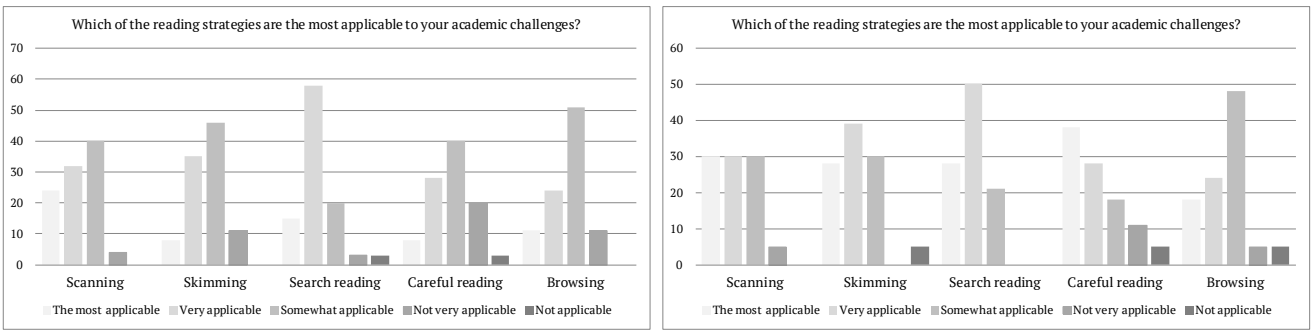
Tasks Effectiveness for Academic Reading Preparation

The sixth question asked the extent of the effectiveness of the nine task types. Several websites, including but not limited to Take IELTS with British Council or IELTSEssentials, were consulted in order to choose these types carefully. All task types were highlighted as effective with a relatively small variance in their importance. Matching causes and effects, summary completion and identifying the writer's views were chosen as the most effective tasks by a noticeably larger proportion of respondents.

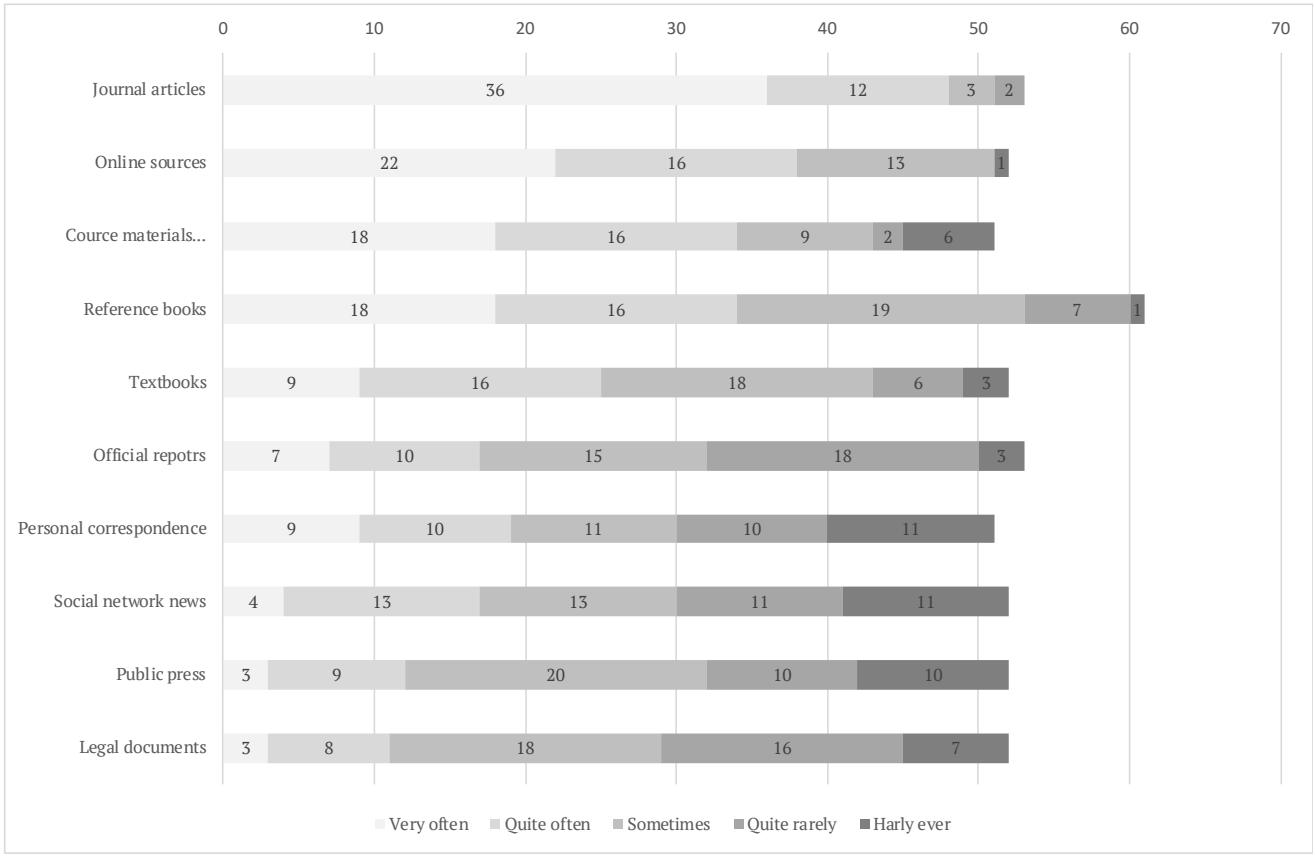
All the other tasks were marked mostly as "somewhat effective". Although very few respondents marked these task types as "not very effective", their number was still larger than the number of people who negatively estimated the first three most effective tasks. Both humanities and sciences bar charts illustrate a very similar picture with a very coherent evaluation of all the tasks as "very effective" and "somewhat effective" by sciences respondents and more inconsistency and inclination to the option "somewhat effective" by humanities respondents.

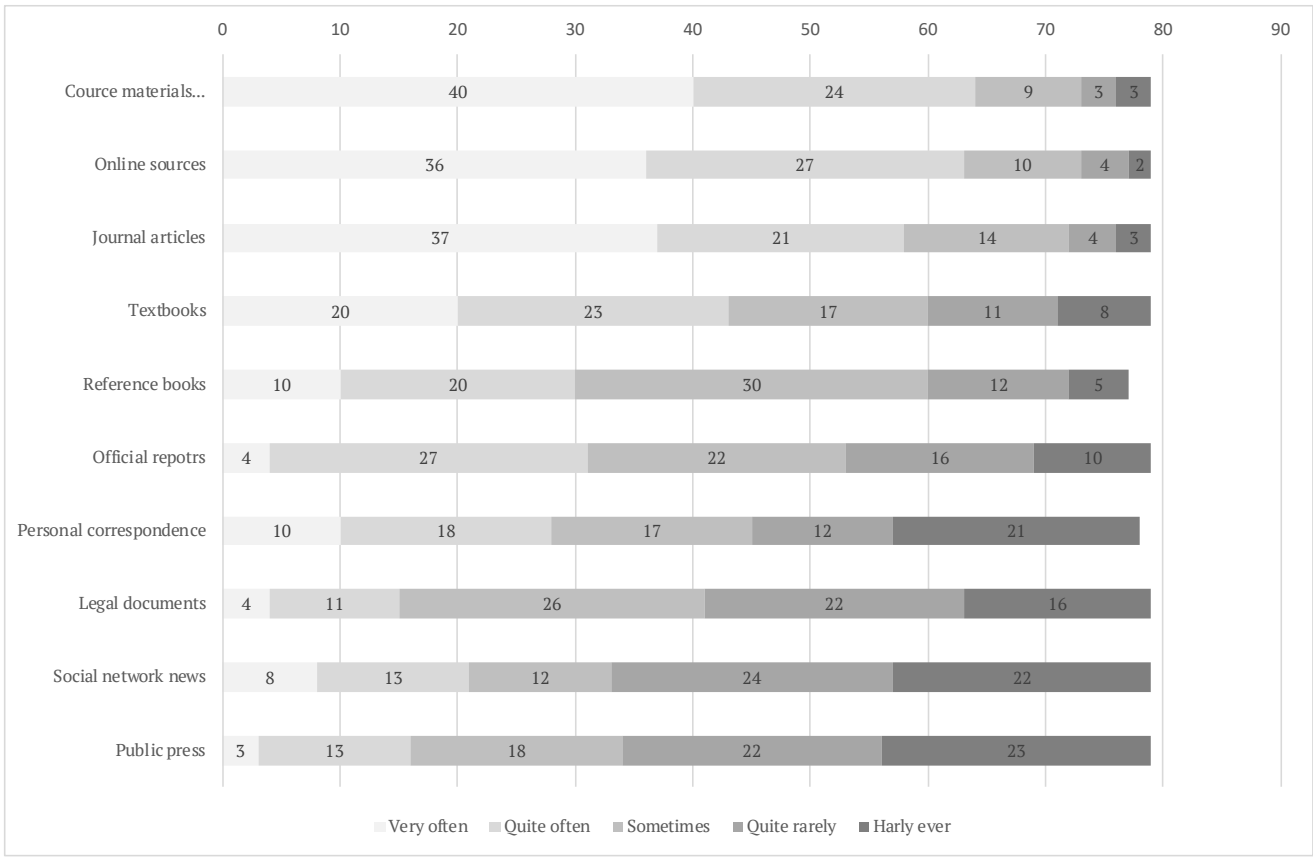
IELTS Preparation Usefulness to Academic Adjustment and its Influence on Academic Achievement

Questions 7 and 10 featured relatively close issues: IELTS preparation usefulness to academic adjustment (7) and its influence on academic achievement (10). Overall, respondents were quite appreciative of IELTS reading preparation. 30.53% of participants said that preparation was "somewhat helpful" along with 26.72% and 10.69% of them estimating noticeable and significant usefulness respectively. The other 30% were not very grateful for this preparation or filled in the *Other* option. Education respondents' answers



Figures 5 and 6. Reading strategies estimated by lower and higher IELTS achievers.





Figures 7 and 8. The frequency of access to informational resources of humanities and sciences respondents (absolute numbers are featured instead of percentages to enhance better readability).

were more narrowly focused on the "somewhat helped" option (39.62%), while sciences representatives' responses were a lot more diverse and more positive about preparation – 30.77% of them specified noticeable help.

The difference in the perception of IELTS preparation usefulness was significant between higher and lower achievers. Higher achievers were markedly more sceptical about the preparation usefulness with 10.53% even choosing the most negative option. 57.89% of them admitted that preparation was helpful to a certain extent (first three options), while this number was 88.46% for lower achievers. Moreover, none of lower achievers thought that the preparation was absolutely "not helpful" and only 7.69% of respondents considered it a bit helpful.

Question 10 demonstrates a similar trend. The overall view of IELTS preparation resourcefulness to enhance academic achievement is 57%. While higher achievers appeared to be a lot more sceptical (47%), lower achievers tended to be significantly more thankful to the preparation (65%). The difference between sciences and humanities respondents is smaller: 60% versus 52% respectively. To summarise, Questions 7 and 10 indicate that the level of achievement is crucial to the perception and evaluation of exam preparation effectiveness: the higher the achievement, the more sceptically respondents act and the lower they tend to evaluate the impact of preparation on adjustment to the challenges of academia and further academic performance.

Respondents' Perceptions of Extra Factors of Exam Success

Question 8 was used to shed light on respondents' perception of extra factors potentially affecting their exam score. Good concentration was highlighted as the priority factor, speed of decision-making was second and anxiety level was third. Test-wiseness was also appreciated, although its importance was mostly "noticeably affected" or "somewhat affected". Overall, respondents felt less enthusiasm about guessing and luck with 16.54% of them rejecting the importance of guessing and 19.55% the importance of luck. 28.57% and 37.6% of respondents said guessing and luck as "a bit effective" respectively.

Although there is no significant difference between humanities and sciences respondents, higher and lower achievers demonstrated markedly different results. Lower achievers tended to evaluate all the factors, i.e. 19.23% and 11.54%, lower achievers pointed out that guessing and luck significantly affected their performance along with only 11.54% and 15.38 of them thinking that it did not affect their score. In contrast, higher achievers demonstrated a lot more disbelief towards these two factors: 36.84% and 47.37% of them fully rejected the influence of guessing and luck on their exam score respectively and none of them took their probable impact on exam scores seriously.

IELTS Preparation Resourcefulness for the Formation of Linguistic Capabilities

Question 9 intended to uncover respondents' opinions on the IELTS preparation effectiveness for forming the capabilities only partially assessed by IELTS itself, according to the findings of Moore et al. (2012). The ability to see what the author is trying to achieve through the text, the capability to

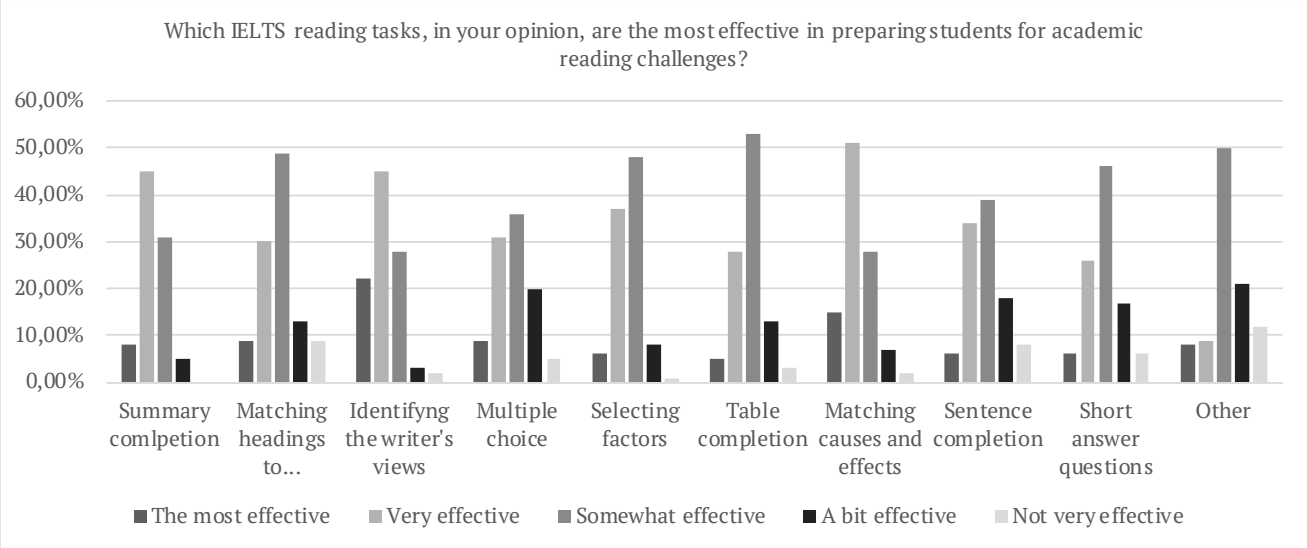
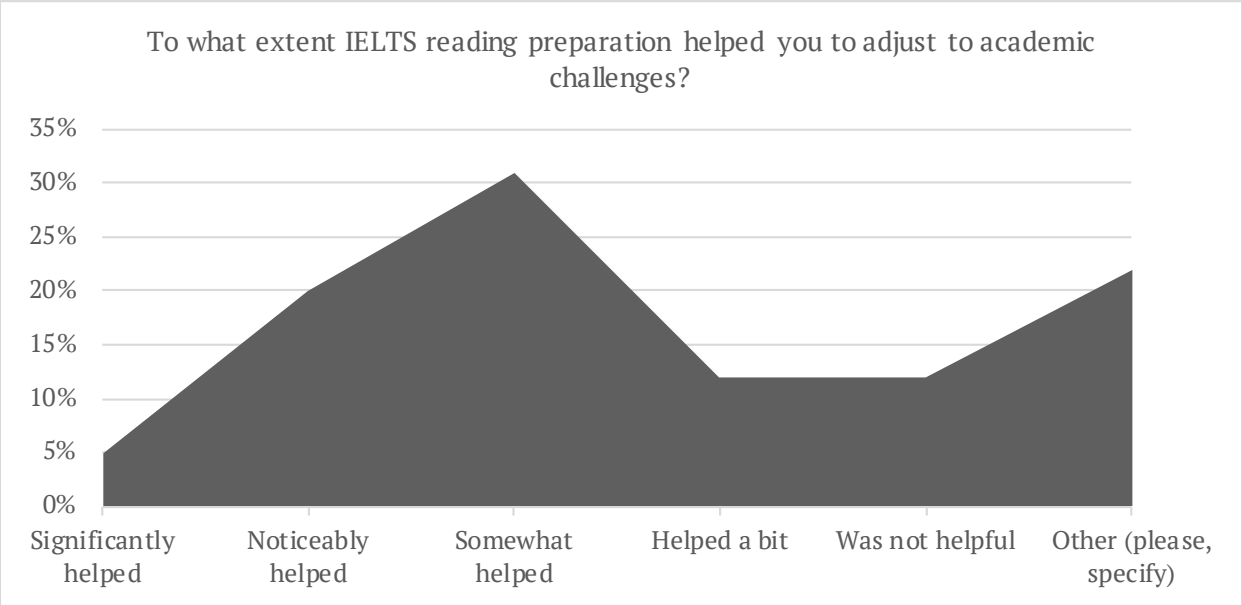
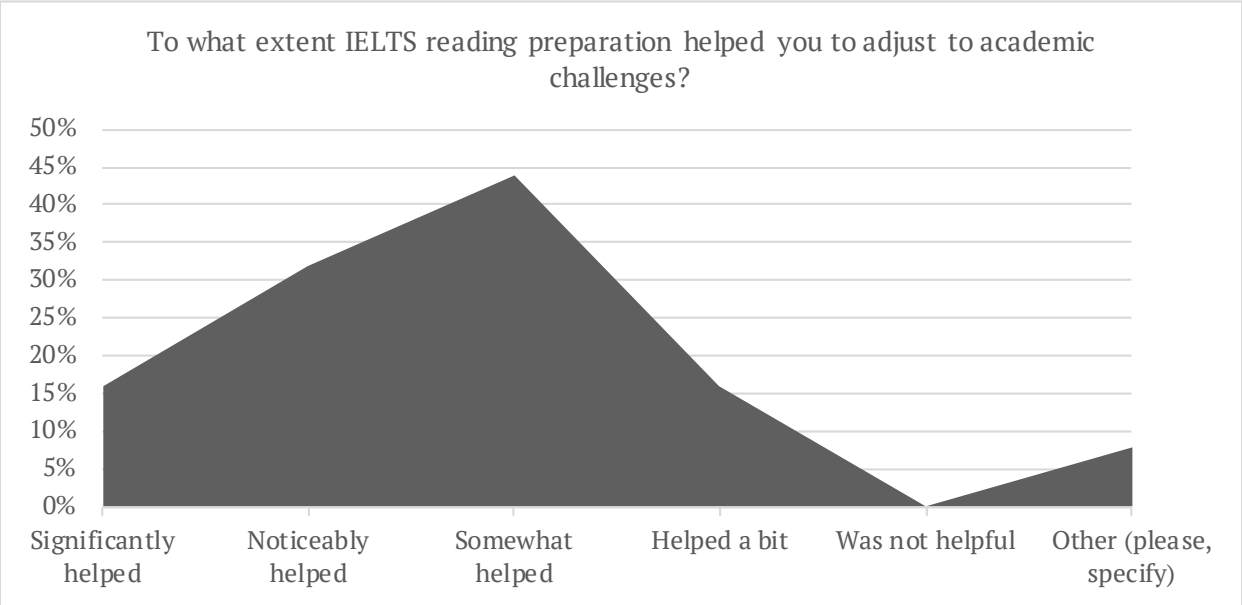


Figure 9. Overall indicators of tasks effectiveness for academic reading preparation.





Figures 10 and 11. IELTS preparation usefulness according to higher and lower achievers.

understand deeply and interpret original sources of information and the ability to identify concepts in the reading for the purpose of applying them to another context emerged as the most desirable skills to all the respondents.

Three other abilities were appreciated as well, with only a slight drop in choosing "significantly resourceful" option. Enhancing creative writing development through various genre reading and reinforcing freedom to disagree with respected authors and developing of solid arguments were estimated by the majority of respondents as "somewhat resourceful" and "a bit resourceful", which may indicate the subject specificity for these advanced skills. There were no notable differences between humanities and sciences respondents, but lower achievers showed remarkably more interest in all these skills than higher achievers. 7.69% of lower achievers said, "reinforcing the freedom to disagree with respected authors…" as "not very resourceful" while higher achievers were less generous in appreciating them and 4 abilities were considered "not very resourceful" by 1 (5.26%) or 5 (26.32%) respondents.

Discussion

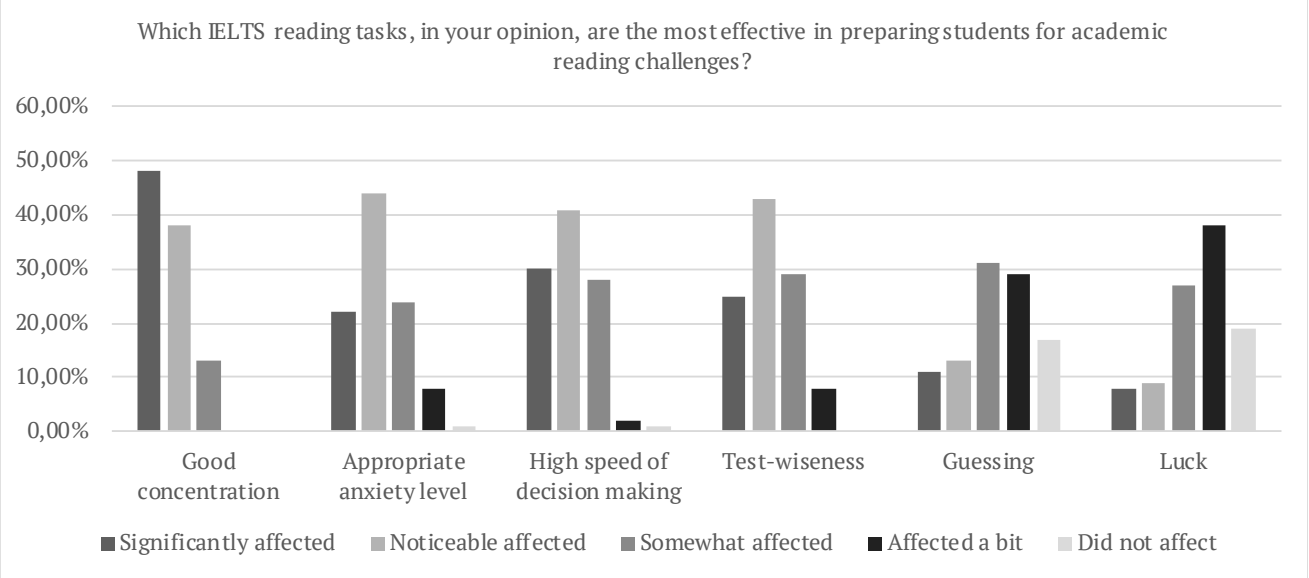


Figure 12. All respondents' perception of extra factors of exam success.

Interpretations of the results are still a very arguable issue. On the one hand, they require more explicitness and guidance in their practical application. On the other hand, striving for both can lead to overinterpreting the scores, as the latter do not have enough potential to predict further trajectories of linguistic development. More clarity should be imposed on the meanings of the scores for the text-takers in order to prevent their probable disapprobation. However, according to the findings, the IELTS reading component generally succeeds in integrating numerous methods of text understanding and appears to be generally valid.

While having quite different views on assessing IELTS validity, all the researchers agree that academic success is enhanced through, and based on, extensive substantive reading. Potentially increasing the jeopardy of negative washback is an emerging problem. Although test-wiseness was not depicted as a crucially important factor affecting exam success, it is hard to deny that it is increasing significantly and its harmful effects may be expressed in illusionary higher levels of validity due to visually improved results. In contrast, it can distract from the key positive aim of validity, which is to control if the test assesses what it is supposed to assess.

Test-Takers' Opinions on the IELTS Exam, the Reading Component and Scores

Kane and Bejar (2014) highlight students' capability of continuing in further education in a non-native linguistic environment as the main mission of a language testing system. First, all the GEP finalists were accepted to leading universities. A smaller proportion had successfully finished their studies, while the vast majority were in the middle of their courses. These facts imply that, regardless of the scale and the nature of probable difficulties with language, all the respondents can be named academic achievers as their IELTS results have sufficed and have not impeded their progression as international scholars.

Test-takers expressed challenging thoughts on the IELTS reading component in the option *Other*. The most extensive commentaries featured IELTS validity as a reliable evidence of current language mastery and a guarantee of further language improvement, along with IELTS comparisons with TOEFL and CPE exams from students who had the experience of taking more than one language test. The respondent with 7.0 overall and 7.5 for reading pointed out that "reading in TOEFL is almost the simplest part and getting almost maximum is not very difficult. TOEFL seems quite balanced in time, but in IELTS reading feels trickier than other sections".

The second issue, discussed by 5 test-takers, was the cost of the IELTS test in general and in particular for the university applicants from Russia, where the cost of the exam is highly dependent on fluctuating currency exchange rates. Cost was highlighted as a stress factor, potentially lowering the scores in case of the impossibility of retaking the exam.

The expiry period of two years did not seem reasonable for three students: "They give a certificate for 2 years. That's funny. It should be given for 5 years, at least 3. I don't understand how I will be able to forget the language?" The answer can be found in another respondent's opinion: "These exams are multi-billion dollar business and 2 years is definitely an extremely short period. It's just marketing and there's nothing to be done". Other students would prefer more detailed IELTS grades and comments that would make the test much less affordable and risk misinterpreting real

knowledge and skills, construct irrelevant variances inevitably influencing validity.

The third comment was the division of IELTS into academic and general modules. This, in one respondent's opinion, has marketing justifications as well: "You successfully passed IELTS academic and it happened that you have to migrate, but they will not accept it! Bring the general! It does not matter that the academic module requires more professionalism and very often suggests better qualifications".

The fourth opinion was that the IELTS test does not fully provide evidence of language mastery and more extended assessment procedures should be compulsory before providing a non-conditional offer of acceptance: "Everything should be controlled, i.e., a Skype interview with a candidate, where the commission will assess the level of the language proficiency, presentation skills and background knowledge! At the same time!" However, this student seemed to have neglected that the IELTS aim does not go further than marking the border of readiness to study in a foreign university and other methods of evaluating candidate applicability are engaged into this extended procedure.

Reading Strategies Most Applicable to Academic Challenges

Although careful reading has traditionally attracted more attention from researchers (Alderson, 2000, Urquhart et al., 1998, Weir, 1993), while the four other strategies could be less beneficial for scholarly challenges, the results did not reveal careful reading superiority to any extent. Moreover, only answering Question 4, higher achievers were notably more generous in grading than lower achievers. This finding implies that higher achievers manage to apply all the strategies with a high degree of regularity. An interesting comment was made by an Engineering student (overall 7.5; reading 8.5) about browsing: "In project-based education the most effective technique is quick browsing for interesting bits of relevant information, to build up a strong narrative behind the proposal. Deep immersion to theoretical works is less integrated in studies; however, thoughtful hours of reflection just make your overall performance and argumentation stronger".

The growing scale of accessible information automatically requires setting new, multileveled reading goals, i.e., being cautious and highly selective in terms of quality, appropriateness and the volume of information. These goals can explain search reading and scanning becoming the most applicable for academic challenges, as before reading carefully students need to go through the time-consuming process of evaluating the relevance and quality of information and only after add a source to their reading lists. This issue is also related to Question 5 results, that textbooks did not appear to be in the list of three most used information sources for students. This implies striving for research activities versus getting the information in ready forms, which usually considerably reduces the cognitive load.

Khalifa and Weir (2009) suggest that along with comprehension the speed of reading is of significant importance. Weir et al. (2009) found that, "for many readers reading quickly, selectively and efficiently posed greater problems than reading carefully and efficiently" (p. 162) and drew attention to the underestimation of the cognitive processing required to carry out test tasks by the majority of researchers. According to Weir et al. (2009), imposing time constraints, seen by almost all the test-takers as predictors for lower grades, has the potential to enhance expeditious reading strategies, i.e. search reading and scanning, which are of great importance for research activities necessary for scholarship. These opinions are fully congruent with our findings.

Information Sources Needed at University

Comparison by specialty provided noticeably more variance while filtering by exam scores did not reveal any notable alteration from overall results. An Education student (8.0 overall, 8.0 reading) commented: "I am always reading something related to my field. Unfortunately, at this point I do not have time for any fiction. However, when I feel like catching up with recent novels I get them as audiobooks because my eyes are too tired to read anything extra". Generally, the test-takers were appreciative of a variety of sources highlighting the importance of studying relevant ones.

While online sources were on top of our list, the study by Moore et al. (2012) mentioned reviewing educational websites as not encouraging good reading practices as students do not read online in a serious and steady way (p. 44). This could be relevant to the problem of limitless information flow, a growing number of poorly referenced sources, which lack healthy criticism. In addition, the lecturers' concern raises the question of making implications on a shallow basis due to careless reading, which can prevent the enhancement of more global and advanced reading practices.

Tasks Effectiveness for Academic Reading Preparation

All the task types were appreciated to a considerable extent by all the test-takers with one of them pointing out that "the options overlap". A Science student

(overall 7.5, reading 7.5) commented: "I cannot specify and distinguish separate tasks… probably a mix of them helped somehow, but I'm not even sure whether separately they were very effective or not that much. That's why I chose "somewhat effective" almost everywhere". This perceptive point specifies the need for a constant reconsidering of the appropriateness of a combination of tasks for each particular test for the purpose of providing test-takers with the chance to demonstrate the broadest possible range of reading capabilities.

In the study by Moore et al. (2012) the required engagement was of highly "local" and "literal" kind for a number of common tasks. Agreeing with Alderson (2000, pp. 211-214), Moore et al. (2012) highlight that multiple-choice tasks have limitations, including the potential for guessing the correct option. Researchers suggested pushing test tasks in the direction of more global and interpretative domains of the analytical matrix featuring a range of views, available evidence, bringing a critical approach, examining and assessing the material and coming to personal judgment.

Weir et al. (2009) recommend ensuring that each test form includes a variety of tasks striving to engage expeditious and careful reading strategies (p. 179). For instance, the Not Given option in Yes/No/Not Given items can encourage the application of both strategies and reduce the possibility of guessing. The NG option requires the ability to make a distinction between one's own opinions and opinions of the others, which is of vital importance for university study where the critical appraisal of information sources is compulsory. Moreover, recommendations by Weir et al. (2009) to make efforts to minimize response strategy assumptions from tasks can be of great help for test developers as well as higher education applicants (p. 179).

IELTS Preparation Usefulness to Academic Adjustment and its Influence on Academic Achievement

The most striking point provided by Questions 7 and 10 was scepticism about the effectiveness of IELTS preparation for higher achievers while their very high results indicate their readiness for the exam. Such results definitely could not have been achieved without extensive language input. This intuitively clear finding requires further investigation for the purpose of identifying alternative forms of exam preparation, figuratively speaking, "without preparing exactly for an exam". Although the impact of linguistic abilities is obvious and undeniable, further research could shed light on the more real-to-life strategies for increasing the exam score.

Special attention could be paid to the correlation between previous performance scores with IELTS score. Qualitative research also has a lot of potential in terms of individual case analyses, i.e., the one, found in the comment of the Education student (8.0 overall; 8.0 reading): "I think one of the best ways to enhance your academic achievement is through reading CPE materials (the old format). Constantly reading something that is even more difficult than what is given in IELTS textbooks helps you achieve very high IELTS score. I have dyslexia and yet I managed to get a very high reading score despite all the stereotypes that dyslexic people cannot learn languages. Practice makes it perfect. There is nothing too difficult about any part of IELTS. If you are resilient and persistent then you can achieve an impressive result".

Respondents' Perception of Extra Factors of Exam Success

Question 8 appeared to be the most commented on and provided a lot of room for interpretation. Exam success is definitely guaranteed when there is a combination of deep knowledge, test-wiseness gained through careful preparation and the advantages probably provided by extra factors. However, we can only strive to predict the proportion of these components in order to calculate a perfect formula for success.

For instance, the test-takers who provided commentaries had different specializations, very different opinions, but their reading scores did not differ significantly. Moreover, the three most chosen extra factors are very resourceful for the formation of numerous skills, going far beyond IELTS and are applicable to various fields of knowledge and work. As such, accusations that IELTS is over-dependent on extra factors do not look very convincing. In the majority of cases, sharp comments can be justified by a selfish desire of weaker students, undervaluing test difficulty to receive higher grades, while a smaller proportion of test-takers may tend to overestimate their "extra" skills and underestimate the real quality of knowledge. Whatever approach to these factors are chosen, they should never be ignored or downplayed by practicing tutors, who have to analyze each student's performance independently and predict developing trajectories with the greatest possible precision.

Table 1
Test-takers comments on Q8

IELTS overall score	IELTS reading score	Specialisation and commentaries
7.0	7.5	*Health care* "The most important things for IELTS are: 1) you MUST think fast. If you are perfect at English, but you are slow, you will not get enough points. This test checks the speed of your thinking. It is not fair because some people are bright, smart, but they need more time. 2) You must prepare for the test, its Questions, structure, and requirements. You will get more points this way".
6.5	7.0	*Engineering* "Careful but fast reading! Reading Questions before and trying to answer them while reading. I always start with reading the given answers/options and only then start reading the text. Searching for the right part of the text one by one."
6.5	7.0	*Science* "I believe that too little time is given for reading in the IELTS exam. You can know the language well and make mistakes. If this reading is given to me in Russian, I will not get 9.0. Although this is my native language. There should be twice as much time given. Because there are people who read and think fast, others do it more slowly. It should not be that much connected to speed, but language mastery. It's unfair."
7.5	8.5	*Engineering* "It seems "deep knowledge" did not affect the results at all; the test is more about these factors (concentration, speed)."
7.0	7.5	*Social work* "I'm not so sure that IELTS reading is relevant to our competence in English. I had very mediocre English at the exam time, I had been preparing for a month with a tutor, but I have a certain advantage – speed! I finished the task in 40 minutes, so I searched for extra 20 minutes more and made corrections - the highest score was for this component."
6.5	7.5	*Education* "I believe that IELTS in general and its reading component are not very reliable indicators of English proficiency. I'm very interested in the results of the survey, because at the time when IELTS was relevant, I was confused by its artificiality. If it really identified the knowledge of English, most likely, I would not have achieved my result!"

IELTS Preparation Resourcefulness for the Formation of Linguistic Capabilities

The most desirable linguistic capabilities, identified in Question 9, appeared to be congruent with the findings by Moore et al. (2012). A critical approach to knowledge advocated by a number of informants implies assessing arguments and not assuming that other points of view do not exist: "You might find a perfectly reasonable answer in a single book…, but you're in no position to evaluate that unless you've read alternatives" (Moore et al., 2012, p. 56). This can be relevant to the pursuit of objectivity, based on exploring a focused topic in a broader context and a gradual movement from description to analysis and the evaluation of concepts and facts, indicating a global – interpretative level of language command and perception.

Along with the findings by Moore et al. (2012), our findings demonstrate that the higher order skills of using inductive and deductive methods of perceiving information, distinguishing what the main points are and summarizing them are scholarly capabilities of high significance. Moreover, both studies highlight

that extensive genre-based reading has the potential to improve learners' writing. This point is crucial for integrating different forms of language command and showing the difference in the requirements between high school and academia.

Conclusion

The literature sources reviewed elucidate various interpretations of validity applied specifically to IELTS reading preparation. Constantly becoming more challenging, requirements of academia demand the capability to switch swiftly between reading strategies and approaching academic texts in various, local and global, literal and interpretative ways. The importance of speed-reading, which evoked the most extensive, inconsistent and emotional commentaries in participants, is expected to be the foundation stone of future debate.

Reading competence may be an extremely broad category to be measured in sixty minutes, but quality preparation can still provide an impressive number of essential skills required in academia, especially for students with a more modest linguistic background. However, preparation for the IELTS reading test is not considered as an extremely significant factor of smoother adjustment to academic challenges and an impact factor on academic success.

There is a necessity to communicate broader information to learners through the IELTS handbook, website and other communication channels. As all forms of assessment have their advantages and limitations, EAP tutors should encourage their students to make efforts to cover the subject without framing it within boundaries of measurement, but with a clear understanding of future academic and professional challenges.

Additional areas for future research include, but are not limited to, elaborating on extra factors besides deep knowledge, which could positively affect IELTS scores in reading and three other IELTS components from the perspective of educational psychology and language teaching methodology. As test-wiseness and washback are subjects of high significance due to the growing number of available exam materials and preparation techniques, more in-depth methods, such as classroom observations, detailed interviews and self-reports could be used to explore their negative consequences and develop methodological recommendations for all the stakeholders.

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There is No Alternative! Student Perceptions of Learning in a Second Language in Lebanon

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Since 1997, children in Lebanese state schools are taught most of the curriculum in English or French. The children's first language, Arabic, may be used even less in private schools, which educate 70% of children. In many countries, mother tongue education is seen as a right but in Lebanon it is taken for granted that children are taught in English or French. Written opinions were collected from seventy-five university students who were asked about the language in education policy. The results of a thematic analysis were discussed with a focus group of eight students. Findings point to a widespread acceptance of the policy, partly based on an underlying belief in the unsuitability of Arabic for the 21st century and a perception that the Lebanese are culturally predisposed to learn languages. Using the concept of linguistic imperialism, we discuss these results with reference to French colonialism and the global spread of English medium instruction. We also use a critical definition of ideology to discuss how a discourse in favour of the language in education policy, which actually favours the interests of the Lebanese elite, has been internalised by the students who see emigration as their only future.

Keywords: language policy, linguistic imperialism, ideology, Lebanese state school, mother tongue education, French colonialism

There is No Alternative! Student Perceptions of Learning in a Second Language in Lebanon

The right to be educated in one's own language has been recognised in several international agreements (UNESCO, n.d.) as a result of campaigns for regional and minority language rights. In Europe, for example, mother tongue education is now recognised as a legal right (Council of Europe, n.d) and in much of the postcolonial world governments have encountered similar pressures to legislate on language policy, albeit in ways specific to each country. In some, it was recognised that "every child should have the right to become literate in his or her mother tongue" (Wiley, 2013, p. 61). Thus, Malaysia legislated in 1970 for instruction in at least three languages (Abdullah & Heng, 2003) to provide for mother tongue education for a larger proportion of its citizens. On the other hand, Morocco ignored the first language of its Berber population until the early years of the 21st century (Bentahila, 1983; Ennaji, 2005).

The Rise of English as the Medium of Instruction

It is interesting to note that the awareness of the importance of learning in a pupil's mother tongue seems to be countered by an increase in popularity for immersion, or "submersion" (Piller, 2016, p. 107), English medium education in primary and secondary schools, even in countries where English does not play a significant part in life outside the classroom and where other colonial languages still retain some influence (Dearden, 2014). One might claim that such a context, the "expanding circle" in Kachru's (1997)

terms, is no longer easy to find on account of the global spread of English use via the Internet. However, despite the fact that English may be a part of an increasing number of people's regular lives through navigating online, such use of English is arguably more akin to a form of computer literacy than it is to the sort of communicative language ability (Bachman & Palmer, 1996) that language teachers are used to discussing. Moreover, even accepting that many young people in these countries engage in some kind of Internet-based negotiation/exchange of meaning, it is useful to distinguish between basic communication skills and the cognitive academic language proficiency necessary for success at school (Cummins, 2008). It is certainly still worth inquiring about the reasons for teaching core curriculum subjects in a language that is not dominant in key domains in the pupil's society.

The use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in universities is also spreading across the world and is now a topic of increasing research and comment (Altbach, 2004; Belhiah & Elhami, 2015; Coleman, 2006; Dearden & Akincioglu, 2016; Green, Wang, Cochrane & Paun, 2012; Kirkpatrick, 2017). These authors link the shift to EMI to the emergence of English as the lingua franca of international business and diplomacy, as well as the internationalisation of higher education as universities try to attract fee paying students from other countries. Coleman also identifies a degree of pragmatism in the shift to EMI. Referring to "the Microsoft effect" (p. 4), he suggests that once English medium instruction in universities has become dominant, it is no longer practical to choose another language.

Decisions about language of instruction, and especially about adopting a new language as a medium of instruction, are influenced by how power is distributed in any one context (Wright, 2007). Wright explains that to "… relinquish the use of one's own language to make space for the language of another group is almost always indicative of a shift in power relations" (p. 124). Power and, by implication, inequalities of power are also the keys that Tollefson (2013) identifies for investigating any aspect of language use in education.

Teaching in English, the teaching of English and relations of power in the world have been the topic of a major polemic in the last twenty-five years. Phillipson (1992; 2009; 2017) argues that there is a deliberate policy on the part of the UK and the USA to further their economic interests by promoting the expansion of English, a policy that he describes as "linguistic imperialism". Phillipson's work has been severely criticised, among other reasons, for seeing conspiracy, instead of benevolence, at work in aid and development projects (Davies, 1996). However, his ideas have had an important influence on the way we think about English and English Language Teaching (ELT) (e.g., Edge, 2003; 2006). In a response to Davies, he argues that, "Linguistic imperialism takes place within an overarching structure of North/South relations, where language interlocks with other dimensions, cultural (particularly education, science and the media), economic and political" (1997, p. 240). Said (1993), whose contemporaneous work on cultural imperialism, was better received, makes a similar claim: "In our time, direct colonialism has largely ended; imperialism, as we shall see, lingers where it has always been, in a kind of general cultural sphere as well as in specific political, ideological, economic and social practices" (p. 9).

While the term imperialism was perhaps unpopular in the early 1990s, when many found reasons for optimism as the Soviet Union broke up, the concept has regained currency. Hardt and Negri (2001) consider empire an appropriate term to describe the status of the global capitalism in the 21st century and, within the admittedly more restricted field of ELT, well-known authors were invited to contribute to a volume about teaching English in an age of empire (Edge, 2006).

In Phillipson's (2008; 2017) analyses of the workings of linguistic imperialism, he makes use of an idea from Harvey (2005), *accumulation through dispossession*. This is originally an idea to explain late capitalism's pursuit of profit through the commodification of anything left in common ownership such as public health and education services. Phillipson uses the concept to comment on Grin's (2004) analysis of the way some countries find their language is of questionable value and the advantage the USA derives from the global spread of English. He looks into the savings to the USA of not having to invest in translation and foreign language teaching to support its international trade as one example. In the discussion, Phillipson is also sensitive to the loss of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1992). An example of this would be the case of Egyptian primary school children being taught English in order to become computer literate at the expense of learning to be literate in Arabic (Warschauer, 2003). Elsewhere, Pathak's (2011) account of donning flak jackets to teach English to the new Iraqi army (after the established army was disbanded) may also be seen to provide some support for Phillipson's (2009) claims about a continuing linguistic imperialism aimed at increasing profits for national and multinational businesses based in the West by reaching into new territories and social domains.

Phillipson (1997) more generally considers analysis of linguistic imperialism to be part of linguicism studies, which scrutinize, "how language contributes to unequal access to societal power and how linguistic hierarchies operate and are legitimated" (p. 239). This is not a new idea but it is relevant to the spread of

EMI. Block (2015) gives examples of unequal access to societal power from several parts of the world and concludes that, "we are beginning to see a correlation between class position and individuals' access to and success in English language learning" (p. 11). This should concern us as we see basic education increasingly delivered through English. Of course, EMI in schools is not necessarily problematic, but an approach to EMI that maximises the use of English as an end in itself would need to be criticised from a social justice perspective.

What we can take from the authors commented on thus far is a clear understanding that the teaching of English in the world is not a neutral endeavour. Kumaravadivelu (2006) points out that TESOL professionals operate at the intersection of globalisation, empire and English and, "knowingly or unknowingly, play a role in the service of global corporations as well as imperial powers" (p. 1).

The idea of language use serving the interests of people in power points to the relevance of *ideology*. Phillipson (1992) would argue that that many of the beliefs supporting the spread of EMI are mistaken and are, in fact, "fallacies" (p. 194). In a more recent publication, he includes such beliefs in what he calls "the myths of global English" (2017, p. 315). These beliefs, which he argues are still dominant and underlie the acceptance of EMI, include the idea that use of a single language in class is better than bilingual instruction, that native-speaker teachers are to be preferred and that as early a start as possible is important for learning a second language. Looking into how fallacious beliefs develop is one focus of ideology studies.

In the literature on second language teaching, the term ideology is used inconsistently (Orr, 2014). At times, it has negative connotations, much like the word *dogma*, and, at others, as in the literature on language policy, it is viewed from neutral and/or critical perspectives (Johnson, 2013). A useful review of the term is Thompson (1990) who argues for a definition that sees ideology as basically "meaning in the service of power" (p. 23) or the use of language "to sustain relations of domination" (p. 56). Thompson's definition allows for a discourse to be more or less ideological inasmuch as it serves to make an unequal power relation acceptable and to appear to the dominated as something natural, neutral and eternal (or at least longstanding). The processes by which this happens are referred to by Thompson as *legitimation* and *reification*. The first confers authority on an idea while the second makes the idea appear to be something not created by people and thus beyond our control. Although Thompson's work on ideology is mostly used in media and cultural studies, it has also been used by education researchers working in different areas such as critical literacy (Janks, 2014); ELT textbook evaluation (Fitzgibbon, 2013); inclusive education (Slee, 2001); university teaching of accountancy (Ferguson, Collison, Power & Stevenson, 2009) and international law (Marks, 2001).

Not all authors writing about the emergence of English as a lingua franca view it in such a critical manner. They are generally more descriptive in their comments or write about how the teaching profession can adjust to the new reality (Dearden & Akincioglu, 2016; Galloway & Rose, 2015; Ostler, 2010). There may be a sense that if much of the world of work requires proficiency in English then schools and universities should help pupils and students by teaching in English. However, this seems a poor rationale for denying children the right to an education in core subjects in the language that they speak at home with their parents or other care-givers. A sign that the debate is to get more attention was the launch of a new research centre for EMI at the University of Oxford in March 2014 (EMI Oxford, n.d.), although the representation of EMI as an "unstoppable train" (Macaro, 2015, p. 7) might be taken to mean that, not only do we have no choice in the matter but that there may be undesirable consequences.

Language in Lebanon

The last one hundred and fifty years in Lebanon have seen Turkish, Arabic, French and English compete for space in education. Other languages spoken in the country include Kurdish and Armenian and more recently it has become very common to hear the languages of Sri Lankan, Ethiopian and Philippine migrant workers in addition to Pidgin Arabic (something Bizri (2010) calls "pidgin madam" and which developed because of the contact between Sri Lankan domestic workers and their Lebanese employers). Moreover, many Lebanese describe themselves as "English educated" or "French educated" – a reference to the fact that much of the school curriculum is delivered in one of these two languages.

The relationship between identity and language in Lebanon is the topic of continuing research and discussion (e.g., Al Batal, 2002; Diab, 2009; Esseili, 2014; Joseph, 2004; Marcus, 2016). While the first independent government in 1943 proclaimed the country as one with an Arab face, or character, the implication was that the body might be something else. Indeed, this is what is contested, with some arguing for a historical Arab identity and others for alternative histories, albeit in an Arab milieu. Based on the 1943 Constitution, power in Lebanon is allocated to the leaders of religious sects. A struggle to change the distribution of power in 1975 led to fifteen years of civil war. Early on in the war there may, in fact, have

been aspirations to end the sectarian system but the forces dedicated to maintaining it, albeit reshaped, were too powerful (Traboulsi, 2007). The civil war ended in 1990 and a long process of rebuilding the country began. Education reform was part of the process and this included decisions about the medium of instruction.

Schooling in Lebanon

Organized schooling for all children in Lebanon dates from the French mandate (1920-1943) when the language of instruction was Arabic and French. This became mainly Arabic post independence – at least officially. Notwithstanding the official position on Arabic, the widespread use of French continued despite criticism from nationalist intellectuals. Amil (1968/2007), for example, argued that the use of French discriminated against poor Lebanese children and that the education policy served to reproduce the elite class of Lebanese who had collaborated with the old French colonial power to maintain their privilege at the expense of the development of society. In addition to French, English began to establish a place for itself as a medium of instruction in the national school system. Diab (2006) sees this as a response to the growing importance of the USA in the region (US dollars are one half of the dual currency in Lebanon). When the civil war ended in 1990, attempts to establish a common identity and purpose included a new policy on language in education. In the case of Lebanon, Arabic was "made central to post-civil war unity" (Zakharia, 2009, p. 215) and the 1997 national curriculum made it the common language for all Lebanese school students no matter which foreign language might also be used. However, as Zakharia shows, Arabic is undermined by a complex of local and international factors, and, as a consequence, "devalued vis-à-vis other school languages" (p. 229). The current situation is that, officially, lessons are in French or English for science and mathematics and other subjects are given in Arabic. Unofficially, the language in education policy is implemented differently across the country, due to the existence of "a *centralized* government-mandated national curriculum delivered through highly *decentralized* schooling practices" (Zakharia, 2010, p. 158). Zakharia points to the growing network of private schools which educate around 70% of children (MEHE, 2014) in Lebanon. Many of these are subsidised by the state and run by foundations linked to the religious sects whose leaders form the government. These private schools "are linked to national networks that intercede in the implementation of top-down government school policies and create policies of their own" (Zakharia, 2010, p. 158). This means that Arabic may be used even less than officially intended.

Lebanon is thus an interesting case study, as a number of factors interact with each other and relate to decisions about the use of Arabic, French and English in education. There is the attempt to use the language of instruction to assist in developing a national identity while maintaining an economic and cultural and political relationship with the old colonial power of France. This relationship is said to be more important for Christian (particularly Maronite) Lebanese (Joseph, 2004; Suleiman, 2006). There is also the economic and political relation with the new imperial power (USA). The USA takes great interest in Lebanon because of its position in the region and its border with Israel. And, finally, there is the general trend towards EMI already discussed, which sees French losing ground in Lebanon (Diab, 2009; Esseili, 2014; Kadi, 2016; Suleiman, 2006). In other countries in the region, there seems to be concern about the presence of a second language as the medium of instruction in education and the consequences for Arabic (e.g. Bell, 2015; Findlow, 2006; Lindsey, 2015; Raddawi & Meslem, 2015; Solloway, 2017). However, in Lebanon, there is much less concern, perhaps because of an unquestioned assumption that the country is multilingual (Bahous, Bacha & Nabhani, 2011; Marcus 2016). There are occasional attempts to raise the issue (Shawish, 2010) but the literature does not include the kind of studies that have emerged from other Arabic speaking countries. Perhaps one obstacle is the refusal by some to even acknowledge the Lebanese dialect as Arabic (Salameh, 2010).

Another reason Lebanon is interesting to study is the presence of Palestinian children in Lebanon who attend schools run by the United Nations inside the refugee camps (around 400,000 people live in camps established more than 60 years ago when they had to leave their homes in historic Palestine). The Lebanese curriculum is followed, as is the language of instruction policy, and teachers struggle with the same problems as their colleagues outside the camps, exacerbated by the pressures of refugee life. Furthermore, since 2012, thousands of Syrian refugee children trying to access schooling in Lebanon have experienced the challenge of being taught in a second language.

Lebanon has very high school enrollment rates compared to other countries in the region, but the dropout rate is high and the repetition rate is the highest in the region. Problems with second languages are highlighted as one of the main challenges for students (UNICEF, 2012, p. 8), and, indeed, for teachers (MEHE, 2014, p. 15). Docherty, Barakat, Kniveton, Mikati and Khalifa (2017) claim that of 4000 Lebanese school teachers tested, 95% needed to improve their English to reach recommended levels. The UNICEF report into the plight of Syrian refugees in Lebanon

serves to highlight the problems facing poor Lebanese children whose classrooms they share in many of the rural areas. Thus, if "the language barrier stands as a towering impediment to the right to education" (UNICEF, 2012, p. 14) for the refugees, it is hardly less so for many poorer Lebanese children whose families have only basic proficiency in English or French, if at all. Ironically, both the refugees and their Lebanese host communities share the same mother tongue. In Syria, this is the language of instruction, but in Lebanon, it is replaced to a great extent by a foreign language.

Research Focus

Our interest in the medium of instruction in Lebanon developed over a number of years spent working with teachers of English and the increasing number of teachers of other subjects who teach in English. It can be argued that a policy whereby more than half the mandatory curriculum is taught in a language other than the pupils' mother tongue must rest on the assumption that the pupils have enough ability in English or French to be able to learn the curriculum to a satisfactory standard, or that they will develop this ability in the course of their studies with no disadvantage occurring. It seems reasonable to question these assumptions given that most Lebanese have Arabic as their mother tongue and pupils outside the capital do not live in communities where either English or French are widely spoken in everyday life. Most university programmes are in English or French but the universities have to run pre-sessional language programmes for many of their students. Shaaban (2005; 2013) comments on Lebanese school leavers' generally inadequate level of second language proficiency for university study. We decided to investigate this issue from the perspective of our students. The following general research question was formulated: What do Lebanese university students think about the second language medium of instruction policy and what reasons do they give for their opinions?

Methods

Research Context

The research was carried out in a private university in the north of Lebanon. The medium of instruction is officially English with a few courses delivered in French. Courses for a degree in Arabic language and literature are taught in Arabic. The university provides English language support for students in the form of a pre-sessional "Foundation" year, which consists of courses in English for Academic Purposes (EAP). There are also a number of courses for academic writing development that can be taken during a student's major.

Participants

The participants in this study came from classes taught by the researchers. A total of seventy-five students (from around one hundred) agreed to take part. Twenty-nine students were female and forty-six male. Fifty of the students were drawn from the Foundation year cohort and another twenty-five students were undergraduates drawn from an option module called Language, Society and Culture. A significant majority of the students had chosen to study for science and technology related degrees. The university is relatively expensive, although scholarships are available, so the students ,arguably, may be considered to come from middle-class backgrounds. The students were not asked about their religion. This was in contrast to Diab (2009) who also asked Lebanese students in an English medium university about their attitudes to the use of Arabic, English and French. In our case, we were interested to learn about ideas common to all our students, regardless of religious identity. The students were informed about the project and were asked in English and Arabic for permission to use their data and given the option to withdraw at any time.

Data Collection

As part of their course work, all these students were asked to write about the language in education policy in Lebanon. This consisted of an essay in which they were asked to give and explain their opinion. The course work was formative and did not count towards any formal assessment. The participants are those students who gave permission for their texts to be used as data in this research. The students were also invited to be part of a focus group to discuss the initial analysis. Subsequently, eight students attended a focus group session of one hour. The discussion was conducted in Arabic and English, recorded and transcribed.

Data Analysis

Both researchers view language (in) education from a critical and social justice perspective (Hawkins, 2011). As such, we are interested in understanding the way people with less societal power lose out as a consequence of the way different aspects of education are designed and practised. It was inevitable that such a critical perspective would influence the way we selected units of data for discussion. Recognising this reality, we tried to ensure that all the data was

analysed and that we did not begin by looking for evidence to support our own expectations. Therefore, an inductive approach similar to that described by Robson (2011, pp. 474-488) was taken to analysing the data. We read the students' work and identified every segment of text that constituted a unit of meaning. Each one was then assigned to a category suggested by the segment itself. Each segment was compared with those segments already placed in categories and, if necessary, a new category was created. Initially, some segments were assigned to more than one category. There is, of course, an important degree of subjectivity in deciding what counts as a unit of meaning. For example, we decided that the following piece of text constituted one unit of meaning rather than two: "Lebanese people are special and different from all Arabic people" (student 1). We put this segment in a category called "Lebanese uniqueness". At first, we assigned this segment to another category as well ("Lebanon is different from other Arab countries") but in the end this second category was seen to be less clear-cut than the first and the two were merged.

Eventually, all segments were assigned a single category through discussion between the researchers. The categories were then collected into themes that made discussion of the data more manageable and that reflected our interest in developing a critical understanding of the students' perceptions of the language in education policy. The focus group discussion was based on presenting the themes to the participants and asking them for their reactions. The ease with which they engaged with the discussion and the fact that they did not want to change the topics supported our sense of having identified the key aspects in the data.

Results

The results of the data analysis show that we sorted the students' comments into several categories, ten of which are relevant to the issue of their perceptions of the language in education policy in Lebanese schools. We were able to see three broad themes, each of which is made up of several categories of recurring ideas. These themes are explained below and illustrative quotes are provided.

Theme 1: Learning for the Modern World (Science, Technology, Business and the Media) Cannot be Done in Arabic

The students repeatedly refer to English and French as the vehicles for scientific knowledge while Arabic is referred to as a hindrance to learning science. This theme links the following categories:

Science comes from the West (and by extension, scientists are not Arabs). "The use of English is a must in some fields because there are no achievements of experiences done in Arabic" (student 34).

Key concepts in science and technology cannot be understood in Arabic (translation is not possible and by extension, "native" English speaking teachers are desirable). "If Arabic was chosen as the language in teaching this could be an educational disaster… look at words like cylinder, we use the same word in Arabic because to translate it, no one will understand what I am referring to" (student 32).

Arabic is not a world language. "…the native language of a country must not necessarily be used in the subjects of its education system especially if this language is universally weak and difficult to learn" (student 50).

Theme 2: Success in Life Involves Emigration

This theme is related to the previous idea about modern life being lived in international languages. This theme links the following categories:

Job prospects in Lebanon are limited (and so emigration is inevitable and the poor people are the ones who only speak Arabic). "The ability to speak languages gives us the opportunity to work in a country that pays higher wages" (student 49). "In other countries, the poor schools teach in Arabic …yeah the poor, the school that belong to the poor community" (student 75).

Postgraduate studies are better if followed in the parts of the world that produce modern ideas (and, by extension, the non-use of Arabic helps prepare for study abroad). "English support students studying at universities all over the world and it facilitates the opportunity for students to find jobs in the evolving market" (student 37).

The role of school is to prepare students for emigration. "We can know the success of the Lebanese people from the school system, the system obligate the student to study three languages. In addition, most Lebanese travel and work outside so they need to learn languages" (student 26).

Theme 3: The Lebanese are Able to Benefit from the Language in Education Policy because of a Unique Pragmatism, a Cultural Predisposition that Involves a Desire to Learn and Openness to the World.

The common thread here is the idea that Lebanon is a crossroads where different powers meet and through which different peoples pass, some of them settling. This is related to the idea of Lebanon having a unique geography that leaves it squeezed between the sea and high mountains, beyond which lies the desert.

References to the unique geography, differentiated from everything to the east, give way to references to a unique culture, also expressed as different to everything to the east and, particularly, to other Arab countries. This theme links the following categories:

Lebanon is unique. "Lebanese people are special and different from all Arabic people" (student 1).

Lebanon is a physical and cultural crossroads. "Lebanon is small and located between three continents. The location attributes to Lebanon the quality of linking culture… the number one country in the Middle East when it comes to communication and learning process" (student 2).

The Lebanese are open to new ideas and learning (and by extension they are good language learners). "They want to be opened on all the world. One important way to follow the world's improvements is that they learn other languages to understand everything" (student 7). "We find people more cultivated and educated, they can speak more than a language by the age of ten" (student 38). "Lebanese are known for their ability to learn lots of languages" (student 28).

The Lebanese ability in languages comes from their pragmatic outlook. "Despite the wars and what they have been through they learned to adapt to all situations and live with what they have" (student 21). "In other countries such as Syria, in most schools, Arabic is the main language that is used for most subjects. That is why they are known through Arabic countries as good Arabic speakers, as average citizens, public speakers and politicians. Lebanon on the other hand has a reputation of 'having the survival skills wherever you throw them'" (student 40).

Discussion

The general research question that we started with was, "What do Lebanese university students think about the L2 medium of instruction policy and what reasons do they give for their opinions?" The answer in the case of our participants is that they generally approve of the policy and that their reasons are largely pragmatic, based on recognition of the utility of English in the global world of work. Running through the data is the sense that Arabic is not a language of power and an almost unanimous belief that not using in the mother tongue in school is a positive feature of the Lebanese education system. This finding is consistent with the results reported in Diab (2009) and Esseili (2011). Much of our participants' reasoning also seems to be based on a sort of common sense about the inadequacy of Arabic for dealing with the concepts of the modern world.

In an effort to follow the trend towards critical perspectives in language policy related studies (Johnson, 2013) we will now discuss the findings using Phillipson's (1992; 2009; 2017) ideas about linguistic imperialism and Thompson's (1990) ideas about ideology. In doing so, we are conscious of Johnson's warning that "focusing exclusively on the subjugating power of policy" can make it appear "monolithic" (p. 43). However, we hope to avoid this by considering the multiple influences of past colonial history, the reality of globalisation today, the nature of political power in Lebanon and a dominant narrative about Lebanese identity.

Linguistic Imperialism

We can see awareness of the idea of a global hierarchy in the students' sense of having to accept the struggle to learn in a second language in order to be as good as the source of new ideas, i.e. the West. They have accepted that their lot is to run fast so that they can keep pace. The efforts of western cultural organisations to improve French and English language teaching are also based on this belief. Lin and Luke (2006) put it like this, "The core ontogenic assumption of colonialism and, indeed, of the new forms of economic and cultural empire is that the 'Other' is playing a linear game of individual, technological and cultural 'catch up'" (p. 69). Our students' perception of Arabic, in line with Zakharia (2009), as a language of the home, associated with history and religion, goes hand in hand with their sense of needing to work in the more valuable languages of the powerful in order to try and catch up. Lin and Luke would not be surprised that one of the students made the comment that, "Arabic can't cope with the modern world as fast as English" (student 6). Thus, instead of developing their thinking and expression in Arabic and English, our students accept that their intellectual progress will be formed solely through English. This is the integrated process of linguistic capital accumulation and dispossession referred to by Phillipson (2017).

It is interesting to contrast the students' perceptions of Arabic with perceptions of another language being replaced by a second language as the medium of instruction, Chinese. While Arabic appears to be considered a language of limited value, Kirkpatrick (2014, p. 5) takes it for granted that Chinese universities recognize that Chinese is a "vibrant and important language of communication and scholarship" despite being replaced by English on some programmes. This difference is arguably due to the relatively strong position of China in the global balance of power.

We have seen that those students in Lebanon who succeed in graduating from the school system to reach

university consider emigration as the necessary next step. When they do so, they contribute directly to the process of accumulation through dispossession (Grin, 2004), in this case by a poor country adding to the wealth of richer countries by exporting its educated youth. Moreover, it is these students who can aspire to better incomes. In this sense, the language in education policy helps maintain unequal access to societal power.

Ideology

The perception that the imposition of an L2 medium of instruction is a normal and acceptable state of affairs can be considered in relation to the processes of "reification" and "legitimation". These are two of the key ideas that underpin Thompson's (1990) discussion of ideology in terms of how language is used to create "meaning in the service of power" (p. 56). In the case of this research project, we have considered language in more ways than one. Firstly, there is the language of instruction, English, French or Arabic, and secondly, there is the language used by our participants to express themselves. Thirdly, there are also the discourses about Lebanon to which the students make reference.

Reification. This is a major process whereby a temporary, historical state of affairs is portrayed as if it is permanent and natural. Thus, the social world is observed by people in the same way they might observe a mountain; they do not see it as something they shape and can change. All of the students made comments suggesting that it was common sense to study in a second language. In the following example one of the students explains that, "Most of the schools teach the scientific courses in French or English. It's important for students to know how to speak these languages to make education easier to follow" (student 7). Thus, second language medium instruction is necessary because it will help the pupils understand lessons given in a second language.

Legitimation. This is another major process in which we see the way ideas are *universalised*, *rationalised* and *narrativised*. Universalisation is the process by which the exercise of power is presented as rooted in mutual interest. In the next example, we can see how a student sees the decision to use a second language as the medium of instruction as a positive decision taken in the best interests of everyone: "In Lebanese schools opportunities will be open and choices infinite with French and English rather than Arabic. It's true that students are Lebanese but they will be recognised according to their education and knowledge and not their culture. I prefer to be open to the world and not limited to the Arab world only." (student 33).

Rationalisation is the process by which events are seen as logical and alternatives as irrational. In the data, there are clear expressions of disbelief that schooling could be different, despite their own experience of seeing teachers at school and university use Arabic to discuss difficult concepts introduced in the second language: "Some majors cannot be taught in Arabic. In schools, these subjects are taught in English and French. To follow educational progress we must use the language of research." (student 34); "…it is so difficult to study scientific subjects in Arabic… If you ask somebody in Lebanon why are you are learning this language he will answer by just saying it is simpler than the Arabic language and its complexity… there is no qualified teachers who teach scientific subjects in Arabic" (student 49). It is ironic that the UN report (UNICEF, 2012) on the experiences of Syrian refugee children in Lebanese schools includes the story of a school where the teacher decided to use Arabic out of sympathy to the students and reported, "We give them sciences in French, so I suggested that we give it in Arabic, they did better than the Lebanese" (2012, p. 16).

Finally, narrativisation is the process by which practices are set in historical context and seen as worthy of respect. The ideological move of narrativisation is clearly evident in the way all students refer to the history of Lebanon in their explanations of why Lebanese students can cope with second language medium instruction. There are references to the Ottoman rulers, the French and the Americans. There is pragmatism here, recognising the reality of foreign powers and rationalising education policy decisions (in favour of the languages of these powers) as a logical consequence – for example, "Lots of people learned French language when the French army was in Lebanon" (student 5).

There is also another narrative at work, the idea of Lebanon as open to all cultures through its geographical position as a crossroads between east and west. This is the Lebanon that is the safe refuge for people escaping oppression. It is also as the Lebanon of the Phoenician myth (Kaufman, 2014; Traboulsi, 1999) that is home to a society of sea traders who become entrepreneurs through skilful negotiation of their contacts with other peoples and because of a desire to learn. The following examples show this sense of history, geography and culture: "Variety of cultures that passed through left behind people that speak different languages, like Armenian" (student 3). "Lebanon is an open country that links Gulf countries to European countries" (student 27). "Lebanon geographically is located in a strategic position in the Middle East due to its sea ports in the Mediterranean sea… Lebanon merchants must learn any languages to communicate in foreign trading" (student 22).

We have seen how our students are positive about the use of second languages at the expense of Arabic on the basis that they are better prepared for a life abroad. It may seem strange that a school system should be approved of because it prepares the country's children to leave but underlying this idea is the awareness that there is little work in Lebanon and what work exists is not well paid. We know from Yaacoub and Badre (2012) that 53% of graduates living in Lebanon are unemployed. (Shaheen (2016) adds corruption to the causes driving Lebanese youth to emigrate). The link between poverty and not knowing English and/or French is made explicit by several students. The need to emigrate is rationalised on the basis of the situation in Lebanon, but the idea that the situation could be different is not considered. The economy and the effects of globalisation are effectively reified, reproducing the discourse of "there is no alternative" that is the slogan of neoliberalism (Holborrow, 2007). Emigration is also commented on as something which the Lebanese have been doing for a long time and the link to the story of previous generations makes it easier to accept the need to leave.

How the Elite Benefit

If the role of ideology is to sustain unequal power relations in society, then, in this case, we would argue that the elite in Lebanon benefit from the unquestioning use of second languages as a medium of instruction in education through the production of graduates who emigrate and whose remittances are extraordinarily important for the economy (Nader, 2014; Atalla & Ezzeddine, 2017). The way this policy is perceived makes the Ministry of Education appear to be providing the key skills that every child needs – despite the high repetition and drop out rates. Nader cites a report that shows the government benefits because over 60% of remittances from Lebanese working abroad goes on food expenditures as recipients working in Lebanon are poor and those without work have no welfare payments to rely on.

The reproduction of the narrative of the pragmatic, resourceful Lebanese (also seen in Diab's (2009) results) arguably places the responsibility for any lack of success at school on the individual who does not have the necessary desire to learn. It might also be seen to relieve the Ministry of Education of a responsibility to invest in the kind of professional development necessary if teachers are to work in a second language (or ideally multiple languages) because there is an assumption that, while it is a challenge, it is one the Lebanese are culturally equipped to deal with. There is also a benefit to the religious elites whose private schools attract parents aware of the lack of resources in the government schools.

Finally, the discourse around the use of English and French in education can be seen as part of those discourses that present Lebanese society as different from Arab societies, despite the "Arab face". The idea that Lebanon is qualitatively different benefits the religious elites, who have little interest in a strong central authority of the kind historically found elsewhere in the region (Traboulsi, 2007; Salamey, 2014; Salloukh, Barakat, Al-Habal, Khattab & Mikaelian, 2015).

Our main area of interest is the teaching of English so this is where we will direct some final comments. It is encouraging that recent years have seen a critical focus on EMI developing (Barnard, 2015; Shohamy, 2013; Wilkinson, 2012), and Kirkpatrick (2014) argues that action can be taken to resist EMI in favour of a bi/multilingual model more appropriate for the 21st century. While some may see EMI as an "unstoppable train" (Macaro, 2015, p. 7), Kirkpatrick's metaphor is that the "EMI horse has bolted" (2016), one that at least suggests regaining control is possible. In our opinion, discussions about EMI, for example on postgraduate programmes in ELT, without reference to social class, to the people who benefit and to those who are disadvantaged, are themselves ideological because they present EMI as a generally neutral or beneficial development. Unfortunately, social class is not a topic that is common in mainstream literature in ELT, in contrast to writing on education more generally (e.g. Bisseret, 1979; Wrigely and Smyth, 2013). Another reason to want a critical perspective is the questionable linking of EMI with modernising that belittles local knowledge and expertise. For example, Dearden, (2014), in her report for the British Council, writes that university degrees from Kazakhstan were previously not recognised in the developed world because of the country's Soviet background. Now, however, in Kazakhstan, there is the perception that, "EMI is not simply a new medium of instruction, but also a way to implement a pedagogy and curriculum which is more in line with established world standards of teaching and assessment" (p. 19). Even more recently, the Malaysian government has decided that all locally produced English language textbooks will be replaced by UK publications (Aris, 2017). This perception of the superiority of western ideas about language and teaching supports the use of linguistic imperialism and ideology as a framework for the analysis of EMI in many contexts. If discussion of EMI, or the adoption of any other second language as a medium of instruction, is not conducted critically, the main problems considered are technical ones (e.g. Vu and Burns, 2014), such as not having enough appropriately trained teachers. This assumption unfortunately elicits responses (e.g. Cambridge English, n.d.; Docherty, et al., 2017) that perpetuate

the impression that solutions are to be found amongst foreign experts.

Conclusion

In this paper we have considered university students' perceptions of the way that English and French are used in Lebanese schools. Our study is limited to participants at one English medium university and cannot claim to be representative although there are similarities with some of the conclusions of other researchers (Diab, 2009; Esseili, 2011; Zakharia, 2010).

We think that it is important that studies into the use of second languages as the medium of instruction, and the possible marginalising of the mother tongue in schools, take a critical perspective. We have tried to do this by using core concepts of linguistic imperialism and ideology. In Lebanon, French as a medium of instruction is a legacy of colonialism. Back in 1968, Amil (1968/2007) criticised the discriminatory effects of French as a language of instruction in core subjects, "Behind a heavy curtain of slogans about cultural openness, what is hidden is the fact that the majority of Lebanese pupils' needs are being ignored as a result of the way science and the Arabic language are treated in school." (p. 11). On the other hand, the widespread use of English is a relatively recent development and one that is linked to a globalisation that sees access to English correlate with social class (Block, 2015). The students in our study made several comments that clearly linked English proficiency with avoiding poverty.

We suggest that practitioners in Lebanon give more consideration to the value of a multilingual pedagogy that develops and makes use of their students' full range of language and literacy skills, including Arabic, in the teaching of all curriculum subjects. Future research could investigate the implementation of such a pedagogy in selected schools across the diversity of contexts existing in Lebanon. As mentioned earlier, the literature on language of instruction in Lebanon does not reflect the same concern for mother tongue education as seems to exist in other countries in the region. A research agenda that focused on multilingual classroom practices could take advantage of the perception in Lebanon that schooling needs to happen in more languages than just the mother tongue, and, at the same time, shift attention towards improving the school experiences of all the country's children.

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Influence of L1 Properties and Proficiency on the Acquisition of Gender Agreement

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This research investigates the influence of L1 properties and proficiency level on the acquisition of the Spanish gender agreement system. French and English-speaking learners of Spanish participated in the study. Subjects were divided into four different groups considering their L1 (French and English) and their proficiency level (intermediate and advanced). Subjects completed three different tasks: an untimed grammaticality judgment (UGJT) to measure learners' explicit knowledge, an elicited oral imitation (EOI) and an eye-tracking to assess their implicit knowledge of the Spanish gender agreement system. From this multi-tiered methodology, this research project aimed to examine whether L1 properties and proficiency level influence learners' explicit and implicit knowledge of the Spanish gender agreement. The results from the UGJT suggest that both French and English learners can notice noun-adjective discord. As for the EOI and eye-tracking tasks, only the French advanced learners clearly demonstrated integrated implicit knowledge of gender agreement. Therefore, based on these results, we can imply that implicit knowledge of gender agreement is acquired later and that L1 properties influence this whole process, even at an advanced proficiency level.

Keywords: grammatical gender, adjective agreement, L2 Spanish, transfer, proficiency level, explicit knowledge, implicit knowledge, eye-tracking

Influence of L1 Properties and Proficiency on the Acquisition of Gender Agreement

The acquisition of morpho-syntactic features in a second language is often problematic, even for learners with advanced proficiency level (Bruhn de Garavito & White, 2002; White, Valenzuela, Kozlowska-Macgregor & Leung, 2004; Keating, 2009; Foucart & Frenck-Mestre, 2011). The development of an L2 can largely be affected by transfer, a general term used to explain the influence of an acquired language in the development of a new one (Gass & Selinker, 1983; Odlin, 1989; Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008). It has been suggested that, when there is a similarity between two languages, learners can acquire a given structure without too much confusion by means of transfer (Sabourin, Stowe & De Haan, 2006; Ellis, Conradie & Huddlestone, 2012; Alhawary, 2005; 2009). Typological similarity and source language proficiency are known to influence transfer processes of any kind (Ringbom, 2007). However, it remains a methodological challenge to identify the extent to which transfer and proficiency level influence acquisition.

An area that has been widely explored in the field of morpho-syntax acquisition is L2 gender agreement (e.g., Sagarra & Herschensohn, 2011; Montrul, de la Fuente, Davidson & Foote, 2013, Hopp, 2016), a topic of great interest since it is a complex and ambiguous feature, which proves itself to be difficult whether or not L1 and L2 grammars differ. To investigate gender agreement, some studies have employed offline techniques to measure grammatical knowledge, such as grammaticality judgment task for comprehension and oral errors for production (White et al., 2004; Judy, Guijarro-Fuentes & Rothman, 2008; Montrul, Foote & Perpiñán, 2008; Alarcón, 2011). Other studies have used online techniques to measure implicit knowledge in real time, such as eye-tracking and event-related potentials (Keating, 2009; Tokowicz & MacWhinney, 2005; Bañón, Fiorentino & Gabriele, 2014). However, few studies have considered combining various tasks to tap into the acquisition of both explicit and implicit knowledge of gender agreement.

In this study, we investigate the influence of L1

properties and proficiency level on the acquisition of explicit and implicit knowledge of the Spanish gender agreement system. French and English-speaking learners of Spanish participated in this research project. For their part, the underlying gender system in the French language has a direct counterpart in Spanish. In contrast, English has no concord on adjectives, making these two ideal cases to test the influence of transfer at different proficiency levels on the acquisition of this feature. Using a set of tasks ranging from an online receptive reading task (eye-tracking) to an expressive task (elicited oral imitation) and an offline receptive task (untimed grammaticality judgment), this research project intends to extensively examine the influence of learners' L1 properties and proficiency level on the acquisition of both explicit and implicit knowledge of gender agreement.

Crosslinguistic Influence

Generally speaking, the notion of crosslinguistic influence can be summarised as the, "influence resulting from similarities and differences between target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired" (Odlin, 1989, p. 27). Depending on learner-related factors, such as language proficiency and typology, prior knowledge will have more or less influence on the learner's receptive and expressive competence of the L2. Furthermore, the interaction between different language systems in a learner's mind may either help them understand or produce the L2 or not. Recently, Ringbom (2007) brought forward a new position in characterizing transfer in three different levels: 'item' for words, expressions, morphemes and phonemes, 'procedural' for transfer of language functional categories and 'overall' for the combination of both item and procedural.

According to Ringbom (2007), in order for transfer to happen at the 'item' level, it depends on how learners perceive the similarities and the differences between their L1 and their L2. Learners make use of an oversimplification strategy, where they would perceive the L2 as equivalent to their L1 and apply the rule as such. Item transfer is mostly observed at the lower proficiency level. As for procedural transfer, we refer once again to learners' perception of the linguistic distance that exists between both languages. In other words, the influence of procedural transfer is positive when both language structures are linguistically similar, i.e., whose functional categories are similar but could also be negative if they differ from each other. Even though it is well established that positive transfer is far more difficult to measure (e.g., Falk & Bardel, 2010), the present study attempts to examine positive procedural transfer of gender agreement from French-speaking learners of Spanish.

Learning Gender Agreement

According to Corbett (1991), the existence of gender is revealed by morpho-syntactic agreement. In Spanish, the target language of the present study, adjectives grammatically agree with nouns in gender and number (Real Academia Española, 2010; Bosque & Demonte, 1999). In many cases, morpho-phonological properties of the noun can provide a cue to its gender, with nouns ending in – o (e.g., *piso* 'flat') belonging to the masculine and those ending in – a (e.g., *casa* 'house') to the feminine class, although there are exceptions to these rules (see Montrul et al., 2008). As for French, adjectives grammatically agree with nouns as in Spanish, i.e., the systems work similarly. Compared to gendered languages such as Spanish and French, English does not mark grammatical gender on either nouns or adjectives (e.g., white house). Because of the process of gender concord (Steele, 1978), the adjective changes its inflection in accordance with the noun's gender, which dictates the variability in the inflectional pattern of the adjective. Consequently, gender agreement is a mechanism that indicates the relations of different linguistic categories in a sentence. While gender assignment is a lexical property of nouns, gender marking on adjectives is a derivative property that depends on the noun they modify. The principle that adjectives must be marked for the gender of the noun they are associated with is known as 'gender agreement'.

For morpho-syntactic gender agreement, many studies using online receptive tasks, such as eye-tracking and event-related potentials, reveal that sensitivity to agreement violations correlates with the presence of grammatical gender marking in the learners' L1 (e.g., Bond, Gabriele, Fiorentino & Bañón, 2011; Foucart & Frenck-Mestre, 2011), as well as of learners' proficiency (Keating, 2009; Sagarra & Herschenhohn, 2011; 2013; Gabriele, Fiorentino & Bañón, 2013). Moreover, according to Morales et al. (2015), learners whose L1 encodes grammatical gender can come to use gender marking with a high level of accuracy at intermediate proficiency levels. To the contrary, some studies indicate that even highly advanced L2 learners who speak a genderless L1 still struggle with gender agreement on determiners, even for highly familiar L2 nouns (Lew-Williams & Fernald, 2010; Grüter, Lew-Williams & Fernald, 2012). Given this, it would appear that gender agreement is a feature acquired later in the acquisition process (Foucart & Frenck- Mestre, 2011; Judy et al., 2008; Montrul et al., 2013). Regarding studies using offline

receptive tasks, such as grammaticality judgment and sentence completion, they observe similar phenomena (Sabourin et al., 2006; Ellis et al., 2012). In other words, the presence of a gender system in the learners' L1 presents itself as being beneficial in the acquisition of such a feature.

While findings from some studies using oral expressive tasks are in keeping with the tendencies observed in the previously mentioned research (Alhawary, 2005; 2009; Dewaele & Véronique, 2000; 2001; Barting, 2000), other research points towards a lesser influence of L1 properties in acquiring gender agreement (Bruhn de Garavito & White, 2002; White et al., 2004). As the latter research stated, even though learners speak a gendered language, they still make gender concord errors at a frequency similar to their genderless language counterparts. With these contradictions in mind, the current study sought to explore this area further, putting forward an experiment combining different tasks, which allow for in-depth observations of the influence of L1 properties and proficiency level on the acquisition of gender agreement.

The Present Study

Most research observing the acquisition of gender agreement in an L2 indicate that L1 properties play a major role in the process (Sabourin et al., 2006; Ellis et al., 2012; Foucart & Frenck-Mestre, 2011). However, most studies are either offline or online and focus solely on advanced proficiency learners. Additionally, the majority of these research projects did not take into account either type of linguistic knowledge assessed (explicit or implicit) or multiple L2 learners' proficiency level. The present study explored the extent to which acquiring explicit and implicit knowledge of gender agreement, exemplified by noun-adjective concord, can be influenced by learners' L1 properties and proficiency level. Furthermore, Sagarra & Herschensohn (2011; 2013) recommended that future research use a combination of different tests. For this reason, we employed an online receptive reading task (eye-tracking experiment) and an offline receptive task (untimed grammaticality judgment task), and an expressive task (elicited oral imitation test) to investigate the following research questions:

1. Do L1 properties affect the development of learners' explicit and implicit knowledge of noun-adjective agreement?

The prediction for the first research question, whether L1 properties affect the development of learners' knowledge of gender concord, is that French speakers learners of Spanish will demonstrate sensitivity to gender agreement violations, whereas English speaking learners of Spanish will not (for both explicit and implicit measures). This prediction follows Ringbom's (2007) procedural transfer, which assumes that syntactic processing in L2 is affected by the similarity of syntactic rules in L1 and L2.

2. Does L2 proficiency affect the acquisition process of noun-adjective gender agreement? Is there a difference between the intermediate and the advanced participants?

The second research question examines whether there is a difference between the intermediate and advanced learners when it comes to acquiring explicit and implicit knowledge of Spanish gender agreement. We hypothesize that advanced learners will be more sensitive to gender concord than the intermediate learners, in both the explicit and implicit measures. We base our prediction on previous research, which determined that gender agreement is a syntactic feature acquired late in the acquisition process (Lew-Williams & Fernald, 2010; Grüter et al., 2012; Foucart & Frenck- Mestre, 2011; Judy et al., 2008; Montrul et al., 2013).

3. If taken together, do L1 properties in combination with proficiency level affect the types of knowledge acquired (explicit and implicit) to different extents?

The third research question focuses on examining to what extent learners' L1 properties and proficiency level, taken together, affect the acquisition of Spanish gender agreement. More specifically, we observe whether the differences between our four groups of learners, divided in terms of L1 properties and proficiency level, influence the types of knowledge expressed, namely explicit and implicit knowledge. The fact that it is well established that explicit and implicit knowledge are not accessed the same way leads us to suggest that there will be a difference between each group and their difficulties. Furthermore, additional research into crosslinguistic influence suggests that L1 properties are potentially more influential at the initial stages of acquisition (Odlin & Jarvis, 2004; Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008). Consequently, we predict that the influence of L1 properties will stabilize at an advanced proficiency level.

Materials and Methods

A between-subjects design was employed to explore the influence of L1 properties and proficiency level in the development of explicit and implicit knowledge of grammatical gender agreement in L2 Spanish. Number agreement was kept constant, whereas gender was manipulated by using feminine and masculine

patterns marked on nouns and adjectives within every experimental item. Explicit knowledge was measured through an untimed grammaticality judgment task (UGJT), whereas implicit knowledge was assessed through both an eye-tracking experiment and an elicited oral imitation test (EOI).

Participants

Twenty-three English and twenty French speaking learners of Spanish participated in the study. They were first asked to complete a placement test in order to classify them into one of the four groups: English-intermediate (n=11), English-advanced (n=12), French-intermediate (n=10) and French-advanced (n=10). Participants who had learned and/or were previously exposed to any other L2s with grammatical gender were excluded from the study. Given the linguistic context of Canada, English-speaking Canadians were not considered for participation because of their probable active or passive knowledge of the French language. For that reason, the English-speaking subjects were all undergraduate students at a college in the northeast of the United States. The English participants included 10 males and 13 females. As for the French-speaking subjects, they were all enrolled in a postsecondary education program at different institutions in the province of Quebec in Canada. The French participants included 4 males and 16 females. Finally, for their data to be included in the results, all participants needed to complete all tasks, which were divided into two different sessions. Table 1 specifically illustrates the age range, number of Spanish courses completed and length of immersion in a Spanish-speaking country.

Study Design

The materials for the three tasks consisted of 24 sentences involving noun-adjective gender agreement, half of which were grammatical (i.e., the noun and modifying adjective agreed in gender) and half were ungrammatical (i.e., the noun and modifying adjective did not agree in gender). We also considered noun gender and linear distance in an attempt to diminish task effect. However, the present study highlights grammaticality, which should suffice to answer the research questions. Noun gender (masculine vs. feminine) was matched across conditions, whereas linear distance between the noun and its agreeing adjective was organized into three levels (see Table 2). The experimental items followed the same syntactic structure in all three experiments to complete. In each task, the 24 experimental items were mixed with 24 filler sentences that tested other aspects of grammar (tense, number agreement and verb conjugation).

The nouns and the adjectives used in this study were rigorously selected. First, all experimental nouns and adjectives ended in the suffixes commonly associated with gender (–o for masculine and –a for feminine). This was done to ensure that the emphasis was on gender agreement, not assignment. Errors in gender agreement are more salient when gender is marked morphologically on nouns and adjectives. Second, in order to eliminate confounding effects, we only used grammatical gender leaving semantic gender aside. Third, to ensure that the results were not influenced by unfamiliar words, all nouns (n= 55) and adjectives (n= 47) were selected from the benchmarks for beginners (A1-A2) of the *Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes* (2006). As shown in Table 2, we

Table 1
Background Information for the L2 Learners of Spanish

Group	Age range	Number of Spanish courses completed	Length of immersion in a Hispanic country
English intermediate (n = 11)			
Mean	18.64	3.36	0.55
Range	18-20	0-4	0-6
SD	0.67	1.21	1.81
English advanced (n = 12)			
Mean	20.08	4.17	2.75
Range	18-22	3-7	0-12
SD	1.16	1.03	4.56
French intermediate (n = 10)			
Mean	32.6	0.9	0.70
Range	17-64	0-5	0-5
SD	15.73	1.91	1.64
French advanced (n = 10)			
Mean	40.00	0.90	15.4
Range	29-71	0-4	0-84
SD	15.92	1.52	25.78

controlled for terminal morphology, type of gender and word familiarity. However, creating 24 sentences per experiment constrained us to recycle experimental nouns and adjectives.

These different categories allowed learners' competence on both grammatical and ungrammatical sentences to be tested. All of the sentences were eight to twelve words long, so that processing demands would not cause longer sentences to be rejected or misunderstood.

Procedure

During the first session, participants first completed a screening test (placement test) in order to classify them in the right group. Afterwards, they performed an elicited oral imitation test (EOI) and an untimed grammaticality judgment task (UGJT). This session lasted approximately 90 minutes per participant. The second session took place two to three weeks later, where subjects participated in an eye-tracking experiment, for approximately 45 minutes. As Sagarra & Herschensohn (2011) suggested, we should have gone from the most implicit to the most explicit measure so that the latter did not bias the implicit processes of the former. Because of technical difficulties and availability of the eye-tracking device, we were unable to replicate this suggestion. However, we believe that the number of weeks between sessions was enough to control the learners' awareness of the focus of the study.

First session: Elicited oral imitation and untimed grammaticality judgment task. The EOI was designed to investigate learners' implicit knowledge of the Spanish gender agreement system within a semi-controlled expressive task. To date, this experiment is considered to be one of the most reliable tasks to measure implicit/intuitive L2 knowledge (Erlam, 2006; 2009; Zhang, 2015). The EOI required participants to listen to a sentence in Spanish, to answer a yes or no comprehension question, which served as distraction, and then to reconstruct the sentence in the best Spanish possible. Each experimental item included a noun-adjective gender agreement. As previously mentioned, half the sentences were grammatical and half contained a noun-adjective gender discord. The EOI is reconstructive in nature and not rote repetition. Thus, we expected speakers who had internalized implicit knowledge of the target structure to spontaneously correct ungrammatical items. One point was allotted when the noun-adjective agreement was well reconstructed and no point when reconstructed otherwise.

The second experiment, UGJT, was designed to investigate learners' explicit knowledge of the Spanish gender agreement system through a receptive offline task. Since the UGJT required learners to focus on form and was not time constrained, it is considered a measure of explicit knowledge (Godfroid et al., 2015; Vafaee, Suzuki & Kachisnke, 2017). In this experiment, participants read Spanish sentences silently on a computer screen, then decided whether each sentence was correct or incorrect and finally, if judged incorrect, indicated the source of the error. Subjects were allotted one point for identifying grammatical sentences as correct or ungrammatical ones as incorrect including identifying the error.

Second session: Eye-tracking experiment. Based widely on the recommendations of Keating (2009) and those of Roberts & Siyanova-Chanturia (2013), the eye-tracking experiment was designed to investigate learners' implicit knowledge of the Spanish gender agreement system by means of an online receptive task. While reading, participants' eye-movements were recorded with an EyeTechSensor tracking device designed by PerTech. Viewing was binocular, with eye

Table 2
Experimental Items

Examples of experimental items	Location of adjective
1a) *El jamón serrano y el **pollo frío** tiene muchas calorías* 'Serrano ham and cold chicken contain a lot of calories.' 1b) *En la clase de español, una **pizarra** ***negro** es muy útil.* 'In the Spanish classroom, a blackboard is very useful.'	Adjacent (attributive)
2a) *Para viajeros, una **cámara** es **cara**, pero muy útil* 'For travellers, a cámara is expensive but very useful.' 2b) *Según mi hija, la **tortuga** es ***lento** y el tigre es rápido.* 'According to my daughter, the turtle is slow and the tiger is fast.'	+1 word (predicative)
3a) La **comida** de la cocinera está **preparada** con poca sal. 'The cook's food is prepared with little salt' 3b) La **fiesta** de mi amiga fue ***divertido** e impresionante. 'My friend's party was fun and impressive.'	+4-5 words (predicative)

movement recorded from the right eye. The apparatus was interfaced with a PC that controlled stimulus display and data storage. The sentences were presented individually on a 17-inch monitor. Sentences appeared in a single line in black against a light gray background using normal uppercase and lowercase letters.

Before each Spanish sentence, subjects were asked to fix a target that occupied the position of the sentence-initial character. They were instructed to look at the fixation target while pressing the 'Advance' button to display the sentence. Participants were asked to read the Spanish sentences for meaning and to indicate whether the subsequent sentence (written in the subjects' L1) expressed the same general idea as the Spanish sentence by pressing YES or NO. This check for meaning served as a distractor from the possible ungrammaticality of the target item.

Although eye movements were recorded on every word in each sentence, analyses were limited to data obtained from three different measures: Total reading time and time allotted to the regions of interest (ROI) 'adjective' (in milliseconds), and the regressions to the controller noun (in percentage of probability). This study examined if there were differences in the data regarding the learners' reading of the grammatical and the ungrammatical sentences. The equipment setup and calibration, combined with the online receptive task took approximately 45 minutes.

For comparability purposes, the EOI, the UGJT and the eye-tracking experiment contained the same number and type of sentences, but the content and noun-adjective combinations were different to avoid possible practice effects that would increase sensitivity to gender agreement violations.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the learners' performance on noun-adjective agreement in Spanish. As mentioned previously, data from this set of experiments allowed us to examine learners' explicit knowledge (UGJT) as well as implicit knowledge (EOI and eye-tracking) of the target feature.

Experiment 1: Untimed Grammaticality Judgment Task

The UGJT was aimed at examining the influence that L1 properties and proficiency level have on the acquisition of explicit knowledge. In order to make sure that we observed learners' explicit knowledge, we did not impose any time constraint and made sure that learners' attention was directed towards the linguistic forms.

As shown in Table 3, when isolating the L1 properties variable, the data showed no significant differences between the English-speaking and the French-speaking learners as both groups completed the UGJT with a high level of accuracy. However, there was a significant interaction between grammaticality and L1 properties with a significant level of p=0.0022.

To follow up on this interaction, logistic regressions were conducted separately for each group. The French-speaking learners were able to judge both the grammatical and the ungrammatical sentences with approximately the same level of accuracy (a difference of 3.63%), whereas the English-speaking learners struggled significantly more with the ungrammatical sentences (a difference of 19.35%). In other words, as shown in Table 3, the data analysis suggested that the English-speaking learners were less efficient at judging the ungrammatical than the grammatical items. These finding are in line with other research stating that L1 properties play a role when it comes to acquiring gender agreement in an L2 (Sabourin et al., 2006; Bond et al., 2011). It also supports Ringbom's (2007) procedural and inhibitive transfer hypothesis. According to this author, procedural transfer determines that L1 properties influence the acquisition process of syntactic features such as gender agreement, whereas inhibitive transfer occurs when the learner's L1 does not have specific structures of the target language and tends to be manifested as underuse or avoidance in production.

Table 3
UGJT results (considering L1 properties)
(Standard errors appear in parentheses)

Groups	N	Grammaticality	
		Grammatical	Ungrammatical
English speakers	23	99.15 (.62)	79.80 (.34)
French speakers	20	97.74 (.56)	94.11 (.42)

Regarding the learners' proficiency level, the logistic regression showed a certain tendency which came close to the level of significance of p<0.05, with a probability of p=0.0585. In other words, consistent with our prediction and the results of previous studies on the acquisition of gender agreement, advanced learners were more accurate at judging grammaticality, which suggests that this feature is acquired somewhat later in the acquisition process. We must mention that the data analysis did not show any significant interaction between proficiency and grammaticality. However, we acknowledge that the two groups were more accurate on grammatical than ungrammatical sentences, but the intermediate learners were substantially more affected by grammaticality (a difference of 14.1%) than were the advanced learners (a difference of 6.6%),

as shown in Table 4.

Table 4
UGJT results (considering proficiency level)

(Standard errors appear in parentheses)

Groups	N	Grammaticality	
		Grammatical	Ungrammatical
Intermediate	21	97.35 (.50)	83.21 (.37)
Advanced	22	99.28 (.67)	92.72 (.40)

As we consider the influence of L1 properties in combination with proficiency level, results did not reveal any significant differences between the four groups, with all of them scoring, on least square means, over 90% accuracy. However, after exploring the distribution of the learners' incorrect answers, the logistic regression showed a tendency between learners' L1 properties, proficiency level, and grammaticality, with a probability of p=0.0992. As shown in Table 5, both intermediate and advanced English-speaking learners of Spanish were less efficient at judging the ungrammatical items than the grammatical ones. As for the other two groups, who were intermediate and advanced French-speaking learners, the grammaticality of the Spanish sentences did not appear to influence their ability to judge them appropriately.

Table 5
UGJT results (considering both between-subject variables)

(Standard errors appear in parentheses)

Groups	N	Grammaticality	
		Grammatical	Ungrammatical
English-speaking Intermediate	11	98.84 (.81)	66.18 (.47)
English-speaking Advanced	12	99.38 (.90)	88.85 (.50)
French-speaking Intermediate	10	94.04 (.58)	92.62 (.56)
French-speaking Advanced	10	99.16 (.94)	95.32 (.62)

All data from the UGJT were subjected to fit test, more specifically to a variance estimate. With values in the area of equal to 1 for each group of learners, the statistical model appears to be a good fit for the experimental data.

Discussion of Experiment 1. With regard to explicit knowledge, assessed through the UGJT, results suggest that all four groups have the ability to accurately judge the grammaticality of the Spanish noun-adjective agreement. However, the fact that the English-speaking learners struggled more with the ungrammatical sentences than the grammatical ones shows that there exists a slight difference between the French and the English speakers and their explicit knowledge of the Spanish gender agreement system. This suggests that typological similarities between French and Spanish help learners establish useful links on how noun-adjective agreement manifests itself in Spanish. As for the English-speaking L2 learners, the fact that they struggled more with the ungrammatical sentences could be explained as follows.

A possible explanation for this phenomenon could be that English speakers make use of an avoidance strategy. When they are uncertain about the grammaticality of the sentence, the English-speaking learners prefer not to identify the source of the error in the subsequent question. Therefore, were we to consider the preceding argument as a demonstration of learners' lower confidence level, English speakers learning Spanish may have been influenced by the proposed task. In order to examine the validity of this explanation, in a subsequent study, it would be of great interest to include a confidence rating judgment, which would allow us to compare the results of the UGJT to the confidence rating.

As for another explanation for this phenomenon, according to Godfroid et al. (2015), asking participants to identify the grammatical error pushes them to rely more on explicit and analyzed knowledge. Moreover, it has been suggested that ungrammatical sentences make higher demands on control and analysis than the grammatical ones (Bialystok, 1986). Taking these visions into consideration would suggest that the English-speaking learners exert less control over their explicit knowledge than their French counterparts. In other words, we could suggest that French-speaking learners have more control over their explicit knowledge than the English-speaking ones, which would be explained by the presence of an extensive gender system in their L1 properties.

To recap and summarize, two possible strands emerge to explain the observed differences between the manner in which the French and the English participants processed the ungrammatical sentences. Either learners' level of confidence or control over their explicit knowledge is the underlying explanation. The unifying account is one of Godfroid et al. (2015) who stated that, "whereas the presence of an ungrammatical element is sufficient evidence that a sentence is ungrammatical, the absence of an ungrammatical element is essentially a lack of evidence" (p. 289). In other words, the fact that the English participants struggled more with the ungrammatical sentences does not mean that they lack explicit knowledge of gender agreement. However, the fact that their French counterparts did not experience the same challenge towards judging grammaticality points to the presence of an extensive gender agreement system in their L1 properties, which would help them to demonstrate efficiency.

Experiment 2: Elicited Oral Imitation Test

This task was conducted to investigate learners' implicit knowledge of the Spanish gender agreement system within a semi-controlled expressive task. Moreover, this second experiment aimed at examining whether L1 properties and proficiency level play a role when it comes to reconstructing Spanish sentences, which include a noun-adjective gender agreement.

Before we take a look at the analysis for the between-subject variables, it is important to mention that grammaticality revealed itself as significant, with a level of significance below 0.05 of $p<.0001$. The French-speaking as well as the English-speaking learners struggled more with the ungrammatical sentences than the grammatical ones. Moreover, regarding the influence of L1 properties in the development of implicit knowledge, the results from the EOI demonstrated that the French-speaking learners were more accurate at reconstructing noun-adjective gender agreement than their English counterparts with a level of significance below 0.05 of $p=0.0146$.

As shown in Table 6, the French-speaking learners were more accurate at reconstructing ungrammatical items than their English counterparts. The 60.53% and 40.05% least square means respectively suggest that the test is reconstructive in nature and that both groups of learners have some implicit knowledge of gender agreement.

Table 6
EOI results (considering L1 properties)

(Standard errors appear in parentheses)

Groups	N	Grammaticality	
		Grammatical	Ungrammatical
English speakers	23	67.61 (.20)	40.05 (.20)
French speakers	20	77.87 (.24)	60.53 (.22

When considering the possible effect of proficiency on the acquisition of implicit knowledge of gender agreement, the statistical analysis demonstrated a significant difference between the intermediate and the advanced learners (below of 0.05 of $p=0.0077$). As shown in Table 7, the probability that the intermediate learners reconstruct the experimental items grammatically is significantly lower than for their advanced counterparts.

Even though the logistic regression did not reveal any significant interaction between proficiency level and grammaticality, it is worth mentioning the tendency towards significance between these variables, with a probability of $p=0.0808$. In other words, the logistic regressions allowed us to observe that intermediate learners were less likely to reconstruct items that included a noun-adjective gender discord than the advanced ones. Aligned with Erlam (2006), the fact that the intermediate learners were able to reconstruct 37.9% of the ungrammatical sentences show that they do have some implicit knowledge of Spanish gender agreement. However, it also demonstrates that noun-adjective gender agreement is a syntactic feature acquired later in the L2 learning process (Montrul et al., 2008; Montrul, Davidson, de la Fuente & Foote, 2014).

Table 7
EOI results (considering proficiency level)

(Standard errors appear in parentheses)

Groups	N	Grammaticality	
		Grammatical	Ungrammatical
Intermediate	21	68.13 (.21)	37.89 (.21)
Advanced	22	77.46 (.23)	62.67 (.21)

When examining the possible interaction between learners' L1 properties and proficiency level, it shows that the advanced French-speaking L2 learners were more accurate at reconstructing the Spanish sentences than any other group, especially the intermediate English speakers. As illustrated in Table 8, we can also observe that the intermediate French-speaking and the advanced English-speaking learners were able to complete the task with approximately the same accuracy. This observation could be interpreted as proof of the presence of crosslinguistic influence where French-speaking learners rely on their L1 properties of gender agreement.

Table 8
EOI results (considering both between-subject variables)

(Standard errors appear in parentheses)

Groups	N	Grammaticality	
		Grammatical	Ungrammatical
English-speaking Intermediate	11	59.75 (.40)	30.17 (.30)
English-speaking Advanced	12	74.59 (.29)	50.82 (.26)
French-speaking Intermediate	10	46.28 (.30)	75.48 (.32)
French-speaking Advanced	10	80.09 (.35)	73.18 (.33)

All data from the EOI were subjected to fit test, more specifically to a variance estimate. With values in the area of equal to 1 for each group of learners, the statistical model also appears to be a good fit for this set of experimental data.

Discussion of Experiment 2. Regarding the acquisition of implicit knowledge within a semi-controlled expressive task, it was possible to observe that learners L1 properties as well as proficiency level have a certain impact in reconstructing noun-adjective gender agreement adequately. As described by the statistical analysis, results suggest that the French-

speaking subjects were able to complete the task better and more accurately than the English-speaking ones. Moreover, results also demonstrate that advanced learners are more efficient than their intermediate counterparts. When taken the two between-subjects variables together, we can perceive that advanced French-speakers are, overall, more accurate than the other groups and that the intermediate French and the advanced English are similar.

The similarity between the intermediate French and the advanced English speakers may reflect the fact that, in general, the French-speaking learners are better able to rely on their overall experience with gender agreement; namely procedural transfer. In other words, given the fact that this abstract feature is represented in their L1, the French-speaking learners may successfully process the Spanish gender agreement system at a lower level of proficiency in comparison with the English-speaking learners.

Experiment 3: Eye-tracking experiment

This task was conducted to investigate learners' sensitivity to gender agreement discord within an online receptive reading experiment. According to Dussias (2010), the advantage of using an eye-tracking experiment is the possibility of watching subjects' sensitivity to grammatical discord as we register the eye-movement for every millisecond. This section will enumerate data from this experiment, considering three different measures: total reading time, time allotted to the region of interest (ROI) 'adjective' and finally, regression to the controller noun. Before we start analyzing the results, it should be pointed out that 37% of the data from the eye-tracking were excluded from the analysis due to technical difficulties.

In the eye-tracking experiment, grammaticality revealed itself as significant in the measure of ROI 'adjective' (p=0.0015) and as a strong tendency in the total reading time (p=0.0622). Regarding the influence of L1 properties on the acquisition of gender agreement, none of the measures demonstrated any significant interaction between the learners L1 properties and grammaticality. Yet, there is an observable tendency between the French and English-speaking learners of Spanish, as shown in Table 9. It seems that the French-speaking subjects take more time in reading ungrammatical sentences than grammatical ones. As for the English-speaking learners, analysis did not show any difference between both conditions. In other words, this tendency p=0.0783 suggests that French-speaking subjects could be more sensitive to gender discord than their English counterparts, which would suggest that they possess greater implicit knowledge of the Spanish gender agreement system.

Regarding the effect of proficiency level in the subjects' sensitivity to noun-adjective agreement, none of the three measures demonstrated a clear difference between the way intermediate and advanced speakers read the Spanish sentences. However, it appears that advanced learners spend more time in the ROI 'adjective' of the ungrammatical sentences than the grammatical ones. Furthermore, the probability of making a regression to the controller noun when the item is ungrammatical seems to be higher for advanced (difference of 6.01%) than for intermediate learners (difference of 4.43%). As shown in Table 10, a certain tendency between proficiency and grammaticality can be acknowledged. Data analyses, however, did not provide enough evidence for this interaction to be significant.

When examining the possible triple interaction between both between-subject variables and grammaticality, data analysis shows that the advanced French-speaking learners were significantly more sensitive to noun-adjective discord than any other groups as the total reading time suggests, with a level of significance of p=0.0047. Logistic regressions were then conducted separately for each group. As shown in Table 11, the advanced French-speaking learners took more time in reading the ungrammatical items than the grammatical ones, with a level of significance below 0.05 of p=0.0003. In addition, they spent more time in the ROI 'adjective' when the sentences included a gender discord, with a level of significance p<.0001. Finally, when observing the possible regressions to the controller noun, results suggest that the advanced French-speaking group tended to go back to the controller noun more often when the item was ungrammatical (a difference of 20.79% more), with a level of significance below 0.05 of p=0.0032. As for the other three groups, they did not appear to be sensitive to gender discord at this time. Consequently, findings from the eye-tracking experiment indicate that

Table 9
Eye-tracking experiment (considering L1 properties)

(Standard errors appear in parentheses)

Groups	N	Total reading time (s.)			Time allotted to ROI 'adjective' (s.)		
		G	UG	Diff.	G	UG	Diff.
English speakers	13	5.630 (.45)	5.745 (.47)	0.12	0.646 (.06)	0.628 (.06)	-0.02
French speakers	15	5.506 (.37)	6.180 (.39)	0.67	0.615 (.05)	0.796 (.06)	0.18

Table 10
Eye-tracking experiment (considering proficiency level)

(Standard errors appear in parentheses)

Groups	N	Total reading time (s.)			Time allotted to ROI 'adjective' (s.)		
		G	UG	Diff.	G	UG	Diff.
Intermediate	12	06.04 (0.45)	6.32 (.47)	0.28	0.71 (.06)	0.79 (.06)	0.08
Advanced	16	05.10 (0.37)	5.60 (.40)	0.50	0.55 (.05)	0.70 (.05)	0.15

Table 11
Eye-tracking experiment (considering both between-subject variables)

(Standard errors appear in parentheses)

Groups	N	Total reading time (s.)			Time allotted to ROI 'adjective' (s.)		
		G	UG	Diff.	G	UG	Diff.
English-speaking intermediate	06	5.92 (.72)	6.53 (.74)	0.61	0.72 (.10)	0.84 (.10)	0.12
English-speaking advanced	07	5.40 (.55)	4.96 (.59)	-0.44	0.57 (.08)	0.56 (.07)	-0.01
French-speaking intermediate	06	6.15 (.55)	6.12 (.56)	-0.03	0.71 (.08)	0.75 (.07)	0.04
French-speaking advanced	09	4.86 (.49)	6.24 (.54)	01.38	0.52 (.06)	0.85 (.08)	0.33

advanced French-speaking learners of Spanish were the only group sensitive to noun-adjective agreement discord, which suggest that they are the only ones to have well integrated implicit knowledge of gender agreement.

All data from the eye-tracking experiment were subjected to fit test, more specifically to a variance estimate. With values in the area of equal to 1 for each group of learners, the statistical model appears to be a good fit for the experimental data.

Discussion of Experiment 3. Regarding the acquisition of implicit knowledge within an online receptive experiment, the only group who showed sensitivity to noun-adjective agreement discrepancies was the advanced French-speaking learners of Spanish. As previously discussed, most research examining the influence of L1 properties on the acquisition of gender agreement concurs that the presence of a gender system in the learners' L1 favorably influence their level of acquisition (Foucart & Frenck-Mestre, 2011; Bond et al., 2011). Moreover, the fact that the intermediate French-speaking learners did not show any sensitivity to noun-adjective discord allows us to postulate towards the idea that implicit knowledge of gender agreement is acquired late in the acquisition process, as others have already suggested (Keating, 2009; Foucart & Frenck-Mestre, 2011; Judy et al., 2008; Montrul et al., 2013). This observation could be interpreted as proof of the presence of crosslinguistic influence where learners rely on their L1 properties of gender agreement; a phenomenon which may apply to learners of any stage of language development.

General Discussion

The goal of the present study was to examine the influence of L1 properties and of proficiency level on the acquisition of noun-adjective gender agreement across a variety of experimental tasks, including an expressive measure, as well as offline and online receptive reading measures, in groups of intermediate and advanced French and English-speaking learners of Spanish. A research design of this type was necessary in order to tease apart the acquisition of explicit and implicit knowledge. It is important to mention that, as DeKeyser (2009) pointed out, "often students will have considerable amounts of explicit knowledge about parts of the L2, but little or no competence, i.e., implicit, intuitive knowledge, of the same elements in the same L2" (p.124). This comment, together with the findings from the three experiments carried out in this research project, suggest that even though all of the participants exhibited a high level of explicit knowledge, it does not mean that the same representation will apply for implicit knowledge.

Regarding the first research question, which aimed at observing the influence of L1 properties on the acquisition of gender agreement, the results partially support our prediction that learners' L1 properties would affect the acquisition of the Spanish gender agreement system. Taking explicit knowledge into account, both French and English-speaking learners performed at a high level of accuracy. Indeed, even though the analyses suggest a difference in the way each group responded to the ungrammatical

sentences, there were no significant differences in accuracy between subjects. Meanwhile, in terms of implicit knowledge, it appears that L1 properties affect learners' accuracy in the acquisition of gender agreement. To conclude, based on the interpretation of findings, it appears that L1 properties play a role when it comes to increasing the learners' level of confidence of difficult grammar elements, to reconstructing ungrammatical Spanish sentences and to being sensitive to agreement discord. In other words, L1 properties appear to affect the learners' knowledge of the Spanish gender agreement system.

As for the second research question, which focused on the effect of proficiency level, results partially support our prediction that learners' proficiency would affect the level of acquisition of the Spanish gender agreement system. Considering learners' explicit knowledge of gender agreement, both intermediate and advanced learners performed at a high level of accuracy. In fact, even though results appear to be slightly different in the way each group processed gender agreement, there were no significant differences in accuracy between the two groups' proficiency level. Concurrently, it appears that proficiency level partially affects learners' implicit knowledge. In the expressive task, the advanced learners were more accurate at reconstructing ungrammatical sentences than the intermediate ones. To conclude, based on the interpretation of findings, it appears that level of proficiency plays a role in regard to learners' implicit knowledge of the Spanish gender agreement system, taking into account results from the expressive task. Nevertheless, it would appear that we have insufficient evidence to demonstrate an influence of proficiency level since none of the measures from the eye-tracking allow us to examine a significant interaction between these variables.

The above findings are especially noteworthy in light of our third research question, which examined a combination of both between-subject variables. Taking L1 properties and proficiency level together, the three experiments included in the study indicate that the Spanish gender agreement system poses different problems depending on the types of knowledge assessed. The relatively high level of overall achievement in Spanish L2/L3 of all participants in the UGJT did not reflect the findings observed in the EOI, which was essentially used to assess the learners' implicit knowledge. As for the eye-tracking experiment, only the one group demonstrated sensitivity to gender discord, which suggest that implicit knowledge of gender agreement is normally acquired later in the acquisition process (Keating, 2009; Foucart & Frenck-Mestre, 2011; Judy et al., 2008; Montrul et al., 2013; among others) and that L1 properties influence this whole process, even at an advanced proficiency level (Sabourin et al., 2006; Ellis et al., 2012; Alhawary, 2005; 2009).

Conclusion

The contribution of the present study for research communities who investigate gender agreement is two-fold: shedding additional light on the influence of L1 properties and proficiency level on the acquisition of gender agreement and using a research design that taps into both explicit and implicit knowledge. Based on the findings of the present study, the difference between the French and the English speakers learning Spanish is best represented in the tasks measuring implicit knowledge, including both the EOI and the eye-tracking experiment. However, it is important to mention that acquiring gender agreement is not only influenced by L1 properties but also proficiency.

Furthermore, the unique methodology used in the form of an offline and an online receptive task, and an oral expressive test represents an innovation in terms of possible triangulation of data. Indeed, even though each task contained items that included the same sentence structure, the same number of words and the same accessible vocabulary, results allowed us to arrive at different perspectives of the same phenomenon, namely acquisition of gender agreement.

The results show that certain types of L2 knowledge may or may not be accessible during metalinguistic tasks and during real-time comprehension, depending on the levels of proficiency; and that this knowledge can be tapped into by different tasks to offer a more rounded picture of what "acquisition" means. (Roberts, 2013, p. 632).

Taking the above into account demonstrates the need for a multi-tiered methodology to best investigate the complex linguistic feature that is gender agreement. The present study is proof of that and future research should invest time and effort to maximize our understanding of second language acquisition of abstract features in order to better assist instructors and learners.

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EFL Reading Metacomprehension from the Developmental Perspective: A Longitudinal Case Study

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As the first half of the literacy equation (reading + writing = literacy), reading is primarily considered a dynamic meaning-focused interaction in which the reader is required to build comprehension of a text in a non-linear way. In other words, the reader is constantly checking the degree to which he or she understands the given information, simultaneously trying to identify comprehension failures and employ efficient repair strategies. This ability is termed metacomprehension; when it is enhanced, comprehension is generally more successful. Metacomprehension appears to be even more important for non-native readers because of their limited vocabulary and grammar. This is the key theoretical background of the single case study described in the current paper since it follows the developmental path of an EFL learner (Croatian teenager) with special focus on his reading ability. The main aim of the study was to see how his metacomprehension would develop over an extended period of exposure to EFL in the school setting. It was based on the hypothesis that extended exposure would result in better awareness of comprehension during the reading process. The study was conducted in two parts (Grade 5 and Grade 8) and comprised a number of stages. Being a case study, multiple sources and techniques were applied in gathering data, both qualitative and quantitative, such as: a multiple-choice comprehension test, a questionnaire for measuring the reader's awareness of strategic reading processes (in Grade 5), an English proficiency test, a text restoration task, the self-revelation (stream-of-consciousness data) technique, a post-reading interview, and observation notes (in Grade 8). The results obtained initially indicated the participant's good EFL reading comprehension performance but later showed that he was less successful, which was related to his poor EFL proficiency. In terms of reading strategy, it can be added that, despite some initial strategic abilities, the participant did not significantly develop his strategic behaviour for EFL reading. To conclude, prolonged exposure to EFL did not lead to better reading metacomprehension in this particular school learner.

Keywords: metacomprehension, dynamic system, case study, reading strategies, EFL reading

Reading includes different processes, from the recognition of graphemes to the integration of global ideas from the text into the reader's knowledge. Word recognition, syntactic analysis and text comprehension are most commonly identified as three processing levels that determine an individual's ability to read (Adams, 1999; Beech & Colley, 1984; Grabe, 2009). Many scholars (see more in Tracey & Mandel Morrow, 2006) have tried to explain how these are inter-related in terms of their functionality, which has resulted in the determination of the following three broad categories: (a) bottom-up processing (a focus on constructing the text from decoding the smallest units – letters, words, phrases, sentences, etc.); (b) top-

down processing (an emphasis on fitting the text into the reader's linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge – a sort of psycholinguistic guessing game); and (c) interactive processing (the alternate or simultaneous use of both bottom-up and top-down processing – a dynamic interactive process). It is impossible to avoid any of the three approaches (generally termed models) in serious discussions of the process of reading, particularly when a non-native (both L2 and FL) reader is included (Aebersold & Field, 1997).

More recently, reading has been explained as a dynamic meaning-focused interaction, so that Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, for instance, see this process as:

> [a] complex dynamic system moving across a state space landscape that consists of all possible interpretations of the stretch of text being processed. Understanding the whole text is also seen as a complex dynamic system that produces the multidimensional state space landscape on which the reading process moves. The experience of reading the text changes the landscape as the reading process co-adapts with current understandings of the whole text. Meaning is constructed from the text at different levels using the reader's previous experiences of literacy, of texts, and of the world; the reader searches for a coherent meaning for the whole as the parts are processed (2008, pp. 186-187).

Based on the first two types of processing, the building of comprehension is linear, determined by smaller (below sentence level) or larger (above sentence level) pieces of text. The interactive approach, by contrast, implies the non-linear building of comprehension during which the reader is moving from one way of processing to the other. While doing this, he/she is constantly checking his/her comprehension, which is known as self-monitoring. In order to do this efficiently, he/she needs a range of strategies. It is clear that successful reading requires the reader's awareness of his/her comprehension or lack of it, as well as the knowledge of what to do when he/she fails to comprehend (Grabe, 2009).

Metacomprehension as the key term in this paper, therefore, can be defined as the reader's ability to monitor the degree to which he/she understands information being communicated to him/her, to recognise failures to comprehend, and to employ repair strategies when failures are identified.[1] Efforts to enhance this ability should gradually lead to improved reading comprehension. Unlike grammar, vocabulary knowledge or other competencies important in reading, metacomprehension cannot be developed through rote-memorisation, drilling or one-way instruction from the teacher, but requires interaction between the teacher and learners (Cohen & Weaver, 2006; Yu-Fen, 2002). As Vygotsky (2012) put it, learners acquire the capacity for self-regulation throughout interaction with more knowledgeable individuals. Since the early 1990s, researchers have examined performances in comprehension monitoring between proficient and less proficient readers to discover how metacomprehension can function more effectively (see more in Yu-Fen, 2002). They generally concluded that less proficient readers in the (non-)native language are more likely to fail to recognise that a problem exists or to identify the source and solve it. Even when they are aware of the source of the problem, they find it hard to identify a solution. Speaking explicitly about reading in a non-native language, it may be important to emphasise here that metacomprehension seems to be crucial primarily because the reader possesses limited vocabulary knowledge and grammar (Block, 1992).

The ability to monitor comprehension has also received some attention in reading tasks with young learners. Markman (1979) was among the first researchers to consider this issue and showed, among other things, that children fail to report logical inconsistencies in textual material. According to Grabe (2009), a review of 20 studies with native readers in second to sixth grades who were taught directly how to monitor their comprehension revealed significant improvements in three areas: the detection of textual difficulties, the enhancement of text material recall, and better performance on standardised reading comprehension tests. However, the author adds that the impact of self-monitoring on reading comprehension with non-native readers is still under-represented in research.

This article, therefore, can be seen as a contribution to this field of investigation, while its developmental perspective makes our study, conducted in the context of reading in English as a foreign language (EFL), even more multifaceted. This coincides with Geva and Ramírez (2015) who view EFL reading comprehension as a complex process, pointing out its multiple facets that may change with development and experience.

The main aim of the study was to obtain insight into an individual's development of reading metacomprehension over an extended period of exposure to EFL in the school setting. It was realised by means of the following research question: What, if any, is the effect of extended exposure to EFL on a school learner with regard to his awareness of comprehension during the reading process? The hypothesis was that extended exposure would lead to better awareness of comprehension during the reading process.

[1] Adapted from www.cognitiveatlas.org/concept/metacomprehension.

Methods

Research design. This article reports on an individual or single case study (Benatti, 2015; Robson, 2002; Wei & Moyer, 2008) used as a research method to understand the effect of extended exposure to EFL on the reading metacomprehension of a male learner. By definition, a case study of this type tends to provide a detailed account of one person (a case) within a wider context. It typically involves multiple techniques of data collection, both quantitative and qualitative, although such an in-depth investigation – which can be done over any length of time – often uses the latter rather than the former. In this particular study, a mixed approach was applied, with eight different types of sources: a questionnaire for measuring a child's awareness of strategic reading processes, a reading comprehension test, an open-ended strategy use questionnaire, a language proficiency test, gap-filling tasks, the self-revelation (stream-of-consciousness data) method, an interview, and notes resulting from online observations.

Participant's profile. Although a large-scale study was conducted with Frank's class, special attention was paid to Frank (not his real name) here, differing him from classmates because of his truly specific linguistic background. Frank was born in a medium-sized city in Croatia, to which his parents, both of Albanian origin, had come from Kosovo in their youth (mother at age 12, father at age 19). He is the third-born child in a family of four children. Asked about his native language, he perceived himself as bilingual and could not say which of the two languages was dominant, since he spoke mostly Albanian with his parents and elderly family members, but used Albanian and Croatian almost interchangeably in communication with his brothers. When unable to remember a word or phrase in Albanian, he would frequently replace it with its Croatian equivalent and vice versa. In his play with other children (both Croatian and Albanian) in the neighbourhood, Croatian prevailed.[2] This language development can, therefore, be seen as an example of additive simultaneous bilingualism (Gardner, 2002; Lambert, 1977).

At the age of six and a half, he first attended a private primary school (Grades 1-3), where he studied EFL, although it was neither official (just one of the extra-curricular activities, not a formal school subject with grading) nor intensive (no more than two class periods a week). In Grade 4, he moved to a state primary school, where he was, for no particular reason, placed in a class that had already been learning English for three years, putting him in an unfavourable position compared to his classmates. The class of 22 learners was part of a pilot project[3] and had started learning EFL in Grade 1 under very favourable conditions: for example, in Grades 1 and 2 they had had four class periods of 45 minutes every week in groups of 11 learners, in a learner-friendly classroom; in Grade 3 they were taught as a whole class, in a larger classroom used for other subjects as well.

In Grade 5 the number of class periods decreased (three instead of four). The learners also experienced two teacher changes, first in Grade 5 and then in Grade 8 (a total of four different teachers in Frank's case). To make this clearer, it should be emphasised that at that time foreign language (FL) teaching in Croatia was officially introduced in Grade 4 (as a compulsory subject at primary school level), so Frank's class appears to have been privileged to participate in the pilot project. Since his hometown is officially a bilingual environment because of the Italian ethnic minority living there, children were encouraged to learn Italian earlier than other (foreign) languages. It was Frank's second FL (his real name is, in fact, Italian) when the study was conducted. Although he also started learning Italian in Grade 1, the official start occurred in Grade 2, as is common in this Croatian region (Istria).

Despite the circumstances described above, Frank's primary school grades in English were quite good (3, 5, 5, 5, 4),[4] but he was better in Italian (5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 5, 4).[5] He achieved a very similar range in his grades for Croatian (5, 5, 5, 5, 4, 4, 4, 5).[6] His grade point average was 5.0 throughout his primary education, from Grade 1 to Grade 8. When the first part of the study was conducted, Frank was a fifth-grader, while in its second part he attended Grade 8. Since the first author taught his class English from Grade 1 to Grade 4, she can confirm that Frank was a very intelligent and hard-working boy, always eager to participate in any activity and compete with his classmates, trying to integrate into their group as strongly as possible; it was obvious that he wanted to perform as well as them, better even, in his EFL classes, which sometimes suggested that he felt tense and stressed. Regarding the wider context of Frank's EFL learning experiences and outcomes, he represents an example of the so-called extreme cases (Wei & Moyer, 2008), usually overlooked in cross-sectional studies.

[2] Basically, Albanian was Frank's first language according to the sequence of language acquisition resulting from his family background, but Croatian was also his first language, meaning the main language used for wider communication in his more or less immediate environment, such as the neighbourhood and his school (Jelaska, 2005). The mother tongue will not necessarily be the main or most frequent language used for communication purposes (Byram, 2004, p. 418).

[3] Language Learning for European Citizenship (EC), see more in Mihaljević Djigunović (2015); Vilke (2015).

[4] Croatian grades: from 1 (fail) to 5 (excellent).

[5] Grades 2-8.

[6] Grades 1-8.

Procedure and Instruments

As has been previously stated, the study was conducted in two parts, each of them comprising a couple of stages preceded by certain preparations. We have decided to present the procedure in three sections: the key preparation-centred details under one sub-heading and the crucial investigation-centred features under two separate sub-headings (see below).

Preparations. A one-week preparatory stage in Grade 5 was conducted with the aim of explaining to Frank at the outset the rationale behind the study and ensuring his willingness to participate. An informal discussion of the following formed an early part of the process: (a) his L1 and L2 (EFL) reading habits and preferences; (b) possible similarities and differences between the two processes; and (c) other closely related issues. A few multiple-choice reading comprehension tasks, first in Croatian and then in English, were later set (with no time limit) to familiarise him with the given test-taking technique. Although spontaneously encouraged to become a strategic thinker, Frank was not explicitly instructed on metacomprehension strategy use.

Prior to the follow-up study, almost three years later, there was another preparatory stage, which also lasted a week and began with Frank being reminded of his previous involvement. He remembered this somewhat vaguely but still agreed to participate without showing any hesitation, confirming our general impression of him as a very curious boy, not afraid to challenge himself. He was first invited to discuss a set of 20 multiple-choice questions that focused on raising children's awareness of the reading process and strategies (Paris, Cross, & Lipson, 1984). Of course, they were used to provide explanations about what reading strategies are and when and why they are useful, as well as to prepare him to approach concrete text restoration tasks in a strategic manner. Subsequently, he performed a couple of text restoration tasks, without saying what he was thinking/doing. A few days later, Frank was explicitly trained to practise verbalising in parallel with problem solving before he started working on his own. When it was noticed that such practice-focused repetition might be tedious for him, 'the proper study' (his own words) began in order to keep his enthusiasm at the required level.

Grade 5. The study first involved measuring Frank's awareness of strategic reading processes and assessing his text comprehension along with his actual strategy use. The first instrument used was the Metacomprehension Strategy Index (MSI) with 25 multiple-choice items which ask readers about the strategies they could use before, during, and after reading a narrative text. This questionnaire was designed by Schmitt (1990) and aims to assess primary school children's awareness of metacomprehension behaviours that fit into the following categories: (1) predicting and verifying; (2) previewing; (3) purpose setting; (4) self questioning; (5) drawing from background knowledge, and; (6) summarising and applying fix-up strategies. It was translated from English into Croatian for this study and Frank was asked to circle the best answer for each item based on four options. He did this through silent reading, without any time limit. This instrument was targeted at L1 readers and was used here to encourage Frank's thinking about the process as such, according to his Croatian reading experiences, since the first task referred to his Croatian reading comprehension. Two days later, it was followed by a task that checked his comprehension in English.

The second instrument was a reading comprehension test, based on a short narrative text first in Croatian (about a school boy from a village visiting the capital city) and then in English (about a bear visiting mum and her daughters one winter evening), with ten three-option multiple choice questions in each, which assessed explicit and implicit comprehension. The texts were taken from different textbooks for young learners, while the questions were prepared for the purpose of the test and sometimes required serious independent inferences from the reader as certain pieces of information were not directly stated in the text (higher-order processing). In addition, the questions did not always follow the order in which information was presented in the text (reading as a non-linear activity) and did not repeat the same linguistic patterns from the text since vocabulary items and language structures were often changed (a focus on language knowledge), testing Frank's local and global understanding abilities to a greater extent. The selection of the texts and setting of the questions were discussed with his Croatian and English teachers, as their suggestions appeared important to us.

The third instrument, an open-ended questionnaire, included 12 items covering: (a) strategic reading, (b) L1 vs L2 (EFL) reading, and (c) reading self-evaluation (L1 vs EFL). It was designed on the basis of insights into the relevant literature with reference to specific steps in the process of reading the above-mentioned texts. Its aim was to show the participant's retrospective reflections on his actual (not supposed) strategy use and/or to clarify his ways of reaching text comprehension, as well as to provide his general approaches to reading in two languages and reveal his reading self-perception. Frank was asked to write his answers in Croatian (no time limit), immediately upon the completion of each comprehension test.

Grade 8. The study continued with a special focus

on Frank's strategic reading behaviour in EFL and once again a series of instruments was used. The first instrument was the standardised English proficiency test,[7] comprising a reading session and a listening and writing session administered a week later. Reading was covered by five matching tasks, as follows: (1) read this short interview from a British youth magazine, match the questions with the answers, e.g. "Fish, smells awful … - Any food you hate?"; (2) read the following quiz questions and find the right answer, e.g., "It's a way of attracting bees, flies, butterflies and other insects – Why do some flowers smell sweet?"; (3) read the following ads and find the missing part from the list for each gap, e.g., "The Society of London Theatre, the only official half price ticket booth … – best value for today's evening performances"; (4) find the pairs of these definitions from the list, e.g., "a person you visit if you have a headache or a sore throat – doctor"; and (5) what do these notices mean, choose from the answers, e.g., "return books here – this is the library desk".

Task 3 was the only one that did not contain an extra word. Listening was tested with the help of two matching tasks: (1) listen to the text and put the numbers in the picture in the boxes next to the names (a description of the park with many children doing different things simultaneously); and (2) listen to the text and choose one of the answers (e.g., guessing the locations where the speakers are talking). There was only one writing task, which required the participant to compare two almost identical pictures showing a typical afternoon in a family living room (prompts already given, e.g., write about the man and the woman, the weather outside, etc.).

The second instrument involved three different text restoration tasks, which included 22, 32 and 37 gaps respectively. According to this traditional gap-filling technique, based on short narrative texts, Frank's task was to restore every fifth word that had been deleted (except in the first and last sentences).[8] These were either content (emphasis on testing the overall text meaning) or function (emphasis on testing grammatical sensitivity) words. He took the tests at irregular intervals over a period of three months.

Since this format predominantly measures comprehension of the local environment (words and immediate constituents, i.e., syntax and lexis at sentence level), it was accompanied with the stream-of-consciousness technique (self-revelation). In other words, Frank was instructed on how to verbalise his thoughts (reveal himself) during the text restoration procedure to provide insights into his global text comprehension as well.

Finally, he was interviewed each time he finished a text restoration task (immediately upon completion). This was a semi-structured interview – a set of questions had been prepared in advance but any interesting, unexpected detail was also discussed with him during the interview. The initial questions regarded: (1) text title (e.g., "What title would you suggest and why?"); (2) text comprehension (e.g., "Did you understand the text/What is it about?"); and (3) comprehension problems (e.g., "Why haven't you filled in this gap/Where did you have a (serious) problem, why?"). As can be seen, these were actually aimed at assessing Frank's abilities to summarise the text in a meaningful title, identify the main ideas, and cope with problem-solving situations in the context of reading. They helped us identify his approaches to understanding words/text portions, test-taking (task format and test-taking environment), and recognising knowledge/self-confidence (or lack of it).

Using the text restoration task and post-reading interview as instruments resulted in rich stream-of-consciousness reports (audio-recorded), convenient for an in-depth analysis of Frank's strategic behaviour in EFL reading. It could be said that these represented a kind of matrix for his strategy use according to the categorization of processing strategies designed by Anderson, Bachman, Perkins, and Cohen (1991). Appropriate for this context, it comprised: (1) supervising strategies (11 in total, e.g., reading-rate adjustment to increase comprehension, recognition of loss of concentration); (2) support strategies (2 in total, e.g., skipping unknown words, expressing a need for help); (3) paraphrase strategies (5 in total, e.g., use of cognates between L1 and L2 to comprehend, paraphrasing); (4) strategies for establishing coherence in text (7 in total, e.g., rereading, use of background knowledge); (5) other strategies (2 in total, e.g., answer provided with no explanation, change in answer).

Results and Discussion

The obtained data were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively, and the most important findings are presented according to the sequence in which the instruments were administered following the preparations. We think that this is not only relevant from the structural viewpoint (the two-part study comprising several stages), but also for practical reasons, since it enables us to follow his EFL reading development in a chronological order and, consequently, to get a more precise and comprehensive picture.

Preparations. The week spent on preparing

[7] A battery of tests designed by a Hungarian team. See more in: Alderson, Nagy, & Öveges (2000); Fekete, Major, & Nikolov (1999).

[8] Contextual support to the reader.

Frank for the study in Grade 5 showed, firstly, that he particularly liked the (new) possibility of expressing his opinions without any sort of 'punishment' (every single answer was correct and important), as well as the fact that the given tasks would not be evaluated for school purposes (official grading excluded). During the informal discussion on reading, he presented himself as an experienced reader, motivated to read more frequently in English, despite his awareness that this skill is more demanding and challenging than when practised in Croatian.

The steps taken within preparations in the follow-up study in Grade 8 generally revealed that thinking about reading in a truly process-oriented way seemed quite interesting to him, also suggesting how intrigued he was as a reader. Sessions focused on doing and simultaneously verbalising different reading tasks confirmed that he was very serious and concentrated, trying to do everything correctly, although unfortunately most of the time he repeated the instructor's most frequent comments, obviously rather to please the instructor than to provide details about his thoughts. Many other researchers have also reported this experience in their studies preceded by some type of training, but when our participant was intensively exposed to text restoration, he soon abandoned this practice and became absorbed in his dilemmas, expressing them in his own words.

Analysing the participant's behaviour and reactions during both preparatory phases, we can say that our interaction not only confirmed his genuine interest in discussions on L1 and EFL reading, but also indicated his unquestionable involvement in this longitudinal study, as will be shown below. Indeed, Frank's motivation increased with every step, making him a very desirable study participant.

Grade 5

Metacomprehension Strategy Index (MSI). As already stated, the first instrument, the MSI, was used to measure the participant's awareness of strategic steps as an introduction to his actual strategy use during the processes of reading and test-taking that followed.

Table 1
Frank's performance on the MSI

MSI Data						
P/V	Pre	Pur	Que	B/K	S/FU	Total
(7)	(2)	(3)	(3)	(6)	(4)	(25)
1	2	0	1	1	1	6

Note: strategy categories: P/V - predicting & verifying; Pre - previewing strategies; Pur - purpose setting; Que - self-questioning; B/K - drawing from background knowledge; S/FU - summarizing & applying fix-up strategies.

Table 1 shows that Frank opted for two previewing strategies and one strategy in each of the following categories: predicting and verifying, self-questioning, drawing from background knowledge, and summarising and applying fix-up strategies. None of the purpose-setting strategies was selected. Specifically, he thought that in the pre-reading stage it was a good idea to look at the pictures and/or to read the title to see what the story was about, just as it could be helpful to consider what he already knew about the things he saw in the picture. During the while-reading stage, he believed that it was helpful to stop to retell the main points to see if he was understanding what had happened so far, to check to see if he could answer any of the questions he had asked before he started reading, and to check to see whether or not his guesses were correct. Since Frank selected only 6 out of 25 possible responses indicative of metacomprehension, it could be said that his performance on the MSI indicated low strategic awareness.

Reading comprehension task(s). However, Frank's reading test scores suggested that he was skilled in comprehension because he performed so highly on both tasks (Croatian -100%; English - 90%). The only mistake found in the English task probably resulted from his lack of concentration, since the correct answer did require a more careful reading to make a valid inference about the weather conditions depicted outside and the atmosphere shown inside. Furthermore, there was a piece of information in the first sentence that could rather easily mislead him into giving his answer without much thought.

Strategy use questionnaire(s). Asked about his steps before, during, and after reading the given texts, Frank mentioned in the questionnaire that he had looked at the questions first and then read both texts once, "at normal pace, silently and carefully", with no difficulties in comprehending them, because there were no unfamiliar words ("I just understood it."). This is probably why he stated that he could answer each question, "easily but carefully ('no problem')", which may confirm him not only as a careful reader, but also as a careful test-taker (see below his text restoration sessions: the same impression).

However, he did not provide any response to the question about the way(s) in which he constructed meaning either in L1 or EFL. Despite his seemingly effortless problem-solving in the given situation, he perceived EFL reading as a difficult task when compared to L1 reading, since English is a foreign language which is – according to him – enough to make the process more demanding, although he thought that he could read well in English / Croatian regardless of the "many"/ "occasional" mistakes he made. He also explained that it was much easier for him to read in Croatian because of his better-developed speaking

skills ("since early childhood"), while he mentioned Grade 5 in English to support his high self-evaluation, which indicates that children (especially at primary school age) tend to identify grades with their real knowledge (5 means great knowledge, regardless of the underlying criteria). Finally, when asked which of the two narrative texts he preferred, Frank chose the Croatian one, "because it was more interesting".

Total performance in Grade 5. To sum up his reading achievements in Grade 5, we can say that Frank was seen as good at reading in both Croatian and English. While it is true that he had some strategic abilities, he was not sufficiently aware of them and their use at that time.

Grade 8

EFL proficiency test. The standardised EFL proficiency test, used first in this part of the study, showed that Frank's performance ranged from 62.5% for writing skill to 76.8% for reading comprehension and 80% for listening comprehension. More precisely, he scored 20 out of 32 points on the writing section, rated by three independent assessors according to: (1) levels of text organisation (a sequence of sentences established but no more than three different sentence types used); (2) task achievement (both pictures A and B described); (3) grammar/accuracy (the whole text comprehensible despite some mistakes); and (4) vocabulary (a good choice of items, mostly appropriate to the task).

With regard to his reading comprehension, he achieved the top score on tasks 1, 2 and 4, whereas for tasks 3 and 5 he scored 44.4% and 40% respectively. This may have happened because task 3 included advertisements, which might not have been a part of his reading experience (at least not common in EFL classes) at that age; considering task 5, it may also be concluded that this kind of reading (so-called functional reading in the immediate environment) was not generally encouraged in EFL classes, since narrative texts were dominant in this phase of formal language education. Frank scored best on the listening section, where he selected 8 out of 10 correct responses in both tasks. Considering his results, it can be said that his performance on the EFL proficiency test did not suggest high(er) expectations.

Text restoration task(s) (TRT). Frank's performance on the text restoration tasks was recorded as follows: 53.1% on TRT 2, 50% on TRT 3, and 40.9% on TRT 1; that is, his overall comprehension performance was in a low range. Specifically, his response to the three tasks included: (a) 33 restored gaps that were accepted as both syntactically and semantically correct; (b) 24 restored gaps that were accepted as either syntactically or semantically correct; (c) 18 restored gaps that were accepted at neither level; and (d) 16 gaps that were not restored at all. In other words, Frank provided 57 out of 92 *expected* responses, which put him into the category of less successful EFL readers. This coincides with his EFL proficiency test performance (a lower-achieving EFL learner = a lower-achieving EFL reader) since the type of task employed (deletion of both function and content words) required the reader's grammatical (syntax and morphology), as well as background (lexis) knowledge.

Stream-of-consciousness report(s) (SCR). Frank's SCRs provided precise insights into his strategic behaviour while reading/restoring the three above-mentioned texts in English. Firstly, after coding Frank's transcripts, the total number of strategies obtained was N=513 (N_{text1}=171, N_{text2}=183, N_{text3}=159). It is worth noting that the highest number of strategies was used for reading text 2 related to TRT 2, on which the best score was recorded.

The frequency of individual strategy use was further considered. As shown in Table 2, the highest individual strategy use was recorded for one of the strategies for establishing coherence (reading ahead), two strategies in the paraphrase category (translating a word/phrase into L1, and paraphrasing), and another two in the supervising category (formulating a question and making a prediction about the meaning of a word or text content).

Since the obtained results also indicate a variety of strategy use, seemingly caused by the given texts, these were analysed accordingly. On the first text, the highest frequency was recorded for one strategy used for establishing coherence (reading ahead), one in the supervising category (formulating a question), and one in the paraphrase category (translating a word/phrase into L1). During the second text reading session, the highest frequency was obtained for two paraphrase strategies (translating a word/phrase into L1 and paraphrasing), and one supervising strategy (making a prediction about the meaning of a word or text content). In the third case, the highest frequency referred to one strategy in the establishing coherence category (reading ahead) and one in the paraphrase category (translating a word/phrase into L1 and paraphrasing).

On the other hand, Table 2 reveals that four strategies had not been applied at all: two supervising strategies (stating success in understanding (a portion of) text; responding affectively to text content), one paraphrase strategy (using cognates between L1 and L2 to comprehend), and one strategy for establishing coherence (relating stimulus sentence to personal experiences).

When this failure is analysed by text, it can be seen that as many as seven strategies were not applied while reading the first text. That is, in addition to the four

Table 2

Frequency of Individual Strategies Used by the Participant for Each of the Three Texts, and the Total Mean, Minimum and Maximum Values, Standard Deviation, Standard Error, and Coefficient of Variation for Each Strategy

						Total for all three texts					
Category		Strategy	text 1 (f)	text 2 (f)	text 3 (f)	M	min	max	SD	SE mean	CV
Supervising strategies	1.	Referring to the experimental task	3	3	5	3.67	3	5	1.15	0.67	31.49
	2.	Recognizing loss of concentration/memory problem	2	3	1	2.00	1	3	1.00	0.53	50.00
	3.	Stating failure to understand (a portion of) text	5	4	6	5.00	4	6	1.00	0.53	20.00
	4.	**Stating success in understanding (a portion of) text**	**0**	**0**	**0**	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00	0
	5.	Adjusting reading style /rate to increase comprehension	3	9	3	3.33	3	9	0.53	0.33	6.93
	6.	*Formulating a question*	22	16	10	16.00	10	22	6.00	3.46	37.5
	7.	*Making a prediction about the meaning of a word or text content*	9	22	10	13.67	9	22	7.23	4.13	52.93
	8.	Referring to lexical items that impede comprehension	11	16	3	10.00	3	16	6.56	3.79	65.57
	9.	Confirming/disconfirming an inference	9	5	14	9.33	5	14	4.51	2.60	43.31
	10.	Referring to the previous passage	1	**0**	**0**	0.33	0	1	0.53	0.33	173.21
	11.	**Responding affectively to text content**	**0**	**0**	**0**	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00	0
Support strategies	12.	Skipping unknown words	3	0	4	2.33	0	4	2.03	1.20	39.21
	13.	Expressing a need for help/ clarification	0	14	4	6.00	0	14	7.21	4.16	120.19
Paraphrase strategies	14.	**Using cognates between LI and L2 to comprehend**	**0**	**0**	**0**	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00	0
	15.	Breaking lexical items into parts	**0**	3	**0**	1.00	0	3	1.73	1.00	173.21
	16.	*Paraphrasing*	6	21	15	14.00	6	21	7.55	4.36	53.93
	17.	*Transiating a word/ p hrase into LI*	13	23	21	20.67	13	23	2.52	1.45	12.13
	18.	Extrapolating from information in the text	5	4	2	3.67	2	5	1.53	0.33	41.66
Establishing coherence	19.	Rereading	10	1	3	4.67	1	10	4.73	2.73	101.27
	20.	Using context clues to interpret a word/phrase	2	1	0	1.00	0	2	1.00	0.53	100.00
	21.	Reacting to author's style or text surface structure	13	5	5	7.67	5	13	4.62	2.67	60.25
	22.	*Reading ahead*	29	14	21	21.33	14	29	7.51	4.33	35.13
	23.	Using background knowledge	2	1	0	1.00	0	2	1.00	0.53	100.00
	24.	Acknowledging lack of background knowledge	**0**	**0**	2	0.67	0	2	1.15	0.67	173.21
	25.	**Relating stimulus sentence to personal experiences**	**0**	**0**	**0**	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00	0
Other strategies	26.	Providing a response without explaining it	6	15	15	12.00	6	15	5.20	3.00	43.30
	27.	Changing an answer	7	3	10	6.67	3	10	3.51	2.03	52.63

that have already been mentioned, Frank did not use three more strategies: one support strategy (expressing a need for help/clarification), one paraphrase strategy (breaking lexical items into parts), and one strategy for establishing coherence (acknowledging lack of background knowledge). For the second text, seven unused strategies were also recorded, the four already mentioned plus another three strategies: one supervising strategy (referring to the previous passage), one support strategy (skipping unknown words), and one strategy for establishing coherence (acknowledging lack of background knowledge). Eight strategies went unused for the third text, i.e. four in addition to those already mentioned: one supervising strategy (referring to the previous passage), one paraphrase strategy (breaking lexical items into parts), and two strategies for establishing coherence (using context clues to interpret a word/phrase, and using background knowledge).

Higher standard deviation (SD) values for some of the strategies (e.g. expressing a need for help/clarification), indicating more dispersed results, and the differences in the mean values suggest very large variation in the use of individual strategies in this single case study, which may explain why some strategies do not fall within the applied strategy categorization. This is also indicated by the coefficient of variation (CV), which represents the ratio of the standard deviation to the mean. As illustrated in Table 2, SDs go as high as 173.21% of the mean for three strategies (i.e., referring to the previous passage, breaking lexical items into parts, and acknowledging lack of background knowledge), 120.19% for one strategy (i.e., expressing a need for help/clarification), and around 100% for three strategies (i.e., rereading, using context clues to interpret a word/phrase, and using background knowledge). High standard error mean values obtained for paraphrasing, making a prediction about the meaning of a word or text content and expressing a need for help/clarification also indicate deviation from the expected values.

Mean values for strategy use regarding each text and each category were also calculated and compared (see Figure 1). The mean results obtained, for a total of 27 observed strategies, show that Frank's strategy use was fairly low (M=6.33, SD=7.10, SE=0.79) with the highest total mean value being 6.78 for the second text.

Therefore, these results, despite indicating lower mean strategy use by Frank and despite this being a single case study, enable useful insight into his strategic behaviour, or lack of it. Since the frequency of some strategies differed from one text to another (e.g. the use of making a prediction about the meaning of a word or text content was N= 9 on the first text, N=22 on the second, and N=10 on the third text, or rereading: N= 10 on the first text, N=1 on the second, and N=3 on the third text), one of the factors that may have affected his strategy use were characteristics of the text he was reading. Also, failure to use some strategies may also have resulted from specific text/content features, i.e. it is possible that Frank acknowledged lack of background knowledge only while reading the third text because the other two did not give him such a possibility. In addition, failure to use certain strategies (e.g. relating stimulus sentence to personal experiences or using cognates between L1 and L2 to comprehend) may have been a consequence of his insufficient knowledge or awareness of these particular strategies.

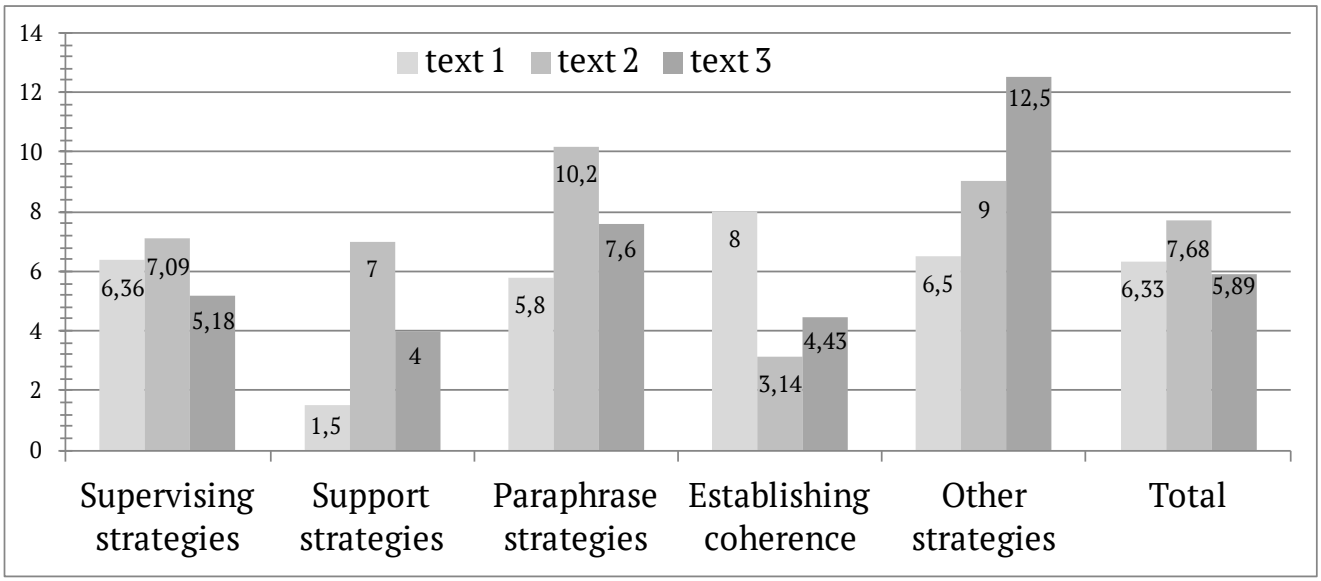

Figure 1. Mean Values for Each Category of Reading Strategies Presented for All Three Texts.

Post-Reading Interview(s) (PRI) and On-Line Observation(s)

With reference to the final instrument, we can see that PRI 1 supported earlier evidence of Frank's poor performance on TRT 1 since he himself admitted a lack of (particularly key) word knowledge several times (e.g., "Have no idea – these two words … this is what mostly keeps bothering me!"), so he could not comprehend the text completely ("… actually I don't know what this is all about …") and, consequently, was not able to suggest any title ("This should be a kind of detective story … Well, how should I know?! It's difficult (…) again these two words … they are important here, I guess …"). His focus on word identification was very obvious and clearly prevented him from making free conclusions about the text at the global level. Asked about the plot, he mostly followed the text by translating, paraphrasing and guessing – sentence after sentence (without summarising the key points). The observational notes additionally reveal that he was anxious, which made him tap his right foot under the desk all the time. Despite his excellent behaviour in the training sessions, his inhibition was recognised during this test-taking session. Based on the general impression, Frank was very systematic when doing the task (sometimes even wasting time on some portions), paid great attention to details (often unnecessarily), approached the task very affectively (lots of sighs, moments of frustration, impatient reactions, etc.) – he was very serious about his involvement in the study and tried to make the most of it.

Next, PRI 3 related to TRT 3, which did not yield great results either, showed a higher level of comprehension ("This is a sort of his autobiography …") because he suggested the title correctly and expressed his positive feelings about the task itself ("not difficult"), hoping for good results ("At least I think that I knew a lot"). Yet, from time to time, he would mention: "I know what to say but don't know what to write here". He probably meant that he could globally comprehend a particular portion, but had some local problems at the level of writing (spelling) or grammar (part of speech), explicitly referring this specific task to his EFL production abilities. Online observations also indicated that this was still a real problem for him ("This is all I know – can't go on …"), which he mostly tended to solve again by translating the text into Croatian (this was how he started the task and he continued this way until he had finished it), but his translations frequently made him confused and hesitant, and sometimes even led to frustration ("Oh my God!!", "What?!").

PRI 2 considering TRT 2, on which Frank performed 'the best' (see Text restoration task(s) (TRT) above), indicates that he mainly comprehended the text globally despite "many unfamiliar words, indeed"; it seems that he built a wider picture of the story since he provided more inferences rooted in the given context ("This is the most logical solution here.") and his background knowledge ("his tent … meaning he's camping."). Therefore, he immediately suggested an adequate title but, when asked about his feelings/experiences on this particular occasion, he was not specific ("don't know what to say"). However, according to the observations, he would grow frustrated and impatient almost every time he could not remember, understand or write something ("What's missing here?!?", "Huh, it's confusing me so much."), and would also show a lack of confidence. From time to time, he showed an awareness of the excessive attention he was giving to the same problem and its solution(s), which he explicitly mentioned ("Oh my God, I'm constantly focusing on this."); he then tried to solve the problems not only through overusing translations and paraphrasing, but by relying on predictions ("This should be some …") and asking for help ("What does this word mean?"). Obviously again, he was extremely eager to do the task correctly and properly.

Total Performance in Grade 8

To sum up, Frank's reading in English at the end of this part was unexpectedly not as successful as it had been in Grade 5, which may be directly related to his proficiency in English. Frank had some abilities that indicated his strategic approach, but he did experience EFL reading as a problem-solving activity in which he tried to focus on both lower-order and higher-order strategies. However, his EFL reading behaviour in Grade 8 was not sufficiently developed to help him to select strategies that could be more efficient in terms of his comprehension capacity.

Conclusion

Considering the participant's background, we may conclude that his language development was not straightforward, since he was raised in an Albanian language setting deeply immersed in a Croatian language environment, particularly with respect to his formal education experiences and out-of-home personal life. In addition, he was exposed to learning two foreign languages (almost) at the same time, one of which was the second language for a part of the population of the place in which he spent his childhood. Looking specifically at learning English, this occurred under special circumstances, which were not favourable in the participant's case, putting him in a position of constant competition with his classmates who were more advanced and experienced

when he joined them. However, it must be mentioned that the overall learning conditions were not stable for them as a group either, since they went through several changes. Specifically, they changed teachers, the number of learners in classes, the total amount of class periods and space where the lessons were held, along with all the facilities and aids normally found in a learning/teaching environment. It is quite clear that these are factors of crucial importance for any formal language development, so we suppose that one of the reasons for the results obtained lies in a combination of such linguistic and non-linguistic landscapes (Šamo, 2015).

Based on the findings driven by the given research design, it can be generally concluded that the participant's later EFL reading development represents a true problem-solving process during which he consciously tried to cope with comprehension (and other) problems in the text by using strategies frequently, but with limited scope, although it might be argued that his early reading development and problem-solving processes were not assessed well enough to enable us to draw more reliable comparisons. It suggests that his metacomprehension ability did not develop as anticipated over the extended period. In other words, the effect of extended exposure to EFL in this Croatian school learner was not entirely positive when his awareness of EFL reading comprehension was taken into account (see Šamo, 2009), which disconfirmed our hypothesis. This consequently fits into SLA research findings, which have more recently viewed the question of exposure in "a very wide spectrum of considerations' (Singleton, 2014, p. 33). Age is just one of the factors, highlighting the interactive network of various language development components.

Most studies are subject to certain limitations and ours was no exception. First, since the participant's linguistic picture is rather complex, it might have been useful to assess each language in terms of metacomprehension abilities to set a base line for later assessment comparisons, although it should be mentioned that we focused on his EFL reading in particular, as the title of the current paper clearly shows. Second, the participant could have been given a similar EFL proficiency test in Grade 5 to provide precise insights into interference factors related to his EFL proficiency and metacomprehension reading strategies. Despite these shortcomings, we still believe that the present study can reveal some interesting views of EFL reading metacomprehension development and contribute to the longitudinal mixed-method approach to reading research within SLA.

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Gabrielova, E. (2018). Gender, Power and Political Speech. Women and Language in the 2015 UK General Election. Deborah Cameron and Sylvia Shaw. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-137-58752-7. *Journal of Language and Education, 4*(1), 117-119. doi:10.17323/2411-7390-2018-4-1-117-119

Gender, Power and Political Speech. Women and Language in the 2015 UK General Election. Deborah Cameron and Sylvia Shaw. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. ISBN: 978-1-137-58752-7

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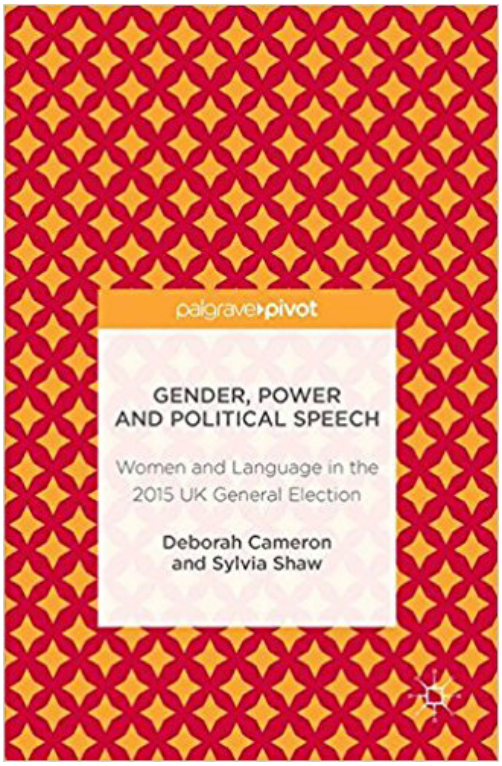
Gender, Power and Political Speech presents an investigation of correlation between gender and public speaking technologies. It provides the audience with real life examples and case studies. The exuberance of empirical data is organized and represented in clearly structured tables. The fact that it looks at female participants' linguistic behaviour in the debates, which are examples of mediated political discourse, distinguishes it from other studies on the related topic. The role of women in politics, their behaviour and rhetoric draws much attention of scholars from all over the world. This book correlates to a certain extent with the study by S. J. Parry-Giles. In her work *Hillary Clinton in the news: Gender and authenticity in American politics* she investigates the representation of Hillary Clinton by the media. Cameron and Shaw have chosen three British female politicians for their analysis and also look into the gender and authenticity of their public speaking strategies. However, they narrow their scope of investigation by analyzing the debates only.

Gender, Power and Political Speech consists of four chapters. It also includes List of Figures and Index which makes it convenient to navigate the content. The book is well structured and easy to follow. At the beginning of each chapter there are Abstract, Kew Words and Introduction parts that introduce readers to the topic and encourage them to anticipate the discussion. Each chapter ends with References providing the list of literature used. The first chapter appears to be introductory. It highlights the notion of 'different voice' the author employs further in narration from both linguistic and sociopolitical point of view. It gives an overview of the 2015 General Election Campaign in the UK and its main events. In the end of the first chapter the author briefly comments on a case study approach and summarizes the aims and methods of the study. The second chapter has a linguistic focus and presents a deeper analysis



of linguistic behaviour of the party leaders within and between gender groups. It also gives an examination of strategies used by participants in their performances. The third chapter is devoted to the representation of three female party leaders and the coverage they received from UK national newspapers. In this chapter the author claims that there was a certain trend of positive representations of women's performances in the debates, which can be related to the 'different voice' ideology of gender, language and politics. The fourth chapter draws the conclusion of the research and pulls together the findings in the previous parts of the book. It readdresses the case study's central questions. The author also discusses the debates as

media events and considers the way 'ordinary viewers' perceived the performances of politicians. Finally, the chapter presents a closer look at Nicola Sturgeon's behaviour as a successful blend of 'authenticity' and 'articulation'.

The first chapter, titled *A Different Voice?*, starts with introducing the idea of a 'different kind of politics' offered by female politicians (p. 2). The style of communication that they tend to use, 'not just *what*, but *how*' they convey their message distinguish them from their male counterparts. The authors present a piece of statistics and previous observations of the issue. They point out to a paradox that in practice women who embody the common virtues, people are willing to see in politics, remain marginalized. Further in the introduction the research questions are stated and the structure of the book is described. The first chapter gives a theoretical overview of language ideologies by Silverstein, Irvine, Cameron, and Sherzer. Cameron and Shaw come to a conclusion that most ideologies of language and gender centre on the belief that women use language in a different way. The origin of 'a different voice' ideology roots in the twentieth century and is indebted to the ideas and political aspirations of the late feminist movement. The early notion of the gender difference was influenced by a 'two cultures' model of male and female communication styles and elaborated in the works by Tannen, Grey, Baron-Cohen, and others. However, Cameron and Shaw claim that this is the dominant 'folk' ideology of language and gender (p. 7). They use the research by Karpowitz and Mendelberg to illustrate the principal of 'looking locally', examining the specific ways in which gender influences language use in particular contexts. The authors present their case study of three female politicians providing the readers with preliminary background information about the debates, the participants and the context in which they took place. Such method of research is chosen by the authors to exemplify the political speech of women in public contexts where the prevailing norms are adversarial. Cameron and Shaw examine two televised party leaders' debates which were broadcast during the 2015 General Election campaign in the UK. The tools for analysis do not relate to one particular framework, but are chosen according to a 'mixed method' approach. The results are discussed in the following chapters.

The first part of the next chapter *Gender and Speech Styles in the 2015 General Election Debates* is devoted to different communication styles that are used by men and women. Cameron and Shaw suggest that televised political debates are helpful while tracing this interrelation between gender and political speech. They look at previous investigations on the related genre and spotted a mismatch in findings of different researches. On the one hand, scholars tend to outline specific features for male and female verbal behaviour. On the other hand, a number of researches claim that styles are mixed and there is a faint distinction between male and female rhetoric. Consequently, Cameron and Shaw define the scope of their study and decide to focus on two broad issues: 'the management on the floor and the distribution of speaking turns' and 'the linguistic strategies participants used to position themselves and their opponents' (p. 32). They describe the way they analyzed the debates in detail what makes their research transparent and clear. All the results are presented in figures and tables and can be easily visualized. The profound descriptive analysis shows that the most important factor influencing the allocation of speaking time to participants is not gender as such but a participant's political role and the status of the party she/he represents. The more significant the party is the more invited turns its representative gains. However, the participants who lack speaking time try to restore it by making interventions and taking uninvited turns.

In terms of strategies, women's behaviour turns out to be controversial. One of the female participant of the debate, Natalie Bennet, followed a male pattern and made an aggressive intervention in attempt to gain the floor, engaging in adversarial linguistic behaviour that falls outside the accepted norms of political debate and showing that 'extreme' rule-breaking is not an exclusively male preserve. The other two female participants explicated their ability to adopt adversarial positions and assert their claims to the floor without using 'crude' strategies which would alienate their audience. Leanne Wood employs a 'secure' speaking turn to challenge the opponent, while Nicola Sturgeon achieved that by taking uninvited turns and exploiting a subtle strategy of shifting her tone from serious to a mocking, ironic and humorous one (p. 66). What is more, Cameron and Shaw come to a conclusion that cooperative and supportive verbal strategies, culturally coded as female ones, were most often used by both sexes and for tactical reasons. They have not defined any outstanding differences between masculine and feminine communication styles. On the contrary, male-female similarities appear more numerous in the research. There are certain limitations which are considered by the authors, such as a specific type of the context (debate) and membership or non-membership of the Westminster Parliament. Additionally, it may be noted that two televised debates are not enough for overall judgments. Before drawing more general conclusions the researchers are eager to look at the reception of the participants' performances in the following chapter. In contrast to the first chapter, which is highly theoretical, the second one is exuberant with empirical examples and scientific outcomes of the study. It might be complex for a common reader to follow and aimed at professionals in specific field of linguistics.

The third chapter *Reception and Representation* examines the media interpretation of the female politicians' performances and thus its contribution to shaping public perceptions of them. It should be acknowledged that the media are an influential source of the opinions which people engage in the process of forming their own judgments (p. 80). The issue gained much attention from other scholars. Having done a theoretical analysis of the topic, Cameron and Shaw come to a conclusion that media coverage depends mostly on the status and significance of the party the participant represents rather than on the gender. However, the preliminary research appeared to be quantitative by their nature. The authors of the book intend to show their qualitative approach based on the content analysis of representation and the linguistic tools used. In the introductory part of the third chapter they pose two sets of questions they are going to answer further in the book: general discursive positioning of female politicians and ideologies of gender and political speech in terms of media coverage. Their analysis is based on a sample of newspaper articles in either national or English editions. The first part of the findings coincides with the previous research and suggests that the participants who are regarded as political threats tend to gain substantial media attention no matter if they are men or women. Nevertheless, the authors claim that numerous comments about women's appearance and sexual attractiveness reinforce a pre-existing gender inequality and mobilize assumptions about interrelation between gender and power. In terms of speech, not using adversarial strategies and women's consensual style were cited with approval, but at the same time certain examples of consensual discourse were evaluated negatively. This coexistence of conflicting ideologies of gender and political speech sets up contradictory expectations which women can fail to meet struggling for leading positions in politics. Cameron and Shaw also consider the stereotypes which are used in representation female political leaders. The most common ones appear to be the 'iron maiden' and 'seductress'. The chapter ends with a conclusion based on the analysis of the reception and representation of women in politics by the media. The authors contradict Karen Ross's supposition that changing public attitudes have made sexism less acceptable and less relative. On the contrary, Cameron and Show outline the shift of the form in which sexist media representations are packaged (p. 107). They tend to be explicitly satirical or humorous. The authors also point out to a gap between representation and the reality of the woman's verbal behaviour. Thus they assert that the reception of women's political speech in General Elections 2015 was shaped to a significant extent by the 'different voice' ideology. What is more, the discourse continues to put women at a disadvantage in the public sphere.

The last chapter summarizes the results of the study and is entitled *Conclusions*. In fact, it reinforces the ideas which have been already stated in the previous chapters. The findings are also grounded on the study of ordinary people perceptions of female politicians and Nicola Sturgeon in particular. The principal outcome the authors want their readers to perceive is that the most effective political speakers, both male and female, use a range of linguistic resources instead of being limited to 'male' adversarial styles and 'female' consensus-based styles. In addition, women deserve equal political representation in the media excluding existing stereotypes.

All things considered, the book is worth reading. It suggests the answers to questions which are actual and ambiguous. In the contemporary world of politics women have become more assertive and struggle for the leading positions at the same pace as men. However, they face a number of difficulties such as firm stereotypes which influence their representation in the media and perception. The most striking idea, the authors undercover in their work, is the mismatch between how women position themselves and how the audience and the media perceive them. The impact of stereotypes is undoubtedly huge. No matter how hard female politicians strive for gaining respect of their male counterparts and the audience, the gender bias prevents them from attaining the desired position. We are aware of successful examples like Hillary Clinton and Angela Merkel, but they are rather exceptions. They have paved a long way to their high posts and recognition.

The book underlines the fact that status and personal qualities are valued by the media and provide the coverage. But at the same time, a high political status is tightly bound to the gender and is rarely obtained by women due to certain assumptions and prejudices. Although Cameron and Shaw have done a profound analysis of the case study, the sample is too narrow, to my mind, and results might be different on a larger scale of research. Nevertheless, *Gender, Power and Political Speech* deserve attention of those readers who are involved in the linguistic study of the same genre. The book contains a great part of theoretical overview of the previous research as well as well-grounded hypotheses, some of which were proved by the findings and some were dismissed.

References:

Parry-Giles, S. J. (2014). *Hillary Clinton in the news: Gender and authenticity in American politics*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press.

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