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Editorial

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the third 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 a comprehensive platform for the scientific debates and news within international scientific community at-large. We would like to take this opportunity to thank current JLE Editorial Board members for their ongoing commitment to the standards to which the journal aspires. 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 find valuable information, as well as some food for thought for you and your colleagues. We invite all our readers to consider submitting their work in the mentioned areas to the JLE and to propose special issues in topic areas of emerging importance to the field.

This issue opens with the paper 'Pragmatics of Crisis-Motivated Humour in Computer Mediated Platforms in Nigeria' by Ayodele James Akinola. It analytically presents crisis-motivated humour and its potential coping strategy in Nigeria through online content examination. This initial paper verifies that the socioeconomic, and political realities give rise to recurring subjects in the Nigeria public discourse via social media Facebook and WhatsApp jokes in order to reinforce a perspective for Nigeria to be as a developing democratic nation.

The article Linguistic Politeness in Yemeni Arabic: The Use of Request Perspective' written by Yahya Mohammed Al-Marrani explores a stereotype for requests to be an important speech act in communication due to different social norms and cultural contexts. The study seeks to identify the difference between male-male and male-female interactions and female-female and female-male interactions in the use of request perspectives as well as hearer-oriented and speaker-oriented, inclusive, and impersonal perspectives. The results of the research show that male-male and male-female interactions and female-female and female-male interactions employed hearer-oriented and speaker-oriented perspective more than other perspectives.

Eleni Griva, Katerina Maroniti, and Anastasia Stamou in ''Linguistic Diversity on TV': A Program for Developing Children's Multiliteracies Skills' analyse the issues regarding the multiliteracies that create a different type of pedagogy within its own language and semiotic resources. The authors' findings reveal that multiliteracies skills could be developed at an early age through experiencing, conceptualizing, analyzing and applying creatively, with the purpose of developing children's critical awareness of linguistic diversity via popular culture texts.

In 'An Exploration of Beliefs about Gender Differences in Language Use', Esma Latić and Amna Brdarević Čeljo investigate the questions arising from human perception of social reality through language, and thereby for the development of the field. The obtained results open fascinating perspectives for further research on the issue of gender differences in language and the research development of a male and female speech area as well as the relationship between language and gender.

In 'Academic Subject Areas and English Language Learning Strategies: Any Relationships?' Ahmad Nazari and Tanvi Warty study the use of English language learning strategies through the relationship between learners. The research postulated the causes for the differences between the selection and use of

English language learning strategies between students of different academic fields, based upon triangulated data.

The paper 'The Influence of Students' Sociocultural Background on the IELTS Speaking Test Preparation Process' by Galina Pavlovskaya and Anastasia Lord presents a study done with new perspectives in the sociocultural factors a teacher/IELTS instructor should consider preparing Russian students for the IELTS exam. The authors of the paper claims that the difficulties Russian students encounter using the speech functions are caused by the students' sociocultural background and should not be attributed only to their low language proficiency level.

In 'Teaching For Justice: Introducing Translanguaging in an Undergraduate TESOL Course' Elizabeth Robinson, Zhongfeng Tian, Tiffany Martínez, and Aybahar Qarqeen focus on an investigation about the effects of translanguaging in a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) course through thematic analysis and macro- and micro-level analyses of power based on our unique individual experiences in the classroom. All the findings in this article further our understanding of an Undergraduate TESOL course as teaching for justice through translanguaging helping students develop justice-based ideas of languge, teaching and learning.

'The Prospects of Kiswahili as a Medium of Instruction in the Tanzanian Education and Training Policy' article by Eustard Rutalemwa Tibategeza and Theodorus du Plessis, representing a research on the government generated documents on the use of Kiswahili as MoI and their implementation. This study sheds new light on the field of education stakeholders' tension, suggesting that English is a language of global business, science and technology and wishing Tanzanian children to be instructed in English only, what provokes misconceptions in the separate underlying proficiency theory that using both English and Kiswahili.

The book review 'Educating for Creativity within Higher Education: Integration of Research into Media Practice. McIntyre, P., Fulton, J., Paton, E., Kerrigan, S., Meany, M. , London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. 240 pp. eBook ISBN 978-3-319-90674-4' by Elena Tereshchenko assumes a pressing necessity and claim for the higher education system to form a creative personality to address the challenges in both society and economy. The reviewer interpreted the authors' goal to improve the field of educational settings based on theoretically-informed, practically-oriented, and robustly-tested models of creativity as the approach to further develop the model of Systems Centred Learning at all stages of educational settings across the globe.

We hope you will enjoy this third issue of the JLE, take part in the debate of the proffered concerns and that you will suggest submitting your papers and sending comments. Please, participate by submitting your work and suggestions for special issues in the coming months and years.

Editor-in-Chief of Issue 3
Tatiana Baranovskaya

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Pragmatics of Crisis-Motivated Humour in Computer Mediated Platforms in Nigeria

Ayodele James Akinola
University of Ibadan

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Ayodele James Akinola, Department of English, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria, 200284. E-mail: james2a2@gmail.com

Humour, an established means of releasing stress and tension, has attracted scholarly attention over the years. In the Nigerian discourse context, studies on Crisis-Motivated Humour (CMH) via CMC platforms are scarce. This paper investigates humour shared through social media that reflects the socioeconomic/political challenges in Nigeria in order to identify CMH as a form of humour through which real-life experiences of other people can be understood. Ethnography of communication and pragmatic act theory provide the theoretical framework. 30 anonymous humorous compositions were randomly selected from *WhatsApp* (15) and *Facebook* (15). CMH is a creative composition of jokes that reflects Nigerian experiences, perceptions, imaginations and assumptions. They are purposefully composed by Nigerians in order to downplay the effects of the crisis and bring temporary relief to the audience. These jokes elicit amusement, high-level wit and satirise the crisis situation(s). CMH are composed mainly in English with a blend of Nigerian Pidgin and a reflection of some Nigerianism. They are replete with verifiable but exaggerated facts, deployed through varying practices. Use of the first person singular pronoun 'I' and second person singular/plural 'you' with the use of simple present tense of verb among other grammatical elements are the norm. These features make some of the jokes believable and also establish CMH as a unique genre of humour with an unlimited audience. CMH are often preserve-able and re-usable and thus serve as a relevant medium through which political leaders can assess the plights of the populace and access first-hand information on the 'real' impacts of the crisis.

Keywords: crisis-motivated humour, computer mediated, platforms, Nigeria, pragmatics of communication

Humour, an established means of releasing stress and tension has attracted scholarly attention over the years and has been identified as an effective means of interaction. In teaching and learning, it is an effective way of arousing and stimulating the interest of learners (Aboudan, 2009; Ruggieri, 1999; Sopher, 1981; Southam and Schwartz, 2004). According to Ross (1998), "humour is capable of creating an atmosphere of relief from anxiety, anger and pain. Its profile is high in the society". The subject has been conceived as a complex multi-faceted phenomenon (Marin-Arrese, 2005). Interest in the topic has continued to grow across various disciplines. Many of the existing studies on humour have focused on its principles, form and functions in societies. Examples include Morreall (1997), Mulkay (1989), Hay (2000), Meyer (2000), to name just a few. Scholars like Dziegielewski, Jacinto, Laudadio, & Legg-Rodriguez (2003), Dean & Major (2008), Mora-Ripoll (2010) among others have explored the therapeutic value of humour. Obadare (2009) and Davies (2014) examined the application of humour in politics with a focus on its various forms and media. Some studies on humour in crisis situations have provided a basis for understanding humour reactions in social media among American, Asian and European users (see Beeston, Urrutia, Halcrow, Xiao, Liu, et al. (2014) and Wise (2016). This study investigates crisis-motivated humour in computer-mediated platforms in Nigeria within the scholarly lens of pragmatics.

Sources and construction of humour vary (Attardo 2017). Depending on the environment, humour can be employed through *satirisation* as seen in texts (especially academic). On the television, it can be regarded as a comedy, constructed in play or before a live audience (e.g. stand-up comedy). In the family, interpersonal or group interactions, humour can be evoked through jokes and sometimes, puns and so on. In all the environments identified, it can be inferred that humour is potentially an effective tool for sustaining the peace, stability and general well-being

of any person or society. Humour can, therefore, be seen as a tool for social interaction (Chapman 1983).

Nigeria, one of the most populated African nations has been recognised among the top-ten happiest people on the continent. According to Helliwell, Layard, and Sachs's (2017) World Happiness Report, the country is the sixth happiest nation in Africa and ninety-fifth in the world (p. 21). In March 2018, the Report sees Nigeria moved from its previous position to fifth in Africa and ninety-first in Africa (p. 24). Some of the variables used in both reports include the Gross Domestic Growth (GDP), social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom to make life choices, generosity, corruption, et cetera. Considering the daily news reports on the print and electronic media in Nigeria and about Nigeria, which in recent times are very unpleasant. It is surprising to discover that Nigeria still ranks fifth among African happiest states. This study, therefore, investigates Crisis-Motivated humour (CMH) in Nigeria and explores its relevance as a potential coping strategy. Specifically, the objectives are to examine the nature of CMH and ideas conveyed through it, identify CMH as a reference of a society's realities, and highlight the pragmatic acts in CMH.

LiteratureReview

In pragmatics and interrelated disciplines such as discourse, psychology, linguistics, sociolinguistics, anthropology, and medicine, there are numerous studies pertaining to the mechanism and roles of humour in interaction. Some of these include McCreaddie & Wiggins (2007), Clarke (2009), Tsakona (2015), Filani (2015), Eleboda (2014), Nneji (2013), Nereus (2012), Dynel (2011), Rowen (2010), Clarke (2009); Ross (1998). Some of these contributions are briefly explored.

Clarke (2009) attempted a description of humour using pattern recognition theory. He argued that humour is effectively an information-processing system which is consequently applicable to any data, whether externally perceived or internally stored. He identified some patterns, which in his estimation give a description of humour. Ross (1998) investigated the relationship between humour and social attitudes – the status of the targets of humour, the joke tellers and the audience – alongside the social aspects of humour. His study serves as a contribution to the debate about 'political correctness' and censorship of humour.

Filani (2016) examined stand-up comedy using discourse theory, which is viewed as having a complementary relationship to the activity type. Both were construed as having a lot in common with "acts" in pragmatics. Relying on Nigerian stand-up comedy as samples, he selected two comedians so as to examine the choice of linguistic code, stereotyping, salutation among others. He affirmed that these comedians employed discourse type as communicative actions to achieve humorous reactions from their audience. Eleboda (2014) investigated humour in advertising in Nigeria from the psychological point of view. This takes into account the influence which humourous advertising has on consumers' behaviour. The study deployed the use of a questionnaire to identify demographic variables of respondents and to measure the influence. Focusing on the telecommunication companies' humorous advertisements, the scholar averred that humorous advertisement is effective for creation of affection among consumers in Nigeria. He also emphasised that consumers have a positive disposition to products whose advert were humorously packaged. Delving into the aspect of gender, Eleboda claimed that women are more likely persuaded by a humorous advertisement than men.

Further, Nereus (2012) studied jokes that were incongruous with polite everyday interactions. An attempt was made to understand the descriptions and functions of humour through three theories: incongruity, superiority, and relief. He explained the relevance of each to the study, proposing that studies of humour have a lot of potential owing to its human values and aesthetics, and found its widespread use in Nigeria. Nneji (2013) approaches humour research using a semantic and pragmatics lens. His focus was the perception of Nigerian jokes as humour construction. In the study, he examined everyday jokes that Nigerian citizens expressed on *Nairaland*, a social media platform. The identity of the users was left anonymous. Drawing on the incongruity theory, Nneji affirmed that jokes depict the socio-cultural life of the Nigerian people. However, the study does not address the motivations for these jokes.

Tsakona (2015) focused on the social functions of joke telling with an emphasis on the speakers' strategies in conveying political humour and their spontaneous comments. He sought "a more comprehensive approach to the analysis of political (or other) jokes" (2015, p. 287) by examining extracts about the Greek debt crisis. In fact, this study points towards crisis-motivated humour even though the term CMH was not applied in the study. Further, Tsakona construed political jokes as those that serve certain social functions. Among other issues, he highlighted the trends of political jokes deriving from oppressive governments, an emphasis on content, and preference for decontextualized texts from printed collections. In addition, he said:

> Nowadays, modern technology and media allow us not only to collect contemporary political (or other jokes), but also to gather evidence on how jokes are disseminated and,

> most importantly, on the reasons why they are circulated and on the social functions they serve, as conceptualized by the speakers themselves.
>
> (Tsakona, 2015, p. 292).

The present study draws on these sources in analyzing how jokes function in three dimensions. First, the motivations for the jokes; second, the platforms where they are generated; third, the effects (overt and covert) they have on the audience. In seeking to understand these three dimensions, I investigate social media jokes that are motivated by the socioeconomic, and political realities in Nigeria as a dynamic society as well as a developing democratic nation.

CMH as a form of informal humour

Although most scholars (such as Moalla, 2015; Chapman, 1983; Dynel, 2011; Nereus, 2012; Vivona, 2014) in humour studies are in unison regarding the fact that jokes are generated from incongruous social experiences, many studies on humour focus mainly on the first two of the three possible varieties of humour:,formal, non-formal, and informal humour. Humour is perceived as formal in a situation where the occasion is strictly formal and the primary purpose of the event is not just to merely evoke laughter. Examples include audience at national day celebrations, business forums, political meetings, corporate meetings, and many others. Non-formal humour can refer to any gathering organised for the main purpose of being entertained. These include weddings, birthdays, television drama series, home movies, reality shows, comedy shows and many others. Here, the person evoking such humour is conscious of the audience, and he/she is doing this so as to fulfil the overt goal of entertaining the audience. Here, the performer and the audience are limited in terms of the space and time. The motivation for this kind of humour is the remuneration or reward for the entertainer.

The third form, informal humour, is often spontaneously evoked for the sake of bantering. This will include jokes between friends, husband and wife, parents to their children, teachers to students in a classroom, to name just a few. There is no direct incentive for the person evoking such other than the fulfilled feeling of having lightened the mood of others through the evocation of smiles or laughter. In some other instances, it can be evoked to just release built-up emotions as a result of undesirable social and environmental experiences (Holmes and Marra, 2002).

Apart from the fact that informal humour has been under-researched, there is a dearth of literature especially on one aspect of informal humour, namely crisis-motivated humour (CMH). CMH, in this study, refers to social or political jokes that are constructed to express the composers' experience of challenging situations in their environments. In other words, CMH is any joke created as a coping strategy for difficult social or political experiences of a people. Such difficulties include any issue that brings about some psychological crisis in the people, and as a means of cushioning the effects, the people experiencing the difficulties resort to humour construction. How this is carried out will be examined alongside the different subjects that convey the experiences.

Materials and Methods

This study is analysis-driven and examines online content. The data analyses were carried out manually. These data were semantically verified according to the researcher's classification of CMH. Further information regarding the sample, research instruments, and research procedures is provided below.

Sample

The samples collected for the study were taken from social media. All of these were purposefully and specifically extracted from two popular social media platforms in Nigeria: *Facebook* and *WhatsApp*. These two platforms were selected due to the high number of Nigerians using them. Across Nigeria, there is hardly anyone with an internet-enabled mobile phone or computer that does not have an account with one of these platforms. Those few who are not users are often fed with stories by their friends, associates, wards or family members about happenings around the nation and the world, based on information derived from one of these social platforms.

From each of the selected platforms, 15 samples rendered in the English language and Nigerian Pidgin were collected. Thus, a total of 30 anonymous humorous compositions (jokes) were randomly collected for analysis in this study. These jokes were those posted on Facebook and WhatsApp between January 2014 and January 2017. Many of the jokes are often recycled and, as a result, their original creators are difficult to identify. The specific age of users on the WhatsApp handle cannot be ascertained. However, according to the Facebook policy on users' age[1], it can be inferred that the age of users whose jokes were collected for this study ranges between 13 and 45 above. Specifically, through a background check on users' profile, seven of the jokes collected were from

[1] https://www.facebook.com/help/157793540954833

female users while the remaining nine were from male on Facebook. All users in the study are literate in Internet-enabled mobile phones/computers.

To achieve the study's objectives, analyses were carried out following the frame of the Ethnography of Communication (EoC) alongside Mey's pragmatic act theory (PAT) (2001). The PAT, on its own, is generally represented with an illustration known as the pragmeme[2]. Prior to the analysis, a discussion on the EoC and PAT were carried out to demonstrate how they apply to the study. Further, the data collection procedure was briefly explained. The analysis provided varying topical angles to CMH as exhibited in the Nigerian narratives.

Instruments

Being a study based on online content analysis, internet-enabled personal computers (PC) and mobile telephones were used. For the corpus from WhatsApp, PC web version 0.2.9737 was used having been paired with GBWhatsApp v6.30 version 2.18.46. This facilitated the copy-and-paste method as well as the storage procedure. Data from Facebook were collected using only the PC. The corpus from the two social media platforms was pasted in a Microsoft-Word document and saved for the purpose of this study.

Procedures

The data for the study were deliberately selected from social media posts (Facebook and WhatsApp) whenever there was a major crisis in Nigeria. Among these crises were the scarcity of fuel, labour union strikes, economic recession, increase in suicide attempts, national treasury looting, insurgent attacks, poor health facilities, among others. In each instance, this researcher used the copy-and-paste method to save the jokes on a personal computer for later use. To sustain their originality, the collected jokes were left unedited. The selected texts were analysed in line with the SPEAKING acronym propounded in Hymes' Ethnography of Communication while Mey's (2001) PAT (otherwise known as the pragmeme) was used to identify the pragmatic acts (practs) and the role of contexts in the selected texts.

Ethnography of Communication and Pragmemic assumptions of Mey (2001)

Hymes' Ethnography of Communication (EoC) is popularised through the acronym of SPEAKING. The theory emphasizes communicative competence, in reaction to Chomsky's distinction between linguistic competence and linguistic performance (see Hymes, 1976). The assumption is that the EoC is capable of analysing a communicative event within the wider context of the social and cultural practices and beliefs of the members of a particular culture or speech community. Cameron (2001) maintains that EOC accounts for communicative form, which may include but is not limited to spoken language and its function within the given culture. In the acronym, the S refers to the setting, which indicates the appropriateness of time. The next letter in the acronym, P stands for the relationship that exists between the interactants. E which stands for Ends is a reference to the important goals to be achieved in the communicative event, which can be planned or unplanned. I presume that the goals can both be overt and covert within the context of CMH and some other types of humour. Letter A indicates the acts sequence and K for Key. The former involves what is said, where and how. The latter has to do with the speakers' extra-linguistic features (understood through the mental posture, tone) and manner of presentation of the jokes presented. These two, acts and keys, have a complimentary relevance to the pragmemic assumption in pragmatics. PAT advances the notion of the speech act theory propounded by John Austin and John Searle (Mey, 2001, p. 219). Here, the context in which linguistic items are deployed with regards to the speaker (or writer), the participants (or target audience) and on what occasion are important to the understanding of meanings in the communicative event. In another sense, the specific communicative situation and the adopted attitudes inform how the intended message is understood.

Mey's pragmatic act notion, which is conveyed diagrammatically and referred to as the pragmeme, exemplifies "the various choices that the language user has at his or her disposal in communicating" (Mey, 2001, p. 222). The emphasis in pragmatics is, therefore, based on the notion of context. Odebunmi defines context as "the condition that constrains the determination of the propositions of an utterance or the understanding of an event or discourse" (Odebunmi, 2016, p. 13). Context is identified from the cognitive, linguistic, situational, and social perspectives. All these are relevant to the CMH texts. The cognitive context points towards the state of mind of the participants in a discussion. The basis for the linguistic context has to do with the interrelatedness of text, or co-texts. The situational context has to do with the location where language is used, while the social context refers to the constraints imposed on meaning and understanding of events by communicative encounters (Odebunmi, 2016, pp. 14-16).

Furthermore, the I of the EoC acronym, which stands for instrumentalities, is concerned with the channels

[2] Mey, J. L. (2001). *Pragmatics, an introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. p. 222

through which communication is impacted. This can be in the form of writing, speaking and the adoption of signs and symbols. In this study, the identified channel is social media with specific attention to *Facebook* and *WhatsApp*. Norms, represented by the acronym N, refer to the attitudes of participants according to the given situation and setting. This accounts for mannerism and the allowance of the use of certain expressions including linguistic code-mixing in communication. Norms, therefore, have a close link with the culture of the situation in which certain linguistic behaviours are exhibited. The last letter of the acronym is the G for genre. This points to the fact that utterances can be categorised into different types or classes.

Results and Discussion

Analyses of data for the study are structured according to the study's objectives, namely: nature of CMH and ideas conveyed through it, CMH as a reference of a society's realities, and pragmatic acts in CMH construction. One of the adopted theories, EoC, is applied to the data and is broken down into two parts: the SPEA and KING parts of the EoC SPEAKING acronym. The SPEA part of the EoC is combined with the pragmemic analysis with the corresponding titles. The other part of the analysis is presented in an abridged version of the EoC and pragmatic act application. However, the pragmatic imports of these jokes were outlined so as to understand their functions.

CMH on (Un)employment

Employment is a very important aspect of every society, most especially concerning youth. This topic features prominently in the Nigerian construction of CMH. An example is given below.

Extract 1

Teacher: who is the president of Nigeria?
Children: Nnamdi Azikiwe
Teacher: good!!
Who is the minister of defence?
Children: Bukola Saraki
Teacher: correct!!
What is the capital city of Nigeria?
Children: Benin City
Teacher: very good!!
Who composed the national anthem?
Children: Timaya
Teacher: Excellent!!
If the people from Nigeria are called Nigerians,
How will you call the people from Moscow?
Children: Mosquitoes
Teacher: Wow!!
Then, 2+5 will give you wat?
Children: 25
Teacher: perfect!!
You will remain stupid like
this until your government increases my salary.
Don't spoil the fun, send it to ur friends.😂😂😂

The extract above within the tradition of EoC (from the S to A parts of the SPEAKING acronym, others will be collectively discussed in subsequent analysis) implies that the setting is Nigeria, based on the initial question posed by the teacher. Here, it is assumed the students should be able to provide the answer. However, they fail and provide another name, one who was actually a President in the historical past of the nation. The pragmatic import of this presupposes that the pupils are lagging behind with regards to knowledge acquisition. Note that the responses were collectively allocated to the character as children rather than as individual pupils with identifiable names. The reason for this is revealed in the concluding part of the joke where the teacher implicitly requests and demands an increase in her/his remuneration from her employers. As a result, the pract of requesting and demanding is demonstrated. Although this is construed as a joke, it indicates that the teachers in the nation are poorly paid. The movement for a pay rise is, in fact, a recurring topic. The joke thus covertly paints a picture of the state of education in the country.

Regarding the participants, the overt participants are the imaginary teacher and her/his students. In the covert consideration, the participants will include every Nigerian from the middle-class downward whose child is enrolled in any government-run schools. It should be noted that the complaint of the teacher in the context is the lack of salary increments, hence her/his nonchalance to their errors. Again, within the pragmatic act tradition, the pract of abandoning was evoked. Here, the students were abandoned in their ignorance without recourse to their future. Recall that the E letter indicates the ends of the communicative event. In the text above, although the overt end is an evocation of humour, the covert end is a form of protest. In this sense, the protesting pract is deployed.

In Extract 1 above, some of the acts include those of requesting, abandoning and protesting. Through the co-texts, inference is found in relation to the repetitive reference to Nigeria. The voice points to that of an oppressed worker who is now oppressing others as a result of an unpleasant work situation. The second extract shares some similarities.

Extract 2

U R G E N T
Do you know any GRADUATE with 1st Class, 2.1 or

2.2 in any of the following fields:
Geography, Geology, Geophysics, Physics,
Medicine, Health Sciences, Computer Science,
Tailoring Technology, Engineering Sciences,
Agriculture Sciences, Geography Education,
Law, Mass Communication,
Political Science, Sociology,
History or any other Arts courses?
*Can they speak English fluently? *Can they write well?
*Are they willing to relocate to Canada? *Do they have computer skills?
Alright. Please, greet them for me. Happy Easter.

Going through the texts above, the setting in the meta-linguistic context is a job advertisement. In the pseudo advert, one is taken through the details of a job vacancy, which virtually every educated person (participants) would be qualified to apply for. However, the composer reveals the real intention (end) only at the end, which is to satirize the challenge of unemployment in the country and the attendant rat-race that follows it. Through this composition, practs of arousing (interest and hope), of mocking, and of equating were exhibited. The introductory part of the text arouses the readers but later mocks them towards the end. It suggests that everyone is desirous of a good-paying job and elicits the fantasy of travel abroad resonant among citizens.

Both of the above extracts and the ensuing analysis point to the fact that employment and unemployment are recurring subjects in the Nigeria public discourse. This conveys the idea that it is a common practice for the employed to seek pay rises why the unemployed dream of a well-paid position. The composers of these jokes use the current situation in Nigeria for a humorous communication that conveys a socio-political message.

CMH on premium placed on human lives

Nigeria has a communal-based society and much value is placed on the well-being of each member; in other words, citizens share in each other's joy and sorrow. However, with the advent of modern technologies, communal-living is fast fading and people are now more socially isolated. One consequence of this, in the recent years, has been an increase in cases of suicide. Although, technologies like mobile phones and the virtual worlds of the internet and the social media cannot be wholly held responsible, they do encourage a 'mind your own business' mindset. Turbulent economic situations in Nigeria are also a contributing factor is the rise in suicide rates. Social media is replete with references to this situation and, in some cases, mobilizes humour as a way of coping with the social problem. Consider the extract below.

Extract 3

Na wa oo[3] person no go make calls again near bridges?
I just parked my car near 3rd mainland bridge to answer an urgent call and over 100 vehicles parked and the occupants begging me not to do it! That they will help me with whatever problems I have!
They thought I wanted to jump and commit suicide! As a sharp[4] person, I quickly told them I'm owing somebody 20m![5]
Come see alert for my phone as them gather money to stop me from jumping
Chie[6] this one na good business oo it's better than MMM[7] wey they give help. I will go to another bridge tomorrow. Laugh the stress of the day away.

From the joke, the usual Nigerianness of the setting is introduced. This time through the utilisation of the Pidgin English: "Na wa oo person no go make calls again near bridges". The participants are imaginary readers of the text. The narrative style is employed to sustain and arouse the readers' curiosity. Here, the readers' shared situation knowledge (in Mey's pragmeme) comes to bear. The reader can easily relate with the co-texts such as "near 3rd mainland bridge" etc. The humorous dimension is introduced by the imaginary and exaggerated "100 vehicles" and their "occupants" who were begging "not to do it". Here the expression "not to do it" is a pragmatic reference to the act "suicide". The further explanation about the "help" "with whatever problems I have" in the extract reveals the covert end as well as the overt. While the overt is just to amuse through the pract of telling or amusing, the other is a reminder that the general situation in the country still makes others assume someone might attempt suicide. The overt end is enhanced more as a result of the fabricated donations made by the passersby. Extract 3 is replete with practs of exaggeration and suggestion (to the readers to consider the prank). The covert end foregrounds the suicide attempt as well as expresses the premium place on the lives of others by fellow citizens.

CMH on education, government policies and corruption

[3] Nigerian slangy expression used as an exclamation when one is in a bad or pathetic situation. When divided into two separate words, "Na" means "It is" and "Wao" could directly imply "woe".
[4] Smart person
[5] Million in Nigerian currency called Naira
[6] Exclamation
[7] A money doubling scheme that has no legal backing in the country's banking system

Politics and policies are like the Siamese twins. They are hardly separable. Consequently, people's perception of policies is usually linked with the policymakers. In Nigeria, some policies of the government are popularised through the comic dimension introduced by the people. It is also a reflection of how such is viewed. Take the extract below for example.

Extract 4

> Admission! Admission!! Admission!!!
> I am pleased to announce the launch of our inaugural Whistle Blowing certificate programmes listed below: EFCC[8]
> - 6-month Diploma in Whistle Blowing (DWB): This crash-course programme will equip you with the ability to spot suspected houses where stolen funds are kept. With this degree, you will be able to spot Naira stashes kept behind walls.
> - 3-year Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) Degree in Whistle Blowing: Smart people don't keep stolen funds in Naira. So why should you go about looking for Naira loot? This programme equips you with the aided ability to spot all looted foreign currencies.
> - 18-month M.Sc Degree in Whistle Blowing: The looters have become masters, and that is why you also need to be a master at whistle blowing. Take your whistle-blowing ability to the next level with our M.Sc. Spot looted local and foreign currencies in Houses (Mud or Modern) Safes (Fire or Water proof), Wells (Wet or Dry) Caskets (Cemetery or Burial Ground).
> - 3-year Doctor of Philosophy in Whistle Blowing: Looters understand the importance of leaving no trails, and have now employed digital currencies in looting. With this degree, you will be able to decipher owners of Bitcoin wallets with looted funds. You don't even have to leave your house scouting for houses like a real estate agent, or burial grounds like an undertaker. Simply sit behind a computer like a Yahoo Yahoo boy and earn whistle blowing $$$ easily.
> Signed,
> Director of Recruitment,
> Oju Ole[9] University

The extract above is patterned on a tertiary education enrolment notice, with the speaker taking on the pragmatic voice of authority, like that of the Registrar. The overt intention is to call for potential university students to apply for officially non-existing courses. In the Nigerian situation, demand for higher education outweighs its supply. This joke makes use of that reality to produce humour. As a result, the pract of providing is used as the overt end. In between the lines of texts at the covert level, the joke satirizes the newly introduced "whistle-blower policy", a policy that promises a cash reward to anyone who helps the government expose stashed money as a result of corruption. This also assists in the aspect of awareness-raising with regards to the policy; thus, the pract of informing is also enacted. The dimension of CMH in this text is that it helps to identify corruption as one of the major challenges facing Nigeria.

Again, the complexity of the anti-corruption struggle is creatively construed in the joke. An analysis of the text shows that there are different categories for the advertisement: it ranges from enrollment in the diploma programme, to a bachelor degree, up to the doctoral degree certification.

The reference to "Director of Recruitment, Oju Ole University" is a recognition of the widespread hatred for corruption. "Oju Ole" here literally means the face of (a) thief University and connotatively implies a university that trains students on how to catch the corrupt ones. This is also a pragmatic inference that corruption is the enemy of the nation's development. The composer of the joke displays a good and appreciable understanding of the technology-based corruption, which requires solutions that are technology-driven. The co-texts with reference to "Yahoo-Yahoo boy" who "simply sit(s) behind a computer" are references to other cases of corruption found in the country. Through this, corruption can be implicitly construed as a crisis that impacts on societal politics and its policies. It is a popular topic of social discourse among Nigerian citizens, and fighting corruption requires some level of skill and temerity.

CMH on security and health

Security is an important aspect of every society. A safe society will likely be considered a healthy society. The subjects of security and health are considered important in Nigeria. These are expressed in the daily discourse of Nigerians and are, therefore, one of the topics for joke telling. Consider the following extract which displays humour related to public security:

Extract 5

> A local FM Radio station was running a contest, and I phoned up.
> The Radio presenter said, "Congratulations on being our first caller, all you have to do is answer the following question correctly, to win

8 A body established by the Nigerian government to prosecute offenders of economic and financial crimes. In full, it means the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission.

9 *Oju Ole* literally means "the face of the thief"

our grand prize."
"That's fantastic!" I shouted in delight.
"Feel confident?" she asked. "It's a maths question."
"Well, I am an Engineer and have been teaching and practicing maths for almost 10 years, " I proudly replied.
"Ok then, to win our grand prize of 2 return tickets for an adventurous trip to Sambisa[10] forest and an opportunity to meet Shekau and the chibok Girls Face to Face, What is 2+2?"
I replied, "7".

Among some of the jokes selected, the above is unique for its wit through the composer's combination of dialogue and narrative. It conveys the excitement of "winning" in the first instance, here the caller employs the pract of rejecting when told about the nature of the prize he would get: "a trip to Sambisa" "to meet Shekau and the chibok Girls Face to Face", upon correct answer to the question. At the other end of the imaginary "radio presenter", the intention was to get the "caller" scared owing to the reality of the dreaded Sambisa forest, a forest in the northeastern part of Nigeria which was allegedly previously held by an insurgent group led by Shekau. The joke above conveys the idea of multiple role-playing in jokes. Although the overt end achieves humour, the covert end evokes the pract of scaring. This is revealed by the deliberate refusal of the "caller" to give the correct answer. Here the avoidance strategy employed implies a trip to the "forest" is equally avoided. It thus conveys a desire of the citizens to have a secure nation irrespective of the location.

On the understanding of Nigerian citizen's perception of health, the following extract provides some insight.

Extract 6

Nigerian nurses make Pregnancy look like a criminal offense, and the worse thing is that they are everywhere, both in Private and Government Hospitals.
For Instance, when a woman who is in labour is being brought to the Hospital, they will throw her into the so-called "Labour Room" and lock her up like a criminal awaiting trial and they will go to the reception and gossip or go into the Doctor's Office until the woman begins to scream like the world is coming to an end.
And when they go to meet her, it is not to help her, but to insult her: "You go dey hear things like"
Na me do you?
When e dey sweet you, I dey there?
The man wey do u nor dey here o!
Madam push o!
Abeg open your leg joor!
Abi you wan kill ur pinkin?
You better push now or else I go leave you here o!

The understanding of the setting of the subject in the EoC tradition is made clear in the opening sentence. Here, the narrative technique is employed to describe the "Labour Room". The author of the joke did not exhibit a direct involvement in the story, but rather she/he simply conveys the assumed situation reported in a typical hospital's delivery room, in "both Private and Government Hospitals". While the overt intention remains the same as in other similar cases, to evoke humour, the covert intention is to satirize the typical disposition of health workers in Nigeria by conveying the lack of sophistication on the part of the healthcare attendants during the delivery of a child. In order to make the joke believable, the author switches codes into pidgin English and assumes the role of the imaginary nurses. Through this, the pract of telling was employed. The telling pract also conveys the face-threatening act on the part of the imaginary nurse or doctor in dealing with the imaginary woman in the "Labour Room". Seen from another perspective, the joke can also be seen to connote through the author's utilisation of the shared situation knowledge to emphasise her/his message that the childbearing process (and by extension other activities) is difficult for citizens.

CMH on leaders and the economy

"A joke is often at the expense of another person whose weakness is being foregrounded" (Nereus 2012: 3). In this vein, CMH is a veritable tool for understanding and expressing citizens' perception of their leaders, as illustrated in the example below.

Extract 7

. . . . . Some former leaders died and went to hell. The British leader asks the devil to allow him to make a phone call to London to know the welfare of his people. He spends five minutes. Satan bills him $5000.The United States leader makes his call for eight minutes and Satan bills him $8000. The Nigerian leader calls Abuja and spends two hours. He is briefed about the fuel trouble, Boko Haram, kidnapping, budget brouhaha and the anti-corruption war.
"After his call, he asks Satan, 'How much is my bill?' Satan replies: 'Your bill is $1.'

[10] Name of the forest in Nigeria in which the insurgent group Boko Haram were believed to be hiding and planning their attacks against the country.

> Surprised, the Nigerian leader says: 'How come my own call is cheaper than the other two leaders'? I stayed longest on the phone.'
> Satan, smiling, replies: "What's the difference? Calling hell from hell is not expensive; it's a local call."

The joke above addresses the issues of leadership and the economy. In the opening part, it presupposes that "some former leaders died and went to hell", which presents the pract of affirming. Hell is believed (among many religious adherents) to be a place of torment for sinners. In the Nigerian narrative, corruption is a sin. In the light of this, the message being conveyed is that "some of the former leaders" who "died" have gone "to hell". However, these (Nigerian) leaders were not isolated to be the only category of people in Hell. Hence "the British leader" and "United States leader" were also occupying a spot in Hell. Through these co-texts, the pract of identifying and associating are implied. Based on the narration, when it gets to the turn of the Nigerian leader to make a call, he spends more time on the phone. Here, this narrative was informed by the intention of the author to relay the numerous "troubles" plaguing the country, including "Boko Haram, kidnapping, budget brouhaha and the anti-corruption war". Within this strategy, the covert end of the joke is overtly enhanced. To provide a more dramatic exposure of the country's assumed reality, the author equates the nation to Hell through the reply given by "Satan" to the Nigerian leader: "What's the difference? Calling hell from hell is not expensive; it's a local call." From the perspective of the composer, Nigeria is no different from Hell, a place of torment for sinners. This view is likely to be widespread given the humour it elicits. In Extract 6, some of the other identifiable practs include informing, condemning, mocking, and mimicking.

CMH and the KING of EoC

Recall that most of the analysed data represented the S to the A (SPEA) parts of the EoC acronym. The remaining parts (KING) are summarized below.

K- In the context of the CMH analysed, the key is English (official language) with a blend of pidgin and some Nigerianisms. This is to enhance the dissemination of the jokes. Examples are *Labour Room, Yahoo-Yahoo, EFCC, pinkin, joor.*

I- The social media serves as the major channel for disseminating these jokes. The channel is regarded as the instrument in the EoC context.

N- Refers to the norm observable in the data. Here, they are replete with the use of first-person personal pronouns "I". This is to enforce the truthfulness of the jokes and also to exaggerate. The norm in the CMH also includes the peculiar use of certain expressions through pidginization and Nigerianism.

Another feature noticeable in the "norm" consideration of CMH among Nigerians is grammatical errors, including the omission or insertion of definite or indefinite articles, spelling errors and incorrect use of adjectives. See extracts 2 and 5, among others.

G- In the genre consideration, the CMH is construed as a form of humour that belongs to the informal type. The table below summarizes these in the tradition of the EoC and the pragmatic references or functions.

Conclusion

The study examined CMH as a genre of humour. The nature of jokes in CMH is mainly a combination of informal and non-formal categories of humour. On WhatsApp, when CMH is shared with a fellow user, it takes on the nature of the informal category because of the intention to amuse the reader. However, when it is shared in a WhatsApp group or as a Facebook timeline update, it quickly reaches a larger and wider audience, and takes on an entertaining intention on these platforms. As a result, CMH can also be categorized as a non-formal humour. Hence, by nature, it is an informal-non-formal genre of humour. However, it is not and cannot be categorised under the formal humour genres.

The pragmatic function of CMH included the use of the textual part and the psychological act of the pragmemic activity. All these produced various practs such as amusing, narrating, informing, (implicit) lamenting, satirizing, and relieving (of tension). The pragmatic implication is that at the covert level, the jokes serve as a coping strategy, providing a pragmemic voice of invective, approval, support and/or protest against government policies. The pragmatic relevance of CMH is embedded in its social functions as it serves as an indicator of the sense of citizens' freedom and a note of warning to the corrupt and inefficient leaders in Nigeria.

The context of CMH construction presents it as a satire of the social, economic and political experiences of the people. In essence, it reveals the socioeconomic and political realities in a particular historical period of the nation, unveiling perceptions through the "fingers and minds" of Nigerian citizens. CMH, therefore, refers to a genre of humour that is specifically meant to offer relief from tension, help deal with difficult and challenging situations, and to soften the impact of difficulties experienced in everyday life. In other words, CMH serves as a reference to social realities and, as such, is a compilation of jokes that are potentially psychologically beneficial. The understanding of

CMH as a humorous reaction to Nigerian realities is, therefore, invaluable to the understanding of humour, humour studies and their relevance in the social discourse of contemporary Nigeria.

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Appendix

EoC and the pragmatic references/functions in the studied CMH

Eo C	Features	References/functions
S	**Nigeria**	**Adults across all ethnic groups**
P	**Nigerians**	**Bridges the gap between the poor and the wealthy**
E	**Humour**	**Overt and Covert, to entertain and reflect the social, economic, and political realities**
A	**Pragmatic acts**	**amusing, narrating, informing, (implicit) lamenting, satirizing, relieving (tension)**
K	**Jokes**	**anonymous and creatively constructed**
I	**Social media**	***Facebook* and *Whatsapp***
N	**Nigerianisms, pidginization, grammatical errors**	**in the communicative principle tradition of pragmatics**
G	**CMH**	**For entertainment, protest, invective, etc**

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Linguistic Politeness in Yemeni Arabic: The Use of Request Perspective

Yahya Mohammed Al-Marrani
Sana'a University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Yahya Mohammed Al-Marrani, Sana'a University, PO Box 1247, Sana'a, Yemen. E-mail: almarrani99@gmail.com

This article attempts to investigate the use of request perspectives in Yemeni Arabic. The sample of the current study consists of 336 undergraduate students, namely 168 male respondents and 168 female respondents. They were asked to respond in Yemeni Arabic to twelve different situations in which they carried out the speech act of request. The data were collected using a Discourse Completion Test (DCT). They were analyzed according to the models proposed by Blum-Kulka, et al. (1989), whose analytical framework classified request perspective into four types: hearer-oriented request, speaker-oriented request, inclusive, and impersonal. The results of the study revealed that native speakers of Yemeni Arabic that used the direct head acts of requests were mostly from the hearer-oriented perspective. The respondents employed a hearer-oriented perspective either in the direct strategies or conventionally indirect strategies in order to show solidarity and paying attention to others. However, the indirect head act of request used various perspectives such as hearer-oriented, speaker-oriented, inclusive, or impersonal. The respondents employed speaker-oriented perspective, inclusive or impersonal in order to be free from the imposition of others and to show that they respected the rights of others to their own autonomy and freedom of movement or choice. Furthermore, the results revealed that in general, the respondents in M-M and F-F interactions and M-F and F-M interactions employed hearer-oriented and speaker-oriented perspective more than other perspectives. In particular, the results revealed that the respondents in M-M and F-F interactions and M-F and F-M interactions had a great tendency to use hearer-oriented perspective only in direct requests.

Keywords: politeness, request, hearer-oriented perspective, speaker-oriented perspective, inclusive, impersonal

Brown and Levinson (1978) state that requests are face-threatening acts in which both the speaker's and hearer's faces are at risk, since, "By making a request, the speaker impinges on the hearer's claim to freedom of action and freedom from imposition" (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1984, p. 201). Furthermore, Felix-Brasdefer (2005) indicates that a request is a directive act and a pre-event that initiates with the negotiation of face during a conversational interaction. The request is a type of speech act where the speaker demands from the hearer to perform an act which is for their benefit at the cost of the hearer. Khalib and Tayeh (2014) also state that indirectness is a very important means of communication especially in exchanges between persons to show respect and to save face. Ellis (1994) states that requests are directive acts, where a speaker attempts to make the hearer perform or stop performing a particular action. Speciously, the hearer is the one who always feels imposed by the speaker's request. Factors such as social distance and power relations between speakers and hearers greatly influence the strategies used in making requests (Wolfson, 1989). House (1989) shows that even "please" could be shown to be impolite because it increases the directness of requests by making their force more obvious. Searle (1975) mentions that indirectness as being when one illocutionary act is performed indirectly via the performance of another. The base motive of being indirect is to express politeness as well as to save face for the hearer (Goffman, 1967). That is why instead of expressing unpleasant thoughts, many people articulate them courteously. The reason behind this is to avoid conflict, clashes, and issues, especially between parties whose relationship is very close. It is important for everyone to possess this communication skill in order to maintain harmony in the community. Searle (1969) states that all linguistic communication involves the production of speech acts and speech acts are acts performed by utterances, e.g., giving orders, making promises, complaining, and requesting. Utterances of language are not simply information: they are equivalent to actions (Austin, 1962). Kasper (1990) states what is called "top-down processing" manner, where it is necessary for

learners to first recognize the extra-linguistic, cultural constraints that operate in a native speaker's choice of a particular speech act appropriate to the context. After recognizing these features, they must be able to realize this speech act at the linguistic level according to the L2 sociocultural norms.

Al-Marrani (2010) states that: "The terms politeness plays an important role to protect face during the realization of speech acts such as requests" (p. 168). Furthermore, Lakoff (1973) defines politeness as forms of behavior that have been developed in societies in order to reduce friction in personal interaction. Moreover, Watts (2003) says that linguistic politeness should always be perceived in this double perspective, from the speaker and the hearer, because the speakers are also the hearers and vice versa. In addition, Seniarika (2017) mentions that, in a request, the speaker to a greater or lesser extent imposes on the addressee: hence, there is a need to put politeness strategies into action in order to mitigate the imposition, in other words, to soften what the addressee might regard as an impingement on his/her freedom of action.

In fact, this widely held stereotype is backed up by most of the studies on requests strategies, which maintain that request is an important speech act in communication due to different social norms and cultural contexts. What is probably worth mentioning here is that there is a shortage of studies examining the possible effects of gender on the speech act of request perspective among native speakers of Yemeni Arabic. In fact, most studies, to the best of the present researcher's knowledge, seem to be more concerned with the overall nature of request as a linguistic/ pragmatic phenomenon than with exploring social factors such as, particularly, gender and the possible contribution these may make to unraveling untouched linguistic and pragmatic facts that may contribute to the overall understanding of language. Therefore, this study attempts to identify the type of request perspectives as used in male-male and male-female interactions and female-female and female-male interactions and the most frequent type. Furthermore, identify if there is significant difference between male-male and male-female interactions and female-female and female-male interactions in the use of request perspectives.

Request Perspectives

The head act of a request can be realized from different points of view in making a request. A speaker will have different choices to realize a request and this choice depends on the situation. According to Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984), requests are realized by means of four perspectives. These are: hearer oriented perspective, speaker-oriented, inclusive, and impersonal. Request perspective is considered as a very important source of variation in requests. The head act of a request may include reference to the requestee (the hearer) and this type of request construction is called hearer-oriented request. The role of the hearer is stressed using hearer-oriented perspective as, for example, with *can*:

(1) Can you drink a cup of tea?

In this perspective, the speaker would choose to stress the role of the addressee.

On the other hand, the speaker may choose to stress his/her own role in a request. This type of request construction is called speaker oriented request: for example,

(2) Can I drink a cup of tea?

As can be seen in the example above, the speaker-oriented perspectives sound as if asking for permission from the hearer for an act to be carried out. Thus, marking the form for politeness because, "True permission requests imply that the addressee has control over the speaker and that the speaker's wishes are subject to the hearer's approval" (Gordan & Ervin-Tripp, 1984 as cited in Blum-Kulka, 1989, p. 60).

The speaker may also choose to make his/her request inclusive:

(3) Can we drink tea?

In addition, the speaker may avoid and soften the impact of the threatening act by not referring to a particular person and, thus, make the request impersonal:

(4) Is there any chance of drinking tea now?

These four perspectives are available to speakers within a single situation.

Yemeni Arabic

Yemeni Arabic is spoken as a mother tongue in Yemen, except in the eastern province of Mahra and on the island of Soqotra, where the inhabitants speak both Yemeni Arabic and Mahari in the former and Yemeni Arabic and Soqotri in the province of Soqotra. The independent languages of Mahari and Soqotri are not Arabic dialects at all, but developed from Old South Arabian via the ancient Sabaean language. Yemeni Arabic is characterised by a great diversity and by a number of features that are not found across most of the Arabic speaking world. Yemeni Arabic is not referring to one single variety spoken throughout the country. Rather, the term is used to refer to a number of local dialects that, though mutually intelligible, include some linguistic features that make them distinguishable.

Arabic and Yemeni Culture

Yemen is a Middle Eastern country located on the Arabian Peninsula in the Southwest Asia, with a population more than 22 million people, bordered by Saudi Arabia to the North, the Red Sea to the West, the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden to the South, and Oman to the East. It is one of the oldest countries, with a distinct cultural tradition of its own. Yemen society and culture reflect everyday life of Yemen people and their traditional aspects, mainly guided by Islamic principles and laws. Yemen society and culture are slightly different from other Arab countries. Furthermore, there are many differences between Yemeni culture and western culture from religion and clothing to behaviour and customs.

In Yemen, the family is considered the basis of society and the concept of family has a much broader scope. It does not mean father, mother and children but also includes kin group or clan. The members of family usually live in close proximity to each other, meet frequently, celebrate together and coordinate their activities. Gender roles and relations have changed over the last two decades. Women now work with men in different fields. Educated women have been active role at all various fields of society and the nature of interaction between men and women is developed in different situations such as, the workplace, public places such as restaurants, universities, schools, public transport, markets and professional situations. Social interaction is very carefully controlled between men and women in Yemen. Women interact freely with other women and close male relatives. The woman in Yemeni society has great status. She is a mother, a wife, a sister and a daughter. Therefore, the members of family and all society members stand with a woman by protecting and respecting her. The honour and protection afforded to women are related to Islamic aspects and values and to Yemeni customs.

Yemeni people are very generous and polite. They offer to help friends and strangers. For example, if a stranger asks for directions, Yemeni people would help him directly and some of them may insist to accompany him to his destination. Yemeni people use different expressions that distinguish them as polite and social people. For example, they use polite expressions to welcome a guest on arrival with expressions such as 'marħaba or ʔahlanwasahlan' (welcome). Yemeni people are social and love to strengthen sound relationships. If their friends or even strangers have a problem, Yemeni people offer their help directly using polite expressions such as "tiʃtimusaʕdah" (do you need a help?) or "mʊmkinʔasaʕdak" (can I help you?). Arab culture in general and Yemeni culture in particular is different from westerners' culture, for example, Yemenis prefer to stand and to be closer when they are talking and touch other people of the same sex more than westerners do. Furthermore, it is common in Yemeni society to see two men or two women holding hands when they walk down a street, which represents a sign of friendship and solidarity. Yemeni society is a collective society or a group orientation society. When a Yemeni person boards a bus or selects a seat on a bench, he often sits beside someone rather than going to an empty seat or leaving a space between himself and others. In addition, when a Yemeni person asks someone to do something for him, he employs high levels of directness without the fear of losing face because that is the expected behaviour in such situations. The preference for the direct request in Yemeni society seems to be an instance of solidarity of politeness strategies and shows that being direct in making a request expresses camaraderie, and is consistent with the norms of Yemeni culture.

Furthermore, the Islamic religion affects Yemeni society on a daily basis. Therefore, Yemeni Arabic is full of religious or Islamic expressions, which help to mitigate and soften their speech such as 'ʔallahjaħfðˤak (Allah preserve you) for males, 'ʔallahjaħfðˤik (Allah preserve you) for females, 'ʔallahjʊbʔarikfi:k' (Allah bless you) for males and 'ʔallahjʊbʔarikfi:ki' (Allah bless you) for females,'ʔallahjardˤaʕalaik' (Allah be pleased with you) for males, 'ʔallahjardˤaʕalaiki' (Allah be pleased with you) for females and Islamic greeting 'asslamʕalaijkum' (Peace be with you) for males or females. In short, Yemeni society is collectivist society and more related to membership in a group such as family, friends or a working group even with strangers.

Literature Review

Requests have long attracted the attention of many researchers and several types of research have been conducted in the area of the speech act of request, making it one of the most widely studied speech acts compared to other speech acts. Pinto & Raschio (2007) state,

> This wealth of research is largely due to the fact that requests entail the speaker (S) imposing on the hearer (H) by requesting that a certain action is carried out for S's benefit. Given this element of imposition, a successful request requires some degree of linguistic tact that often varies across languages, thus the transfer of strategies from one language to another may result in inappropriate or nonconventional speech (p. 135).

Ellis (2012) claims that requests are, "Attempts on the part of the speaker to get the hearer to perform or to stop performing some kind of action in the interests of the speaker" (p. 172). Blum-Kulka (1982, 1983) conducted a study on the request behavior in Hebrew

and compared it with the Canadian and American speakers of English. The results of the study show that the degree of social distance and power relationship between interlocutors are very important factors in making the request. They confirm that value given to politeness is not determined by the language form, but by the context of the speech act because what may be viewed as polite in some cultures may not be viewed with the same degree in another. Therefore, misunderstanding and using inappropriate forms in cross-cultural communication should be expected.

Felix-Brasdefer (2005) examined the notions of indirectness and politeness in speech act of requests, including head acts and external modifications, among Mexican university students in role-play situations. The subjects of the study were ten NSs of Mexican Spanish included four males and six females. The data of the study were collected through an open-ended role-play. The results of the study show that NSs of Mexican Spanish prefer to use conventional indirectness strategies by means of 'query preparatory' when making the request in situations which display + Power or + Distance, whereas they prefer to use directness strategies when the relationship between the interlocutors was closer (-Distance). Also, the study proves that there is no relation between indirectness and politeness as observed by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983). The findings of the study show that direct requests are situation-dependent and seem to be the expected behavior among Mexican subjects in a solidarity politeness system (-Power, – Distance). Also, the findings of the study are consistent with other studies which found that directness in German and Polish cultures should not be considered impolite, but rather should be seen as a way of expressing closeness and affiliation.

Lin (2009) compared the use of query preparatory modals in conventionally indirect requests made by native speakers of English (NS-Es), native speakers of Chinese (NS-Cs), and Chinese learners of English-as-a-Foreign Language (EFLs). A total of 3600 expressions of the request were elicited from 180 college students (60 in each group - NS-E, NS-C, and EFL) using the Discourse Completion Task (DCT). The results of the study provide support for Blum-Kulak's (1989) generalizations on the conventionality of indirect request. First, although the same range and types of models are used in Chinese and English, the preference orders and distributions of the sub-strategies vary cross-culturally, which results in inter-language deviations from what is observed in DCT-elicited NS English data. Second, the sub-strategies also vary in terms of form, function, and distribution.

Martínez-Flor (2009) carried out a study of the role that "please" played as a mitigating device to soften a request. This study indicated that the participants of the study, Spanish EFL learners, employed "please" only at the end of the request move. Martínez-Flor posited that this pattern of use can be changed by presenting rich sources of pragmatic input such as film scenes to the learners.

Hatam and Mohammad (2014) examined request perspective use among Iranian EFL learners. This study investigates the request perspectives of a sample of 61 request utterances elicited through a discourse completion task (DCT) from 30 Iranian MA EFL learners. The DCT included 6 situations, 2 situations for each social status or relative power (P) level (i.e., +P, -P or =P). The results showed that overall, Iranian EFL learners favored the hearer-oriented perspective mostly and the speaker-hearer oriented perspective the least. The results also indicated that while in +P situations, the most frequent perspective was the impersonal perspective, the dominant perspective in both -P and =P situations was hearer oriented. In brief, the study highlighted the fact that Iranian EFL learners are not fully aware of the power dynamics in interactions and that they are therefore in need of instructional intervention in pragmatics in language learning.

Methods

Participants

Before the selection of respondents was conducted, the researcher held a meeting with the dean of each faculty and the head of each department in order to get permission to conduct the study and to collect the list of the students' names. after that all respondents who were involved in this study, were accepted cheerfully to be a part of the study. The study was comprised of 336 undergraduate students, namely 168 male respondents and 168 female respondents, all were university students at Sana'a University, Faculty of Education Sana'a, Faculty of Education Arhab, and Faculty of Education Al-Mahweet. The respondents were relatively homogeneous in terms of their cultural background because all students in Sana'a University are Yemenis and share the same language and culture.

Materials

A Discourse Completion Test (DCT) originally designed by Blum-Kulka (1982) widely used since then in collecting data on speech acts realization both within and cross-language groups. Discourse Completion Test (DCT) used in this investigation involves twelve written situations. The DCT applied in the current study for collecting written data consisted of twelve written dialogues that denote twelve

different situations, which were adapted from Reiter (2000) and Umar (2004). The respondents were then asked to complete each dialogue by writing a suitable request in Yemeni Arabic, with the description of situations clearly specified between the interlocutors. The description is then followed by two incomplete dialogues for each situation where the respondents need to complete the turn of the speaker, one time in the same gender (Male-Male and Female-Female) and the other time cross gender (Male-Female and Female-Male) by writing the suitable request. The DCT was written in Yemeni Arabic and translated to English, for example:

الحاله الاولى : لديك وجبة لذيذه في المطعم والآن حان الوقت لتطلب من المباشر/ المباشرة إعداد فاتورة الحساب،ما الذي سوف تقوله؟
للمباشر: .....
للمباشرة:.....

Situation 1: You have a delicious meal in a restaurant and now it is time to ask the waiter/waitress to prepare your bill. What would you say?

For waiter: .....
For waitress: .....

Validity of the Instrument of the Study

In order to ensure the validity of the study instrument, the DCT was distributed to three university professors who have teaching experience in linguistics from Sana'a University. They were requested to determine the face and the content validity of the DCT. They generously provided feedback on the suitability of the instruments for the study sample and the reliability of the language used in the DCT. Based on their feedback and notes, the DCT was subsequently modified by changing some situations in the DCT to be clearer and easier for respondents.

Procedure

The researcher held a meeting with the respondents of the study in the three faculties: Faculty of Education Sana'a, Faculty of Education Arhab, and Faculty of Education of Al-Mahweet at Sana'a University, respectively. The data collection was conducted at the lectures halls provided by each faculty. At the beginning, the researcher gave the respondents a brief introduction to his study and introduced to them how to use the DCT to make sure that the respondents understood. Then, each respondent was requested to put himself/herself in a real situation and wrote out what they would say to the hearer when making requests. Next, the written DCT was distributed to them to complete in Yemeni Arabic in forty minutes in order to ensure spontaneous responses.

Data Analysis

Data collected for this study were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively, the respondents' responses were statistically analyzed to determine frequencies, percentages for cross-classification purposes, e.g., to determine which request perspective had the highest statistical frequency in the respondents' choices or alternatively to determine which request perspectives had the lowest statistical frequency in the respondents' choices. Qualitatively, the participants' responses to the DCT questionnaire were coded, categorized and descriptively analyzed for discussion purposes.

The primary theoretical framework of this study is based on Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) CCSARP (Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project) coding scheme used to study the realization of speech acts in a number of languages such as American English, French, Hebrew, Argentinian Spanish, Russian and German. The main idea of Blum-Kulka et al.'s CCSARP is that request perspective can be divided into four types as follows:

1. When uttering a request, a speaker may choose to emphasize the role of the addressee by uttering a hearer-oriented request: can you lend me your pen?
2. When uttering a request, a speaker may focus on his/her role and utter a speaker- oriented request: can I borrow your pen?
3. The speaker can choose his/her request inclusively: can we travel now?
4. The speaker can avoid the issue completely by using impersonal request: is there any chance of traveling now?

Request perspective can be summarized as follows:

1. Hearer oriented request
2. Speaker oriented request
3. Inclusive
4. Impersonal

Depending on the above request perspective, certain speech acts are intrinsically threatening to face and thus require softening by means of request perspective strategies. The framework focuses on the effects of linguistic choices on the face wants of the hearer, whether they feel approved of, liked, or respect. The framework emphasizes softening of the request as the main purpose for using politeness strategies.

Results

Request Perspective Used by Male Respondents in situation 1, 2, 3 and 4

The analysis of the respondents' request perspective in the four situations showed that there were differences in their choice of requests perspective. As shown in Table 1 below, there were significant differences in frequencies and percentages of the distribution of direct head act request strategies by perspective in the M-M interactions and M-F interactions. The male respondents in both M-M interactions and M-F interactions employed mostly hearer-orientated perspective across the four situations with high frequency and percentage. In particular, as shown in Table 1, the male respondents in M-M interactions and M-F interactions employed hearer oriented perspective only in making direct request strategies in situations 1, 2, 3 and 4 with high frequency (M-M 90.47%, 95.25%, 56.54%, 79.76% versus M-F 75.59%, 83.33%, 47.61%, 65,49%, respectively), whereas, the male respondents in M-M interactions and M-F interactions employed various perspectives in making conventionally indirect request strategies. It can be observed that the distribution of conventionally indirect strategies by perspective indicated that most conventionally indirect requests by perspective were hearer oriented (M-M 5.35%, 2.97%, 26.20%, 10.17% versus M-F 14.88%, 10.11%, 29.76%, 22.62%), followed by speaker oriented (M-M 2.38%, 1.78%, 14.88%, 7.75% versus M-F 5.94%, 5.35%, 19.66%, 10.11%). Furthermore, inclusive and impersonal wzre found with low frequency (see Table 1 below).

Table 1
Request Perspective: The Case of Males

Situation	Perspective	M-M		M-F	
		Direct	Conventionally indirect	Direct	Conventionally indirect
S1	Hearer-oriented	152 90.47%	9 5.35%	127 75.59%	25 14.88%
	Speaker-oriented	0	4 2.38%	0	10 5.94%
	Inclusive	0	2 1.21%	0	4 2.38%
	Impersonal	0	1 0.59%	0	2 1.21%
S2	Hearer-oriented	160 95.25%	5 2.97%	140 83.33%	17 10.11%
	Speaker-oriented	0	3 1.78%	0	9 5.35%
	Inclusive	0	0	0	2 1.21%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S3	Hearer-oriented	95 56.54%	44 26.20%	80 47.61%	50 29.76%
	Speaker-oriented	0	25 14.88%	0	33 19.66%
	Inclusive	0	4 2.38%	0	5 2.97%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S4	Hearer-oriented	134 79.76%	18 10.71%	110 65.49%	38 22.62%
	Speaker-oriented	0	13 7.75%	0	17 10.11%
	Inclusive	0	3 1.78%	0	3 1.78%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
Total		541	131	457	215

These are examples according to the respondent's production:

It can be concluded that the distribution of direct strategies and conventionally indirect by perspective

Hearer-oriented perspectives

(1)	ja:-mʊbaʃer	***ʔdi-li***	**alfaturah**
*	hey waiter	***give-to me***	**bill**
	Waiter,	***give me***	**the bill.**
(2)	ja:ħa:ʤ	***naðif-li***	**maktab-i**
*	hey hajji	***clean-for me***	**office-my**
	Hajji,	***clean***	**my office.**

(3)	Law samaħt	***mʊmkin***	**tidi-li**	**alfaturah**
*	If you allowed	***can***	**give-to me**	**bill**
	Excuse me,	***can you***	**give me**	**the bill.**

Speaker oriented perspectives

(4)	min faðlak	***ʔqdar***	**ʔaʕrifkam**	**alfaturah**
*	out of your bounty	***able I***	**know how much**	**bill**
	Please,	***can I***	**know how much**	**the bill?**

(5)	ʔʊχt-i	min faðlik	***ʔqdar***	**ʔarslik**	**tiʃtari**
*	sister-my	out of your bounty	***able I***	**send-you**	**buy**
	My sister,	please,	***can I***	**send you**	**to buy**

χðrawa:t	min	albaqa:lah
vegetable	from	grocery
vegetable	from	Grocery?

(6)	Law samaħt	***mʊmkin***	**ʔastaʕi:r**	**maħmulak**	**lmʊdat**
*	If you allowed	***can***	**borrow**	**laptop-your**	**for**
	Excuse me,	***can I***	**borrow**	**your laptop**	**for**

sa:ʕah

an hour

an hour.

Impersonal perspectives

(7)	**li:ʃ ma:**	nistaʕmil	maħmulik	lmʊdat	sa:ʕah
*	**Why not**	use	laptop-your	for	an hour
	Why don't we	use	your laptop	for	an hour?

(8)	**ʔi:ʃraʔjik-i**	nistaχdim	al-maħmu:l	lmʊdat	sa:ʕah
*	**How about**	use	laptop	for	an hour
	How about using the laptopforan hour?				

indicated that there were differences in the choice. The male respondents in both groups M-M and M-F used mostly hearer-orientated perspective in making direct requests across the four situations. However, the findings indicated that the male respondents in M-M interactions and M-F interactions tended to use various perspectives in making indirect requests with different frequency and percentage across the four situations. The male respondents mostly employed hearer-oriented perspectives if compared to the other perspectives in M-M and M-F interactions.

Request Perspective Used by Female Respondents in situation 1, 2, 3 and 4

As can be seen in Table 2 below, the distribution of direct strategies by perspective indicated differences in frequency and percentage in F-F interactions and F-M interactions. Generally, the female respondents in both F-F interactions and F-M interactions employed hearer-oriented across the four situations with high frequency and percentage in making direct requests strategies (F-F 88.9%, 88.10%, 61.92%, 87.5% versus F-M 74.43%, 73.23%, 39.30%, 72.7%).

However, as shown in Table 2, the distribution of conventionally indirect head act strategies by perspective in F-F interactions and F-M interactions showed differences in their choice. The findings revealed that in general, the female respondents in F-F interactions and F-M interactions across the four situations employed hearer-oriented more frequently than other perspectives (F-F 5.95%, 5.95%, 25.59%, 7.15% versus F-M 15.47%, 16.7%, 42.85%, 17.26%). Furthermore, they employed speaker-oriented perspectives in all four situations (F-F 4.16%, 3.57%, 10.71%, 5.35% versus F-M 7.73%, 7.73%, 14.88%, 10.76%). In addition, inclusive was observed in situation one, two and three with low frequencies and percentage (F-F 1.21%, 2.38%, 1.78% versus F-M 1.78%, 2.97%, and 2.97%). Impersonal was employed in situation one only (F-F 0.59% versus F-M 0.59%).

Request Perspective Used by Male Respondents in situation 5, 6, 7 and 8

The analysis of the request perspective in M-M interactions and M-F interactions across the four situations, five, six, seven and eight showed that there were differences in frequency and percentage in the choice of perspective. As shown in the Table 3 below, the findings indicated that in general, the respondents in M-M interactions and M-F interactions across the four situations employed hearer oriented only in all four situations in making direct requests (M-M 61.32%, 80.95%, 79.16%, 71.42% versus M-F 41.8%, 65.47%, 65.47%, 55.95%). Speaker-orientated perspectives, inclusive and impersonal were not employed in any of

Table 2

Request Perspective: the Case of Females

Situation	Perspective	F-F		F-M	
		Direct	Conventionally indirect	Direct	Conventionally indirect
S1	Hearer-oriented	148 88.09%	10 5.95%	125 74.43%	26 15.47%
	Speaker-oriented	0	7 4.16%	0	13 7.73%
	Inclusive	0	2 1.21%	0	3 1.78%
	Impersonal	0	1 0.59%	0	1 0.59%
S2	Hearer-oriented	148 88.10%	10 5.95%	123 73.23%	27 16.07%
	Speaker-oriented	0	6 3.57%	0	13 7.73%
	Inclusive	0	4 2.38%	0	5 2.97%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S3	Hearer-oriented	104 61.92%	43 25.59%	66 39.30%	72 42.85%
	Speaker-oriented	0	18 10.71%	0	25 14.88%
	Inclusive	0	3 1.78%	0	5 2.97%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S4	Hearer-oriented	147 87.5%	12 7.15%	121 72.02%	29 17.26%
	Speaker-oriented	0	9 5.35%	0	18 10.76%
	Inclusive	0	0	0	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
Total		547	125	435	237

Hearer-oriented perspectives

(9) Law samaħti ja:ʔuχt-i ***ʔdi-li*** alfaturah
* If you allowed sister-my ***give- me*** bill
Excuse me my sister, ***give me*** the bill.

(10) min faðlik ***mumkin*** tidi-li alfaturah
* out of your bounty ***can*** give- me bill
Please, ***can you*** give me the bill.

Speaker oriented perspectives

(11) Law samaħt ja:ʔaχ-i ***ʔqdar*** ʔaχð alfaturah
* If you allowed brother-my ***able-I*** get bill
Excuse me my brother, ***can I*** get the bill.

(12) Law samaħt ***mumkin*** **ʔrssila-k** **tiʃtari** **χðrawa:t**
* If you allowed ***can-I*** **send-you** **buy** **vegetable**
Excuse me, ***can I*** **send you** **to buy** **vegetable**
min albaqa:lah
from grocery
from grocery.

(13) ʕafwan ʔqdar ʔstaχdim maħmulak lmʊdat sa:ʕah
* sorry able I use laptop-your for an hour
I am sorry can I use your laptop for an hour?

these situations in making the direct request.

However, as shown in Table 3, the distribution of conventionally indirect head act strategies by perspective in M-M and M-F interactions showed differences in the choice of perspectives. Generally, the findings revealed that the respondents in M-M and M-F interactions preferred to use hearer-oriented perspective more frequently than other perspectives across the four situations (M-M 24.40%, 11.30%, 12.25%, 19.4% versus M-F 39.88%, 23.23%, 22.3%, 27.97%). In addition, speaker-oriented perspective was used in all four situations (M-M 11.90%, 7.75%, 8.34%, 8.33% versus M-F 16.07%, 11.30%, 12.5%, 13.70%). Inclusive was used in situation five and eight with low frequencies and percentages (M-M 2.38%, 1.21% versus M-F 2.97%, 2.38%). Impersonal was not employed in any of these situations.

Hearer-oriented perspectives

(14) ʔiðasama:ħt ja:ʔʊstað ***ʔadi-li*** kitab-ak ʔktʊb
* If you allowed hey teacher ***give-me*** book-your write
Excuse me teacher, ***give me*** your book to do
wadʒib-i
homework-my
my homework.

(15) ʔiðama:fi: maniʕ ja:mʊdir ***tiqdir*** tissmaħ-li
* If no objection hey manager ***can you*** allow-me
If there is no objection my manager, ***can you*** allow me
ʔrwiħbadri aljaʊm
leave early today
to leave early today?

Speaker oriented perspectives

(16) min faðlik ja:ʔʊstaðah ***mʊmkin*** ʔastaʕi:r kitab-ik

Table 3

Request Perspective: the Case of Males

Situation	Perspective	M-M		M-F	
		Direct	Conventionally indirect	Direct	Conventionally indirect
S5	Hearer-oriented	103 61.32%	41 24.40%	69 41.08%	67 39.88%
	Speaker-oriented	0	20 11.90%	0	27 16.07%
	Inclusive	0	4 2.38%	0	5 2.97%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S6	Hearer-oriented	136 80.95%	19 11.30%	110 65.47%	39 23.23%
	Speaker-oriented	0	13 7.75%	0	19 11.30%
	Inclusive	0	0	0	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S7	Hearer-oriented	133 79.16%	21 12.5%	110 65.47%	37 22.03%
	Speaker-oriented	0	14 8.34%	0	21 12.5%
	Inclusive	0	0	0	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S8	Hearer-oriented	120 71.42%	32 19.04%	94 55.95%	47 27.97%
	Speaker-oriented	0	14 8.33%	0	23 13.70%
	Inclusive	0	2 1.21%	0	4 2.38%
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
Total		492	180	383	289

*	out of your bounty	hey teacher	***can***	borrow	book-your	
	Please	teacher,	***can I***	borrow	your book?	
(17)	ʔallahjaħfðik	ja:ʔʊsta:ðah	***ʔqdar***ʔħsʊlʕala			
*	Allah preserve you	hey teacher	***able***	obtain	on	
	Allah preserves you	my teacher,	***can I***	obtain		
	risalattawsjah letter recommendation a recommendation letter?					
(18)	Law samaħti	ja:mʊdirah	***baʔimmkani***	ʔrwiħ		
*	If you allowed me	hey manager	***Can-I***	go		
	Excuse me	manager,	***can I***	leave work		
	badri early early?					

Request Perspective Used by Female Respondents in situation 5, 6, 7 and 8

As shown in Table 4 below, generally, the female respondents in both F-F and F-M interactions mostly employed hearer-oriented across the four situations with high frequency and percentage in direct head act request strategies (F-F 49.42%, 65.49%, 66.07%, 63.9% versus F-M 31.56%, 51.79%, 52.97%, 49.42%). However, speaker-oriented perspectives, inclusive and impersonal were not employed in any of these situations with direct head act request strategies. The female respondents considered hearer-oriented as solidarity politeness strategies, expressing camaraderie between interlocutors. They also considered hearer-oriented as an expected behaviour in such situations in Yemeni culture.

However, as shown in Table 4, the findings

Table 4

Request Perspective: The Case of Females

Situation	Perspective	F-F		F-M	
		Direct	Conventionally indirect	Direct	Conventionally indirect
S5	Hearer-oriented	83 49.42%	58 34.52%	53 31.56%	77 45.84%
	Speaker-oriented	0	23 13.69%	0	36 21.42%
	Inclusive	0	3 1.78%	0	1 0.59%
	Impersonal	0	1 0.59%	0	1 0.59%
S6	Hearer-oriented	110 65.49%	34 20.23%	87 51.79%	54 32.14
	Speaker-oriented	0	24 14.28%	0	27 16.07%
	Inclusive	0	0	0	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
S7	Hearer-oriented	111 66.07%	34 20.23%	89 52.97%	44 26.19%
	Speaker-oriented	0	23 13.70%	0	35 20.84%
	Inclusive	0	0	0	0
	Impersonal	0	0		0
S8	Hearer-oriented	106 63.09%	40 23.83%	83 49.42%	59 35.11%
	Speaker-oriented	0	17 10.11%	0	20 11.90%
	Inclusive	0	5 2.97%	0	6 3.57
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0
Total		410	262	312	360

revealed that in both F-F and F-M interactions most conventionally indirect strategies by perspective were hearer-oriented perspectives across the four situations with high frequency more than other perspectives (F-F 34.52%, 20.23%, 20.23%, 23.83% versus F-M 45.84%, 32.14%, 26.19%, 35.11%). Furthermore, it can be noticed that the speaker-oriented perspective was used in all four situations as second preferred strategies (F-F 13.69%, 14.28%, 13.70%, 10.11% versus F-M 21.42%, 16.07%, 20.84%, 11.90%). Inclusive was also employed but only in situation five and eight with low frequencies and percentages (F-F 1.78%, 2.97% versus F-M 0.59%, 3.57%). Impersonal was employed in situation one only (F-F 0.59%, F-M 0.59%). The findings indicated that in both F-F and F-M interactions, the female respondents showed a greater preference to employ hearer-oriented and speaker-oriented with conventionally indirect requests more than other perspectives.

Hearer-oriented perspectives

(19)	ʕafwan	ja:ʔʊstaðah	***tʕirin-i***	kitab-ik
*	sorry	hey teacher	***lend-me***	book-your
	I am sorry	teacher,	***lend me***	your book?
(20)	ʔallahjaħfðik	ja:mʊdirah	***mʊmkin***	tissmaħi-li
*	Allah preserve you	hey manager	***can***	allow-me
	Allah preserves you	my manager,	***can you***	allow me
	ʔrwiħbadri	aljaʊm		
	leave early	today		
	to leave early	today?		

Speaker oriented perspectives

(21)	ʕafwan	ja:ʔʊstʔaðah	***ʔqdar***	ʔstaʕi:r	kitab-ik
*	sorry	hey teacher	***able I***	borrow	book-your
	I am sorry	teacher,	***can I***	borrow	your book?

(22)	Law samaħti	ja:ʔʊsta:ðahfatima	***ʔqdar***	ʔrwiħ
*	If you allowed me	teacher Fatima	***can***	go
	Excuse me	teacher Fatima,	***can I***	leave work

badrialjaʊm	maʕ-i	mawʕid	mʕa	ɬabibalasnan	
early today	have-I	appointment	with	dentist	
early today,	I have	an appointment	with	dentist.	

(23)	ʕafwan	ja: mʊdirah	***mʊmkin***	ʔʃi l	sja:ra:t-ak	ʔwasil
*	sorry	hey manager	***can***	use	car-your	lift
	I am sorry	my manager,	***can I***	use	your car	to lift

ʔaχ-i	min	almaħtah
brother-my	from	station
my brother	from	station?

Request Perspective Used by Male Respondents in situation 9, 10, 11 and 12

Based on the results in Table 5 below, it showed that there were significant differences in the choice of request perspectives in M-M interactions and M-F interactions across the four situations (nine, ten, eleven and twelve). As shown in Table 5, the findings indicated that in general, the male respondents in M-M and M-F interactions across the four situations employed hearer-oriented perspective more frequently in making direct requests (M-M 76.78%, 67.85%, 79.86%, and 68.46% versus M-F 60.11%, 54.16%, 62%, and 47.64%). However, the findings indicated that most conventionally indirect head act requests were hearer-oriented perspective across the four situations with high frequency in both M-M interactions and M-F interactions (M-M 13.09%, 15.47%, 7.83%, 15.47% versus M-F 25%, 25.59%, 17.19%, 30.35%). The male respondents reported that they felt closeness to each other and felt that they are familiar with each other, so they used hearer-oriented with conventionally indirect head act requests strategies to show solidarity and strong relationship between them. Hearer-oriented in M-M interactions and M-F interactions act as a marker of solidarity and camaraderie between interlocutors when the speaker and hearer in equal social position.

Furthermore, the male respondents employed the speaker-oriented perspectives as a second preferred strategy in (M-M8.35%, 9.53%, 4.65%, and 10.13% versus M-F 11.32%, 11.90%, 11.30%, 13.69%). Inclusive was employed in all four situations with low frequency with conventionally indirect strategies (M-M 1.78%, 2.97%, 1.80%, 1.78% versus M-F 3.57%, 3.57%, 2.38%, 2.97%). Impersonal was not employed in any of these situations.

Request Perspective Used by Female Respondents in situation 9, 10, 11 and 12

According to the analysis of request perspectives of the four situations, the female respondents in F-F and F-M interactions showed that there were significant differences in the choice of perspectives. Generally, Table 6 below showed that the female respondents in F-F and F-M interactions across the four situations employed hearer-oriented perspective only in making direct requests (F-F 67.28%, 59.54%, 69.04%, 63.70% versus F-M 52.97%, 42.90%, 54.16%, 48.81%). However, the findings indicated that the distribution of conventionally indirect head act strategies by perspective showed that the female respondents employed hearer-orientated perspective with high frequency across the four situations in both F-F interactions and F-M interactions (F-F 18.45%, 25.59%, 16.07%, 22.02% versus F-M 30.35%, 32.70%,

Table 5

Request Perspective: the Case of Males

Situation	Perspective	M-M			M-F		
		Direct	Conventionally indirect	Non-conventionally indirect	Direct	Conventionally indirect	Non-conventionally indirect
S9	Hearer-oriented	129 76.78%	22 13.09%	0	101 60.11%	42 25%	0
	Speaker-oriented	0	14 8.35%	0	0	19 11.32%	0
	Inclusive	0	3 1.78%	0	0	6 3.57%	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
S10	Hearer-oriented	114 67.85%	26 15.47%	2 1.21%	91 54.16%	43 25.59%	2 1.21%
	Speaker-oriented	0	16 9.53%	5 2.97%	0	20 11.90%	6 3.57%
	Inclusive	0	5 2.97%	0	0	6 3.57%	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
S11	Hearer-oriented	134 79.86%	13 7.83%	4 2.38%	105 62%	29 17.19%	3 1.78%
	Speaker-oriented	0	8 4.56%	6 3.57%	0	19 11.30%	9 5.35%
	Inclusive	0	3 1.80%	0	0	4 2.38%	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
S12	Hearer-oriented	115 68.46%	26 15.47	3 1.78%	80 47.64%	51 30.35%	3 1.78%
	Speaker-oriented	0	17 10.13%	4 2.38%	0	23 13.69%	6 3.57%
	Inclusive	0	3 1.78%	0	0	5 2.97%	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		492	156	24	377	267	29

Hearer-oriented perspectives

(24)	Law samaħt	ja:saħab-i	***ʔftitsalifni***		fʊlu:s
*	If you allowed me	hey friend-my	***want-I lend me***		money
	Excuse me	My friend,	***I want you lend me***		money.
(25)	ʔiðama:fi: ʔizʕʤ	ja:abdʊlah	***tiqdar***	tsalfni	fʊlu:s
*	If no bother	hey Abdullah	***you able***	lend-me	money
	If there is no bother	Abdullah,	***Can you***	lend me	money?

daftari-k La:ni kʊnt ʁaijb ʔmss

notebook-your because was absent yesterday

your notebook? because I was absent yesterday

(27)	Law samaħti	ja:fatima	***mʊmkin***	ʔstalif	fʊlu:s
*	If you allowed me	hey fatima	***can I***	borrow	money
	Excuse me	Fatima,	***can I***	borrow	money?

nisi:tfʊlu:si fi albeit

forgot money-my at home

I forgot my money at home.

Speaker oriented perspectives

(26)	ʔiðatakarramti	ja:ʔʊχt-i	***ʔqdar***	ʔstaʕi:r
*	If you be generous enough	sister-my	***able I***	borrow
	Please	my sister,	***can I***	borrow

(28)	ʕafwan	ja:ʔʊχt-i	***mʊmkin***	ʔastaχdim	maħmul-ak
*	sorry	sister-my	***can***	use-I	laptop-your
	I am sorry	my sister,	***can I***	use	your laptop?

maħmu:l-i	mʊʕtal
laptop-my	broken
my laptop	is broken.

Impersonal perspective

(29)	li:ʃ ma:	nsi:r	la-ʔsu:q	ʔʃtari	fawakih
*	Why not	go	to-market	to buy	fruit
	Why don't we	go	to the market	to buy	fruit?

31.52%, 23.74%). The Speaker-oriented employed as second preferred strategy (F-F 13.09%, 11.30%, 7.73%, 12.5% versus F-M 13.69%, 19.64%, 10.16%, 16.07%). Inclusive was also employed in all four situations with low frequency (F-F 0.59%, 3.57%, 1.21%, 1.78% versus F-M 1.78%, 4.76%, 2.38%). Impersonal was not employed in any of these situations.

Non-conventionally indirect head act requests strategies were employed in situation eleven only. Most of the non-conventionally indirect requests in both F-F interactions and F-M interactions were speaker-oriented perspective because the weight of imposition was very high in such a situation, so the respondents preferred to stress their roles to mitigate and soften the request.

Table 6
Request Perspective: The Case of Females

Situation	Perspective	F-F			F-M		
		Direct	Conventionally indirect	Non-conventionally indirect	Direct	Conventionally indirect	Non-conventionally indirect
S9	Hearer-oriented	113 67.28%	31 18.45%	0	89 52.97%	51 30.35%	0
	Speaker-oriented	0	22 13.09%	0	0	23 13.69%	0
	Inclusive	0	1 0.59%	0	0	3 1.78%	0
	Impersonal	0	1 0.59%	0	0	2 1.21%	0
S10	Hearer-oriented	100 59.54%	43 25.59%	0	72 42.90%	55 32.70%	0
	Speaker-oriented	0	19 11.30%	0	0	33 19.64%	0
	Inclusive	0	6 3.57%	0	0	8 4.76%	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
S11	Hearer-oriented	116 69.04%	27 16.07%	6 3.57%	91 54.16%	53 31.52%	1 0.59%
	Speaker-oriented	0	13 7.73%	4 2.38%	0	17 10.16%	6 3.57%
	Inclusive	0	2 1.21%	0	0	0	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
S12	Hearer-oriented	107 63.70%	37 22.02%	0	82 48.81%	55 32.74%	0
	Speaker-oriented	0	21 12.5%	0	0	27 16.07%	0
	Inclusive	0	3 1.78%	0	0	4 2.38%	0
	Impersonal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total		436	226	10	334	331	7

Hearer-oriented perspectives

(30)	ja:ʔʊχt-i	***tiqdar-i***	tʕirin-i	daftari-k	
*	sister-my	***can-you***	lend-me	notebook-your	
	My sister,	***can you***	lend me	your notebook?	

(31)	law takarramti	ja:ʤarati	***mʊmkin***	tiwasilin-imaʕak-i
*	If you be generous enough	hey neighbour	***can***	take-me with-you
	Please	my neighbour,	***can you***	give me a ride

la-asu:q	ʔʃtari	fawakih
to-market	to buy	fruit
to the market	to buy	fruit?

(32)	Law samaħti	ja: fatima	***mʊmkin***	tsalfini	fʊlu:s	nisi:t
*	If you allowed me	hey fatima	***can***	lend-me	money	forgot
	Excuse me	Fatima,	***can you***	lend me	money?	I forgot

fʊlu:si	fi	albeit
money-my	at	home
my money	at	home.

Speaker oriented perspectives

(33)	ja:ʔaχ-i	***mʊmkin***	ʔstaʕi:r	daftara-k	
*	brother-my	***can***	borrow	notebook-your	
	My brother,	***can I***	borrow	your notebook?	

(34)	law takarramt	ja:ʤari	***ʔqdar***	ʔru:ħmaʕ-ak	
*	If you be generous enough	hey neighbour	***able I***	go	with-you
	Please	my neighbour,	***can I***	go	

la-asu:q	ʔʃtari	fawakih
to-market	to buy	fruit
to the market with you	to buy	fruit?

(35)	law takarramt	ja:ʔaχ-i	***bʔammkan-i***	ʔstalif
*	If you be generous enough	brother-my	***able-I***	borrow
	Please	my brother,	***can I***	borrow

fʊlu:snisi:t	fʊlu:si	fi	albeit
money forgot	money-my	at	home
money?I forgot	my money	at	home.

(36)	Law samaħt	ja:abdʊllah	***ʔastʈiʕ***	ʔastaχdim	maħmul-ak	
*	If you allowed	hey Abdullah	***able-I***	use-I	laptop-your	
	Excuse me	Abdullah,	***can I***	use	your laptop?	

Discussion

It was found that the respondents of the study used various perspectives such as hearer-oriented perspective, speaker-oriented perspective, inclusive or impersonal either in the direct strategies, conventionally indirect strategies or non-conventionally indirect strategies. According to the type of request perspectives, the results showed that the hearer oriented perspective was the most frequently used by respondents in M-M and F-F interactions and M-F and F-M interactions. In particular, the results revealed that the respondents in M-M and F-F interactions and M-F and F-M interactions had a great tendency to use hearer-oriented perspective only in direct requests. The interpretation for using hearer-oriented perspective in the direct request was that native speakers of Yemeni Arabic in M-M and F-F interactions and M-F and F-M interactions seemed to be less bothered by consideration of perspective, and they seem to feel free to directly impose on the hearer because it was the expected behavior in Yemeni culture as reported by the respondents. This result is in agreement with Hatam and Mohammad (2014) as they stated that Iranian EFL learners favored the hearer-oriented perspective more than others perspective. A further explanation for the frequent use of hearer oriented perspective is that it is the dominant way of realizing a request in Yemeni Arabic. This result is also consistent with Kim's (2007) findings which revealed that the most frequent perspective selected by Korean ESL learners was hearer-oriented perspective.

Furthermore, the results, according to the significant difference between male-male and male-female interactions and female-female and female-male interactions in the use of request perspectives, showed that there are no significant differences in the use of request perspectives between male-male and male-female interactions and female-female and female-male interactions. Male and female respondents used hearer-oriented perspective as the first preferred perspective strategy and speaker-oriented as a second preferred strategy in Yemeni Arabic. Other perspectives were used but less than hearer-oriented and speaker-oriented perspectives but not in all situations. The respondents used hearer-oriented because it was the expected behavior in Yemeni culture in order to show solidarity and friendship. The respondents used speaker-oriented perspective when they felt that the weight of imposition was so high on the hearer, so they preferred to stress their own roles to avoid a level of coerciveness and to make their request as permission from the hearer for an act to be done. It can be observed that the findings of the study correspond with what Blum-Kulka (1982,

1983) claimed, that politeness value is not determined by the language form, it is determined by the context of speech act because what may be viewed as polite in some culture may not be viewed with the same degree of politeness in another.

Unexpectedly, the female respondents in F-F and F-M interactions used the same request perspectives as male respondents in M-M and M-F. It was expected from the results of the current study that female respondents would use different strategies, such as speaker-oriented perspective, and that they would be politer than male respondents. Therefore, this result is not consistent with Holmes' (1995) result that women are more polite than men. The interpretation for using the same request perspectives by male and female respondents was to show solidarity and paying attention to others without considering gender differences and to show that they respected the rights of others to their own autonomy and freedom of movement or choice.

The results of the current study are limited only for the respondents of the study because they are homogeneous and they are from one of the Arab countries, with the study concentrated on Yemeni Arabic only and on small size sample. Furthermore, the researcher used only written (DCT) for collecting data. Therefore, the results of the current study cannot be generalized to all Arab countries. In addition, the result of the current study cannot fill the knowledge gap in this area because it is the first study in Yemeni Arabic, so the researcher suggests that further research can be done in the area of speech acts in Yemeni Arabic in order explore other types of speech acts in Yemeni Arabic that might cause misunderstandings such as apology, invitation and refusal.

Conclusion

This paper reports findings of the use request perspectives in Yemeni Arabic. It focuses on the most frequent type used by the respondents and if there is any significant difference in the use of request perspectives. It can be concluded that the respondents use different types of request perspectives with different frequencies and percentages.

The findings revealed that the respondents in general preferred to use hearer-oriented perspective more frequently than other perspectives across as the first preferred strategy. Speaker-oriented was employed as a second preferred strategy. Inclusive and impersonal were employed sometimes with low frequency. In addition, the findings revealed that there is no significant difference in the use of request perspectives in males and females' interactions and they use the same request perspectives.

The findings can be a guideline for English and Arabic language learning and teaching in Yemen. It helps teachers to highlight the similarities and differences to their students to facilitate the teaching of polite/impolite expressions in the target language as compared to the first language. It helps the language instructors who endeavor to reveal pragmatic competence by Arabic speakers in preparing their teaching materials. Furthermore, the current study helps non-native speakers of Arabic to get a clear idea about what are acceptable or not acceptable expressions in Arabic language in general and Yemeni Arabic in particular.

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'Linguistic Diversity on TV': A Program for Developing Children's Multiliteracies Skills

Eleni Griva
University of Western Macedonia

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Eleni Griva, University of Western Macedonia, 3 Ikaron, Kozani 501 00, Greece. E-mail: eegriva@uowm.gr

Katerina Maroniti
Researcher

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Katerina Maroniti, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, University Campus, 54124, Thessaloniki, Greece.

Anastasia Stamou
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Anastasia G. Stamou, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, University Campus, 54124, Thessaloniki, Greece.

In this article, we present a program designed for and carried out with young children, which was based on the four-stage multiliteracies model: experiencing, conceptualizing, analyzing and applying creatively. The main purpose of the study was to develop children's critical awareness of linguistic diversity through popular culture texts in a collaborative, creative and multimodal educational environment. The program was carried out for two school years: a) in the first school year, an intervention was implemented to 2nd grade children of a Greek primary school, and b) in the second school year, a similar intervention was applied to children of the 1st grade. In this article, we report on the results of the first school year's intervention. The results revealed the positive impact of the program on children's ability to easily distinguish between different types of speech styles due to geographical, age and socio-economic factors. The children understood – at least to some extent – that the texts of popular culture tend to display language diversity in a distorted and stigmatized way. The results of those implementations were very encouraging; a fact that stimulates our interest in continuing respective ventures by involving a wider sample of students and incorporating a greater range of popular culture texts.

Keywords: linguistic diversity, young children, popular culture texts, multiliteracies skills, critical language awareness

New social conditions and technological developments since the early 2000s have created the need for individuals to acquire new skills in order to be able to function successfully in the modern educational and social environment. These innovations lead to new forms of literacy, often referred to as 21st century literacy, resulting in the necessity for developing students' multiliteracies skills in order to respond effectively to new digital environments.

Consequently, multiliteracies have emerged from the need to develop the necessary skills to understand multimodal texts integrating different semiotic ways to generate meaning and to understand the meanings produced in multiplex/multidimensional and multicultural contexts (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996). Multiliteracies also create a different type of pedagogy in which language and other semiotic resources are dynamically representational sources that are constantly shaped by their users as they employ them to achieve certain cultural goals (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). In multiliteracies pedagogy, all forms of representation, including language, should be regarded as dynamic processes of transformation rather than processes of reproduction (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). This type of pedagogy focuses on much broader modes of representation than language,

which are differentiated according to culture and context and have specific cognitive, cultural and social influences (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, 2009, 2012, 2015). The purpose of multiliteracies is to develop students' critical language awareness and to enhance their communication and textual potential by exploiting their diverse cultural, social and textual experiences and background in the class (see also Archakis & Tsakona, 2012).

Popular culture (e.g. television, films, comics) plays a central role in such an educational context, consequently it has been included in many school curricula (e.g. Alvermann et al., 1999; Stevens, 2001; Morrell, 2002). The recontextualization of popular culture in the classroom has been indicated to contribute to students' active participation in the learning process, as it is related to their actual social practices and experiences (Duff, 2004). Students' engagement with popular culture texts implies their practice in receptive and productive skills with clear communication purpose and sociolinguistic orientation, as linguistic diversity (e.g., geographic and social dialects) is also deemed necessary for the language course. Specifically, under the influence of sociolinguistics, it has been argued that an essential part of language teaching should be devoted to students' awareness raising regarding the dynamic and diverse nature of language, due to geographical, social, ethnic and stylistic factors, as well as to the development of their ability to creatively draw on this diversity for the achievement of their communicative and social purposes (see, in particular, Kakridis et al., 1999; Stamou, 2012). To this end, the teaching of popular culture can contribute to raising students' sociolinguistic awareness, as the discourse of popular culture is par excellence heteroglossic/polyphonic (see Coupland, 2009).

Complementing other literacy practices, multiliteracies pedagogy focuses on developing students' linguistic, sociolinguistic and digital literacy skills, so that students are active participants in social change, and become designers and constructors of the social future (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). According to Cope and Kalantzis (2009, pp. 167-168), teaching and learning about the design of meaning should include a combination of four stages: a) *Situated Practice,* which involves immersion in experience and the utilization of available designs (experiencing the new); b) *Overt Instruction,* which involves systematic, analytical, and conscious understanding, and requires the introduction of explicit metalanguage describing and interpreting the design elements of different modes of meaning (conceptualising with theory); c) *Critical Framing,* which means interpreting the social and cultural context, i.e., viewing the meanings critically in relation to their context (analysing critically); d) *Transformed Practice* entailing transfer in meaning-making practice (applying creatively) (see also Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012).

Taking into consideration the abovementioned model of the pedagogy of multiliteracies, we designed and implemented a longitudinal program sustained on a task-based framework aiming to develop young school children's critical awareness of linguistic diversity through popular culture texts in a collaborative, creative and multimodal educational environment. It was an interesting process for us to examine whether multiliteracies skills could be developed at an early age. Emphasis was placed not only on providing children with opportunities to get pleasure from the texts of popular culture, but also on developing their reflective stance towards those texts.

Materials and Methods

An attempt was made to design and implement a longitudinal program to young school children though four stages: experiencing, conceptualizing, analyzing and applying creatively, with the ***purpose*** to develop young children's critical awareness of linguistic diversity through popular culture texts in a collaborative, creative and multimodal educational environment, and ultimately, and enhance their multiliteracies skills. Moreover, an estimate of the efficacy of the program was attempted by using the following research tools: pre-test and post-test, the researcher's journal, portfolios and post interviews.

Instruments and Data Analysis

Pre-test and post-test. In order to identify a possible improvement in students' critical awareness of linguistic diversity through popular media texts in a collaborative, creative and multimodal educational environment, we explored how children actually decode media texts and how they conceptualize sociolinguistic diversity through those texts, before (pre-test) and after the implementation of the program (post-test).

Children's perspectives were explored through semi-structured individual interviews, which were conducted in a silent room at school. The children were shown some video clips from popular Greek TV series and films and were asked to comment on the sociolinguistically diverse speech styles of the characters. Those clips were chosen because they depicted characters speaking a range of different speech styles (e.g. Standard Modern Greek, Greek Northern rural accent, youth style of talk) (see Stamou et al., 2015). Each interview lasted about thirty

minutes.

The researcher's journal.

The researcher kept a journal throughout the program, where he/she recorded and reflected on the events and experiences of each teaching intervention. In this way, a more detailed description of the program was made and an overall reflection on the entire process was recorded. The teacher-researcher used journals as a tool for formative evaluation by reflecting on her own work and interpreting it critically in order to refurbish it and improve it along the way (see Griva & Kofou, 2018; Richards & Lockhart, 1994).

Keeping notes and reflecting on them constitutes an ongoing process which helps the teacher-researcher to gather information and give feedback on the way the program works, so that he/she can make improvements, where needed, as regards to methods, materials, teaching processes and students' learning 'paths' (Griva & Kofou, 2018).

Portfolios.

Every group used a portfolio as a collection of their work demonstrating achievement or improvement. Portfolios were considered a formative and process-oriented tool for documenting and reporting learning outcomes on a continuous basis (see Griva & Kofou, 2018; Stiggins, 1994). Children's collection of works comprised the results of the activities and games carried out in the main and post-stage of the program; such as written work on sociolinguistic aspects, notes, language games, drawings, creations and role-play games.

The children, in collaboration with the teacher, reflected on and articulated their thinking about each piece of work. When assessing children's work related to the role play games, the researchers checked the transcribed linguistic scripts and dialogues created by the children on the basis of topical appropriateness, creativity and fluency. In relation to the analysis of drawings and paintings, the researchers considered the way in which the characters of the videos were depicted by the children (e.g. color selection, selection and size of objects, accompanying linguistic scripts, etc.).

Post interviews

Upon the completion of the intervention, the researchers conducted structured interviews with the children to identify the knowledge they had acquired in the specific educational context, but also to record what they liked the most. The researchers encouraged children to feel free to answer the following age-appropriate questions:

What did you like most about the program?

- What was it that made you encounter difficulties during the program?
- What do you think could be done in a different way?
- What did you learn best?
- Would you like to participate in similar types of activities next year?

General Background of Research

The program: 'Learning about linguistic diversity on TV'. Before initiating the design of the program, we identified young children's preferences for popular culture, and in particular their preferences for television programs (such as cartoons and TV series) (Stamou et al., 2014), and we mapped teachers' views on the use of popular culture at school (Maroniti & Stamou, 2014). Moreover, through semi-structured interviews, we explored children's perspectives while commenting on the sociolinguistically diverse speech styles of the characters watched in some video clips (animated films, popular Greek TV series) (Stamou et al., 2015).

Based on the collected data, we designed educational materials composed of selected TV commercials and videos from popular Greek TV serials, with content appropriate to the children's age (M. age = 7.5), which emphasized the sociolinguistically diverse speech of the characters speaking a range of different styles (see also Maroniti et al., 2015). The purpose was to develop students' critical awareness of television phenomena representing sociolinguistic diversity in an interactive, collaborative, creative and multimodal educational environment. The development of a critical stance is considered necessary, as it has been indicated that television and film tend to represent linguistic diversity in a way that the dominant language ideologies of homogenization are reproduced, e.g. through the allocation of low-status speech styles to peripheral and low-class characters, whereas socially-prestigious speech styles are usually employed for the construction of central and elite characters' speech (Stamou, 2014; in press).

Materials.

The units were delivered in a multimodal environment comprising educational videos of popular TV series, maps, posters and pictures, in an attempt to raise the students' critical awareness to empower

their communicative behavior and multiliteracies skills. The modules were also delivered in a task-based context, which presented the students with a variety of games and playful activities, including on-line games, designing posters, working on arts and crafts, doing puzzles, taking part in role-playing, doing pantomime, learning new songs, delivering presentations, and participating in debates among others. These activities provided the students with a rich experience of real language used in different social contexts, stimulated their curiosity, challenged them to engage actively and develop their creativity, free expression as well as their interactional skills (Griva & Chostelidou, 2017; Griva & Semoglou, 2012).

It is widely accepted that games and role playing are activities that provide children with opportunities to practice various language aspects assuming a role, or by drawing on the newly required knowledge and applying it creatively in new contexts (see Aldavero, 2008). In this vein, playing is a significant way to develop critical language awareness focusing on children's participation and enjoyment in a relaxed situation (Dryden & Vos, 2001), as well as to interact with other peers in a pleasurable 'low risk' context (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2009).

The program was designed around twelve units per school year, aiming to promote children's critical language awareness, with each unit lasting 3 hours. Three units, one for each type of linguistic diversity (geographical, age, social class), were selected for the purpose of this study (see section 3):

- Learning about dialects (see Unit related to geographic diversity).
- Learning about youth speech styles (see Unit related to age diversity).
- Learning about social class linguistic differences (see Unit related to the social class diversity).

Participants

The sample consisted of 41 young children (20 boys and 21 girls), 20 first graders and 21 second graders of a Greek experimental primary school supervised by the University of Western Macedonia. Our basic aim was to implement the experiment with students of the school which was affiliated with our University. All children came from the same geographical area, Florina city, a small city in north-western Greece, and were exposed to the same language. Greek was their only L1 (first language), as there were on migrant children in the group.

The longitudinal program was carried out for two school years: a) In the first school year, an intervention was implemented to children of the 2nd grade, and b) in the second school year, a similar intervention was applied to children of the 1st grade (see also Maroniti et al., 2016)

Research design

Task-based framework for developing multiliteracies skills.

The program was carried out in a task-based framework, following the four-stage multiliteracies model of Cope & Kalantzis (2000), as sketched above. In particular, in the 'task-based' context (Willis, 1996), students get engaged in problem-solving activities and try to find solutions through co-operation, interaction and co-decision. In such an educational context, according to Porter-Ladousse (1987) and Jacobs (1988), students are given the opportunity to activate their prior knowledge, stimulate their participation in inquiry-based activities, as well as to get involved in authentic communication within the classroom and express their creativity (Griva & Semoglou, 2015).

In the present paper, an attempt was made to help children learn by:

a) being with others, while feeling secure and confident enough to take risks, to explore, and to take part in challenging experiences (Broady, 2006; Johnson & Johnson, 1999);
b) experiencing, analyzing, making choices and decisions, solving problems, and developing critical language awareness.

Special attention was drawn to the playful and creative activities that were implemented by the teacher and the techniques also used such as brainstorming, creative writing activities, physical activities, board games. It is worth mentioning that the teacher served as a facilitator of the students' development throughout the program, by encouraging their participation and interaction.

Pre-stage: Experiencing.

The purpose of the 'pre-stage' (corresponding to the 'situated practice' of Cope & Kalantzis, 2000) was to activate students' prior knowledge, introduce them to the topic, and make them experience new knowledge about television phenomena representing sociolinguistic diversity in an interactive, creative and multimodal environment (e.g. ppt, prezzi, video clips, songs, pictures, questions and answers etc.).

Task-cycle: Conceptualizing and analyzing.

The purpose of the 'task-cycle' (corresponding to the 'overt instruction' and 'critical framing' of Cope

& Kazantzis, 2000) was: a) to prepare the children to understand the linguistic and textual mechanisms of the popular culture texts and interpret the texts with the teacher's guidance; b) to make them identify and reflect critically on the stereotypes that concern the television representations of linguistic diversity.

Initially, the children were familiarized with various mechanisms of stigmatization of linguistic diversity, for example, of stress and intonation pronunciation. While discussing with the teacher and interacting with classmates within each group, they were able to trace these mechanisms and gradually develop critical awareness of the ways sociolinguistic diversity is portrayed on TV.

The activities included at this stage were related to watching a TV video clip, participating in critical discussions about the topic of the video, painting and designing, completing vocabulary games etc. The students cooperated on a common group task, interacting with each other during "problem-solving negotiation" and assuming responsibility for contributing to the group task. Emphasis was placed on interpersonal relationships and group dynamics, by providing children with opportunities and encouraging them to participate actively in the learning process with the purpose of achieving efficient learning outcomes. The teacher was the coordinator and experienced member of the group, who encouraged children to explain or describe these displays to their classmates (see also Vrinioti & Griva, 2015). Upon the completion of the task, the leader of each group announced their decision and presented the process of solving the problem and their 'product' to the teacher and the classmates.

Post-stage: Applying creatively.

The purpose of the 'post-stage' (corresponding to the 'transformed practice' of Cope & Kazantzis, 2000) was to make children apply appropriately and creatively new knowledge about sociolinguistic diversity acquired in the task-cycle stage, through participation in cooperative activities and role play games. As this stage entailed transfer in meaning-making practice (see Cope and Kalantzis, 2009), the children, through being engaged into multimodal-multisensory activities of critical linguistic awareness, applied creatively newly acquired knowledge into other contexts. In other words, they were asked to recreate and re-contextualize new knowledge through their participation in playful and creative activities, such as games, role play and pantomime.

For the purpose of the program, we divided the children into four groups of four to five members each, so that all children could have the opportunity to work collaboratively. The researcher-teacher asked the children to choose a representative name for each group, and they chose to use names from their favorite cartoon heroes, which is another sign of their strong involvement in popular culture. The first group chose 'SpongeBob', the second group 'Goofy', the third group 'Bugs Bunny' and the fourth one 'Taz'.

Procedure

Indicative Learning Units. Unit: Learning about dialects. Pre-stage: Experiencing. The objective of this stage was to bring children into contact with different speech styles used by people in diverse geographical areas and to make them identify/understand how speech is often different among people coming from different areas of the country.

Activity: Children were presented with a map of Greece and Cyprus, while listening to some traditional dialectal songs representative of various Greek-speaking regions (e.g. Corfu, Thrace, Crete, Macedonia, and Cyprus) in a multimodal environment.

Procedure: The children were encouraged to initiate a discussion in plenary, based on some of the following questions.

- Did you notice anything strange in the singer's way of speaking?
- Have you ever heard someone speak in this way? Where?
- Which speech style do you like most? Why?

Task-cycle: Conceptualizing and analysing.

The basic objective of this stage was to make children realize that the TV portrayal of geographic diversity is associated with specific (mostly negative) social characteristics and different dressing code.

Main Task

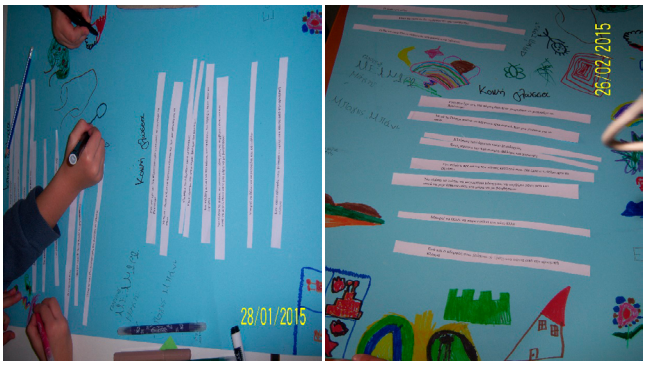
Video watching: (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7VRIcAejN3o) 'The Corfiot mother-in-law'.

This episode is part of the famous TV comedy series *Seven Thanasimes Petheres* (Seven Deadly Mothers-in-Law) which was broadcast in Greece from 2004 until 2010. The TV series depicts different types of mothers-in-law, often using different geographical dialect or sociolect and they also tend to represent them as vicious or naïve, always trying to interfere in their children's life. In this episode, the Corfiot mother-in-law, Aghiolina, is a middle-aged woman from Corfu, who speaks the Corfiot dialect.

First activity: Reflect critically on the video extract. After watching the video, the teacher assigned the groups some questions to reflect on, to discuss, and provide answers to them. Every group had to select a question/topic to work on:

- Did you notice any difference in the way the characters speak? Were there any words that you did not understand? Why do you think this happened?
- How is Aghiolina presented, and how are her brides? Who do you like most? Why;
- Do you think you could come across a Corfiot like Aghiolina? Could he/she speak differently?
- If Aghiolina met you, would she speak in this way, despite the fact that you speak differently from her? What do you think?

Second activity: Distinguish between standard and dialectal speech styles. The teacher split the class into groups of four children, and gave them some phrases of 'standard language' and 'Corfiot variety' on small pieces of paper (for example: Ti einai ore pali, ego sou to exo pei na pareis dio-tria garsonia gia na mporoume na vgainoume, sygxarikia, tsi tsoupres mou, mporei na thelei na paraggelei kati allo, niorantisses, do mou to piato sou…). Then she asked the students to stick them on a cardboard in two columns, the "Corfiot variety" and the "standard language". Some of those phrases/ words were heard in the media text and some of them came from other episodes of the TV series (see Picture 1).



Picture 1. Matching captions of the "Corfiot variety" with the "Standard language".

Post-stage: Applying creatively. The main objective of this stage was to make children apply appropriately and creatively the newly acquired knowledge on geographic diversity and transform it critically to a new context.

Activity: Relay and role playing. The teacher put the students into groups and engaged them in playing relay with words/ phrases from various dialects. She then placed two baskets in front of each group, one corresponding to the standard language and the other to the dialects. Whenever a sound extract from a dialect or the standard language was heard, the child had to decide on which basket he/she would put his/ her card into.

Picture 2. Children get prepared to participate in relay.

The children were then asked to participate in a role play game: "a new student, Spyros from Corfu, has just come to school. The children are invited to help him to meet his new friends and describe his favorite Corfiot food". The children were free to choose whether to use the geographical dialect or just the standard variety from a list of phrases provided in both language codes (Picture 3).

Picture 3. Children are participating in the role play.

Unit: Learning about youth speech styles.

Pre-stage: Experiencing. The objective of this stage was to bring children into contact with different speech styles used by people of different ages and to make them identify/understand how youth speech styles may differ from adults. In addition, an attempt was made to make children realize that the representation of youth speech styles on TV is portrayed as a single and homogeneous sociolect (a 'youth language'), while reproducing rather negative stereotypes of young people related to laxity, immaturity, familiarity with technology, engagement in unconventional youth cultures (see also Saltidou & Stamou, 2014).

Activity: The children watched the following TV commercials (Molto, OTE, Germanos) with young people using 'youth language' and adult people who do not understand it, as well as TV commercials in which young people become part of unconventional youth cultures.

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LxXNihoNdM (Molto TV commercial).
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6or7G30shY (OTE TV commercial).
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fEWJ9eeqwco (Germanos TV commercial).
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_UUFLvVAhLI (Molto TV commercial 2).

Procedure: The children were encouraged to initiate a discussion on some of the following questions.

- Have you noticed any difference in the way young people talk?
- Do you understand what young people say in the commercial?
- Did you notice any communication problems between young people and adults?

Task-cycle: Conceptualizing and analysing. The purpose of this stage was to make children understand the television reproduction of negative stereotypes of young people. Young people and their styles of talk are associated with negative stereotypes, such as laxity, immaturity, superficiality, or cunning behavior. Moreover, the 'gap' of perceptions and worldview between youth and adulthood is highlighted by the adults who are presented to express their views on the socially 'correct' way of talking and behaving.

Main Task. *Video watching:* Reflection on young people's and adults' styles of talk

The children watched three clips from the famous Greek TV series *Deka Lepta Kirigma* (Ten-Minute Preaching), which was broadcast from 2000 until 2004. The plot revolves around the 'preaching' that the teenage protagonist Leonidas is subjected to by his mother, Mary, and to a lesser extent by his grandmother, Kikitsa, or his mother's friend and colleague, Zeta, in order to conform to the adults' model of the 'good child'. Leonidas, along with his friends Telis and Marilena, have a keen interest in hip-hop music and culture, but they are completely indifferent to school:

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mefYZKn-rQM (Leonidas-Telis-Kikitsa-Mary-, episode: 1, 36.13′-37.55′);
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_8GR3LuLG4 (Leonidas-Kikitsa-Mary/ episode: 2, 18.03′-20.14′).
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydT1IaKiGtg (Leonidas-Kikitsa-Mary-Zeta/ episode: 3, 14.50′-16.48′).

The teacher discussed with the children the young people's (Telis and Leonidas) style of talk, which expresses their emotional status, their age and interests, and which is negatively commented on by adults. The teacher posed the following questions: "Could it be otherwise?"; "Could an elderly person (such as Leonidas's grandmother Kikitsa) speak and behave like Leonidas (a young person)?".

First activity: Reflect critically on the video clip

Then, the teacher assigned the groups some questions to reflect on, to discuss, and provide answers to them. Every group had to select a question/topic to work on:

- Did you notice any communication issues between the characters of different age (Leonidas-Kikitsa-Mary)? Why do you think this happened?
- How are Leonidas and Telis presented in relation to their character, behavior and their aspirations / dreams?
- Why does Leonidas believe that there is a gap between young people's views and adult ones?

Second activity: Analyze critically

Match words and expressions of youth speech style and standard variety to the character's photography.

Children cooperated in groups, helping each other, interacting with each other, and assuming responsibility for contributing to the group task. Each group was provided with photos of the four characters (Leonidas, Telis, Kikitsa, Mary), as well as some words/expressions of youth style of talk and the standard variety that had been heard in the clips of the series. Then, the children were asked to match the words or expressions to the right character, on a large cardboard. Upon the completion of the task, the leader of each group announced their decision and presented the creations to the teacher and the classmates.

***Post-stage: Applying creatively*.**

The objective of this stage was to make children apply appropriately and creatively the newly acquired knowledge of the speech style related to the age.

Activity: Create a mask in relation to the characters of the episodes of the series and participate in a role play.

The teacher put the students into groups and asked them to collaborate and create the masks and present them in the plenary. In the next step, the children were asked to get engaged in a role play: to present a conversation between an elderly man (e.g. grandmother or grandfather with her / his grandson /daughter about the summer holiday). The children were free to choose either the words and expressions used by young people or those used by elderly persons in the previous activity.

Unit: Learning about linguistic differences: Social classes.

Pre-stage: Experiencing The objective of this stage was to bring children into contact with different speech styles used by people of different socio-economic backgrounds and to make them identify/ understand the way speech is often different between people of high status professions and those of low status.

Activity: The students were presented with some TV commercials including a speaker of low-status speech style.

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_9MMu_yShM
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvEAF_Eqwek

Procedure: The children were encouraged to initiate a discussion on the following questions:

- What do you think of the man's speech style? Do you notice anything different from the way you speak?
- Have you heard anybody else talking like that? When?
- Do you think the way he is dressed suits the way he talks? Why?

Task-cycle: Conceptualizing and analysing. The main objective of this stage was to make children realize that every social class is portrayed on television in a humorous and stereotypical way, giving the impression that the social classes are in sharp contrast. Also, their representation on TV is related to both positive and negative social stereotypes.

Main Task. *Video watching: Reflect critically on the video clip* A clip (episode: 1, 10:40′-14:23′) from the TV series *Men kai Den* (The Ones and The Others) was shown (*http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CYEFCzXTGaI)* to the children. It was a comedy TV series which was broadcast in Greece in 1993-1996. The plot is based on two families from a distinct socio-economic background: the Daga family and the Stamati family. The Dagas are represented as an upper-class, rich and well-educated family, who use highly prestigious standardized language forms. In contrast, the Stamatis are represented as a loudly, cunning, lazy and low-educated family, who employ stigmatized nonstandard speech styles (e.g. street language, youth style of talk).

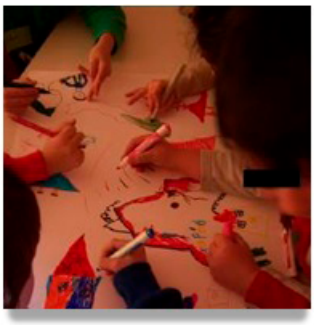
First Activity: Critical discussion and reflection on high- and low-status speech styles.

After watching the clip, the teacher assigned the groups some questions to reflect on, to discuss and provide answers to them. Every group had to select a question/topic to work on:

- Did you notice any difference in the way the characters speak? Does one family understand the other? Why; who would you like to be friends with? Why?
- How do those people who speak the low-status speech style look like?
- How do those people who speak the high-status speech style look like? Do you think people differ so much in real life? Why?

Second activity: Design the house of your favorite character

The teacher put the students into groups and asked the members of each group to choose and create the house they prefer, either the Daga family's house or that of the Stamati family (Pictures 4 and 5). Upon the completion of the task, the leader of each group presented their construction and explained their choice to the teacher and the classmates.



Pictures 4 and 5. The children are creating the houses of the two families.

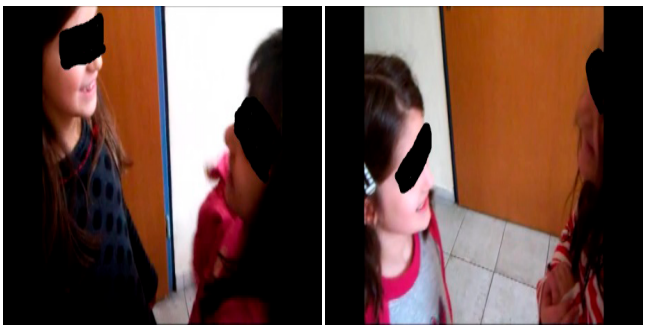
Post-stage: Applying creatively. The objective of this stage was to help children apply functionally and creatively the acquired knowledge and transform it critically to a new context.

Activity: Board game and role play

All groups were in front of a large board game consisting of numbered squares (see Pictures 6 and 7). Depending on the roll that each group would bring, they opened the corresponding box where there was a 'hidden' order.

Pictures 6 and 7. Children are participating in the game.

The orders contained some helpful questions so that the children could easily perform them (see Pictures 8 and 9). For example, some of the orders may be: "the Daga family goes to the doctor" (how do they speak to the doctor? will they be polite? will they cry out?), "The Danga family are supermarket employees" (how do they behave? How do they speak?), "The Stamati family are customers in a clothes store" (how will they speak? Will they be polite? Will they be arrogant?). The children should reflect critically on these questions based on the newly acquired knowledge.



Pictures 8 and 9. Children are participating in the role play game.

Results

From the thematic analysis of children's ***pre-test***, it was found that they can easily distinguish between different dimensions of sociolinguistic difference, showing an enhanced sociolinguistic awareness. Moreover, we found a general convergence of the children with the common/usual "reading" approach of television representations, where linguistic heterogeneity tends to be "stigmatized" and used for humorous purposes (e.g. Stamou, 2011). Some children noticed that a different speech style may cause laughter. There were also children who declared they felt sorry for a particular character, because he "speaks badly". Thus, most children tended to express "negative" or "indifferent" feelings towards nonstandard varieties and did not accept the characters that spoke these varieties. In other words, their perceptions proved to be in line with traditional language stereotypes.

For example, when the children watched a video from the Greek TV series, *Constantine and Helen,* where Constantine's speech style was marked standard Modern Greek and *Helen's was* marked non-standard Modern Greek, most of the children responded that they could distinguish between the speech styles of Constantine and Helen (Table 1). Nevertheless, they appeared divided regarding their feelings (with negative feelings, though, slightly dominating positive ones) towards both the marked Standard Modern Greek of Constantine and the marked nonstandard Modern Greek of Helen. Equally ambivalent were children's responses with respect to the social attractiveness of both characters. The negative evaluation of Constantine's marked standard was justified through unintelligibility (e.g. "he speaks differently and I don't understand him", "he uses words that I don't understand", "he uses long and difficult words", "he uses weird words") and seriousness (e.g. "he speaks seriously", "he speaks sternly", "his words are bad"), while children's negative comments on Helen's marked nonstandard were justified through aesthetics (e.g. "she does not use nice words", "she does not speak nicely", "she uses ugly words", "she uses bad words") and otherness (e.g. "she speaks a bit weirdly", "she speaks differently") (see also Stamou, Maroniti, & Griva, 2015).

Similar results were revealed in children's works collected in the *portfolios*. In particular, the researchers identified masks designed by the children that expressed feelings of wonder or even anger about youth speech styles, as well as some other pieces of work that expressed feelings of laughter or joy towards this type of linguistic diversity. On the contrary, the analysis of the children's pieces of work relating to geographical diversity showed that the majority of them completed the activity unproblematically, proving that children of this age have developed some sociolinguistic awareness of dialectal diversity.

Since the program aimed at helping children understand and become aware of the ideological role of television representations of linguistic diversity and, therefore, to 'reject' stereotypes of nonstandard speech styles, during the post-test, we expected children to express more positive feelings towards the characters of "divergent" linguistic behavior. However, there were no significant differences between *pre*-and *post-test*, a fact that may be attributed to certain issues and difficulties having arisen during the 'applying creatively' stage, but also to the constraints imposed by the 'measurement' of qualitative data such as the development of critical sociolinguistic awareness.

Table 1
Categories and subcategories of the thematic strand "Children's views on social variation of social class"

Categories		Sub-categories	Pre-test Occurrences	Post-test Occurrences
1.	Feelings towards Helen's marked non-standard modern Greek	Positive feelings towards Helen's marked non-standard	13	21
		Negative feelings towards Helen's marked non-standard	28	20
2.	Feelings towards Constantine's marked standard modern Greek	Positive feelings towards Constantine's marked standard	25	23
		Negative feelings towards Constantine's marked standard	16	18
3.	Awareness of the differences between Constantine's marked standard modern Greek and Helen's marked non-standard	Ability to distinguish between Constantine's marked standard and Helen's marked non-standard	19	32
		Inability to distinguish between Constantine's marked standard and Helen's marked non-standard	22	9
4.	Preference for Constantine's marked standard or Helen's marked non-standard	Preference for Constantine's marked standard in relation to Helen's marked non-standard	20	22
		Preference for Helen's marked non-standard in relation to Constantine's marked standard	14	19
		No preference for Constantine's marked standard or Helen's marked non-standard	7	-
5.	Evaluation of the social attractiveness between Constantine and Helen	Positive feelings towards Constantine as a character	11	12
		Positive feelings towards Helen as a character	22	21
		Positive feelings towards both Constantine and Helen as characters	6	7
		Positive feelings towards neither Constantine nor Helen as characters	2	1
6.	Preference for using Constantine's and Helen's speech styles	Preference for talking like Constantine to Helen	31	28
		Preference for talking like Helen to Constantine	10	13

The qualitative analysis of the data of the ***researcher's journal*** revealed that the majority of the educational objectives were fulfilled to a significant degree. It was found that children at seven years old possess an enhanced critical awareness, as they exhibited a good ability to distinguish between different dimensions of sociolinguistic diversity (see Table 2). Besides, they were also able to realize that, on TV, this diversity is not only depicted through speech, but also through visuals (e.g. appearance, dressing, home decoration), considerably enhancing their multiliteracies skills. Moreover, the program implementation led to the development of the students' critical awareness, allowing them to understand the 'gap' between television representations of linguistic diversity and their own sociolinguistic experience (see Table 2).

Having said that, it was also revealed that some difficulties arose, especially at the stage of "transformed practice", where children in many cases tended to reproduce the stereotyped television imagery of linguistic diversity, instead of transforming creatively the newly acquired knowledge. This resulted into their inability to critically transfer the acquired knowledge to a new context, maybe because they are in their early childhood years. Moreover, the teacher's guidance limited children's expression in re-contextualizing "newly acquired" knowledge. As a consequence, they produced more or less conventional texts without approaching linguistic diversity creatively and critically.

Despite the problems that have arisen, the qualitative analysis of the ***children's post interview*** data indicated a generally positive attitude towards the program. The great majority of the children declared they did not encounter any difficulty during the program, while two of them mentioned they faced some difficulties in discussing about the video on the pre-stage, but they were not able to identify and describe the exact issues. It is very encouraging that

Table 2
Typologies, categories and subcategories of journal entries

Typologies	Categories	Subcategories	
Teaching process	*1. Objectives*	Distinguishing between standard and dialectal speech styles	
		Activating prior knowledge	
		Being aware of relating language varieties to specific stereotypes and social characteristics	
		Analysing critically new knowledge and applying it creatively	
2. Methods and techniques		Creative activities in multimodal context	
		Role play, games	
		Whole class discussion	
	3. Aids	Video	
		H/Y- Projector (Prezi, Power Point, Windows Media Player)	
		Realia	√
		Poster and maps	√
		Vocabulary cards	√
		Hoops	√
Teacher's role	4. Provision of Assistance	Students' encouragement for participation	√
		Organizing students' work based on their needs	√
		Guidance provision	√
Students' attitude	*5. Students' behaviour*	Interest in participating in experiential activities of critical transformation	√
		Low interest in participating in experiential activities of critical transformation	
		Active participation in discussions in the prestage	√
		Active participation in discussions in the main stage	√
		Non spontaneous participation in discussions in the main stage	
		Interest in watching videos of TV series/advertisements	√
		Interest in group interaction and cooperation	√
	6. Participation in the activities	Interest in participating in creative activities	
		Low interest in participating in creative activities	
		Interest in participating in role playing and game-based activities	√
		Low interest in participating in role playing and game-based activities	
		Interest in participating in the presentation of the tasks	√
Overall reflection on the program	*7. Learning outcomes*	Understanding the distinction between standard and dialectal speech styles	√
		Understanding the relation of language varieties to specific stereotypes and social characteristics	
		Developing critical thinking	√
8. Problems Encountered		.Students' difficulty in transferring newly acquired knowledge critically	
		Students' difficulty in experiential activities	√

the children showed great interest in actively and enthusiastically being involved in most activities and games, such as vocabulary games, creating paintings and watching video clips. Representative results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Results of the children's post interviews

1. Children's preference for activities	**Occurrences**
1.1 Vocabulary games	36
1.2 Drawing	35
1.3 Watching TV videos	35
1.4 Role playing	33
1.5 physical activities	22
2. Knowledge acquisition	
2.1 Awareness of sociolinguistic diversity	35
2.2 Awareness of language attitudes	13
3. Difficulties encountered	
3.1 No difficulties	29
3.2 Difficulties in participating in whole classroom discussion	12
4. Participation in the project in the next grade	
4.1 Desire to participate in the project once again	38
4.2 Unwillingness to participate	3

This demonstrates that the participants' engagement into multimodal resources being at the core of their interests, such as popular culture, as well as their spontaneous participation in interactive, playful and multisensory classroom environment cultivated positive feelings about nonstandard varieties.

Conclusion

In this paper, we presented a longitudinal program designed and implemented to young school children though four stages: experiencing, conceptualizing, analyzing and applying creatively, with the purpose of developing children's critical awareness of linguistic diversity through popular culture texts in a collaborative, creative and multimodal educational environment, and ultimately, enhancing their multiliteracies skills. A generic analysis of the results suggests that the program had a positive impact of the program on children's ability to easily distinguish among different types of speech styles due to geographical, age and socio-economic factors, although the pre-test data indicated that children had already had a certain degree of sociolinguistic awareness. More importantly, through their participation in the program, the children were able to realize that the diverse speech styles as television representations tend to be constructed as causing barriers to communication and comprehension. In this way, they showed a higher degree of understanding of the discrepancy between the TV characters and their own sociolinguistic experience through the critical discussion on specific patterns of television discourse.

Another point to consider is that such an intervention promotes a different educational culture which impinges on the existing curriculum provision and the existing structures in Greek education, as well as on the established beliefs and perceptions of both teachers and students on issues related to conceptualizing language and adopting certain teaching approaches in the language classroom (Koutsogiannis, 2006). In addition, parents seem to have some reservations about using popular cultural texts in their children's classrooms, which means that there is a need for close collaboration between school and family for the effectiveness of the implementation of such a program (Stamou et al., 2014).

Sociolinguistic stereotypes tend to be particularly "resistant" even from an early age, as they are well-established perceptions that are difficult to change entirely. However, through the implementation of the longitudinal program of critical language awareness, which followed the multiliteracies model (see Cope & Kalatzis, 2000; Kalatzis & Cope, 2012) in a task-based framework, it was revealed that children understood – at least to some extent – that the texts of popular culture tend to display language diversity in a distorted and stigmatized way, by reproducing dominant perceptions and beliefs about language and the world.

In conclusion, the results of the implementation into two classes were very encouraging; a fact that stimulates our interest in continuing respective ventures (Maroniti et al., 2016). Thus, the program should be continued in the future, on a more systematic basis, involving a wider sample of students and teachers, as well as incorporating a great range of popular culture texts, aiming at reversing established beliefs about sociolinguistic reality. Launching such a project on a wider scale and for a longer time could possibly contribute to further developing children's multiliteracies skills, sensitizing them even deeper on diversity issues, and enhancing their ability to easily distinguish between different types of speech styles.

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An Exploration of Beliefs about Gender Differences in Language Use

Esma Latić
International Burch University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Esma Latić, International Burch University, Francuske revolucije bb, 71210 Ilidža, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.
E-mail: esma.latic@stu.ibu.edu.ba

Amna Brdarević Čeljo
International Burch University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Amna Brdarević Čeljo, International Burch University, Francuske revolucije bb, 71210 Ilidža, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.
E-mail: amna.brdarevic.celjo@ibu.edu.ba

It is the natural order of things for humans to acquire beliefs and conform to stereotypes in an attempt to explain phenomena surrounding them. These mental constructs are known to have a pervasive influence on the way people think and act, and therefore are partly responsible for shaping our social reality. Thus, due to their impact, scientific exploration is needed to illuminate their nature and so enable humans to act upon these findings. Beliefs or stereotypes that are being studied in this research are those held about the differences in language use by men and women. Acknowledging that people in Bosnia and Herzegovina largely comply to traditional, patriarchal social norms, this study aims to elucidate the matter by investigating whether students of a private university situated in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, conform to widespread stereotypes about language and gender, women's speech and men's speech in particular, and whether males and females differ in conformity to the stereotypes. The study was conducted among sixty-nine students of International Burch University in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, who completed a survey containing a set of statements based on commonly held stereotypes about women's and men's speech. The results demonstrated that the students do not firmly believe in widespread stereotypes about the way women and men speak and that the female and male students do not significantly differ in terms of those beliefs, which offers an important insight into the progress of modern Bosnian society in terms of gender-related matters.

Keywords: beliefs, stereotypes, gender differences, men's language, women's language

With the emergence of gender studies in the 1970s, the tendency to explore and understand the differences between genders found its place within various scientific disciplines. The study of language and gender is one such interdisciplinary field, which aims to provide answers to the question whether men and women talk differently. Asking such a question is considered to be of paramount importance for understanding language as a social practice that influences the way humans perceive and position themselves and others in social schemes. The task of such scholarship entails "the broader task of interrogating and transforming existing conceptual schemes" (McElhinny, 1998, p. 21), challenging the assumptions commonly underlying gender-based research. These assumptions, largely conceived from stereotypes rather than on solid scientific evidence and firmly grounded on entrenched beliefs about the manner in which women and men use language adhered to since childhood (Coates, 2013), however, constitute a principal part of so-called 'folk knowledge'.

As much as it is important to study gender differences in linguistic usage through the analysis of actual language data, a more detailed insight into speakers' attitudes towards these differences might be of key importance for further understanding of human perception of social reality through language, and thereby for the development of the field. The present study thus attempts to shed some more light on this issue by exploring beliefs International Burch

University students have about gender differences in linguistic usage. More specifically, it aims to discover, firstly, if the stereotypes are present among students and, secondly, whether male and female students significantly differ in terms of their conformation to common stereotypes about the way women and men use language.

Literature Review

One of the first major scholars to propose a theoretical construct of the way women speak, differing from the way men do, was Robin Lakoff, who sparked and popularized the discussion with her book, *Language and Women's Place* (1975). Namely, Lakoff (1975) claims that "women's language" is a form of language somehow deficient compared to the "neutral" form of language – the one the author uses to refer to the form of language men use. As stated in Lakoff (1975), "women's language" is taught to women in their childhood and expected to be used by them in adulthood at the expense of their own expressiveness. Thus, women are incapable of expressing themselves fully and genuinely because of the limitations of the language that have been imposed upon them by society, which leads to perpetual social gender inequality (p. 40). "Women's language", according to Lakoff (1975), is characterised by the following features: (1) vocabulary related to their interests (e.g. magenta, shirr), (2) "empty" adjectives (e.g. adorable, charming), (3) interrogative intonation where declaratives are expected (e.g. "What's your name, dear? Mary Smith?"), (4) hedges (e.g., I think, sort of, I wonder), (5) intensifiers (e.g., so, very), (6) hypercorrect grammar (e.g. ending 'g' is almost never dropped out in pronunciation of words, such as "singing" becoming '"*singin*"), (7) excessively polite forms (e.g., using "please" and "thank you" often), (8) lack of sense of humour, and (9) speech in italics (using tone to emphasize certain words while speaking) (p. 78-81). Lakoff's work sparked a widespread interest in the unexplored area examining whether men and women do speak differently (e.g. Amir et al., 2012; Brown, 1998; Bucholtz, 2004; Cameron, McAlinden, & O'Leary, 1989; Coates, 2003; De Klerk, 1992; Dubois and Crouch, 1975; Fishman, 1980a; Gibson, 2009; Gomm, 1981; Holmes, 1984, 1987; Irwin, 2002; Kuha, 2005; Livia, 2004; McConnell, 2004; McElhinny, 2004; Mei, 2006; Nemati and Bayer, 2007; Preisler, 1986; Schleef, 2009; Uhlman, 2015) and it encompassed the core of the stereotypes of women's speech that still seem to exist in different quantities and qualities across the world's societies. However, it also faced intense criticism for its lack of solid scientific evidence, as well as the reference to "men's language" as the norm (e.g. Coates, 2013; Crawford, 1995; Holmes, 1987; Leaper & Robnett, 2011; O'Barr & Atkins, 1980; Spender, 1980). Coates (2013) also maintains that, apart from an academic audience, the general public still seem to adhere to "a world view where women should learn to be more like men" (p. 7) and "grow up to believe that women talk more than men, that women 'gossip', that men swear more than women, that women are more polite, and so on" (p. 86). The author further argues that beliefs that women's vocabulary is filled with words of less significance for the language (p. 10), that "women's language" is much more polite and sophisticated, or simply more "ladylike" (p. 15) and pervaded by verbosity have persisted throughout centuries (Coates, 2013). Despite the fact that there is no clear evidence for such claims, still, as maintained in Coates (2013), "Western European culture is imbued with the belief that women do talk a lot, and there is evidence that silence is an ideal that has been held up to (and imposed on) women for many centuries" (p. 26).

Numerous studies that tested Lakoff's claims refuted the idea that there is a *uniform* difference between males and females in their linguistic practice which reflects their social inequality and asserted that the differences that possibly exist do not necessarily reflect the *powerlessness* Lakoff talks about when discussing "women's language" (e.g. Brown, 1998; Cameron et al., 1989, De Klerk, 1992; Dubious & Crouch, 1975; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003; Holmes, 1995; Nemati & Bayer, 2007; O'Barr & Atkins, 1980). However, various other studies seem to confirm the existence of the aforementioned entrenched beliefs and stereotypes about women's speech. For instance, in 1967, when Lakoff's books still had not been published, in a study of blue-collar families and their gender stereotypes, Komarovsky found that both genders were aware of the widespread perception of "women's language". One of the female participants said: "[Men] think we [women] are silly and talk too much. They think that women gossip a lot and they are against it", while a male participant commented that women "talk about kidstuff and trivia like Mrs. X had her tooth pulled out" (as quoted in Haas, 1979, p. 619). They also agreed that the topics usually discussed by women are family and social problems, while men like to talk about politics, cars, sports, work, etc. Klein (1971) inferred that both men and women talk primarily about their work and secondly about the things that are of interest to them (p. 73). Moreover, Garcia-Zamor (1973) investigated the stereotypes in pre-school children by asking girls and boys to judge whether some utterances were produced by a female or a male doll and found that stronger expletives as well as competitive and agressive language were labelled as

male, and the more euphemised utterances as female (as quoted in Haas, 1979, pp. 617-622).

Kramer (1974) used captions from the New Yorker's cartoons and asked college students to judge them as male or female and asked for an explanation of their choices. For most of the captions (79%), male and female students made the same choices when guessing gender of the speaker, conforming to similar linguistic stereotypes, such as that women speak more and men are more authoritative, leading them to their conclusions. Moreover, Kramer (1977) investigated the stereotypes about the speech of females and males and found that male speech is commonly depicted as boastful, militant, authoritarian, forceful, aggressive, blunt, dominating and loud, using swear words, showing anger rather than concealing it, straight to the point, having sense of humor (pp. 156-157), whereas the typical female speech was characterized as gentle, fast, friendly, emotional, polite, smooth, open and self-revealing and enthusiastic (pp. 156-157), women are claimed to smile a lot when talking, to speak in good grammar, discuss trivial topics, enunciate clearly, use hands and face to express ideas, gossip, express concern for the listener, use many details, smile a lot when talking and use good grammar (p. 159). Siegler and Siegler (1976) tested whether college students would attribute strongly assertive forms more often to males and less assertive ones to females, as well as whether the forms assigned to men would be judged more intelligent than those associated with females. The results confirmed that strong assertions were most often ascribed to males and they were also rated more intelligent (p. 169).

Thus, it seems that a significant amount of research has been carried out to uncover the differences in male and female language use and such studies are certainly necessary in order to eliminate the abundance of empirically unproven opinions, particularly noticeable among general public. There appears to be, however, a scarcity of studies that focused on the stereotypes of female and male speech which seem to persist in spite of evident development of humankind in terms of gender equality and change in perception of gender roles and traits. The need to investigate these particular stereotypes is summarized by Kramer (1975) who asserts that the stereotypes of the way females and males speak reflect the stereotypes of general gender roles in society and result in people trying to act and interact according to the gender roles and norms prescribed by these stereotypes (p. 152).

The Present Study

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, patriarchal sentiment is still quite strong and beliefs about gender roles are still largely based on traditional, conservative notions of how women and men should behave, thus encompassing beliefs and prescriptions about the way they speak as well. Even though males and females are believed to be afforded equal opportunities to communicate (Bećirović, 2012; Rizvić & Bećirović, 2017), young girls are often expected to avoid speaking too loudly or too assertively, particularly in mixed-gender conversations, using "inappropriate" language, even in informal situations, discussing particular "male" topics, etc. in order not to be perceived as ill-mannered or "tomboy-like", while the same expectations are rarely held for young boys. The situation, naturally, varies across different social classes and urban/rural environments and is highly dependent on individuals' levels of education and self-consciousness. However, this entire spectrum of socially desirable roles perpetuates the state of gender inequality generally evident in various spheres of life in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This particular article explores one part of society and its members might not be fully representative of the entire population. However, due to the paucity of evidence in the literature, especially in the Bosnian context, this study is an attempt to initiate the exploration of how deeply-rooted stereotypes are and how they might account for differences existing in other aspects of life. More specifically, its aim is to explore whether younger people, namely university-level students, conform to the common stereotypes about gender differences in language use and whether male and female participants significantly differ in their conformation to the stereotypes about women's speech, men's speech and the relationship between language and gender in general. Thus, the following hypotheses will be tested in the process:

H1: Due to their age and the specificity of their educational milieu, we hypothesize that the participants do not fully conform to strong stereotypes about the way women and men speak and about the relationship between language and gender.

H02: There is no statistically significant difference in the female and male students' perceptions of the way women and men speak.

H03: There is no statistically significant difference between female and male students' perceptions of the relationship between language and gender.

Materials and Methods

Participants

Sixty-nine undergraduate level students studying in different study years at the Department of English Language and Literature at a private university in Bosnia and Herzegovina participated in the study. The language of instruction at this institution is English. All the participants were non-native speakers of the English language coming from different cultural backgrounds. A more detailed description of the participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic statistics

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	54	78.3%
	Male	15	21.7%
Ethnicity	Bosnian	49	71%
	Turkish	12	17.4%
	Other	8	11.6%
	Min.	Max.	Mean
Age	18	29	20.7

Measures and procedures

The study's questionnaire was constructed based on the list of general assumptions about the way women and men speak suggested in Keith and Shuttleworth (2008). The assumptions are somewhat similar to those proposed by Lakoff (1975), which are perhaps more general in their nature and were therefore considered appropriate for this particular study. The questionnaire consists of 22 items which can be further divided into three sections: (1) stereotypes about female speech (8 items), (2) stereotypes about male speech (9 items), and (3) general beliefs about language and gender (5 items). All items were rated on a 3-point scale, ranging from disagree (1) to agree (3). In addition to this questionnaire, a general demographic survey was distributed among participants. The participants were students of the Department of English Language and Literature at International Burch University, a private university situated in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The questionnaire was distributed in a written form and completed anonymously, with the participants being informed about the aim and potential benefits of the study. The average time of completion was around 20 minutes. The overall data is internally consistent as the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient for 22 items is .828. The Cronbach Alpha coefficients both for the subscale perceptions of women's speech (8 items) and for the subscale perceptions of men's speech is .724, and for the subscale the relationship between language and gender is .600.

Data analysis

All data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 23). In order to analyse individual items of the instrument, a descriptive analysis was run. The independent-samples t-tests were used with the aim of investigating whether there exist statistically significant differences between male and female participants in terms of the stereotypes of the way men and women speak, general beliefs about language and gender, and likelihood of "feminine" language usage. All tests of significance in this study were set at the .05 level.

Results

Preliminary analyses

The descriptive results of the participants' perceptions of male and female speech and the relationship between language and gender are displayed in Table 2 encompassing means, standard deviations and reliability.

Table 2
Descriptive statistics and reliability

	N	Mean	SD	α
Perceptions of the way women speak	69	2.27	.414	.724
Perceptions of the way men speak	69	2.19	.461	.724
Perceptions of the relationship between language and gender	69	2.23	.374	.600

With the aim of investigating whether there was consistency in the participants' perceptions of female speech, the data were statistically analysed. In the output presented in Table 3, the data requested for each of the items are summarized. The highest mean (M = 2.46, SD = .719) was calculated for the assertion that women ask more questions, where a large number of participants (n = 41, 59.4%) agreed with the statement. At the other end, the lowest mean (M = 2.05, SD = .855) was found in the statement that women talk too much, where 23 participants (33.3%) disagreed and 27 of them (39.1%) agreed with the idea.

The results in this section show that the participants did not categorically agree or disagree with most of the statements, but rather demonstrated high variance in responses - leading us to the conclusion that the participants generally did not strongly conform to the existing traditional stereotypes as might be

Table 3
Descriptive statistics of the responses on the perceptions of female speech

	N	Mean	SD
Women speak more than men	69	2.23	.842
Women talk too much.	69	2.05	.855
Women are more polite.	69	2.42	.735
Women are indecisive/hesitant.	69	2.26	.656
Women complain and nag.	69	2.21	.764
Women ask more questions.	69	2.46	.719
Women support each other in conversation.	69	2.26	.760
Women try to speak in a more "correct" way.	69	2.37	.768

Table 4
Descriptive statistics of the responses on the stereotypes of male speech

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Men swear more.	69	1	3	2.24	.847
Men don't talk about emotions.	69	1	3	2.02	.873
Men talk about sport more.	69	1	3	2.66	.585
Men insult each other frequently.	69	1	3	2.31	.737
Men are competitive in conversation.	69	1	3	2.30	.772
Men dominate conversation.	69	1	3	1.94	.838
Men speak with more authority.	69	1	3	2.15	.884
Men give more commands.	69	1	3	2.01	.889
Men interrupt more.	69	1	3	2.10	.825

expected. Major consistencies, where more than 50% of the participants either agreed or disagreed with the statements, were found in only two items; namely, 39 participants (56.5%) claimed that women are more polite and 41 participants (59.4%) said that women ask more questions. The first one is completely understandable if we take into consideration that in Bosnia and Herzegovina the social norm is that women should be more polite than men, both in their behaviour and language use. A particularly interesting finding was that a number of participants (n = 23, 33.3%) disagreed with the widespread stereotype that women speak more than men.

Moreover, with the aim of investigating whether there was strong consistency in the responses, the data were statistically analysed and presented in Table 4. The highest mean (M = 2.66, SD = .585) was found in the item "Men talk about sport more", with 50 participants (72.5%) agreeing with the statement. The lowest mean (M = 1.94, SD = .838), on the other hand, was calculated for the item "Men dominate conversation", where 26 participants (37.7%) disagreed and 22 of them (31.9%) agreed with the statement. The highest variability of distribution (SD = .889) was found in the responses to the assertion that men give more commands (only less than 7% of the male participants disagreed with the statement compared to around 44% of the female participants).

The lack of major consistencies was evident in this area as well. The data demonstrated high variance in responses, with only two items having a majority of respondents agreeing with the statements: the majority (n = 35, 50.7%) claimed that men swear more, and 50 respondents (72.5%) agreed that men talk about sport more. The highest percentage of agreement (72.5%) might be due to the widely accepted belief that men are generally more interested in sports and therefrom comes the conclusion that they speak about it more frequently. In terms of the latter, as was the case with the social norm of politeness, society also expects women to swear less, which is thus reflected in the language use as well.

The questions analysed above were concerned with specifically female and specifically male language. In addition, more general questions were posed to the participants to explore whether they held beliefs about characteristics of language usage potentially associable with different genders and about the relationship between gender and language.

A frequency analysis showed that the highest mean (M = 2.59, SD = .648) was found in the responses to the statement that they notice the differences in the ways men and women speak, where a majority of participants (n = 47, 68.1%) agreed. On the other end, the lowest mean (M = 1.75, SD = .755) was found in the response to the claim that they should use the language appropriate for their gender, where 30 participants (43.5%) disagreed with the statement (Table 5).

Do male and female participants differ in their perceptions of the way women and men speak?

In order to determine whether female and male participants in this study differed in their perceptions of the way women and men speak, an independent-samples t-test was conducted. The results showed no significant difference in the participants' perceptions of the way women speak (p = .415) between males (*M* = 2.20, *SD* = .426) and females (*M* = 2.30, *SD* = .413). Likewise, the results also showed no significant

Table 5
Descriptive statistics of general beliefs about gender-based language differences

	N	Mean	SD
I notice the differences in the ways men and women speak.	69	2.59	.648
Our gender determines the way we speak.	69	2.11	.832
Women are taught what language is appropriate for their gender.	69	2.52	.655
Men are taught what language is appropriate for their gender.	69	2.07	.810
We should use the language appropriate for our gender.	69	1.86	.856

difference between males (*M* = 2.31, *SD* = .309) and females (*M* = 2.16, *SD* = .493) in the participants' perception of the way men speak (p = .287).

Table 6
T-test results comparing males and females' perceptions of the way men and women speak

	Female		Male		*P*
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Perceptions of the way women speak	2.30	4.13	2.20	.426	.415
Perceptions of the way men speak	2.16	.493	2.31	.309	.287

In order to get a more detailed insight into their answers, an analysis of individual items was required and thus conducted. An independent-samples t-test showed that most of the items (15 out of 16) for both the way women's and men's language use was perceived did not differ between female and male participants, which is numerically represented in *p* values in the table below. Only one item, the statement that men dominate conversation, demonstrated a significant difference (*p* = 0.40), with the frequency analysis showing that men were more likely to agree with the statement (46%) than women (28%). In addition to that, this analysis provided more details on the mean scores of individual responses, and the highest mean here (M = 2.97, SD = .843) was found in female participants' responses to the statement that men interrupt more, where 21 female participants (38.8%) agreed with the statement, while the lowest mean (M = 1.83, SD = .841) was found also among female participants, this time in response to the claim that men dominate conversation, where 24 (44,4%) of them disagreed. The data are shown in Table 7 below.

Do male and female participants differ in their perceptions of the relationship between language and gender?

Table 7
T-test results comparing males and females on their perception of the way men and women speak

	Female		Male		*P*
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Women speak more than men	2.20	.855	2.33	.816	.602
Women are more polite	2.46	.745	2.26	.703	.365
Women are indecisive/ hesitant	2.31	.667	2.06	.593	.197
Women complain and nag	2.22	.743	2.20	.861	.922
Women talk too much	2.00	.868	2.26	.798	.289
Women ask more questions	2.44	.718	2.53	.743	.675
Women support each other in conversation.	2.35	.756	1.93	.703	.059
Women speak in a more "correct" way.	2.46	.745	2.06	.798	.077
Men swear more	2.25	850	2.20	.861	.813
Men don't talk about emotions	2.05	.887	1.93	.833	.635
Men talk about sport more.	2.68	.608	2.60	.507	.495
Men insult each other frequently.	2.29	.743	2.40	.736	.633
Men are competitive in conversation.	2.25	.805	2.46	.639	.362
Men dominate conversation.	1.83	.841	2.33	.723	.040
Men speak with more authority.	2.11	.945	2.33	.617	.394
Men give more commands.	1.95	.948	2.33	.617	.121
Men interrupt more.	2.97	.843	2.20	.774	.605

An independent-samples t-test was run to determine whether female and male participants differ in their beliefs about gender-based differences. The results display no significant difference (*p* = .433) between the male (*M* = 2.32, *SD* = .368) and the female participants (*M* = 2.21, *SD* = .496) in the perceptions about the relationship between language and gender.

Further analysis showed that the difference in males' and females' perceptions about the relationship between language and gender for all individual items is insignificant, which is numerically represented in *p* values in Table 8. It can be noticed that the male participants obtained a slightly, but insignificantly higher mean overall and for individual items apart from the item stating "We should use the language appropriate for our gender", for which the female participants (*M* = 1.88, *SD* = .861) obtained a slightly higher mean than the male participants (*M* = 1.80, *SD* = .861).

Table 8
T-test results comparing males and females on their beliefs about gender-based differences

	Female		Male		*P*
	M	SD	M	SD	
All beliefs	2.21	.496	2.32	.368	.433
I notice the differences in the ways men and women speak.	2.57	.661	2.66	.617	.628
Our gender determines the way we speak.	2.11	.839	2.13	.833	.928
Women are taught what language is appropriate for their gender.	2.48	.665	2.66	.617	.337
Men are taught what language is appropriate for their gender.	2.00	.665	2.33	.816	.160
We should use the language appropriate for our gender.	1.88	.861	1.80	.861	.725

Discussion

This study aimed to explore the perceptions of gender differences in language among students at International Burch University as well as to identify whether male and female participants significantly differ in these perceptions. Generally speaking, participants in this study do not seem to conform fully to some of the widely held stereotypes about male and female speech and about the relationship between language and gender, which supports our first hypothesis. Specifically, in terms of general beliefs about the relationship between language and gender, it is noteworthy that of 47 out of 69 of the study's participants (68.1%) claimed that they *do* notice the differences in the way men and women speak, but they do not believe as strongly that men and women are taught what language is appropriate for them, nor do they feel that they should speak according to their gender. It seems, therefore, that the participants believe in certain innate, perhaps biological differences women and men actualize in their language use, which are not necessarily taught by society. This question, however, would require a further, perhaps qualitative exploration of these beliefs in order to make any firm conclusions about them. That students are aware of the differences is in line with Kiełkiewicz-Janowiak and Pawelczyk's (2006) finding that people appear to believe in gender-based speech differences, even though they might not have witnessed them in reality.

Among the responses reflecting the stereotypes of the way women speak, two items showed major consistencies with over 50% of the participants agreeing with the statement – the claim that women are more polite yielded 56.5% (n = 39) agreement, while the one that women ask more questions was claimed by 59.4% (n = 41) of the participants. Both might be explained in terms of the social context in Bosnia and Herzegovina where women are expected to behave and thus talk more politely and are usually deemed more inquisitive and curious. Moreover, the latter could also be related to the negative belief of women being nosy and likely to gossip, thus their likelihood of asking questions is higher. Regarding other scientific findings, the results related to female politeness are in line with Coates' (2013) proposal of the stereotype still being widespread among general public as well as the results of Kramer's (1977) study in which this trait was associated with female speech. The findings of two studies of actual language use conducted by Brown (1998) and Holmes (1995) could be used here to draw a parallel between the stereotype and its footing in reality; namely, they both found that women do use more polite forms of language than men. In terms of the participants' agreement with the stereotype that women ask more questions, it reflects the findings of Pawelczyk's (2003) study in which respondents judged questions given for judgement as more likely to be produced by a female speaker as well as the study of gender stereotypes in Poland conducted by Kiełkiewicz-Janowiak and Pawelczyk (2006) in which women were believed to ask more questions "because they are nosy" (p. 360). However, it is important to emphasize that the study was conducted in a department in which most of the students are female, thus the participants might have gained the impression of women asking more questions, regardless of the analogous stereotype. On the other hand, the lowest mean (M = 2.05, SD = .855) was found in responses to the claim that women talk too much, which is in stark contrast to the results of some previous studies in which participants usually associated verbosity with female speech (Komarovsky, 1979; Kramer, 1974; Kramer, 1977). This is also quite an interesting finding since it might be used demonstrate that the younger, educated generation in the country is no longer as convinced in arguably one of the strongest stereotypes held by older generations.

In terms of the stereotypes of male speech, two major consistencies were found in agreement with the claims that men swear more (n = 35, 50.7%) and talk about sport more (n = 50, 72.5%). These stereotypes, among the others, perhaps most distinctly transcend the sphere of language, i.e. men are often perceived to be less cautious about their behavior in terms of politeness and are generally believed to like and participate in sports, which might be a plausible explanation for these results. Furthermore, they confirm some previous study's findings; for instance, the stereotypes of men swearing more was proposed by Coates (2013) and found in the studies of Kramer (1974, 1977) and Garcia-Zamor (1973). On the other

hand, the lowest mean (M = 1.94, SD = .838) was found for the belief that men dominate conversation, which is quite an important finding taking into consideration that the notion of male dominance is a sort of a basis for any strong patriarchal narrative and environment. This result is in opposition to the findings of some other studies of stereotypes (e.g. Aries, 1996; Kramer, 1974, 1977) as well as of real language use (e.g. Gilbert, 1990; Jenkins and Cheshire, 1990; O'Barr and Atkins, 1980).

The second hypothesis stating that there is no statistically significant difference in the female and male students' perceptions of the way women and men speak was supported by this study. As for the individual items, only one significant difference was found (p = 0.04) for the claim that men dominate conversation, where more men (46%) than women (28%) agreed with the statement. This can be understood in the light of the male students' subjective perception of their own dominance in society in general, and consequently in conversational interactions as well. It seems, therefore, that the participants' gender generally did not have an effect on their attribution of stereotypes, which seems to be in congruence with findings from Kiełkiewicz-Janowiak and Pawelczyk's (2006) study in which 5 (20%) out of 25 stereotypes showed a significant difference between male and female participants (p. 362). Thus, the rejection of the hypothesis might be understood as an indicator that, if existent, certain stereotypes are spread equally across gender groups and that women and men do not perceive their gender's speech notably favourably or unfavourably.

As for the third hypothesis, stating that female and male students do not significantly differ in their perceptions of the relationship between language and gender, it was also supported – the t-test showed no significant differences among female and male responses. Namely, even though the students seem to be aware and somewhat conform to the beliefs, none of the items showed strong agreement within any gender group. This, however, seems quite expectable considering the fact that most participants were of the same nationality, Bosnian, and were thus raised in a culture which could perhaps be deemed homogeneous in terms of the norms it imposes and the beliefs it nurtures about gender. In addition, none of the statements in this category were positively biased towards any of the genders, which would have potentially yielded different responses along the gender variable. However, it should be noted that the male participants obtained a slightly, although insignificantly higher mean overall and for individual items, apart from the item stating "We should use the language appropriate for our gender", for which the female participants (M = 1.88, SD = .861) obtained a slightly higher mean than the male participants (M = 1.80, SD = .861).

Finally, it is important to note that the scope of the study is limited in different aspects, the most important one being the sample size. A larger sample would enrich the study population and therefore make the evidence more generalizable. Moreover, a more diverse sample, encompassing students from different universities and different study fields would also contribute to the significance of the paper. Since the participants in the present study were students at the Department of English Language and Literature at a private university in which the language of instruction is English, they are, due to the nature of their studies, certainly more aware of language and linguistic differences (Bećirović et al., 2017), as well as certain stereotypes pertaining to language and gender.

Conclusion

This study has led to a discovery that even though stereotypes seem to exist among university-level students in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, they do not seem to be as strong as to claim that young people in the country perceive women and men as strikingly different speakers. Considering the Bosnian context, having been extensively patriarchal and under the yoke of gender-based norms throughout its history, these findings seem rather surprising and could lead to a conclusion that the newer generations have experienced an evolution in thought through their education and exposure to more progressive, gender-sensitive and equality-oriented ideas of the modern world, and that the progress has embraced both males and females. Additionally, this is a positive indicator that the entire society might be going through an important historical shift from a less patriarchal to a more egalitarian society. This discovery is important in as much as it provides a clearer image of gender stereotypes among the youth of Bosnia and Herzegovina, thus questioning the premise of the Bosnian society still being patriarchal in all its spheres – the belief which itself could be harmful because it potentially perpetuates the state in conviction that a significant change is impossible.

The discovery, however, could be further explored with focus on some important notions. Firstly, as proposed by Siegler & Siegler (1967), the stereotypes negatively portraying females' use of language might seem to have ceased to exist, but in reality, they have only become undesirable to express. Thus, another study should involve a more discrete strategy of uncovering the underlying beliefs through which subjects would unconsciously reveal what they actually hold to be true. Secondly, factors such as

level of education, occupation, living area, etc., if considered, could portray a more detailed and thus more truthful representation of whether young people in the country have generally ceased to succumb to the overwhelming mentality or it is a matter of a wider sociocultural environment in which they live.

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Academic Subject Areas and English Language Learning Strategies: Any Relationships?

Ahmad Nazari
Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Ahmad Nazari, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Education City, Doha, 34110, Qatar.
E-mail: anazari@hbku.edu.qa

Tanvi Warty
London Metropolitan University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Tanvi Warty, London Metropolitan University, 166-220 Holloway Rd, London N7 8DB, United Kingdom.
E-mail: drtanviwarty@gmail.com

This study is an attempt to resolve the contradictory findings concerning the relationship between learners' English language learning strategies and their academic subject areas. A two-phased mixed-methods research approach, consisting of a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview, was adopted for the study. 250 students speaking English as a second language and studying five different subject areas at various London universities responded to a questionnaire on the English language learning strategies they used. The results showed that the preference for learning strategies differed significantly between students of different subject areas. Whilst cognitive strategies were reported to be the most commonly used ones by medicine and finance students, metacognitive, memory-related and social strategies were mostly used by law, music and social science students respectively. The least common set of strategies reported to be used by law and finance students was affective strategies, whereas compensatory, cognitive and metacognitive strategies were the least used ones by medicine, music and social science students in turn. A semi-structured interview was conducted with 10 of the participants to disclose the reasons behind these learners' choices of learning strategies and the contributory factors which might influence their choices. The results showed that the participants attributed their choices to factors such as the nature of their academic exposure, of their academic instructions, their learning styles, their motivations and their domestic backgrounds. The pedagogical and research significance of the study are described in the concluding remarks.

Keywords: academic subject areas, English language learning strategies, self-regulation, interaction, motivation, domestic background

London hosts an increasing number of international students with each passing year and may be considered to be amongst the most sought-after academic cities in the world. In 2016, the United Kingdom hosted 2,280,830 international students, 38% of whom were studying at London universities, and all of whom spoke English as a Second Language (HESA, 2016). In addition to having spent a considerable amount of time studying their primary academic fields, these learners have also expended time and effort into learning English as a second language, and will continue to do so during the course of their higher education in London. Therefore, even mere conjecture would dictate that during this time they are likely to acquire and assimilate specific strategies applicable to learning their primary academic field, the English language or indeed both. If we are to accept this premise, the need for this research becomes quite evident, i.e. if strategies, as opposed to styles, are learnable (Oxford, 2003) and different learners seem to learn differently,

it will prompt investigating whether there is any relationship between a learner's primary academic field and her/his English language learning strategies, and if affirmative, why this relationship occurs. The authors of the current study are certainly not the first researchers to have stumbled upon the above issues. Similar questions have been posed by researchers in Malaysia (Muniandy and Shuib, 2016), Iran (Sahragard et al., 2014), Taiwan (Tuan, 2011), China (Li and Qin, 2006) and the United States of America (Gresham, 2007) as well. The following paragraphs provide a brief overview of the key studies and literature in this field.

Ever since the concept of learning strategies was first brought into linguistic focus by Rubin (1975), many have tried to define it. However, the most widely accepted definition and classification are those proposed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990), "Learning strategies are the special thoughts and behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn or retain new information" (p. 3). Although there have been a considerable number of proposed definitions and scales, many argue that Rebecca Oxford's 'Strategy Inventory of Language Learning (SILL)' (Oxford, 2003)is still the most comprehensive and widely-implemented questionnaire available at present (Chang, 2011). Figure 1 succinctly depicts Oxford's classification of language learning strategies (1990):

Oxford (2011) also aptly provides a theoretical underpinning for language learning strategies by linking this concept to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Oxford argues that as the objective of strategy training is to help the learner to move from dependence to independence in their language learning, this training indeed scaffolds the learner to move through their Zone of Proximal Development, from other-regulation to self-regulation where the learner is metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviourally autonomous. Zimmerman (1990) highlights that self-regulated learners use their learning strategies in a systematic way and are in control of the learning process:

> Undoubtedly, all learners use regulatory processes to some degree, but self-regulated learners are distinguished by (a) their awareness of strategic relations between regulatory processes or responses and learning outcomes and (b) their use of these strategies to achieve their academic goals (p. 5).

Being the term under investigation in this study, it is fitting to address studies conducted with respect to language learning strategies and academic subject areas in the past. The outcomes of the studies have provided a variety of contrasting results. A few studies have found a strong and significant link between the preferred language learning strategies employed by learners in relation to their primary academic field (Dreyer and Oxford, 1996; Psaltou-Joycey and Kantaridou, 2011; Walters, 2006; Li and Qin, 2006; Gresham, 2007), whereas Tuan (2011) and Sahragard et al. (2014) found a positive but weak link between the two variables. In contrast, McMullen (2009) and Isemonger and Sheppard (2003) found no correlation between a language learner's academic field and

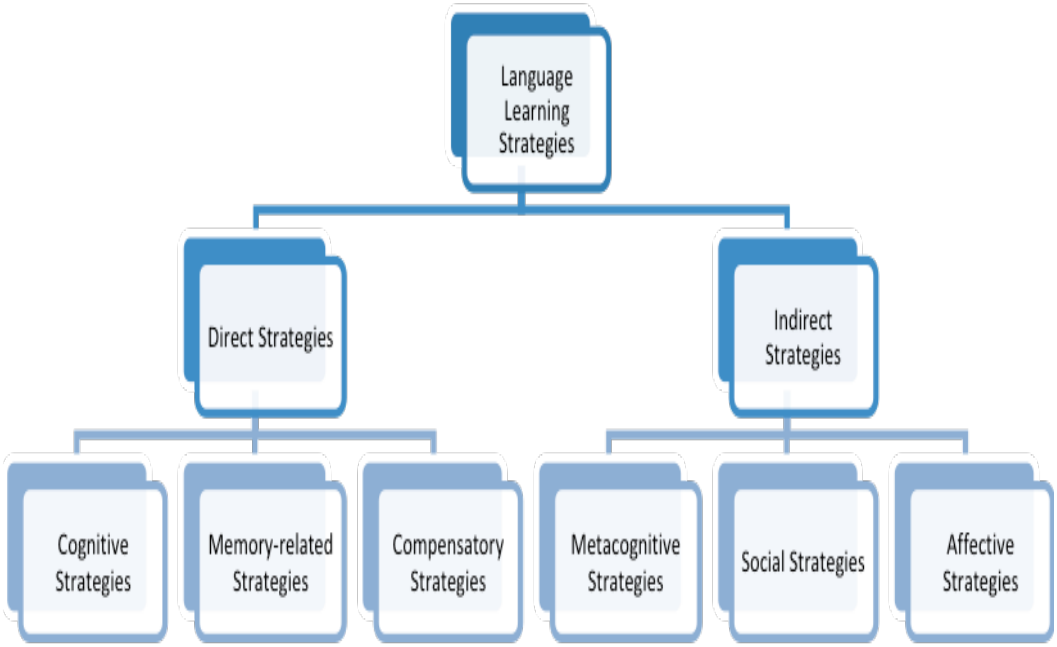

Figure 1. Oxford's classification of language learning strategies (Oxford, 1990).

choice of language learning strategies.

A similar study conducted by Sahragard et al. in Iran probably comprises the largest sample to date, with 376 participating students. While they enlisted a large number of participants, they too used a single research tool, viz. Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). Sahragard et al. (2014) advised future researchers to fill in the lacunae left by their study:

> Future studies utilizing other data collection methods such as interviews and think-aloud protocols may produce more precise results through data triangulation… Further studies investigating the relationship between the field of study and language learning strategies and styles in other EFL and ESL contexts would contribute to the illumination of this area of study (p. 267).

Elsewhere in their article, Sahragard et al. (2014) again echo the need for more studies in this domain by stating that:

> Extensive research into students' learning styles and strategies in different fields of study seems necessary. In recent years, language learning strategies and styles have been studied in relation to a number of variables in various contexts. However, thus far, few studies have examined this relationship (p. 270).

After careful consideration of the existing studies in the field, two points of interest stand out: First, a majority of the existing studies are quantitative in nature and very few investigate the factors contributing to the possible relationship between academic fields and language learning strategies. Second, the studies themselves are few and far between. While some researchers have investigated this relationship, they have also unanimously called for more research in this sphere, as evidenced by Sahragard et al. (2014) in the preceding paragraph. More recently, Muniandy and Shuib (2016) have endorsed and reiterated this necessity:

> We advise larger sample be used in future studies which may be able to provide optimal findings in this area. Besides, this study only focuses on the data obtained from questionnaire – thus it limits the participants' responses. In future, interviews should be conducted, to obtain a more in-depth understanding of language learning strategies (p. 16).

Therefore, the primary objective of this research is to find any possible relationship between university students' subject areas and the types of English language learning strategies they use. The above objective, which is tackled by adopting a quantitative approach, is in fact an attempt to contribute modestly to resolving the contradictory findings concerning the relationship between language learning strategies and academic subject areas. In addition, as a secondary objective, by adopting a qualitative approach, which has not been applied adequately in previous studies of this topic, this research contributes to digging out the reasons behind these learners' choices of learning strategies and the contributory factors which may influence their choices. To address these objectives, the following research questions are formulated:

1. Is there any relationship between a learner's primary academic field and her/his English language learning strategies?
2. If yes, why does this occur?

To the above end, the following null hypothesis is put forward: There are not any significant relationships between a learner's primary academic field and her/his English language learning strategies.

Method

Participants

In this study a stratified opportunistic sampling was adopted to select participants, i.e. students attending London universities and studying either medicine, law, finance, music or social sciences were invited to volunteer into the study. A total of 250 students (117 males and 133 females) were recruited and divided into five equal groups of fifty students each, based on their academic major at a university in London. Finally, the participants were between 18 and 60 years of age, living in London at the time the study was conducted and spoke English as a second language (see Table 1 and 2 for further demographic information). 10 students (6 females and 4 males), two from each subject area, agreed to take part in a semi-structured interview. Their age range was from 19 to 28. They spoke different L1s and were from various nationalities (see Table 1 and 2 for further demographic information). Meticulous care was taken to ensure that written and informed consent was obtained from all the participants of the study. The following section describes and analyses the data so gathered.

Materials

Table 1
Questionnaire participants' descriptive statistics

		N	%
Gender	Male	117	46.8%
	Female	133	53.2%
Subject	Finance	50	20.0%
	Law	50	20.0%
	Medicine	50	20.0%
	Music	50	20.0%
	Social Science	50	20.0%
Language	Hindi	34	13.6%
	Mandarin	33	13.2%
	Spanish	30	12.0%
	German	26	10.4%
	Japanese	24	9.6%
	Polish	24	9.6%
	Arabic	21	8.4%
	Gujarati	13	5.2%
	Korean	8	3.2%
	Finnish	6	2.4%
	French	6	2.4%
	Russian	5	2.0%
	Thai	5	2.0%
	Italian	4	1.6%
	Dutch	3	1.2%
	Hungarian	3	1.2%
	Portuguese	3	1.2%
	Czech	2	.8%
English Years (grouped)	1-3 years	58	23.2%
	4-6 years	109	43.6%
	7-9 years	83	33.2%

The research tools used in this study were a questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale and a semi-structured interview. The questionnaire was a modified and combined version of Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (Oxford, 1996) and Griffths' English Language Learning Strategy Inventory (ELLSI) (Griffiths, 2013). The results of the questionnaire data were analysed by applying a one-way ANOVA. Afterwards, a semi-structured interview was conducted with ten participants individually, covering the learner's academic and linguistic background, her/his duration and nature of exposure to English, her/his choice of English language learning strategies, and a comparative inquiry into her/his strategy use in language learning versus university studies. Once conducted, the interviews were transcribed and analysed using the procedures of the grounded theory approach (Cohen et. al., 2011).

Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods methodology, which due to its complementary nature, helped

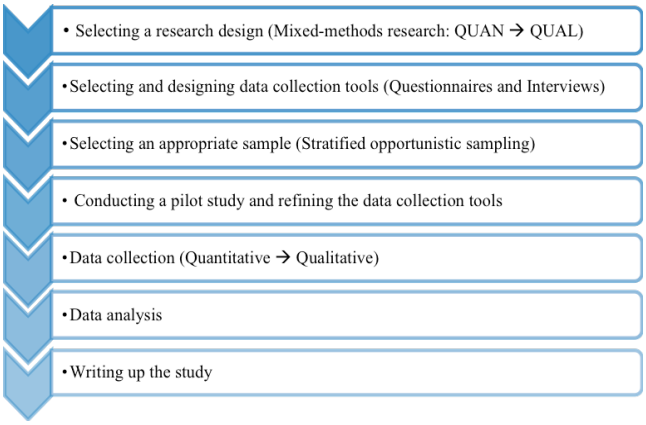

Figure 2. Sequence of data collection and analysis.

Table 2
Demographic information of the interviewees

Participant Number	Age (years)	Gender	Nationality	Duration of learning English (years)	Duration of stay in London (months)	First Language	Academic Field at University
01	26	Male	Spanish	6	19	Spanish	Medicine
02	26	Male	Saudi Arabian	8	18	Arabic	Medicine
03	26	Female	Polish	7	27	Polish	Law
04	28	Female	Polish	8	36	Polish	Law
05	24	Female	Thai	6	24	Thai	Finance
06	24	Male	Brazilian	7	24	Portuguese	Finance
07	21	Female	Polish	4	12	Polish	Music
08	19	Female	French	6	10	French	Music
09	22	Male	Kuwaiti	9	9	Arabic	Social Science
10	26	Female	Spanish	5	14	Spanish	Social Science

triangulate the obtained data, thus filling in the lacunae left behind any one method of investigation. The sequence of data collection and analysis is delineated in Figure 2.

Data Analysis

Before collecting the main study data, the questionnaire was piloted with 10 participants, similar to those taking part in the main study questionnaire, two of whom also participated in a pilot interview. These enabled the researchers to refine the research tools, making them more rigorous and thus improving the validity and reliability of resultant data (Crossman, 2017). For example, in the questionnaire, one of the items was initially phrased as "repetition helps me remember" and two of the pilot study respondents claimed that they were not sure whether that included written or oral repetition. The item was later reframed to as "I say or write new English words several times to remember them". Additionally, some items were added when they were found to be a strategy that many considered important, although they did not feature in Oxford's original Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). For example, an item as "I watch English language television or movies to improve my English language" was added after realising four of the pilot study respondents used it as an integral language learning strategy. After collecting the main study data, the results of the questionnaire data were analysed by carrying out a one-way ANOVA (see the section below for the analysis).

With respect to the interview-guide, a pilot study was conducted with two participants, similar to those taking part in the main study interview. Consequently, questions such as "Do you enjoy studying English?" or "What makes studying your subject at university rewarding?" had to be discarded because they failed to elicit any relevant data. They were reframed to extract more relevant information with minimal speaking on the interviewer's part. For example, three questions, viz., "Do you create a schedule for examinations?", "How do you plan your schedule for examinations?" and "What additional requirements do you have during examinations?" were amalgamated into one question, "What are the strategies that work best for you when preparing for an examination? And why do they work for you?" (see the section below for the analysis).

In addition to the pilot study, the methodological triangulation adopted here through the application of a mixed methods approach bridged issues of reliability and validity too (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 266).

Results

ANOVA

Concerning the results of the questionnaire, to compare the preferred English language learning strategies by academic fields, a one-way ANOVA was performed with mean scores for each strategy serving as dependent variables and academic fields serving as the comparison group variable (see Table 3). One of the assumptions of ANOVA is the homogeneity of variances. Therefore, Levene's test of equality of variance was calculated for each of the dependent variables (Glass, 1966). The results indicated that this assumption holds true for the given sample, and thus a robust version of ANOVA – a Welch test was used (Tomarken and Serlin, 1986).

Table 3
ANOVA results

	F	Df	p-value
Cognitive learning strategies	2.513	(4, 245)	.045
Metacognitive learning strategies	2.850	(4, 245)	.038
Memory-related learning strategies	2.563	(4, 245)	.044
Compensatory learning strategies	0.925	(4, 245)	.450
Affective learning strategies	0.480	(4, 245)	.750
Social learning strategies	2.839	(4, 245)	.026

The results of the ANOVA showed that the preference for cognitive (0.045), metacognitive (0.038), memory-related (0.044) and social (0.026) learning strategies differs significantly (with $p < 0.05$) between students of different academic fields. In addition, the most common and least common set of strategies used by students of different academic fields also varied considerably (see Table 4).

Table 4
Most common and least common set of strategies used by students

Academic field	Most commonly used strategy	Least commonly used strategy
Medicine	Cognitive	Compensatory
Law	Metacognitive	Affective
Finance	Cognitive	Affective
Music	Memory-related	Cognitive
Social Science	Social	Metacognitive

Grounded Theory

Upon considering the interview data, a few strategies stand out as being useful to both the participants' respective academic fields as well as their journey through learning English as a second language. These

strategies, which are in fact the selective codes, which in turn are the results of applying the procedures of grounded theory to the analysis of the interview data, are presented below:

1. Securing information from a variety of sources and grouping similar items together.
2. Applying logic and reasoning to organise material in the best way.
3. Learning by doing.
4. Interacting with people.
5. Evaluating one's own progress.
6. Managing oneself in academic, social and emotional contexts.

In addition, the differences in strategy use between the two domains, i.e. academic fields at university and English as a Second Language, were also evaluated and are tabulated in Table 5:

However, this was purely the researchers' interpretation of findings and could be subject to a certain degree of subjectivity. Concerning our qualitative data and analysis, we are aware that:

Qualitative research, while rigorous, inherently works with data that is subjective and contextual, which places limits on the extent to which findings can be generalised. To put it another way, the degree of the generalisability of the research findings might be one of the limitations of my study (Nazari, 2017, p. 114).

Discussion

The aim of this study was to identify significant differences, if any, between the selection and use of English language learning strategies between students of different academic fields, and the reasons for their existence. This depends upon the areas where statistically significant deviations in terms of strategy preference amongst the five fields were noted.

Sourcing Information:

A majority of students studying medicine, law and finance sought books and newspapers as the primary source of new information. Both interviewees studying medicine preferred standardised sources of English such as the Oxford English Dictionary and Thesaurus. In contrast, the students of music and social science preferred watching television or movies with subtitles to acquire new linguistic information. They seemed to attribute this preference to the passive and repeatable nature of learning that media-based sources afford. This thought is echoed by Celce-Murcia and McIntosh (1991) who believe that audio-visual modes of instructions are beneficial because they enable

Table 5
Differences in strategy use between two domains

No.	Learning Strategy	Academic Field	Second Language (English)
1.	Defining end-points/ goals.	Predominantly objective with well-defined boundaries: Standardised exams designed by the university. Distribution of marks and grades on a systematic scale.	Predominantly subjective and ambiguous: A feeling of possessing sufficient knowledge, so as to navigate effortlessly through conversations.
2.	Practising skills before applying them.	More feasible, since there are well-defined models and step-wise guidelines to proceed i.e. theory à practice.	Less feasible, since one must attain a level of confidence to speak to others in the second language.
3.	Motivation to continue learning.	Predominantly instrumental: to achieve one's academic/ professional goals.	Predominantly integrative: to eventually merge into the target society.
4.	Sources of new information.	Primarily books, academic publications and newspapers.	A wider range of sources, such as various types of media and entertainment in addition to books and newspapers.
5.	Progression from learning to interaction.	There usually exists a preference towards learning by oneself and then discussing with a group/ others.	The general preference is to interact with others first and reflect upon the interaction by oneself at a later date.
6.	Estimating the stages of learning and the time required to learn.	Usually, there is a definite point where one begins and ends, along with a specified time frame.	Very subjective, as each person begins with a different level of ability and takes different amounts of time to achieve the same degree of proficiency.
7.	Logical progression and learning concepts.	Generally a concept is learnt in theory and then it is applied to a practical situation.	A significant part of learning is contextually based in different situations and learnt by direct exposure to the practical uses of the language.
8.	Effects of stress.	Stress can motivate and often improves performance or, less often, hinders productivity.	Stress usually hinders communication and diminishes output.

students to learn the language at their own pace and with as much repetition as required.

Logic and reasoning

The students of medicine and finance subscribed to the practice of identifying patterns in new information and creating condensed summaries. It may be interesting to note that both students of finance and one of medicine and one of law, attributed the use of this strategy as stemming from the requirements of their respective academic fields at university. These findings are in agreement with those of Peacock and Ho et al. (2003), Prakongchati (2007) and Sahragard et al. (2014), who identified a similar causal link.

Retention of information

Both music and law students showed a preference towards using memory-related strategies to retain new lexis; however, their approaches differed. Students of music preferred writing or speaking out loud while the students of law preferred creating acronyms and lists to better retain factual data. Another difference that emerged from the interviews is that the cohort of students studying music claimed that they found acquiring new lexis by means of listening to be easier than reading long texts, which they found tedious and boring. This general consensus was reversed in the cohort of students studying law. One possible explanation for this may be found in the studies conducted by Ho et al. (2003) and Franklin et al. (2008), which concluded that individuals exposed to training in music at or before the age of 12 were better equipped to retain verbal memory than their peers.

Theory and practice

The students of medicine and social science expressed a preference towards the former, while those studying music, law and finance appeared to prefer the latter. The former group appears to prefer a step-wise and guided progression from understanding the subject in theory and practising it in a controlled environment, followed by employing it in the real world. This may reflect the corresponding academic curricula at university level, which are so designed that episteme precedes phronesis, i.e. mastery of theoretical knowledge precedes practical application (Korthagen et al., 2001). In comparison, the latter seems to adopt a radically different and immersive approach, by first dealing with the practical aspect of communication, and then attempting to make sense of the learnt behaviour.

Degree of interaction

While the students of social science and finance appeared to be the most frequent users of social strategies while learning English, their sources of information and context seemed to differ considerably. The students of finance preferred to interact with native speakers of English and used them as models from which they could acquire lexical chunks and learn 'correct' pronunciation. Kachru (1996) is in partial agreement with this opinion and states that native speakers have a certain "Sprachgefühl" (intuitive feeling for the natural use of a language), which allows them to instinctively select the most fitting expression in a given context. However, Long (1991) argues the case for non-native conversation partners and claims that they are often more understanding than native speakers. Additionally, students of social science showed a genuine interest in learning about British cultures. A recent study conducted in Saudi Arabia found a similar correlation between students of social science and a focus on the target culture (Al-Hebaishi, 2012). Surprisingly, there was no significant correlation found between social language learning strategies and students of medicine and law. This runs counter to our expectations, since these are fields which, one would assume, require a substantial amount of interaction.

Linguistic monitoring

The most common set of English language learning strategies used by law students was metacognitive. This suggests that they examined their own progress and learning processes more frequently and perhaps more in depth, than others. This could be due to the fact that part of the ideal curriculum for students of law in London includes lessons on strategy development and assessing progress (Wangerin, 1987; Boyle, 2003). In comparison, students of social science seemed to favour paying attention to others while they spoke English, so as to learn from them. This mirrors the findings of Sahragard et al. (2014), whose study concluded that students of predominantly positivist sciences such as biology and engineering used metacognitive strategies more often than students of social science.

Personal temperament

The students of medicine and music showed markedly different responses to language-related stress. Interviewees from the field of medicine admitted to having dealt with highly stressful academic situations in the past and therefore seemed to have an armamentarium of strategies already in place to deal with it. Two strategies isolated from the interviews were as follows: a temporary change of

activity such as taking a walk; and talking to a friend/ family member, preferably in their first language. In comparison, the students of music declared that they were most stressed during exams, where they were under scrutiny, which only led them to commit more mistakes than usual. Although this study shows similar quantitative results to findings of Barmeyer (2004), and Earley and Ang (2003), they differed in one key aspect. While the aforementioned authors hypothesised that affective strategies were partially influenced by cultural factors, the present study examined four culturally distinct interviewees from the fields of medicine and music i.e. French, Basque, Saudi Arabian and Catalan, who in spite of their varied backgrounds shared a similar thought-process. This leads us to introduce another causal factor which may alter a learner's attitudes towards affective strategies, viz. academic fields.

Having addressed the major differences in strategy preference amongst the five cohorts, we now examine the possible causal factors which may influence these choices.

Previous academic exposure.

The average number of years spent learning English in descending order of cohorts were finance (6.34), social science (6.22), law (5.98), medicine (5.50), and music (2.96). Also, the average number of strategies employed by the students of the five academic fields under consideration was finance (38.12), medicine (37.96), law (37.12), social science (35.90) and music (30.84). It is evident that students of finance topped both scales while the students of medicine were near the bottom of the first scale but rather high up on the second. The general assumption would be that the longer time a person has spent in academia, the more time he/she has at his/her disposal to acquire new and varied learning strategies. We find here a discrepancy in the field of medicine, which leads us to question the much accepted belief that the more time one spends studying a subject, the better one gets at it. An examination of literature found contradictory results in similar studies conducted by Peacock (2001), Melton (1990) and Reid (1987). An attempt to discern a plausible explanation for our findings revealed that it is not merely the time spent in academia, but also the nature of academic exposure and instruction which seemed to play a pivotal role in dictating strategy choice.

Nature of academic exposure.

The students of medicine and finance were often subjected to increased linguistic demands and a higher number of deadlines as compared to those of music. The two former cohorts of students appear to have undergone rigorous training in order to acquire a good score on their English proficiency tests, in addition to preparing themselves for an education where the language of instruction would be English. As opposed to this, the music students seemed to have spent the least amount of time learning English and did not view it as an integral skill for their future careers. A similar relationship was proposed by other researchers between 2001 and 2015, i.e. Wong (2015), Wong & Nunan (2011) and Peacock (2001).

Nature of instruction.

Law and medicine students, in particular, showed a preference towards being given pre-designed materials to study from, probably in an attempt to save time. They also showed a tendency towards applying memorisation and rote-learning techniques. This may be attributed, in part, to the nature of academic material in their primary academic field. One possible explanation is that if they fail to find a logical reason or pattern, they simply accept that they must memorise the data. Studies conducted in China (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Cross & Hitchcock, 2007) and Hong Kong (Lee, 1996) also seem to endorse this view.

Learning style preferences.

There are two points worth mentioning here. First, while the students of social science declared that the nature of the task would determine whether they preferred learning by themselves or in a group, law students found ways and means of dealing with almost all tasks by themselves. Second, the students of music and social science were open to experimenting with strategies which did not necessarily complement their learning styles, whereas the students of medicine and law were comparatively inflexible and rigidly stuck to their preferences. Since learning styles are largely considered inherent attributes of one's personality, they may have led certain individuals, almost naturally, towards their present career paths. This view is echoed in the works of Wong (2015) and Muniandy and Shuib (2014), who propose that although learning styles may influence choice of academic major, they can also indirectly influence choice of language learning strategies.

Competition and motivation.

It appears that most students began learning English with a primary academic goal in mind, i.e., instrumental motivation; however, the more time they spent living in London, integrative motivation became more dominant . While Gardner and Lambert (1968)

may hold their views regarding integrative motivation being a great driving force, Kumaravadivelu (2008) and Dörnyei (1998) have defended the potential of instrumental motivation being an equally important contributor to learning. In addition, medicine and law students believed that competition was fiercer in their field, which may explain why students of certain fields possess more varied English language learning strategies and a more comprehensive strategy-chain as compared to others. This could also be regarded as a wash-back effect of the varying degrees of difficulty with respect to entrance exams in different academic fields.

Domestic background.

If we consider Havighurst's theory of parental occupation, a considerable number of learning strategies and career choices may be attributed to one's domestic background (Trice et. al., 1995). Seven-tenths of interviewees in the present study appear to have chosen a field parallel to that of one of their parents and claimed that they turned to their parents for advice on academic and career choices. Thus, it might be possible that the acquisition of learning strategies may have begun even before the student stepped into school, with the parents being the primary instructors. A study conducted in 1989 determined that children whose parents were medical doctors were nearly fourteen percent more likely to be admitted into medical school than comparable non-followers (Lentz and Laband, 1989). Another pivotal role that family seems to play is that of responsibility and support. One of the key motivators, as stated by 6/10 of the interviewees, was the fact that they wanted to make their parents proud by doing well academically, whether in ESL learning or in their respective academic fields at university. Thus, we cannot overlook the influence of family expectations and sentiments when we consider the choice of academic fields as also a desire to acquire an increasing number of English language learning strategies.

Conclusion

This study has attempted to make a contribution to the understanding of the relationship between university students' academic fields and their English language learning strategies. It has uncovered a number of statistically significant differences in English language learning strategies across five academic fields and postulated the causes for these differences, based upon triangulated data. The results, in fact, clearly showed that the null hypothesis put forward at the outset of this article was not supported. Pedagogically, the first implication of this study pertains to the way in which different English language training is imparted to students. It could be beneficial to provide students with an array of English language learning strategies irrespective of their primary academic fields, thus enabling them to make informed linguistic choices as autonomous, self-regulated learners. The second implication is directed towards the educators in the field of ESL teaching, who may be able to structure a tailor-made series of lessons for cohorts of students having common goals and academic backgrounds. Finally, the age-old concept of longer hours spent learning the language equals better fluency and accuracy needs to be challenged. It would be advantageous to examine the optimal time required to achieve language savvy and a sense of comfort with the language without the learner succumbing to exhaustion and boredom.

The first limitation of this study would lie in the nature and quantity of the sample which, while providing comparable numbers of participants, also relies upon the interest and voluntariness of the student population. Thus, the sample, not being truly randomised, can only account for the opinions of students who were willing to participate in a study, and cannot be extrapolated to the student population in general (Cohen et al., 2011). In addition, the study was conducted within the confines of the city of London and, therefore, does not capture the essence of English language learning strategies beyond these geographical boundaries. Furthermore, the shortcomings of self-reported data must also be considered. Qualitative research tools rely entirely on the veracity and accuracy of the participants' claims with respect to what they prefer and do. This is where triangulation of data may help in making decisions regarding the validity of data and its subsequent interpretations to some extent (Wong and Nunan, 2011). Drawing on the limitations of the study, similar research in more geographically and culturally diverse regions could be beneficial to the domain under investigation. In addition, other possible relationships, e.g. between learners' L1 acquisition strategies and their ESL learning strategies, are other areas worth researching.

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The Influence of Students' Sociocultural Background on the IELTS Speaking Test Preparation Process

Galina Pavlovskaya
National Research University Higher School of Economics

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Galina Pavlovskaya, English Language Department for Economic and Mathematical Disciplines, National Research University Higher School of Economics, 26 Shabolovka Ulitsa, Room 4340, Moscow, 119043, Russiaт Federation.
E-mail: gpavlovskaya@hse.ru

Anastasia Lord
John Molson School of Business, Concordia University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Anastasia Lord , John Molson School of Business, Concordia University, 1455 Boulevard de Maisonneuve O, Montréal, QC H3G 1M8, Canada.
E-mail: gpavlovskaya@hse.ru

The article is aimed at highlighting the sociocultural factors a teacher/IELTS instructor should consider preparing Russian students for the IELTS exam. The main focus of the study was on four speech functions most frequently used in the IELTS Speaking Test: explaining and paraphrasing, expressing personal opinion, providing personal information, and summarizing. The study aims to question the assumption that the problems arising in the use of these speech functions are provoked by the students' low language level and to investigate if there are any sociocultural issues connected with the use of the above-mentioned speech functions influencing students' performance during the IELTS Speaking Test. The study was conducted among first-year students at the Higher School of Economics (HSE) in the Faculty of Computer Science. To see the problem from a different perspective, the study involved not only the first-year students who seem to struggle with the speech functions but also their English teachers who can provide trustworthy first-hand information on the problems the students frequently face. The results of the study demonstrate that the cause of problems students encounter using the speech functions should not be attributed only to their language knowledge, as do the majority of interviewed teachers. The way students tend to explain, paraphrase, summarize, express their opinion and provide personal information is culturally defined which influences students' ability to perform these functions effectively. To help Russian students avoid sociocultural problems preparing for the IELTS Speaking Test, a teacher/IELTS instructor should aim to increase students' sociocultural awareness of the pitfalls in the use of the essential speech functions and sociocultural competence in a foreign language.

Keywords: IELTS, speech functions, sociocultural competence, intercultural communication, multicultural workplace environment

The ever-growing demand for the IELTS certificate, as one of the most valued and recognized by the international employers, is one of the powerful external factors encouraging the most established and forward-looking universities worldwide to provide their students with an opportunity to take the exam and, more importantly, to pass it. The students of the HSE having completed a two-year university English course are ready to take a full-scale IELTS exam with a competitive result (band 6.5-7.5). However, the process of preparation for the exam is demanding and challenging not only for the students themselves but also for their teachers who assume a large part of responsibility for a student's success. The significance of the sociocultural background of the IELTS exam preparation courses is recognized by the educators and researchers who admit the necessity of more detailed and advanced research into the field that still has a lot

of controversial questions concerning the process of preparation and assessment (Gibson & Swan, 2008; Murray, Cross, & Cruickshank, 2014). The present study highlights the sociocultural background of the IELTS Speaking Test preparation and may be of relevance for IELTS instructors/examiners, teachers and researchers interested in finding ways of developing a learner's intercultural competence in a foreign language and sociocultural competence as its integral part.

Apart from the opportunity to work in multicultural companies, to study at top-ranked universities and to live in almost every corner of the world, globalization brings national conflicts and loss of identity. Nowadays an intercultural dialogue is often seen as the main remedy to help bridge cultural differences and to defuse the side effects of globalization (Byram, Nichols, & Stevens, 2001; Deardorff, 2006). Intercultural communicative competence and its sociocultural component required for a productive intercultural dialogue have been proven to be a factor for success for multicultural teams that, thanks to IT technology, can be engaged not only in real face-to-face communication but also in a virtual one or a hybrid of both (Safonova, 2014). As reported by Neo HR organizing annual opinion polls among the students of top Russian universities, world-famous internationally active companies like Google, Microsoft, Yandex, EY, KPMG, Deloitte employ the largest number of the specialists in the field of IT and are considered to be the most reliable employers among Russian students, namely, the students of the Faculty of Computer Science at the Higher School of Economics (HSE) who participated in the study described further in this article. According to the annual reports published by the National Organization of Colleges and Employers (NACE), recruiting policy of these international companies requires that a successful candidate should provide valid academic qualifications proving his/her professional skills, an internationally recognized certificate of English language proficiency for non-native English language speakers, and, above all, demonstrate an ability to work in a multicultural team that depends greatly on the level of sociocultural competence.

According to Byram, Zarate and Neuner (1997), sociocultural competence includes an ability to relate to the representatives of other cultures, knowledge of their way of life, a capacity to enter and discover new situations of intercultural exchange, as well as awareness of self and of how people from different cultures see us. The lack of sociocultural competence may result in communication failures occurring due to numerous sociocultural pitfalls a FL learner fails to avoid. Regardless of the indisputable influence of sociocultural competence on the success of intercultural communication it is still paid modest attention. Highlighting the interconnection of sociocultural competence with other competences in a complex structure of an intercultural communicative competence, Byram and Zarate (1997) express their concern with the imbalance existing in the approach to linguistic and other competences: "In a context of foreign language learning we have to recognize language learning as the dominant concern of teachers and learners. This leads to distortion of the relationship between linguistic competences and others" (p. 10). This focus on linguistic competence often leads to a dysfunctional approach to language teaching, which Kramsch (2004) describes as teaching the four skills "plus culture". However, culture should be "viewed as enabling language proficiency and as being the outcome of reflection on language proficiency" (p. 8). As a result of this approach to language teaching, a student advanced in reading, listening, writing and speaking may still encounter the problem of misunderstanding, misinterpretation often leading to mutual stereotypes in the process of intercultural communication. Cultural differences may hinder effective communication and participation in group work and tutorial discussions, even among those who are proficient in English and come well prepared for classes (Mak, Westwood, Ishiyama, & Barker, 2000; Paulus, Bichelmeyer, Malopinsky, & Rastogi, 2005; Mak, 2011). Another challenge in store for foreign language learners as well as their teachers and examiners, who realize the importance of sociocultural competence and implement the principles of its development into practice, is the problem of assessment (Cohen & Olshtain, 1981; Safonova, 2008; Holmes & O'Neill, 2012). One more question that still remains unanswered is whether the IELTS exam helps to efficiently assess sociocultural competence and guarantee that the holder of the IELTS certificate fits into a multicultural team and satisfies an international employer's expectations. As outlined in the recent IELTS Research Report, there are "difficulties not directly attributed to language" and "it is important to examine these issues because the extent to which it is ethical for a language test to probe cultural aspects of workplace readiness remains a controversial question" (Murray, Cross, & Cruickshank, 2014, p. 34). Obviously, "cultural aspects" are a matter of concern for the IELTS developers, however, as "a language test" it is not aimed at assessing sociocultural competence and be sufficient proof that a candidate will become a strong team player in a multicultural workplace environment. On the other hand, teachers and IELTS examiners have to face the sociocultural background their students inevitably bring into the classroom and take it into consideration, which can be a challenging task to perform given the fact that teachers frequently have no resources beyond the official IELTS handbook and

some commercial materials (Gibson & Swan, 2008).

While L2 teachers worldwide are struggling to examine existing teaching practices and explore the alternatives to guarantee greater achievements for their students, sociocultural background is frequently ignored though it is bound to come on stage in every classroom (Johnson, 2009). It happens not only when culture is discussed or taught explicitly but every time a foreign language learner uses the language (Kramsch, 2004; Elizarova, 2005) and when he/she performs one of the essential speech functions, such as analyzing, comparing and contrasting, explaining and paraphrasing, expressing and justifying opinion, providing personal information, summarising, etc. (Fulcher, 2003). Clearly, every foreign language learner draws from the sociocultural traditions and behavioral patterns in speaking and communication existing in his/her culture. The profound research into the sociocultural characteristics typical for Russian learners and their speaking behavior has been made in the works by Russian and foreign authors (Wierzbicka, 1997; Vassilieva, 1998; Leontovich, 2002; Sternina & Sternin, 2003).

The focus of the conducted study, which is a survey, is on the IELTS Speaking Test, and namely, on the sociocultural issues influencing the students' ability to use the following speech functions: 1) explaining and paraphrasing, 2) expressing opinion, 3) summarising and 4) providing personal information. The survey aims to clarify whether the problems arising in the use of the speech functions are provoked by the students' low language level, as is generally assumed. The survey is guided by the following research questions:

1) What are the reasons for the inefficient use of the speech functions?
2) Are there any sociocultural factors influencing the use of the speech functions?
3) Are teachers' and students' perceptions of the reasons for the inefficient use of the speech functions aligned? If yes/no, to what extent?

Materials and Methods

Participants

The study was conducted at the Faculty of Computer Science at the HSE and involved 60 first-year students studying for a Bachelor's degree in Software Engineering. The students' level of proficiency in English varied from B1 to C1 according to CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). To see the problem from a different perspective 10 English language teachers working at the same faculty were interviewed about the difficulties their students have using the above-mentioned speech functions. Among the English teachers participating in the described study there were IELTS examiners, teachers obtaining DELTA, CELTA, TKT, CPE and IELTS certificates. The teachers and students are representatives of the Russian culture and are not expected to experience misunderstanding because of the cultural gap between them.

Materials

The materials for the study comprised a questionnaire for students and key-informant semi-structured interviews with their English teachers. The survey included two procedures:

Research Design

Step 1

Students were offered a questionnaire specially developed for the study (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire included four parts focusing on the speech functions and had a structural pattern known as 'a questionnaire-an interview' (Valeev, 2002). In each of these four parts the students were offered four fixed alternatives to choose from and they were also asked to propose their own alternative and/or write their comments in the blank space provided. It is important to outline that students were free to choose more than one option from the questionnaire, and/or propose their own, as well as to comment upon their choice in a follow-up discussion.

Step 2

English teachers were invited for key-informant semi-structured interviews. The structural pattern of interviews used in the study can be described as a 'semi-structured interview', or as it is also called 'semi-standardized' or 'in-depth and 'focused interview'; it is a data collection method widely used in language pedagogy research (Nunan, 1992; Brown, 1994). This structure for an interview helps a researcher to guide the whole process and have more control over the direction of the conversation than in an unstructured conversation; while the interviewed are not restricted by the questions, and on the contrary, are encouraged to give details and make their own assumptions. The questions asked by an interviewee in a semi-structured interview are traditionally classified as open, semi-closed, closed and questions/items with fixed alternatives (Cohen, 2007). The questions/guidelines used in the interviews with teachers in this study were formulated following this tradition and included all of the question types, such as: 1) "How would you describe the way your students express personal

opinion?"; 2) "Do they have any problems expressing their opinion in front of the whole class?"; 3) "Are your students happier expressing their opinion when they work in pairs?"; 4) "Are your students willing to express their opinion or they wait for your stimulating questions and/or motivating remarks?"

Research Methods and Procedure

The results of semi-structured interviews depend on the informants' knowledge (Datko, 2015), which made it reasonable to turn to a method of 'key-informant interviews' borrowed from the field of sociocultural anthropology (Duranti, 1997). The method implies selecting knowledgeable individuals who can provide reliable information about particular areas (Kottak, 2002), such as the teachers selected for this study. The second factor helping to select teachers as key informants for the interviews, apart from widely-recognized qualifications, was the fact that all of them work with the students of the Faculty of Computer Science and could provide first-hand and trustworthy information about the students for the study. To interpret data obtained by the questionnaire for students and from interviews with teachers the study employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Results

The results of the survey show that the majority of interviewed teachers attribute students' problems with explaining and paraphrasing to the students' level of language proficiency. However, many of them also report that students often simply neglect the necessity to explain their ideas and thoughts further, providing details and/or paraphrasing. 48% of students, in their turn, are sure that they are able to communicate their message in the first sentence and no paraphrasing or additional information is required. A considerable number of students, 43%, reported that they need stimulating questions or remarks from their teacher/examiner showing that there is actually a need to explain or paraphrase. 92% of students do not explain or paraphrase because they do not think it is necessary or simply because they wait for their teachers to motivate them to do so.

Interviewed students, as well as teachers, report that they experience serious problems expressing their opinion. Only 4 out of 10 teachers and 5 students out of 60 support the statement that students have no difficulties in expressing their opinion freely. The majority of students (53%) highlight that they wait for the teacher's/examiner's invitation to express opinions, 43% of students claim to be too shy and 18% find expressing their opinion difficult because of the language skills that they need to develop. Interviewed teachers, sharing an observation from their teaching practice, state that their students are more willing and relaxed expressing group opinion rather than their own. Moreover, teachers point out that students feel comfortable exchanging their opinion in pairs or in groups rather than stating it in front of the whole class.

Only 15% of students report that they can easily sum up their ideas, while a significant number of students – 28 or 47% - find it difficult to summarise. 38% of students consider summarising "a waste of time" because they feel forced to repeat the ideas they have already expressed earlier. Interviewed teachers attribute problems with summarising among the students mainly to the lack of language skills essential for it. Teachers also point out that many students do not realize the importance of summarizing and complain that their students often forget to sum up.

Providing personal information such as name, nationality, address does not appear to be embarrassing for the majority of students (95%). However, 80% of interviewed students are not willing to talk about their family background, childhood memories and life goals. Interviewed teachers, on the contrary, do not report these topics to be "unsafe" to discuss with their students. The answers and comments given by both students and their teachers are summarized in Table 1.

Perceptions by teachers and students of the reasons for the inefficient use of the speech functions are mostly not aligned, as can be seen from Figure 1 which illustrates the percentage of teachers and students attributing the inefficient use of the speech functions to a low language level. The speech function which is viewed in a relatively similar way is "providing personal information", only 3% of students and 5% of teachers see the difficulties in using this function and attribute them to the lack of language knowledge. Similarly, summarizing is seen as an important speech function that 47% of students admit not being able to use because they "have not practiced enough" and/or "lack appropriate vocabulary and grammar". As claimed by the majority of the interviewed teachers, the remaining speech functions cause problems mainly for those students who demonstrate a low language level and lack language skills essential for explaining and paraphrasing, expressing opinion and summarizing: although the students themselves see different reasons for it (see Table 1. Students and their teachers commenting on the use of four speech functions). The biggest gap in the percentage of teachers and students is observed when the participants comment upon the speech function "expressing opinion". Unlike 70%

Table 1

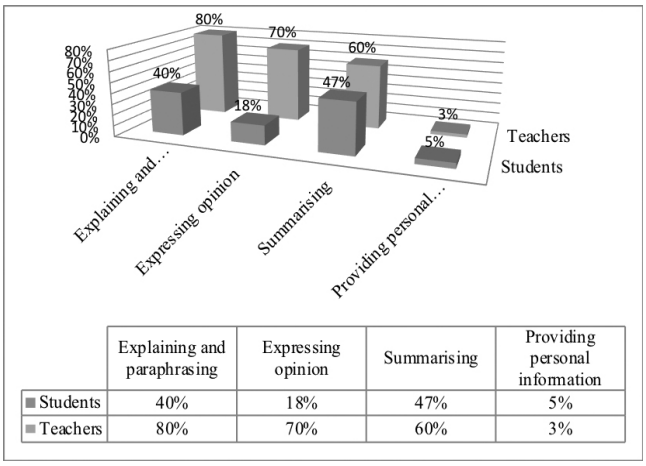
Students and their teachers commenting on the use of four speech functions

Speech Functions	Teachers	Students
Explaining and Paraphrasing	Complain that many students "do not bother to explain or paraphrase" even if it is necessary (6 out of 10 teachers) Point out that students lack language skills essential for explaining and paraphrasing (8 out of 10)	Claim that they make it clear from the very beginning (29 out of 60 students - 48%) Highlight that they lack appropriate grammar and vocabulary (24 out of 60 - 40%) Point out that they are ready to explain and paraphrase if their teacher/examiner asks them to do so (26 out of 60 - 43%) Report that they experience no problems explaining and paraphrasing (8 out of 60 – 13%)
Expressing Opinion	Highlight that students are more willing to express group opinion rather than their own (6 out of 10) Outline that students are more willing to express their opinion when they are ready to speak on the topic ("they know the topic vocabulary", "they know and can use the cliché phrases freely to express opinion" (7 out of 10) Report that some students are "too shy" to express their opinion in front of the whole class" (4 out of 10) Point out that students have no problems expressing their opinion freely (4 out of 10)	Highlight that they express their opinion only if their teacher/examiner asks them to do so (32 out of 60 students – 53%) Point out that they experience difficulties in expressing their own opinion because they are shy (26 out of 60 – 43%) Believe that they lack appropriate grammar and vocabulary to express their opinion (11 out of 60 – 18%) Report that they have no problems expressing their opinion (5 out of 60 – 8%)
Summarising	Point out that students lack language skills essential for summarising (6 out of 10) Highlight that students do not realize the importance of summarising (5 out of 10) Complain that many students "seem to forget to sum up" (4 out of 10)	Report that they avoid summarising because they consider it a "waste of time" (23 out of 60 students – 38%) Point out that they lack language skills essential for summarising (28 out of 60 – 47%) Consider summarising an important skill for the IELTS Speaking Test (9 out of 60 – 15%) Report that they experience no problems summarising (9 out of 60 – 15%)
Providing personal information	Report that there are some taboo topics that they avoid discussing with their students, e.g., politics, religion, sex, salary (10 out of 10) Highlight that students are usually willing to provide personal information and do not avoid talking about family background, childhood memories, likes and dislikes, and life goals (7 out of 10) Point out that very few students lack language skills to provide personal information but some students lacking language skills sometimes exploit the term "a taboo topic" as an excuse for their poor performance (3 out of 10)	Report that they do not mind providing personal information such as name, nationality, address and do not lack language skills to do it (57 out of 60 – 95%) Admit lacking appropriate vocabulary and grammar to provide personal information (3 out of 60 – 5 %) Point out that there are taboo topics that they are not willing to discuss and find embarrassing. Among them the most frequently named topics are politics, religion, family background, childhood memories and life goals (48 out of 60 – 80%) Consider providing personal information "a kind of a human touch that helps to create a positive atmosphere for communication" (1 out of 60 – 2%)

of teachers, who believe that the problems students encounter using this function are linguistic in origin, the majority of students express different views, and only 18% of students share the vision of the problem with their teachers.

Discussion

The results from the survey show that apart from the lack of the language knowledge, namely, the lack of appropriate vocabulary and grammar, there are other factors of a sociocultural nature that influence students' outcomes and their performance during the IELTS Speaking Test. Having analyzed the responses given by students and their teachers, we could observe that the majority of the interviewed teachers underestimate the influence of sociocultural factors



	Explaining and paraphrasing	Expressing opinion	Summarising	Providing personal information
Students	40%	18%	47%	5%
Teachers	80%	70%	60%	3%

Figure 1. The percentage of teachers and students attributing the inefficient use of the speech functions to a low language level.

on students' outcomes and see the development of students' linguistic competence in a foreign language as a matter of dominant concern. On the contrary, the majority of students participating in the survey demonstrated a different and sometimes opposing view on the reasons causing problems with the use of the speech functions. These reasons mentioned by students and some of their teachers can be defined as those connected with sociocultural traditions and behavioral patterns in speaking and communication typical for Russian learners. Among them the following sociocultural reasons were mentioned most frequently: 1) the need for stimulating questions/or questions for details to motivate the speaker to explain further or paraphrase so that the matter, the situation or event is clear for the communication partner; 2) the willingness and readiness to express group opinion rather than your own; 3) seeing summarising as a "mere repetition" and " a waste of time", and 4) experiencing problems discussing taboo topics among which the students name politics, religion, family background, childhood memories and life goals. Though the limitations of the study do not allow to see if these sociocultural factors always come into play in every group of Russian learners and may require a bigger-scale research, the results of the present survey are sufficient to conclude that the problems students encounter using the speech functions could be solved with the help of approaches, teaching practices and tasks targeted at developing students' intercultural communicative competence and sociocultural competence as one of its structural elements.

Conclusion

Given an increasing number of Russian students who choose to work in multicultural companies both in Russia and abroad, it is essential for teachers to find ways to increase the students' level of sociocultural competence that would allow them to communicate effectively and to be able to fit into a multicultural team structure as required by the majority of leading international employers.

The results of the conducted study prove that the problems Russian students encounter using the speech functions are caused by the students' sociocultural background and should not be attributed only to their low language proficiency level, as is generally assumed. The way they tend to explain, paraphrase, summarise, express their opinion and provide personal information is also culturally defined which influences their ability to perform these functions during the IELTS Speaking Test.

To guarantee the efficient use of the speech functions required for the IELTS speaking exam a teacher/IELTS instructor would need a variety of sociocultural problem-based tasks and tests that are to be designed specifically for the format of the IELTS exam. The tasks and tests of this type should aim to develop students' sociocultural awareness that eventually can be turned into appropriate sociocultural performance at the exam.

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Appendix 1

Student's Questionnaire
Speech Functions for the IELTS Speaking Test
Tick what is true for you from 1- 4 or write your own answer in the blank space:

Explaining and paraphrasing

1. I always make it clear from the very beginning. There is no need to explain further or paraphrase what I say.
2. Sometimes I need to explain or paraphrase but I lack appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
3. I can always explain and paraphrase if the examiner/teacher asks me to do so/ I can do it easily using appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
4. Every time I need to explain or paraphrase I can do it easily using appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
5.

Expressing opinion

1. I do not hesitate to express my opinion. I can do it easily using appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
2. It can be difficult for me to express my opinion because I lack appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
3. I am shy and it can be difficult for me to express my opinion, especially in front of the whole class.
4. I would express my opinion if I have something important or interesting to say or if the examiner/teacher asks me to do so. I can do it easily using appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
5.

Summarising

1. I can always summarise ideas, facts and figures using appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
2. It can be difficult for me to summarise ideas, facts and figures because I lack appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
3. I avoid summarising. I think summarising involves repeating and retelling the ideas and facts that have already been mentioned. It can be a waste of time.
4. I think summarising is an essential skill for the IELTS Speaking Test and it makes your answer logical and well-structured.
5.

Providing personal information

1. I do not mind providing personal information if the procedure of the exam requires me to do so. I would not mind any personal questions about my family background, my life goals or my likes and dislikes.
2. I do not mind providing personal information if the procedure of the exam requires me to do so. I would avoid answering some personal questions about my family background, my life goals or my likes and dislikes.
3. I find it embarrassing to provide personal information or to answer personal questions from examiner/the teacher. It can also be difficult for me to answer them because I lack appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
4. I do not mind providing personal information if the procedure of the exam requires me to do so. I would not mind personal questions. It can only be difficult for me to answer them because I lack appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
5.

Please write if there are topics that you are unwilling to discuss during the IELTS Speaking Test because you find them embarrassing.

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Teaching For Justice: Introducing Translanguaging in an Undergraduate TESOL Course

Elizabeth Robinson
Suffolk University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Elizabeth Robinson, Suffolk University, 8 Ashburton Pl, Boston, MA 02108, USA. E-mail: erobinson@suffolk.edu

Zhongfeng Tian
Boston College

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Zhongfeng Tian, Curriculum & Instruction, Boston College, 140 Commonwealth Avenue, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467, USA. E-mail: tianza@bc.edu

Tiffany Martínez
Columbia University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Tiffany Martínez, Graduate Sociology Major, Columbia University, 715 North Ave, New Rochelle, NY, USA. E-mail: tiffany2695@gmail.com

Aybahar Qarqeen
Suffolk University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Aybahar Qarqeen, Undergraduate Psychology Major, Suffolk University, Psychology Department, 73 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02108 USA. E-mail: bahara.9600@gmail.com

This study investigates how introducing translanguaging as a way to affirm language and culture impacted students' understandings of learning and teaching in a TESOL certificate course offered at a university in the northeast of the United States. As researchers, teachers, and students committed to justice, we explored the impact of introducing translanguaging in a course that was originally designed as a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) course through collaborative, qualitative approaches of thematic analysis and macro- and micro-level analyses of power based on our unique individual experiences in the classroom. We found across our analysis that introducing translanguaging provided opportunities to shift assumptions and that, overall, students demonstrated critical sociocultural understandings of language that are foundational in teaching for justice. Ultimately, while we recognize the need for more explicit discussion about the purpose and pedagogy of translanguaging, the shifts towards teaching and embracing multilingual and multicultural realities through translanguaging which the study identified can contribute to the field of language education by demonstrating how teachers might open up possibilities in teaching for justice.

Keywords: translanguaging, justice, TESOL, teacher preparation, collaborative research, language teaching and learning

In the midst of a complex and racially tense political climate, educators must hold one another accountable for the oppressive power structures embedded in academic institutions that fail to affirm all identities. The demographic landscape, in the context of the United States of America, is changing at an unprecedented rate, especially in terms of ethnic and racial diversity. The fastest growing student population in the United States today is children of immigrants, half of whom do not speak English fluently (Calderón, Slavin, & Sánchez, 2011). The persistent academic attainment gaps experienced by these students highlight the insistent and indefatigable need for culturally sustaining (Paris, 2012) English instruction models.

Currently, Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) programs serve as a frequently mandated language instruction model in the United States where participating classrooms enforce an English-only policy rather than including the linguistic diversity of learners. As researchers, educators, and students we argue that an alternative model of English instruction exists that does not prioritize assimilation or the erasure of non-English languages in the classroom. Committed to cultivating culturally- sustaining classrooms, we believe *translanguaging* provides the theoretical and pedagogical tools vital to challenge these structures. It holds the promise of shifting traditional language instruction frameworks and providing us with tools to teach language for *justice* (Ladson-Billings, 2015).

Theoretically, translanguaging refers to the dynamic process of strategically and creatively selecting linguistic features from one unitary, complex linguistic repertoire to make meaning (García & Li Wei, 2014; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015). Pedagogically, translanguaging promotes ways for students and teachers to engage in complex and fluid discursive practices that strategically include the home language practices of students in classroom meaning-making activities (García, 2014). Therefore, by valuing students' linguistic knowledge as assets rather than burdens and leveraging their full linguistic repertoires in academic learning, translanguaging counters the monoglossic American classrooms by opening up inclusive spaces for the development of multilingualism.

We view translanguaging as a tool for teaching for justice because it holds the potential to challenge the dominance of English and the traditional power dynamics in U.S. classrooms. In a translanguaging classroom, language learners are not situated as deficient non-natives, but as "resourceful" agents (e.g., Pennycook, 2012, p. 99) with multilingual repertoires and abilities for successful communication (Canagarajah, 2014). Also, learners are afforded more agency and opportunity to become co-producers of knowledge rather than exclusive consumers of knowledge. Therefore, each individual in the classroom, including the teacher, is set to learn from each other. By exchanging ideas and learning from one another across cultures, races, and ethnicities, the nature of English-only instruction on colonized land is challenged and less U.S. centric.

In this article, we examine the impact of introducing translanguaging in a Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) certificate course. In an effort to conduct this study with an intersectional lens, as researchers we are diverse in age, race, language, ethnicity, citizenship status, and have various levels of academic attainment. At each of our cores, we believe in the power of collaborative learning and sharing agency in academic spaces. We see our work as a response to the recent call for pedagogy that develops and makes use of students' full range of language and literacy skills (Orr & Annous, 2018). Our study of translanguaging aims to export our passion for teaching for justice into research and classrooms around the world.

The purpose of our study is to explore the pedagogical and theoretical implications of introducing translanguaging in an undergraduate TESOL course originally designed as a SEI course offered at an undergraduate institution in Boston, U.S.A. We want to explore how translanguaging might help prepare teachers to teach for justice. The research question driving this study is: *How does introducing translanguaging impact students' understandings of learning and teaching in a TESOL certificate course?*

Conceptual Framework

Translanguaging, as the major conceptual framework undergirding our study, can be understood from two perspectives: translanguaging as theory and translanguaging as pedagogy. Translanguaging as a theory (García & Li Wei, 2014) centers *not* on languages but on the observable, natural communicative practices of bilinguals. It interrogates the duality of bilingualism and posits bi/multilingualism as fluid and dynamic: there are not two or more separate and bounded systems of languages, but rather one single linguistic repertoire from which individual speakers strategically select and deploy features to accomplish different communicative and expressive ends (García & Li Wei, 2014; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015; Vogel & García, 2017). Translanguaging thus takes up an *internal* perspective to describe the languaging of multilingual speakers, and it aims to disrupt the socially constructed boundaries of named languages[1] (such as Spanish, Mandarin, and English). It critiques the dominance of English by privileging bilingual performances and legitimizing all the varieties of language (Vogel & García, 2017). This represents an epistemic shift from a traditionally monolingual, static view of language acquisition to a more holistic, fluid understanding of language as social practice (García, 2009).

Pedagogically, translanguaging acknowledges bi/multilingualism as a resource. It promotes ways for students and teachers to engage in complex and fluid discursive practices that strategically include the home

[1] At the same time, however, "translanguaging theory still recognizes the material effects of socially constructed named language categories and structuralist language ideologies … These named languages carry different statuses and impose different social expectations and constraints upon bilinguals; thus for bilinguals, there is a 'more complex socio-cultural marking of which features to use when and where' than for monolinguals, who most often speak with the language conventions of the society in which they live (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015, p. 13)" (Vogel & García, 2017, pp. 4-6).

language practices of students in classroom activities (García, 2014). Through employing multilingual/ multimodal resources, choosing culturally relevant texts, and positioning teacher as co-learner (García & Kleyn, 2016), translanguaging creates a culturally and linguistically sustaining classroom (Paris, 2012) where all learners are encouraged to bring all their communication styles, registers, and repertoires (Makalela, 2015, p. 202) to engage in learning. Because the main objective is to learn English along with an understanding of its power, translanguaging gives students access to the dominant culture while also challenging the hegemony of standard English. Generally speaking, translanguaging as pedagogy enables a more equitable, just education for students from language-minoritized groups. Translanguaging is different both theoretically and pedagogically from SEI. Theoretically, SEI approaches learning language as best accomplished through immersion in the target language. Pedagogically, SEI is an English-only approach which does not allow other languages to be used in the classroom for instructional purposes. The goals of SEI are to develop grade-level content-area knowledge, academic skills, and increased English proficiency. In sheltered English classes, teachers use clear, direct, simple English and a wide range of scaffolding strategies to communicate meaningful input in the content area to students. While SEI promotes standardized English, translanguaging critiques the dominance of English. SEI represents an assimilationist perspective that erases students' linguistic heritages. There is an ideology of linguistic purism that undergirds English Only instructional models such as SEI (Martínez, Hikida, & Durán, 2015). Translanguaging alternatively promotes asset-based pedagogies that incorporate learners' familiar language and cultural practices into learning (García, 2009) while also working to overtly challenge and overturn ideologies of language rooted in racist, classist, and imperialist histories of standardization (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007).

We believe translanguaging is a vehicle for "liberating the voices of language minoritized students" (García & Leiva, 2014, p. 200) to achieve the goal of disrupting both the dominance of English and the traditional power dynamics in the classroom. Our paper explores what this looks like both theoretically and pedagogically through a classroom case study.

Materials and Methods

General background

This is a collaborative qualitative study that drew on methods of teacher research (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993) to explore the impact of introducing translanguaging theory and pedagogy into an SEI course. As the four authors of this study, we are a professor, a doctoral student, a teaching assistant, and an undergraduate student. We designed our study to recognize the critical roles and contributions of each of the authors and drew upon our collective experience, knowledge, and wisdom.

At the time this study was conducted in Massachusetts the education policies required all teachers to be certified in Sheltered English Immersion (SEI). SEI is a teaching approach that utilizes English as the only mode of instruction to be used with English Learners. In order to obtain a license to teach in Massachusetts, all teacher candidates, regardless of their content area, needed an SEI certification. This certification could be obtained through an SEI course within a teacher preparation program or by passing a licensing test on the principles and practices of SEI.

Within this context, the course that we researched titled *Strategies for Working With English Learners,* had been designed in 2015 as an SEI course for a teacher preparation program offered at a city university in Massachusetts. At the end of 2015 this university closed down its teacher preparation program in part due to the increasing requirements from the state for licensing teachers. Although there was no longer a teacher preparation program, many undergraduate students at this university wanted some exposure to teaching. In 2017 a TESOL Certificate program was developed for undergraduate students. *Strategies for Working with English Learners* was one of the 3 required courses for the certificate.

While preparing for the TESOL Certificate program, the professor of the courses met a doctoral student from a different university in the city who was knowledgeable about translanguaging. The professor was very excited to learn about translanguaging and felt that this approach was more aligned with their goals of teaching for justice than SEI. These two authors formed a partnership with the goal of transforming the TESOL Certificate program from an SEI-based approach into a translanguaging approach. This was the beginning of our research team and we started by looking at how we might introduce translanguaging in the first course offered for the TESOL Certificate, *Strategies for Working with English Learners*, in the spring of 2017.

All the authors met continuously throughout the spring 2017 semester to think about ways to shift the course from an English only approach to a translanguaging approach. Using a google document we collaboratively read through the syllabus and changed language and assignments that reflected an English only approach. This collaborative rewriting process sparked many conversations about terminology, methodology and theory and strengthened our collective understanding of

translanguaging. We then decided to introduce translanguaging in two ways. First, we taught about translanguaging as theory and pedagogy and second, we engaged in a few translanguaging practices. Introducing translanguaging as theory fit well with the critical sociocultural approach used by the professor in teaching about language acquisition and language teaching. One of the professor's learning goals was for students to develop an understanding of the role language plays in the "dynamic and dialogic power relationships between the social and individual, the global and the local, the institutional and the everyday" (Lewis & Moje, 2003, p. 1992). Additionally, both the doctoral student and the teaching assistant gave presentations in the course about translanguaging and supporting non-dominant learners. Students were asked to reflect upon these presentations after.

The second way of introducing translanguaging was intentionally engaging students in some translanguaging practices. We made journals part of the course to allow students the space to clarify and think in any language they felt comfortable. Another translanguaging activity was learning the linguistic and cultural rituals for greetings in all the languages present in the class. These were reinforced by everyone in the class greeting every student in their home languages at the beginning of class.

Participants

All thirty undergraduate students enrolled in *Strategies for working with English Language Learners* in the spring semester of 2017 were informed at the beginning of the course that they had the option to participate in a research study and pseudonyms would be used to protect their identities. Fourteen of the thirty students, two males and twelve females, signed informed consents to participate in the study. The class held impressive linguistic and cultural diversity with twenty-seven languages/cultures represented. Half of the participants were English monolingual students and half were multilingual students who brought the following linguistic and cultural knowledge to the class: Chinese, Spanish, Polish, Vietnamese, Persian, Turkish, English, Arabic, Greek, German, Japanese and Hawaiian.

Data Sources

Data sources consisted of two sets of artifacts and the collective reflective experiences of the authors. The artifacts collected at the end of the semester were: students' reflective journals and students' final portfolios. For the reflective journals, students were asked to respond to a journal prompt at the beginning of most classes. The journals were designed as a place for students to freely explore concepts and their ideas about learning and teaching language. Students were encouraged to use any language they chose in their journals. The majority of students wrote in English. The journals were graded on effort as opposed to actual content. Students' final portfolios were designed as a summative assessment to showcase the learning the students were taking away from the class. The components of the final portfolios (See Appendix) were a philosophy of language statement, a model lesson plan and reflection, a classroom observation reflection, and a personal reflection on their findings of research projects identifying the educational needs of English learners. For the third data source, the authors noted and gathered reflections on experiences they had in the classroom throughout the semester.

Data Analysis

We conducted two different kinds of analysis during this study. One was thematic analysis to examine the ways in which students' understandings of language, teaching and learning were impacted by introducing translanguaging. Using principles of systematic data analysis (Halsall et al., 1998; Hubbard & Power, 1999) we collected and organized students' artifacts from the *Strategies for Working With English Learners* course. Drawing upon our own multiple languages, cultures, and identities, we kept our research question in mind as we individually read through the students' coursework and assignments and inductively coded for themes. We then shared and analyzed our insights and the themes we found. Three major themes emerged during this process. They were 1. defining language 2. teaching language and 3. learning language. Working together we went back through our data to find representations in students' writing of their meaning making related to each theme.

Our second type of analysis focused on power and how introducing translanguaging could support more just understandings of language, teaching and learning. Our goal for this analysis was to figure out how we could challenge dominant power structures through introducing translanguaging. In our weekly research meetings our team discussed at both a micro and macro level the implications of introducing the theory and pedagogy of translanguaging in the course. At a micro level, we reflected and shared our perspectives from our different roles in the classroom. We analyzed and planned strategies and approaches to meet challenges that arose. At a macro level, we reflected on the lessons we were learning from collectively exploring translanguaging. We discussed the implications our work might have for the field of teacher preparation, schools, higher education and the overall current political climate. The following section of this paper elaborates on the findings from these two types of analysis. The three

themes of defining language, teaching language and learning language are explored using student quotes to exemplify students' understandings of each of the themes. We also highlight tensions and contradictions found within each theme. Finally, the micro- and macro-level lessons we have learned from introducing translanguaging are examined.

Results

Defining Language

The first important theme of defining language came from reading through journals and class assignments, and looking for the ways in which students wrote about language. The majority of students, 12 out of 14, understood language from a functional perspective as a tool. In other words, these students wrote about the uses and functions of language. We have selected two representative quotes from students' philosophy of language statements included in their final portfolio assessment for the course.

> The way that a therapist uses specific language can help facilitate the conversation in a way that the patient is perceptive to.... Also, the therapist must create a nurturing environment to a degree, in order to establish trust and a safe environment for the patient to be honest and vulnerable in order to get to the core of whatever issues that need to be addressed. (Laura)

Laura's quote demonstrates how she saw language as a tool to foster and create a productive relationship between a therapist and a patient. This concept of language as a tool for better communication in order to gain trust and ultimately do the work of counseling, was linked to Laura's professional aspirations of being a mental health counselor and therapist. As an English speaker Laura saw her language as the tool she would need to be an effective therapist. Another example of a student's recognition of the powerful function of language can be seen in Nancy's philosophy of language statement.

In financial institution industry, language is one of the most important skill which make people be able to networking, marketing yourself and gain knowledge in your long career path. (Nancy)

Nancy specifically wrote about language as a skill. She recognized that many of the activities required to be successful in the financial field required strong language skills. As an emergent English learner, Nancy was very aware of the need to develop the skills she identified for her career in English. Both Laura and Nancy recognized language as a necessary tool for their future careers.

Some students, 5 out of 14, wrote about language as being connected to culture and identity. We believe this expression of language relates to the sociocultural perspectives and theories that were taught in our class and other Education classes. These five students were all Education minors and had been exposed through multiple classes to sociocultural theories. The professors in the Education program believe in and teach the importance of language in producing and reproducing ways of knowing, acting and doing. In particular we take a critical stance and pay particular attention to the power and role of language in constructing and re-constructing inequalities through social, institutional and systemic relations (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Fairclough, 1989; Foucault, 1980; Pennycook, 2001).

The quotes of students who wrote about language as related to society and culture demonstrate a more complex understanding of language than just serving as a tool for communication. We do not see a tension between a functional and sociocultural understanding of language, many students held both. Rather, we see the possibilities for broadening students understandings of the interconnectedness of language, culture and identity.

My culture and language have a huge impact on my identity. The way I speak, I talk, and communicate with others as well as my behaviors and beliefs comes from my culture and my language. I could see this visibly when I moved to the US. (Adriana)

Adriana wrote about this interconnectedness in one of her weekly journal entries. She recognized that not only the way she acted (behaviors), but also how she thought (beliefs), were constructed through her language and culture. She was an ELL with proficient access to multiple named languages, and most of her academic experience came from outside of the US. It was not surprising to us that Adriana easily understood the concept of translanguaging and could point to her own experiences and practices as examples. However, it was not only "multilingual" students who understood translanguaging and had a sociocultural understanding of language.

Laura, who above wrote about language as a tool for building relationships, was also able to hold both a functional and sociocultural understanding of language.

Language gives people their own identity and comes with a world of cultures and traditions and this should be celebrated and embraced, because if I've learned anything from this class, it is that we can learn so much just by talking.(Laura)

The verbs Laura used in her her journal entry, show her understanding that language has the ability and the power to give or construct identity. From analyzing the ways that students wrote about

and defined language, we realized that introducing translanguaging provided opportunities for the students to examine their definitions of language. For some students the introduction of translanguaging created an awareness of the power of language beyond just a tool for communication. Making the link between language and culture and broadening the conceptions of language to consider multiperspectivity and bi/multilingualism deepened appreciation of language for some students.

Teaching Language

Our second theme is teaching language. Nearly all the students recognized the pedagogical promise of translanguaging: it is important and necessary to implement translanguaging in language teaching classrooms. Students have demonstrated multiple understandings of the merits held by translanguaging as pedagogy. Here we have selected four representative quotes from students' reflective journals when they had been asked to reflect on what they had learned about translanguaging.

> It is very important to have, because it provides a background and diverse culture for new generations. It is a way to value and respect everyone. (Luna)

Luna said that translanguaging could be used as a pedagogical tool to "value and respect" cultural diversity in classrooms. Students (as "new generations" in Luna's words) in such classrooms can benefit from learning each other's rich cultural background and knowledge. Luna here understood that translanguaging has the potential of creating a *multicultural* environment.

> Translanguaging is something I think is very important. If the concept was more implemented in schools, I think it would raise the knowledge and eventually benefit all learners. Maybe individuals who didn't plan on ever being bilingual could then get the opportunity to learn another language not only from a teacher but from peers in the school system. (Anna)

Anna pointed out that by allowing students to bring their home languages (their entire linguistic repertoires) into classrooms, the classroom will become a *multilingual* site where all students could get the opportunity to learn each other's language. Monolingual students ("individuals who didn't plan on ever being bilingual") could also benefit from this process by hearing a variety of languages and interacting with their multilingual peers. In addition, Anna emphasized that translanguaging can turn a classroom into a *learning community* in which everyone is a knowledge resource ("not only from a teacher but from peers").

> I think this is an extremely great model and way of thinking. In a world where there is constantly a fight for power it is refreshing to see that shift away from in classrooms. Students no matter their language or color or whatever else should be comfortable in the classroom. … Students shouldn't be stripped from their identities in our education system. Who knows maybe if translanguaging is used in the classroom all over the nation, a lot of our social/civil/political issues would be solved. (Laura)

Laura saw translanguaging from another perspective, i.e., a *social justice* orientation. According to her, first, translanguaging in classrooms can affirm everyone's identity regardless of their language, race, or ethnicity. Translanguaging holds the promise of creating a comfortable, inclusive context of learning for all students. Second, moving beyond classrooms to the whole nation, translanguaging could disrupt the dominant power structure and then "a lot of our social/civil/political issues would be solved". Generally speaking, Laura believed that translanguaging represents "a great model and way of thinking", and provides a viable solution to address inequality issues to make our society more just and equitable to people from minoritized communities.

> We then learn from others and they get to talk about their culture. I find it interesting and more eye opening. We should have a good environment with others. It would be beneficial to have a global perspective. (Jane)

Jane's quote focused on the *global* perspective that translanguaging as pedagogy could afford students. In this culturally diverse and inclusive environment, "we then learn from others" by valuing everyone's cultural backgrounds and allowing them to "talk about their culture". To her, this is an "interesting and more eye opening" process.

To briefly summarize, students demonstrated an awareness of the multiple affordances of translanguaging as a pedagogical tool in language teaching classrooms: not only can it foster a multilingual, multicultural environment where everyone's identity (for example, culture, language, race) is affirmed and valued, but also has the potential to advocate for social justice for language-minoritized groups by challenging and disrupting the dominant power. Translanguaging as pedagogy shifted students'

awareness of teaching from a focus on strategies for individual ELLs to broader implications towards justice for *everyone*, *new generations*, *the nation* and the *globe*.

In addition to the pedagogical promises, some students also pointed out problems facing the implementation of translanguaging in language teaching.

> Translanguaging is a very interesting topic that many teachers and administrators aren't prepared for. I think it is a 'perfect world' idea but will take a lot of time to succeed in providing a firm structure within the system …. I like splitting students into groups but what if there is an uneven amount? … Would teachers need to go to school longer?" (Luna)

Luna understood translanguaging to be an overly "perfect" approach of which the implementation will "take a lot of time to succeed" due to the lack of teacher and administrator preparation in this area (e.g., the lack of teacher training, the English-only language policy system). Also, she questioned the feasibility of the grouping strategy in a translanguaging classroom (because translanguaging as pedagogy claims that we as teachers could group students based on their similar home language backgrounds so that students are able to draw upon their entire linguistic repertoires to engage in group discussions deeply). Luna was concerned about the "uneven amount" of students in each group, which might weaken the quality of group discussion. Additionally, Luna was also pondering if "teachers need to go to school longer". Here we speculate that Luna might think that teachers need more time to learn other languages in order to perform translanguaging in a classroom (although according to the literature, e.g., García & Kelyn, 2016, a teacher in a translanguaging classroom need not be bilingual).

> How would you implement [translanguaging] with a class of students that have all different languages, none in common? (Martyna)

Martyna raised the difficulty of attending to everyone's full linguistic repertoires: what if the students all have different languages? How do we as teachers choose culturally relevant texts to take everyone's cultural and linguistic backgrounds into consideration and to resonate with everyone's experience? How do we as teachers group students based on their shared home languages when there is "none in common"? Although the scenario Martyna brought up is an extreme case, her concern is worthwhile to keep in mind when applying translanguaging teaching strategies in a culturally and linguistically diverse classroom.

> …We need to have good teachers. (Jane)

Instead of a critique, Jane's words suggest the direction our next steps should take: teachers are on the frontline of implementing translanguaging as pedagogy in classrooms, thus "we need to have good teachers" in order to foster heterogeneous, meaningful, and inclusive contexts of learning for all students. We would like to endorse her idea and further point out the importance of teacher preparation, and that a translanguaging perspective should be infused throughout the teacher education program.

In summary, while recognizing the critical role of translanguaging in language teaching, students were still skeptical about translanguaging being overly idealistic. They have acknowledged the challenges of implementing translanguaging for different stakeholders, such as when none of the students share similar home languages, the lack of teacher and administrator preparation, and the potential push back from the whole educational system.

Learning Language

Our third theme focused on how students understood learning language. Most of the focus of class discussions and the writing done by students was on learning languages in addition to their home language as opposed to the process of learning a home language. We saw through most students' writing that when they wrote about learning additional languages they recognized that learning language also entailed learning culture. This was a connection between language and culture that we had not seen when we were looking at the ways students defined language. When we examined the connections between translanguaging and learning language, we found that the concept of translanguaging resonated with our bi/multilingual students' experiences of learning and using multiple languages in ways that were not demonstrated in the writing of monolingual students. Lisa, a Mandarin speaker, wrote in a journal entry about how translanguaging helped her make sense of the way she engaged with both Mandarin and English.

> The translanguaging theory refresh my perception of bilingual or multilingual speakers. It explains my myth that why I always blend English and Mandarin together when I talk to someone. Sometimes I can only remember the word in English but not in Chinese, even though Chinese is my native language… According to the translanguaging theory, all the language you learned store in a overall system, therefore, all your knowledge and experience would applied when you learn another language. Older people has more social experiences and learning ability,

> which make the learning process more systematic. (Lisa)

For Lisa, it made senese that she might interchange Mandarin and English given that her language repertoire was one unitary, complex system made up of indefinite linguistic features (García & Li Wei, 2014). She also reflected on language learning as building on a person's existing resources. She extrapolated from this understanding to explain how the more experiences a person has, the better and more systematic their learning is. It is interesting to note that this sociocultural understanding of learning language contradicts the often discussed monolingual assumption that languages must be learned at a young age.

Another point that several students raised in their writing about learning language is related to the injustices of English-only policies and ideas around assimilation. Students expressed that language learning should not require students to learn only English and sacrifice their home languages and cultures. Very often when approaches like SEI are used, the goal is proficiency in English and limiting or eradicating the use of home languages other than English. Students in our class felt strongly that these were not just practices.

> Learning a language should not come with stripping away one's first language and culture, it should be an addition to the beauty of the plethora of languages we all speak in the world. (Sophia)

Interestingly, Sophia linked language and culture together as the components that get "stripped away" in the process of learning a language in her philosophy of language statement. When students wrote about language learning, there was a general awareness of the link between language and culture. Sophia was herself bilingual and bicultural and she promoted an additive rather than a subtractive view of bilingualism. However, it was not only bi/multilingual students who wrote about the value of learning language. Laura, a monolingual English speaker also wrote about her desire to expand her linguistic and cultural repertoires.

> I hope to work on my own language development and continue to embrace the unique identities and cultures that each language I am presented with comes with. (Laura)

We realized through our analysis and discussion of students' writings about learning language that we had multiple entry points to help students recognize the connections between language, culture and power. Although not many students defined language in a sociocultural way, when writing about learning language they recognized and wrote about language as connected to culture. Introducing translanguaging helped us as researchers and teachers as well as helping the students to understand learning language as a process of strategic adaptation. Learning a language is not about assimilating to the dominant culture. Learning language is a process of understanding what linguistic features to choose as appropriate for a given context and purpose. Pedagogically, if everyone's languages, cultures and identities are valued and built upon in classrooms then learning a language becomes a culturally sustaining practice (Paris, 2012).

Micro-Level Lessons

Focusing on the pedagogy of translanguaging within the space and the practices of the classroom, we saw some ways that introducing translanguaging challenged dominant structures of power. We reflected that it was not uncommon in education classes for native English speakers to dominate classroom discussions. There was a noticeable shift in the power dynamics among the students when we introduced practices of translanguaging. We learned the linguistic and cultural greetings for each student in our class. At the beginning of each class session, we greeted everyone in their own language. The students who were native English speakers became embarrassed that they only spoke English and were greeted with "hi", while everyone looked forward to greeting students in languages other than English. This simple activity shifted the cultural capital in the classroom to the benefit of multilingual speakers by valuing and recognizing them and their linguistic resources.

As a team we also noticed that there is a need for more explicit discussion about the purpose of translanguaging. We found that most students considered translanguaging to be an overly idealistic approach. A common misperception students had was that translanguaging meant teaching and learning all the different languages in a classroom. Now that we recognize this area of confusion for students encountering translanguaging we can work to develop a deeper understanding of translanguaging.

Macro-Level Lessons

Reflecting on translanguaging as theory and how the lessons from translanguaging might transcend the classroom walls, we believe in its potential to provide teachers with a critical lens. Teachers who are able to recognize and critique the ways in which power operates to maintain dominance are better equipped to enact more just teaching. We recognize that power dynamics do not only live within classrooms. During the process of our study the political climate of our country continued to be a reminder of the necessity of learning about and from others. Making

space in our classroom to learn, value and practice multiperspectivity helped to develop empathy and interest in the world and will, hopefully, lead to the facilitation of better intercultural communication. Analyzing students' work gave us a sense of wonder that while students acknowledged the individuality of each person, the most important takeaway from this class was mainly a deeper appreciation for our common humanity.

Discussion

Our findings demostrate that introducing translanguaging in the *Strategies for Working with English Learners* course was just the beginning to a process of teaching for justice, but that translanguaging helped students develop justice-based ideas of languge, teaching and learning. Students thought and wrote about the power and importance of language, the existing inequalities of current approaches to Sheltered English Instruction (SEI), and the need to affirm all identities.

We noticed a group of students who demonstrated sociocultural understandings of language and the interconnection of language, identity and culture. Related to students' understandings of teaching we found an awareness of the importance for teachers to build an inclusive learning community to incorporate students' cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge. We saw that students recognized the need for classrooms to affirm all students' identities and to position everyone as a teaching resource. We believe these are demonstrations of students developing a translanguaging stance. Developing a translanguaging stance is the first strand of a translanguaging pedagogy, which also entails building a translanguaging design and making translanguaging shifts (García, Johnson, & Seltzer, 2017). For our students, this means building a belief system that they can draw from as teachers. All teachers must believe that students' language practices are both a resource and a right (Ruiz, 1984) and that these language practices work together and must be valued and supported to facilitate learning (García, Johnson, & Seltzer, 2017).

In looking at students' understandings of learning language, we recognized students' awareness of the importance of maintaining home languages. We found that students were critical of models of assimilation into the English-dominant world that generally require all non-English language features, accents, and mannerisms to be discarded or hidden.To counter deficit perceptions of ELLs that often exist in English-dominant settings, we need to ensure future teachers respect, value, and support students' non-dominant languages and cultures. Pedagogical implications from this study suggest that in future courses we need to further students' critiques of assimilation models to discuss the implications of bringing translanguaging into a TESOL context. TESOL is about teaching and learning English and recognizes and promotes the dominance of English. However, we see promise for translanguaging to contribute to the field of TESOL by shifting ideas about language and language teaching and learning and promoting culturally and linguistically sustaining practices.

Concerning our goal of teaching for justice, we saw how translanguaging had the potential to challenge the often unquestioned dominance of English and create culturally and linguistically sustaining classrooms. However, given the distinctness in our student sample, namely the fact that we have a far more diverse student composition than traditional teacher preparation programs, future research should also examine the impact of translanguaging on a more homogeneous teaching population. Traditionally, predominantly white, monolingual English speakers go into the field of teaching. As was previously said, it is of vital importance to challenge their often monoglossic ideologies and develop a translanguaging stance which values bi/multilingualism as a resource. Learning from and valuing the differences of all students is an initial step toward the work that needs to happen beyond the classroom walls. As educators and researchers, we must hold one another accountable for the injustices in our academic institutions, just as we must all hold our political institutions accountable for the harm and terror they inflict upon people through separating families, and failing to protect those in danger. We believe a future teaching force equipped with a critical lens will better serve the growing bilingual student population in the United States by providing a more just and equitable education.

Conclusion

In this collaborative qualitative study we explored how introducing translanguaging into a TESOL course originally designed as a SEI course impacted students' understandings of learning and teaching. We analyzed students' course work as well as our own experinces of being in the classroom. Thematic analysis showed there were some epistemic shifts that occurred among the students which seemed promising; these included: an understanding of language from a critical sociocultural perspective in relation to culture and identity; recognition of the benefits of multilingualism and multiculturalism; the goal of working towards justice for ELLs. However, we are not sure if the epistemic shifts we have observed will bring about pedagogical shifts in the students' actual teaching

practices. Our future research aims to demonstrate how students both make sense of translanguaging theoretically and enact translanguaging in practice.

We recognize as researchers and teachers that we have much farther to travel in our process of exploring the possibilities of translanguaging. We must move from an approach that introduces translanguaging to one that integrates it. We must look more longitudinally at how students' understandings are translated into practice. We must also recognize that translanguaging is not the ultimate answer for improving language instruction. However, it is a beginning. We have learned that translanguaging opens up endless possibilities to challenge dominant structures, value the resources of all students, and work toward teaching for justice.

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Appendix

Final Portfolio Requirements

Elements to be included in the portfolio:

1&2. Title Page & Table of Contents

3. Resume

You could also include in this section any letters of reference or other professional documents.

4. Philosophy of Language Statement

This reflection should demonstrate your knowledge of language and its role in your field. I would like you to include educational theories, and strategies to support language learning/ language development. It should be personal and indicate what is most important to you that you learned in this class.

5. Model Lesson Plan & Reflection

This section should include an introduction and rationale for your lesson plan/s. This should explain what you wanted to accomplish in your "lesson plan". Items to include in the plan itself: topic, grade level/ audience, number of students/ audience members, class/meeting time, media used, procedures, strategies used for supporting language development. At the end please include your own reflection assessing how the "lesson" went and what worked and what might be done differently.

6. Reflection on Classroom Observation

This should be a short reflection 1-3 pages that provides the following information: 1. what class you observed (name/level/location) , how many students, who was the professor, when was the class, etc. 2. An brief overview of what happened in the class 3. Strategies for working with ELLs that were used 4. What you learned or what "takeaways" you had

7. Personal Reflection on the Needs Assessment and Language Service Proposal

In this reflection I would like you to explain your own personal learning from interviewing students, working with your group and coming up with ideas for a language service.

Tibategeza, E.R., & Plessis, T. (2018). The Prospects of Kiswahili as a Medium of Instruction in the Tanzanian Education and Training Policy. *Journal of Language and Education, 4*(3), 88-98. doi:10.17323/2411-7390-2018-4-3-88-98

The Prospects of Kiswahili as a Medium of Instruction in the Tanzanian Education and Training Policy

Eustard Rutalemwa Tibategeza
University of the Free State

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Eustard Rutalemwa Tibategeza, Unit for Language Facilitation and Empowerment University of the Free State, P.O. BOX 339, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa. E-mail: rutatiba@yahoo.com

Theodorus du Plessis
University of the Free State

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Theodorus du Plessis, Unit for Language Facilitation and Empowerment University of the Free State, P.O. BOX 339, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa. E-mail: dplesslt@ufs.ac.za

Based on the research findings, Tanzania has been cognisant of the fact that students can learn better in a language they understand. The government has been issuing policies with the intent to make Kiswahili a medium of instruction at all levels of education but without implementation. The study was conducted using documentary review, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions to examine government generated documents, namely the Cultural Policy of 1997, Education and Training Policy of 1995 and 2014 on the use of Kiswahili as medium of instruction (MoI). The focus was to examine the government generated documents on the intent to use Kiswahili as a medium of instruction and the implementation of this decision, to analyse stakeholders' views on the appropriate medium of instruction, and to give a critical analysis as to why the proposal to make Kiswahili MoI in the Education and Training Policy could face some challenges in implementation. Previous policies, reports, the perceptions and views of education stakeholders were analysed. The findings indicate that there have been some initiatives to make Kiswahili a medium of instruction at all levels of education but such initiatives have been crippled by lack of a political will and misconceptions by some stakeholders who question the possibility for the learners to use Kiswahili as the MoI and still learn English, the language Tanzania needs for wider communication. The article concludes that although the proposed policy is suitable in Tanzania and actually long overdue, we are sceptical of its implementation. This is based on the previous state of affairs in which the government did not implement the proposed switch to Kiswahili as indicated in the reviewed policies and government pronouncements.

Keywords: medium of instruction, policy, mother tongue, language policy, language planning

Lack of proficiency in the medium of instruction (MoI) for both learners and teachers is an important factor in any education system. Qorro (2005) correctly argues, "[a]s the discussion of decision of quality education cannot be divorced from goals of education, it is equally important not to divorce the question of medium of instruction from quality education" (p. 115). MoI has an important role to play in ensuring that effective learning takes place among learners. This prompts the question of whether governments in Africa, notorious for relying on the colonial language as MoI, do enough to ensure that effective learning takes place among their school learners.

The government of Tanzania had, in the past, produced rather good policies in this regard, namely the *Education and Training Policy* of 1995 and the *Cultural Policy* released in 1997. However, studies (Rubanza, 2002; Qorro, 2006; Marwa, 2014; Bikongoro, 2015) have already shown that contents of these good documents have not been implemented. Now the government has again come up with another good policy regarding the medium of instruction at all levels of education,

the new MoI policy contained in 2014 *Education and Training Policy*. In terms of this policy, Kiswahili should be used as MoI at all levels of education. Given previous failures to implement the "good" policy, the main question about this revised policy is: how prepared and committed is Tanzania for its implementation? To answer this question, we shall identify the factors pertaining to the failure to implement the previous policy by analysing relevant government documents, scrutinising current evaluative studies in the field as well as recommendations made by educators and the Presidential Commission which was appointed in 1980 to review the education system in general and submit suggestions on how to improve it.

The objectives of this article, therefore, are to examine the government generated documents on the use of Kiswahili as MoI and the implementation of this decision, to analyse stakeholders' views on the appropriate MoI, and to give a critical prognosis as to why the proposed Kiswahili as MoI in the 2014 *Education and Training Policy* may face some challenges.

Language-in-Education Policy and Medium of Instruction

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) emphasised the right to education without any discrimination, where article 2 focuses on education without language discrimination. In the same note, a UNESCO report (1953) indicates the importance of mother tongue education by stressing "[e]ducationally he [the child] learns more quickly through it [mother tongue] than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium" (p. 11). Furthermore, UNICEF (1999) acknowledges the importance of mother tongue: "there is ample research showing that students are quicker to learn to read and acquire other academic skills when first taught in their mother tongue" (p. 41). This is because the children have internalised the language to help them to understand what they are taught.

In addition to the current international research on this topic, African scholars (Rubagumya, 2003; Wolff, 2006; Mpemba, 2007; Spolsky, 2009; Marwa, 2014; Wa-Mbaleka, 2014; Bikongoro, 2015) are also adamant about mother tongue-based education. When students have a firm grasp of what they are learning in class, MoI gives them a positive ground on which to build their understanding on the subject matter. This can only be achieved when teachers and students understand the language of education in class. According to Marwa (2014), if students are taught in a language they do not understand and if they happen to join the teaching profession, the problem will continue to the next generation. He was referring to English only policy in which poor language teaching has resulted into falling of the proficiency among the learners.

Poor mastery of the medium of instruction can have short- and long-term effects on learners. Marwa (2014) considers short-term effects as poor performance and inability to learn while in the long-term, poor mastery of MoI creates, "a systemic problem of a structural inefficiency which results into relatively less competent locally trained experts" (p. 1265). Additionally, Bikongoro (2015) accentuates, "[it] is logical to say that effective learning and assessment in a knowledge society cannot be realised unless the issue of language of instruction is resolved" (p. 7). He stresses that a learner who understands the language of education in class stands a better chance to follow what is going on in class and can acquire knowledge from different sources.

Sario et al. (2014) submit that, "[t]he use of mother tongue in the classroom makes pupils more active, participative and interactive" (p. 90). They are emphatic that this is because students in such a classroom environment have a language they can use to express their ideas, feelings and opinion. Sario et al. (2014) make an important point, noting that "since the language used in teaching at school is the same as that one used at home, parents can help their children in the teaching and learning process" (p. 90). The home language, if used in school, can encourage active participation by students in the learning process because they understand what is being discussed in class and they can answer teachers' questions as they know what they are being asked. Students use that language to construct and explain the world around them.

Bachore (2014) highlights, "Although there are many factors involved in delivering quality basic education, language is clearly the key to communication and understanding in the classroom" (p. 120). If teaching is conducted in a language students do not understand, they will be affected cognitively and more so if the teacher is also a victim of the medium of instruction. Bachore (2014) further stresses "[c]ompounded by chronic difficulties like low level of teacher education, poorly designed, inappropriate curricula and lack of adequate school facilities, submersion makes both learning and teaching extremely difficult" (p. 120). He is of the view that learning in the mother tongue has clear pedagogical advantages for children as they are likely to feel comfortable and reassured by their ability to understand and analyse information in their own language (Bachore, 2014, p. 122).

However, Bachore (2014) argues that when curriculum content is presented in an unfamiliar language "an enormous amount of time must be spent first teaching children to understand, speak, read and write L2 or a foreign language …" (p. 123).

He equates this with waste of valuable time that could be spent on learning academic concepts in L1. Qorro (2005) supports this idea by saying "[o]nnly the language which teachers and students understand can effectively function as the language of instruction". She emphasises that if students and teachers understand the language of the class, they will be able to discuss, debate ask and answer questions. In this way, the students will generate knowledge. On the same note, Spolsky (2009) faults the school-home language gap and says, "If the teacher and child do not understand each others" speech, teaching and learning are severely impeded" (p. 90). He is categorical that when a child's language is denied, ignored or punished by the school teacher, the child feels of disadvantaged status.

Our experience in the school setting shows that when students join the school for the first time and they are compelled to learn in a new language, frustrations are likely. However, in a study by Khan (2014), if they meet a teacher who can speak their language and makes them settle in the first days of their schooling and they continue using the home language in learning, they are likely to do better. Therefore, Khan (2014) stresses on the advantage of language in learning, arguing that, "language has a central position in all the situations involving human learning" (p. 148). The situation is worse and traumatising if students enter school not speaking the language of the class.

Moreover, Orekan (2011) accepts the fact that "one learns and continues to perform the functions of thinking, counting and even dreaming only in one's primary language" (p. 148). The mother tongue is the language through which a person knows what the world is about, particularly with regard to the learning process. That is why Khan (2014) proposes "all children, irrespective of sex, class and caste, have to move towards the school language from the home language" (p. 148). The first language is as well best suited, on pedagogical grounds, to be used as the medium of instruction.

Considering the emotional and physical needs of the child, Khan (2014) is of the concern that children need effective care during the school years. He therefore strongly suggests that during this period their mother tongue is the ideal medium of instruction because "it is as natural to them as the milk of the mother" (p. 150). He stresses that in their own native tongue children can explore their natural environment.

African scholars (Rubagumya, 2003; Wolff, 2006; Mpemba, 2007; Spolsky, 2009; Marwa, 2014; Wa-Mbaleka, 2014; Bikongoro, 2015) seem to agree on which language is suitable for medium of instruction. They stress that the language the teachers and students understand best is the most ideal. In this case, their research suggests the mother tongue or the first language of the learners as the ideal MoI. Language-in-education policies that promote this principle are therefore inclined to produce good outcomes.

English vs. Kiswahili in Tanzania

In 1995 Kiswahili was spoken as either first language or second language by almost 95% of the population and in 2004 the National Kiswahili Council (BAKITA[1]) estimated that 99% of Tanzanians spoke Kiswahili (Batibo, 1995). Various studies (Mekacha, 1994; Rubanza, 1996) have indicated that most children acquire Kiswahili simultaneously with their respective ethnic community languages. They stress that children who join primary education conversant with one of the ethnic community languages find it easier to learn Kiswahili due to the similarities obtaining in Bantu languages, the language understood by most children. Kiswahili is a national and official language and MoI in pre-primary and primary education (URT, 1995). It is the language mostly used in all the government offices and the language of the people mostly in urban areas in their day-to-day activities.

Commenting on the English situation in Tanzania, Rubanza (2002, p. 45) asserts that students lose their English skills after completing their studies because the society they work and live in does not even use the English language. He equates English with school uniforms, in that students put it on when at school but remove it when they go back home. The same is true for English which is supposedly used at school but students switch to either Kiswahili or ethnic language when at home. In this paper Kiswahili is seen as a language understood by more than 95% of the Tanzanian population.

Apart from the enumerated advantages of the first language of the learners above, most countries in Africa, Tanzania included, still maintain the inherited colonial languages in the school setting. This is supported by the study by Wa-Mbaleka (2014) who stresses that more than half a century after UNESCO declared the importance of mother tongue education for minority children, African countries continue to use European languages. While students from minority groups try to learn and write, they do so in a language new to them. This, according to Wa-Mbaleka (2014), "[d]oes not help them [learners] to learn effectively and efficiently". This is likely to lead such students "into more illiteracy, dropouts, poverty and undesirable life" (p. 18).

According to Marwa (2014) despite the attempt and design of the Cultural Policy in 1962 and later updated in 1997, which decided to change MoI from English to Kiswahili in all levels of education in Tanzania, the implementation has always been inactive. He is of the

[1] BAKITA is an acronym for Baraza la Kiswahili Tanzania (National Kiswahili Council) and that is how it is popularly known in Tanzania.

view that failure to implement the planned policy has always been due to mistrust among the academics, politicians, policy makers and the government in general.

English has continued to gain support among the parents and students claiming that it is the language of development, modernisation, science and technology and a language used by most people in communication across the universe. This argument gains momentum due to the support from powerful donors such as the World Bank, British Council and US-AID (Marwa, 2014). However, Bikongoro (2015) argues that "although most of the writings on the language policy in Tanzania have converged towards the justification of the uselessness of the English language in classroom instruction and assessment, such justification shed light on the tension between English and Kiswahili languages" (p. 2). To him the reality is that English has been maintained in the education setting due to global expansion of knowledge and technology advancement, of which Tanzania cannot avoid.

Although students in Tanzania, as a study by Rubagumya (2003) indicates, admit that they understand their teachers better when teaching is carried out in Kiswahili, the majority of them still think that English should be maintained as the medium of instruction in secondary schools. Explaining this controversy, Wolff (2006) asserts "decades and centuries of marginalisation have created deep-rooted negative prejudice in the minds of many Africans towards their own indigenous languages which stems from traumatic experiences during colonial times" (p. 186). Education stakeholders in Tanzania, such as parents, teachers, students and policy makers, have the impression that home languages do not enhance the performance of pupils in their examinations and their ultimate success in education. However, Rubanza (2002) points out a weakness in the language-in-education policy that the demand for the use of Kiswahili and English at primary and secondary school levels respectively disconnect the students' experiences in Tanzania as far as MoI is concerned. He stresses that what students bring from home, whether an ethnic language or Kiswahili, is not built upon but rather wiped out and they are forced to begin afresh in a language the majority do not understand.

Methods

Area of the Study and Design

The current study was conducted in Tanzania in two regions, namely Mwanza and Dar es Salaam. The study was evaluative in nature and focused on an underdeveloped area of research in language planning, evaluating the language-in-education policy documents. In this specific case, our attention was focused on evaluating the language-in-education policy of Tanzania as contained in the 1995 and 2014 *Education and Training Policy* and the *Cultural Policy* of 1997. We also conducted interviews and focus group discussions with some education stakeholders. Based on the policy evaluation and responses from interviews and focus group discussions, a prognosis was made on the feasibility of the 2014 *Education and Training* Policy after it was launched on 13th February 2015 and of its chances of success.

Research Instruments

The study applied a variety of research instruments to collect relevant data. A documentary review was undertaken on relevant policy documents to gather information on overt language policy and planning in education in Tanzania. The documents reviewed were the *Education and Training Policy* issued in 1995 and 2014, the *Cultural Policy* of 1997, the 1982 Presidential Commission report and official correspondence dossiers in eight selected schools[2] in Mwanza. The documents were reviewed in order to develop the official language-in-education policy in Tanzania.

Semi-structured interviews were used with 16 teachers in the eight selected schools in the Mwanza region, with 10 parents, 8 heads of schools, 10 members of the school boards, and six officials from the Ministry of Education, Tanzania Institute of Education and HakiElimu NGO in Dar es Salaam. The authors had face to face interviews for each interviewee separately that took maximum of half an hour.

Since this study was qualitative in nature, the researchers used the quick impressionist summary and thematic analysis. In the quick impressionist summary approach the researcher summarised the key findings from documentary reviews, interviews, and focus group discussions with brief explanation, interpretation and conclusion. In the thematic analysis we subjected information obtained in the field through the research instruments to themes.

In each school 10 teachers, 16 students were randomly selected and involved in the focus group discussion. There were two groups for teachers and two groups for students in each school, each group comprising five and eight members respectively. Eight schools were randomly selected as a case study from Mwanza region in Tanzania. The aim was to solicit information on schools' language policy on the use of Kiswahili or English in carrying out day-to-day school. Students, teachers and parents were selected randomly whilst heads of schools, members of the

[2] Four primary and four secondary schools which were not English medium schools

school boards and other officials were purposively selected. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study and willingly accepted to give required information without demanding to be compensated.

Results

Data from Documents Reviewed

In November 1980 the government appointed the Presidential Commission chaired by Jackson Makweta to study the Tanzanian education system in general and thereafter make recommendations on how to improve it. The commission conducted an extensive study in most of the parts of Tanzania where relevant education stakeholders were interviewed. Although the language issue was not one of the terms of reference for the commission, in their report they suggested:

> The Ministry of Education, through its organs - the Institute of Curriculum Development, universities, and in cooperation with the National Kiswahili Council should make concrete plans to enable schools and colleges in the country to teach all subjects through the medium of Kiswahili, from Form One by January 1985 and at the university by 1992 (Ripoti - Mapendekezo ya Tume ya Rais,[3] 1982, p. 209).

However, in 1983, Jackson Makweta, who was the chairperson of the commission and had then been appointed a minister of education announced that Kiswahili would not be used as MoI as anticipated.[4] It was alleged that this was a result of the ruling party decision not to allow the change (Kiango, 2006).

The medium of instruction policy is dealt with in Chapter Five of the *Education and Training Policy* of 1995, referred to as *Formal Education and Training*. The policy indicates that Kiswahili shall be **the medium of instruction** in pre-primary and primary education while English shall be **a compulsory subject** in all the seven years of primary education (URT, 1995, pp. 35-39). According to the document it is anticipated that pupils will have acquired and developed mastery of the English language proficiency required in post-primary levels of education, when they complete their seven years of primary education.[5]

The document further indicates that the opposite policy applies for secondary education. The medium of instruction for secondary education shall be English whilst Kiswahili shall be a compulsory subject (URT, 1995, p. 45). The reason given why English should become the medium of instruction in secondary schools is that most of the instructional media and pedagogical materials are written in English, a situation that would remain the same for a long time in the foreseeable future.

Another document reviewed in connection with the language policy is the *Cultural Policy* released in 1997. The language issue is presented in Chapter Three of the document. Kiswahili is described as a language spoken and understood by the majority in the whole country. Therefore, it is to be proclaimed as the national language and incorporated as such in the constitution (URT, 1997, p. 16). Previously, according to this document, Kiswahili as an official language was only indicated in government pronouncements and directives which did not have legal status. Incorporating Kiswahili in the constitution would make Kiswahili formally regarded as an official language in government business, including education. Due to the fact that Kiswahili is a national language, the document makes a promise to strengthen and give adequate resources to the National Kiswahili Council and other institutions responsible for promotion of Kiswahili (URT, 1997, p. 17). Furthermore, the document states that a special programme to enable the use of Kiswahili as a medium of instruction at all levels of education would be designed and implemented (URT, 1997, p. 19). In the case of English, the document acknowledges that few people can understand, speak and write it. It is further acknowledged that continuing to use English as a sole medium of instruction of post-primary education is denying the opportunity for people to acquire knowledge (URT, 1997, p. 19). Despite this acknowledgement, English continues to be used as medium of instruction at post-primary education.

Finally, the other document reviewed is the 2014 *Education and Training Policy* that was launched on 13 February 2015. The language issues are discussed in Chapter Three, where different policy statements in education generally are given. The intention is for capacity building in using different languages in communication, teaching and learning. The government intends to make sure Kiswahili, English and other foreign languages are taught and mastered well at all levels of education due to their importance nationally, regionally and internationally. The document further acknowledges the current use of Kiswahili in pre-primary and primary schools, on one hand, and, on the other hand, the use of English in post primary education as contained in the 1995 *Education and Training Policy*.

It is echoed in the document that Kiswahili is the national language and it is used as the first or second

[3] Ripoti - Mapendekezo ya Tume ya Rais are the Kiswahili words for 'The Presidential Commission Report'

[4] This was reported in *Uhuru* (independence), the state-owned newspaper on 08th August 1983.

[5] The primary education in Tanzania takes seven years

language for many people in Tanzania (Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania[6] henceforth JMT, 2014, p. 36). Kiswahili is further described as the language which can be used by many people in Tanzania to get knowledge and skills in different spheres, including science and technology. As it is in the cultural policy of 1997, the government of Tanzania repeats its intent to use Kiswahili as MoI at all levels of education (JMT, 2014, p. 38). The aim is to give Tanzanians an opportunity for them to get education and training of much value nationally and internationally.

For the case of English, the document admits that English is the second or foreign language in Tanzania and therefore the government would continue to strengthen its use in teaching and learning, though not as a medium of instruction (JMT, 2014, p. 38). It is further indicated that better understanding of English and other foreign languages can enable Tanzanians to communicate with the outside world and be able to get knowledge and skills.

Official Correspondences

Official correspondences between the selected eight schools and the education authorities were also reviewed. The examined forty dossiers were from 1999 to 2008, as they were considered relevant. From studying the collected corpus of official correspondence, it was discovered that no single circular was issued detailing implementation procedures regarding 1995 and 1997 language policy for schools. For example, schools were not directed on which language to be used to document staff meeting minutes, in correspondence between the schools and the ministry, or to be used in the school motto, in the vision and mission of the schools. The documents reviewed indicate the language-in-education policy in Tanzania and the language to be used as MOI at different levels of education. They further indicate that Kiswahili and English are the languages used in education. The government's intent to make Kiswahili a medium of instruction at all levels of education is also reflected in the documents reviewed.

Data from Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

For the purpose of this article, the interviews and focus group discussions aimed at soliciting views from education stakeholders (as identified in the methodology section) on the appropriate medium of instruction in Tanzania. Their views were divided into two categories; those who were in favour of English as MoI and those who supported the use of Kiswahili as MoI.

Respondents' views as captured in the interviews and focus group discussions put forward different arguments why they want English as MoI. The majority of those in favour of English said they prefer English as MOI for various reasons. Firstly, they said English is a unifying language for people from different linguistic backgrounds throughout the world. They think that students can benefit from English as they can easily communicate with other people in the world as it is a global language and they can undertake studies in the English speaking countries. Stakeholders said, "How do you expect our children to communicate with investors coming to Tanzania? They will be outweighed by people from our neighbouring countries whose command of English is better than ours".

Secondly, the majority in the interview and focus group discussion preferred English to Kiswahili because using Kiswahili only as MOI in the Tanzanian context will automatically kill English. That would result in Tanzania being isolated from the international community where English is spoken. Some stakeholders, especially heads of schools and teachers, had this to say: "If we use Kiswahili as a medium of instruction, the pressure we put on students to speak English in the schools surroundings will no longer be there. That will make most students relax in learning English and that will be the end of it [English]".

The third argument put forward especially by teachers and parents was that English should be used as MOI as there are more teaching and learning resources written in the English language. To them, switching to Kiswahili will make it difficult for students and teachers to get the required materials. When reminded that different writers would come up with different materials once Kiswahili became the official MoI, most of them said, "We buy books from developed countries where Kiswahili is not spoken. Relying on books written by Tanzanians only will deny our children to read e-books and other materials found in the Internet".

Furthermore, English was seen as a useful business language and therefore respondents think that those who master it stand a better chance to win well-paid employment opportunities. This was raised because of their experience that most foreign investors in Tanzania use English as a language of communication. Parents insisted, "When we take our children to school, we expect them to get good jobs and come back to help us. How do you expect them to get a well-paying job if they don't know the language of the employer?".

Last but not least, they argued that there is much Kiswahili at home, in the streets and most offices in Tanzania where students can easily pick up and learn Kiswahili. Most of those who supported English said, "Why should the focus be on a language our

[6] Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania - The United Republic of Tanzania

children know? Even some of the people who did not get secondary education can speak Kiswahili. The focus should be on learning English in schools as we cannot get it in streets". They therefore concluded that students need to seriously invest in the English language, the language not spoken by the majority in Tanzania.

Some respondents from the interviews and focus group discussion argued in favour of Kiswahili. Their first argument put forward was that Kiswahili is understood by the majority of teachers and students and therefore a language suitable in education. Officials from the ministry of education and HakiElimu said, "Over 98% of the students and teachers in schools can speak Kiswahili fluently. This will help them to interact in the classroom and be in a position to understand what is being taught. But when you insist on a language [English] both teachers and students do not understand, students will find it hard to follow in class". They stressed that some developed countries use their own languages not "imported" languages.

Secondly, they said due to a pyramid system of education in Tanzania, most of the students who cannot make it at university level do not actually need English in their day-to-day activities. They need to understand concepts in a language they know and use them for problem solving in their environment. This is because Kiswahili is used in most of the domains in Tanzania ranging from family to official issues for the majority. Some parents and members of the school boards said, "When students who do not need university education, why should they be stressed to learn a foreign language while they do not need to use it in their activities outside the school system?".

Lastly they said Kiswahili is a national language and it is steadily becoming an international language. To them, this will in the future resolve the fear people seem to have that without using English which is a language of wider communication, Tanzanians may be isolated from the international community. They referred to the recent East African Community decision to make Kiswahili one of the official languages.

Looking at the arguments in favour of English, one realises that people from different walks of life still have a misconceived idea that without using a language as MoI, students cannot acquire it.

Discussion

The main question that this article intended to answer is whether Tanzania is prepared and committed enough to make Kiswahili a medium of instruction at all levels of education as proposed in the 2014 *Education and Training Policy*. In this section, we discuss why this potentially good proposal may result in another implementation nightmare. From the study above with regard to the 1995 and 1997 language-in-education policy, it is noted that there are three main issues, namely whether the proposed medium of instruction can be used, whether the government is now keen enough to implement the proposed policy and whether English can be adequately mastered if taught as a subject and not used as a medium of instruction.

Suitable Medium of Instruction

The 2014 *Education and Training Policy* directs that Kiswahili should become a medium of instruction at all levels of education. This is a long-awaited idea since 1982 when the Presidential Commission proposed the same for improving the educational system in Tanzania. As indicated in the research by international and African scholars (UNICEF, 1999; UNESCO, 1953; Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukamaa, 1997; Rubanza, 2002; Qorro, 2005; Young, 2009; Marwa, 2014; Sario et al., 2014; Bachore, 2014; Bikongoro, 2015) children learn better in a language they understand, not a foreign language. The majority of school-age children in Tanzania go to school with a good knowledge of Kiswahili (Mekacha, 1994; Rubanza, 1996).

Education stakeholders who preferred the use of Kiswahili as MoI were of the view that Kiswahili is understood by the majority of learners, it is used in most of the domains and most children who do not make it at university level do not actually need to be stressed to learn in a language they do not understand. Rubagumya (1991) in similar vein once said, "It is believed in official circles that without English Tanzania cannot develop; and that without English as the medium of instruction the language will be lost to Tanzania irretrievably" (pp. 75-76). With this contention, parents, teachers and students have a feeling that English should remain as medium of instruction in post-primary education. However, studies in Tanzania have indicated that English is rarely used outside the classroom and most importantly students are reported to learn English only in English language classes (Rubagumya, 1991; Qorro, 2005; Mpemba, 2007).

Moreover, one of the advantages of learning through the mother tongue-based education is that learners develop a solid foundation on which all additional languages can be built if students want to learn an additional language later in the school. This is in line with the developmental interdependence hypothesis developed by Cummins (1981) where close relationship between the two languages of the child is indicated. It states:

> To the extent that instruction in Lx is effective in promoting proficiency in Lx, transfer of this proficiency to Ly will occur provided there is adequate exposure to Ly (either in school or environment) and adequate motivation to learn Ly (Cummins, 1981, p. 29).

Similarly, Young (2009) contends that "quality education occurs effectively when learners begin to read and write in their mother tongue; the language of home and community" (pp. 120-121). She further stresses that "mother tongue education has been shown to facilitate acquisition of literacy skills and provide the foundation for continuing autonomous learning" (p. 121).

Another argument put forward for not making Kiswahili a medium of instruction is that there are no teaching and learning materials in that language. However, Mwansoko (1994) argues that although Kiswahili advocates seem to be discouraged by the fact that the switch to Kiswahili medium of instruction has not been implemented, they have taken a challenge to continue with modernisation of Kiswahili to make it a viable tool of professional communication and pedagogy. Moreover, the Institute of Kiswahili Studies at the University of Dar es Salaam, the National Kiswahili Council of Tanzania and prominent individuals have ventured in publishing teaching and learning materials in Kiswahili across a good number of subjects taught from secondary to tertiary levels.

Therefore, there is a need for mass education to accept the fact that appropriate learning takes place in a language learners understand. This is in line with Burton (2013) in her study of the Philippines that indicates that "research in that country played a great role to convince policy makers on the benefits of the mother tongue instruction for language minority students" (p. 26). She highlights such benefits as "academic skills, stronger classroom participation and development of critical thinking skills" (p. 26). Otherwise, if the proposed policy does not keep in mind the views of different stakeholders, there is a danger of not getting support from the same people who are education stakeholders when it comes to implementation.

Keenness of the Government to Implement the Proposed Policy

The second issue, which is equally important, deduced from the data, particularly policies and reports reviewed, indicate that the government has been producing good policies related to the medium of instruction but these remain unimplemented. This is not the first time Tanzania is coming out with the proposal to make Kiswahili the medium of instruction at all levels of education. The first time was in 1982 through the Presidential Commission report. However, due to lack of political commitment, the proposal was never implemented.

In 1997 the government came up with the same good proposal through the *Cultural Policy* that a special programme to enable the use of Kiswahili as MoI would be designed and implemented (URT, 1997, p. 19). However, up until now Kiswahili is neither a medium of instruction in secondary schools nor is it in tertiary education. Kiswahili has remained MoI in pre-secondary education.

Despite the adoption of one of Africa's largest languages as a national and official language, the government has constantly insisted that English should remain the only MoI at post-primary level (URT, 1995). This decision is attributed to its tremendous power and prestige in the global market. Similarly, the decision to cling to English as a language of education at post-primary level can be attributed to what Wolff (2006) considers to be the experience the post-colonial elites have because they were successful in a foreign language-based system in which the colonial language was the dominant MoI. Students are therefore compelled to learn in English, a language neither the learners nor teachers have properly mastered. This situation has been detrimental to the learning and teaching process. The government position to cling to the use of English at post-primary level reveals a limited understanding of what an appropriate MoI in education should be.

This was also emphasised by the then president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, when addressing the Society for Kiswahili and Poetry:

> English is the Swahili of the world and for that reason it must be taught and given the weight it deserves in our country. … It is wrong to leave English to die. To reject English is foolishness, not patriotism … English will be the medium of instruction in secondary schools and institutions of higher education because if it is left as only a normal subject it may die.[7]

Nyerere seems to have had the same feeling some stakeholders have that students can only learn a new language if used as a medium of instruction. Therefore, for Tanzania to come up with the same proposal in the 2014 *Education and Training Policy*, leaves a lot of questions for academia and researchers.

Mastering English Language

As we have seen once Kiswahili becomes the medium

[7] Nyerere's statement was reported in *Mzalendo*, a state-owned newspaper, October, 28, 1984

of instruction, English will be taught as a subject in primary and secondary schools. Given the fact that the previous policy (United Republic of Tanzania, 1995) actually required English to be taught as subject from an early age and to be used as MOI, the question arises whether learners will adequately master this language within the new system. Questions were raised in our study about the level of English usage within the current system.

In the threshold level hypothesis, Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukamaa (1976) argue that once the children have attained threshold of competence in their first language, they can gain competence in the second language. This concurs with what Baker (2011) says on the Common Underlying Proficiency model, "irrespective of the language in which a person is operating, the thoughts that accompany talking, reading, writing and listening come from the same central engine" (p. 166). This means that when a person has two or more languages, there is one integrated source of thought.

Bikongoro (2015) argues that despite the implementation of the *Education and Training Policy* of 1995 that directs instruction to take place in English and availability of learning materials in English for decades, "many Tanzanian students in secondary schools are challenged by a problem of English proficiency and poor performance" (p. 2). He stresses that English is responsible for students' under-achievement and it is an obstacle in accessing learning materials available in English. That being the case, students do not master the subject matter and acquisition of knowledge becomes complicated to the learners.

Marwa (2014) echoes the above argument that "the local trained graduates are competitively disadvantaged in terms of mastery and competence of the English language which is widely used as a language of wider communication" (p. 1265). He is of the view that with free movement of capital and labour across the newly formed East African Community, graduates who do not master English language will be affected in the labour market. He adds "the mere fact that a person cannot communicate effectively in English, places him in a tough spot" (p. 1265). Due to misconceived ideas held by education stakeholders including students, teachers, parents and politicians, once English is taught as a subject, learners will not be able to learn and use it for meaningful academic and pedagogical purposes (Rubanza, 2002; Qorro, 2005; Young, 2009; Marwa, 2014; Sario et al., 2014; Bachore, 2014; Bikongoro, 2015). From our study, we have seen that stakeholders have a feeling that the introduction of Kiswahili as MoI at all levels of education will result in Tanzania being cut off from the international community. They are sceptical that parents who are economically competent may resist the proposed policy and take their children to English medium schools. However, advocates of Kiswahili emphasise that English should be taught well as a subject for students to master it while keeping Kiswahili as MoI. The issue here should not be either English or Kiswahili but both languages should be seen as equally important but with different approaches.

Conclusion

The main question in this article was to see whether Tanzania is prepared and committed for the implementation of the proposed medium of instruction in the newly launched 2014 education and training policy. To answer this question, previous policies on the matter and other government pronouncements and the Presidential Commission recommendations were analysed. Furthermore, the education stakeholders' views were examined in connection with the appropriate language policy in Tanzania. Based on our findings emanating from this study, we have made a prognosis on the feasibility of the 2014 language-in-education policy.

It is proper to conclude that although the government through the 2014 *Education and Training Policy* has come up with a good proposal to make Kiswahili the medium of instruction, the language both learners and teachers understand well, we are sceptical as to whether Tanzania is prepared better and whether the government is more committed for implementing this policy than in the case of previous policy. As it was not possible to implement the 1982 Presidential Commission recommendation, the 1997 *Cultural Policy*, or respond to several researchers' constant push for the change, and since we do not see clear action plans from the government, it is not clear how serious the government is now in terms of resources and commitment to this policy change.

Moreover, findings from this study indicate that education stakeholders still think that English is a language of global business, science and technology and would therefore wish their children to be instructed in that language for them to master it. Additionally, parents still hold misconceptions held in the separate underlying proficiency theory that using both English and Kiswahili would amount to "confusion, frustration and failure" (Baker, 2011, p. 165). Due to this kind of thinking from parents and other stakeholders that children would learn a language if used as MoI, the government may lack support in implementing the proposed policy in a not so conducive environment.

The government therefore needs to carefully study the stakeholders' tension on the ground between

what is considered a suitable medium of instruction, in this case Kiswahili and what they believe is a more useful language, in this case English. The government should communicate the implementation, provide more directives to the agents of implementation through circulars and prepare action plans for the implementation of the language-in-education policy.

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Elena Tereshchenko
MGIMO University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Elena I. Tereshchenko, MGIMO University, 76 Pr. Vernadskogo, Moscow, 119454, Russian Federation. E-mail: helen_47@list.ru

At present, higher education is undergoing a profound transformation induced by innovations within higher education (HE) systems. This is not just about the innovations of the Bologna Convention and its associated skills approach, but also about conversions that are evolving within higher education itself. With all the developments within higher education and beyond, there is a pressing need for the higher education system to form a creative personality to address the challenges in both society and the economy. Graduates are expected to solve non-standard tasks under uncertain conditions and become acquainted with conditions of continuous change in the environment. The educational process, thus, requires change and improvement. *Educating for Creativity within Higher Education: Integration of Research into Media Practice* by Phillip McIntyre, Janet Fulton, Elizabeth Paton, Susan Kerrigan and Michael Meany was published in *Education and the Arts Series* in 2018. The book includes theoretical, historical, and contemporary foundations of creativity in education. The authors devote the bulk of the book to the historical heritage of creativity to fill the gap as many papers on creativity often fail to outline its culturally-situated nature. The authors employ not only a consciousness-raising approach to understand the field of creativity but also go beyond with a research-informed approach. Their practical approach includes both historical and theoretical comparisons between different 'streams' of creativity studies. One unique contribution to the book is Systems Centered Learning, or the 'Systems approach' for short. While setting up their Systems Centred Learning approach, the authors turn to other methods including those applied by P. Bourdieu, M. Csikszentmihalyi, J.P. Guilford, M. Runco, and A. Craft. The second half of the book focuses on documenting

the success of their adaptation of Michael Meany's integrated model for curriculum design and teaching creativity (2017) within higher education. The authors provide detailed information on the approach and present-day, well-organized evidence in support of its value and feasibility by making attempts to link research and classroom practice with teachers and students serving as the target audience. The discussions in this book are based on a diverse set

of systems around the world, but most heavily focus on UK, US, Asian, and Australian settings. One of the many achievements of the authors is the way they prove the significant impact of creativity on the whole field of educational settings.

The book is organized into 12 chapters following a similar pattern. The introductory chapters give a short overview of the authors' goal to improve the field of educational settings based on theoretically-informed, practically-oriented, and robustly-tested models of creativity.

Chapter 1, 'Setting the Scene', serves as an excellent introduction to the topic and contains several sets of ideas on creativity mostly within Pierre Bourdieu's sociological approach and the systems model of creativity originally proposed by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. The authors analyze research literature on creativity and address a host of important topics, such as innovation approaches to educating for creativity and describing their efficiency and use across cultures, as well as focus on research approach, interlinking of theory on creativity with creative media practice that generates iterative set of learning cycles. This chapter lays the foundation for further chapters in the book.

Chapter 2, 'Deep Background to the Project', brings to the fore the differences and similarities that arise from attempting to understand the concept of creativity. The authors attempt to help the reader understand that the Eastern perception of creativity is similar to but distinct from the understanding in the West. And despite being accepted in many cultures, Western creativity discourses are not universal so far. What is more, examining correlations and connections between different cultures, the authors come to the point that some cultures accept similar views on creativity. Throughout the chapter, the authors concentrate on an individualist outlook on creativity, which dates back to the civilization of the Greco-Romans. The presented ideas play a crucial role in the characteristic way the vision of the creative world developed Moreover, they generate a long-term discourse that has played an integral part in the way creativity was intended. Directing the readers' attention to the relationship between the concepts of understanding of the field of creativity, firstly, it is highlighted that there is a need to admit that globalization has contributed to the exchange of ideas from culture to culture. Thus, it has formed understandings of creativity in various parts of the world. Secondly, the authors indicate that, at first glance, there are distinct cultural and linguistic heritages that act as a key to different conceptions of creativity around the globe, with traditions and local practices fostering that thinking.

Chapter 3, 'The Evaluation of a Psychology of Creativity (across periods of time)', contains an overview of the most influential scientific studies of creativity. Originally, under the influence of Charles Darwin's 'Origin of Species', the study of creativity had to undergo some transformation. Having observed the tendency in developing the study of creativity, the authors illustrate that Sigmund Freud was the founder of one of the key approaches to that study, which appeared in the 20th century. The authors pay a great deal of attention to the tests for measuring creativity proposed by Gilford, but as the authors note, those systems of measurement did not prove to be effectively implemented. However, both Gilford's and Torrance's tests throughout the 1960s managed to dispel doubts that creativity could not be measured. In addition, the authors underscore that pen-and-paper tests (psychometric tests) leave some uncertainty, though being intended to quantify individual differences between creative and non-creative subjects. Further, Roger Perry published studies of the right and left hemispheres of the brain with regard to creative thinking that are elaborated on in the book. The authors provide some examples of the attempts to study the effects of the social environment relating to creativity as well as the social impact on creative individuals, proving that interactive groups are less creative than individuals working alone. In the chapter, there is also a thorough description of the 'teacher to student' relationship with its positive and negative effects on creativity.

Chapter 4, headlined 'Towards a Sociology of Creativity', shifts our focus to studies of the societal influence on scientific institutions across the globe. The authors give a brief glimpse of studies on cultural changes in Western civilizations from 540 BC to AD1900, further proceeding to the exploration of cycles of creativity in painting. Considering these studies, the authors aim to show that social systems have a direct impact on the times and types of creativity dominance at the macro level at particular times in history. This chapter is extremely interesting and informative as it sums up the changes brought about by society, which played an important role in influencing creativity as well as valuing, validating, and recognizing creativity. The authors also deem it necessary to go into detail about the concept of social validation (Van Gogh). The point is that social systems do not only take on enormous importance in developing or influencing when and what types of creativity are dominant at particular times in history. Though, it is most crucial that social structures are necessary for creativity to occur at all.

Chapter 5, entitled 'Confluence Approaches and the Systems Model of Creativity', is concerned with switching over to focus on a number of confluence approaches suggested by some authors and studies. The essence of their approaches is that creativity can

only happen when all of the necessary components are present. In addition, the authors highlight influence-based ideas investigated by those researchers. Furthermore, the authors move to presenting and explaining the essence of the systems model of creativity together with the DIFI model. This systems approach appeared to be a basis for the set of works by several researchers. Each factor in the system is equally important, that is why the authors put so much effort into proving the approach's applicability. The viewpoint of the systems model differs from the generally held opinion. It is not about trying to find universal behavioral personality characteristics that can be attributed to all creative individuals. Switching from historically generated discourses, the authors aim to understand the gist of creativity. They show that it is vital to recognize a variety of interrelated forces that operate at multiple levels.

Chapter 6, 'Creativity, Education and the Systems Approach', introduces the application of research-based ideas connected with creativity in educational settings. It mostly concentrates on research conducted by Anne Harris. The latter considers creativity and education, going deeper into the investigation of the study of creativity. Harris attempts to characterize a process where educators can make their approach to creativity as effective, perfect, and useful as possible. Moreover, she puts in place a guide for teachers' use. She studies how an individual can improve the conditions for creativity in an educational setting. The key implication of the chapter is that learning can serve as a rehearsal and preparation for creativity in later life. While learning, the student acquires the content of the body of knowledge (domain) to the point that he or she can make relevant contributions to it.

Chapter 7, 'Developing Curriculum and Courses Using Systems Centred Learning (SCL)', highlights the role of the above-mentioned approach. Being applied in a diverse set of international settings, this systems approach proves to be universally applicable, providing globally-oriented thinking and basic principles for curriculum development. The authors address the need for revised versions of the systems model. Moreover, the authors raise awareness of how important the interaction between components of the system is. The system can be observed in full only if there is a better form of the 'student-teacher' relationship, which is crucial for the success of the approach. This chapter concentrates on the implementation of mechanisms in the form of surveys of students' assessment of the course and instruction, which helps to direct the educational process in the right direction. The authors summarize that SCL is essential at every stage of the educational process and contributes to improving the creative learning process of students.

Chapter 8, 'The Undergraduate Experience of SCL: The Core and the Media Production Major', is of special interest as it looks into the interlinking of theory and practice. An extensive investigation has shown that peer-reviewed research into creativity helps to develop a useful set of skills that are necessary for students to implement their theoretical knowledge in practice. The aim of the systems approach is to help undergraduate students understand how important the theory and production elements of any program are. The authors draw readers' attention to the fact that the systems model of creativity tends to be introduced during the second year of learning. The conclusion is based on the implementation of the systems approach within the Bachelor of Communication Program at the University of Newcastle (UON) in Australia.

Chapter 9, 'The Media Production Project: Integrating Theory with Practice', mainly describes the stage when students are ready to make more creative decisions for themselves as they enter the last semester of their degree program. The SCL approach enables students to realize that there are many other ways to describe and experience creativity in addition to pedagogy and curriculum approaches. The authors pay much attention to the reflective practice method and provide readers with examples of the projects students undertake in their final year. The examples prove that this form of learning gives each student a deeper understanding of how they can then use their knowledge when entering the professional world.

Chapter 10, 'Adopting Systems Centred Learning for Other Institutional Settings', sets out to explain how the authors began the process of adopting the systems model in other institutional settings. It reflects on the delivery of a curriculum that is centered on creativity in other educational settings, mostly showing how the systems model was introduced at Monash University in Melbourne. The results of this study suggest that the delivery of a systems-centred program led to the reduction of some perceived cultural differences thanks to the students being involved in a globalised educational setting.

In the remaining two chapters, 'Creativity and the Postgraduate Experience' and 'Implications of a Systems Centred Learning Approach', the authors go deeper into investigating the use of SCL at the post-graduate stage. Citing C. Killen, J. Velikovsky, S. Coffee, D. Mohan Tan, and C. Harrison, who have been examining the systems-based approach to creativity, it proves that this approach has continued to be explored since it was initially proposed by Csikszentmihalyi.

To sum up, this book impressively blends research findings with practical implementation. It presents not only researched-based studies with regard to issues explored throughout the book but also investigates ways to further develop the model of Systems Centred Learning at all stages of educational settings across

the globe. The chapters are well nurtured with recent theory and research results. The authors should be commended for doing an effective job both presenting and explaining the importance of the systems approach. Overall, this book would be of primary interest not only to teachers, students, and scholars but also to anyone who is interested in exploring the issues of developing creative skills.

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