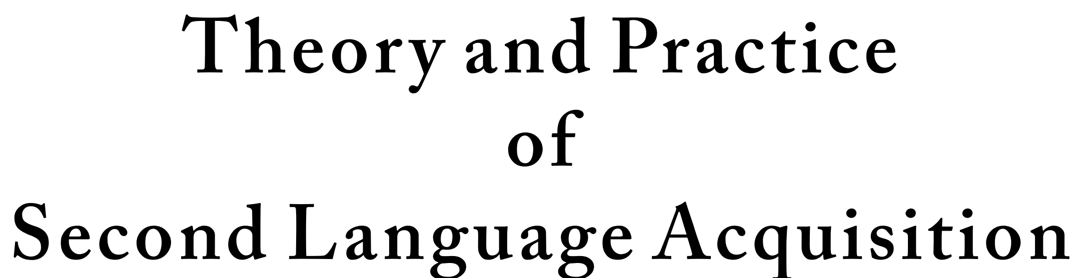


Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition

Vol. 9 (1), 2023

UNIWERSYTET ŚLĄSKI
WYDAWNICTWO

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition

Vol. 9 (1), 2023

Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego • Katowice 2023

Editors-in-Chief

Danuta Gabryś-Barker
University of Silesia in Katowice

Adam Wojtaszek
University of Silesia in Katowice

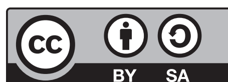
Language Editor

David Schauffler
University of Silesia in Katowice

Editorial Board

Janusz Arabski (University of Silesia in Katowice/Vistula University, Warsaw)
Larissa Aronin (Oranim College of Higher Education/Trinity College, Dublin)
Jasone Cenoz Iraqui (University of the Basque Country, Donostia – San Sebastian)
Halina Chodkiewicz (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin)
Gessica de Angelis (Trinity College, Dublin)
Anna Ewert (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań)
Tammy Gregersen (University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls)
Ulrike Jessner Schmid (University of Innsbruck, Innsbruck)
Hanna Komorowska (University of Social Sciences and Humanities/University of Warsaw)
Jolanta Latkowska (University of Silesia in Katowice)
Peter MacIntyre (Cape Breton University, Sydney)
Anna Niżegorodcew (Jagiellonian University, Cracow)
Aneta Pavlenko (Temple University, Philadelphia)
Miroslaw Pawlak (Adam Mickiewicz University, Kalisz/State School of Higher Professional Education, Konin)
Ewa Piechurska-Kuciel (University of Opole, Opole)
Andrzej Porzuczek (University of Silesia in Katowice)
David Singleton (Trinity College, Dublin/University of Pannonia, Veszprem)
Eva Vetter (University of Vienna, Vienna)
Ewa Waniek-Klimczak (University of Łódź, Łódź)
Maria Wysocka (University of Silesia in Katowice)

This publication is indexed in the following databases:
Arianta, BASE (Bielefeld Academic Search Engine), BAZHUM, CEEOL, CEON, DOAJ, EBSCO, ERIH PLUS, GIGA, Index Copernicus, INFO NA, Nukat, MLA Directory of Periodicals, Most wiedzy, OAI-PMB Data Provider Registry, POLINDEX (PBN), Public Knowledge Project Index, Scopus, WorldCat.



Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Contents

Preface (*Danuta Gabryś-Barker*, *Adam Wojtaszek*)

Articles

Magdalena Szyszka
Context-related Beliefs about L2 Language Learning and Teaching of the Millennial Pre-service EFL Teachers as a Prognosis for Future Classroom Actions

Meihua Liu
Chinese University Students' Beliefs about English Language Learning and Self-efficacy

Astrid Mairitsch, Sonja Babic, Sarah Mercer, Giulia Sulis, Sun Shin
The Role of Compassion during the Shift to Online Teaching for Language Teacher Wellbeing

Ahmed Al Shlowiy, Khaled Layali
EFL Teachers' Perceptions of a Long Shift to Online Learning in a Saudi University during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Monika Kusiak-Pisowacka
Exploring FL Readers' Metacognitive Beliefs: Narrations from Learner Diaries

Babak Mahdavy, Masoomeh Mousavi Namavar
Listening Strategies and L2 Listening Comprehension: Does the Test Method Matter?

Eva Maria Luef, Pia Resnik
Phonotactic Probabilities and Sub-syllabic Segmentation in Language Learning

Zuzana Nováková
Making Students Responsible for Grammar Learning: A Report on a Learner-centered Technique Aimed at Accuracy

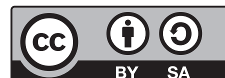
Silvie Válková, Jana Kořínková
Approaches to Teaching Agreement and Disagreement in Selected Coursebook Series

Reviews

N. Schmitt, M. P. H. Rotgers (2020). *An Introduction to Applied Linguistics* (Routledge, Taylor & Francis)—by Muhammad Fahruddin Aziz and Herlandri Eka Jayaputri

Style Guide for the Authors

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition
vol. 9 (1), 2023, pp. 1/5
https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.14558



Preface

The purpose of the *Preface* to this new issue of *Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition* is twofold. First, it offers a short introduction for new readers to familiarize them with the origins and development of the journal (a permanent element of the *Preface*). Second, it provides a concise comment on the contents of the present issue.

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition was founded as a forum of discussion for both Polish and foreign scholars and seems to have fulfilled its mission as a journal on the rise. The present volume marks the ninth year of its presence in the scholarly world. The journal has become quite popular and we receive more and more qualified submissions from Polish and foreign researchers. Indeed, since its foundation, every consecutive issue of the journal has welcomed contributions from renowned researchers, including Peter MacIntyre, David Singleton, Larissa Aronin, Sarah Mercer, Tammy Gregersen and Jean-Marc Dewaele, among others. Also, the fast growing number of OA uploads testifies to the journal's increasing popularity, as does the queue of articles already accepted and awaiting their turn to be included in the next volumes to be published. This is why we have already made a couple of decisions to increase the number of research papers published in a single volume over the last few years: in the first years of the journal's existence there were six, later seven, last year eight and, starting with issue 9(1), *TAPSLA* will include as many as nine research contributions, followed by one book review this time. It is the journal's ambition to demonstrate new trends and hitherto unknown venues for research in SLA, focusing both on theoretical discussions and the practical solutions to problems that are based upon them. We aim not only to publish and share with our readers contributions from well-known and respected scholars but also to promote young researchers from all over the world, who often present fresh and innovative ideas or open up new perspectives on issues already under discussion. In other words, the journal hopes to become

a venue for the exchange of ideas between well-established academics and those inspired by them. In terms of its content, the journal presents contributions on issues ranging from purely linguistic and cognitively-oriented research on language acquisition processes to psycho- and sociolinguistic studies, always trying to feature the most recent developments in terms both of topic choice and of the methodology of research. We publish our journal through an open access system, where the entire production process is executed online and the final product is available to everyone, thus offering an opportunity to share ideas through a broad, effective and economical mode of dissemination. We maintain high standards and quality, which are guaranteed by the international Editorial Board of *TAPSLA*, whose members are well-known Polish and foreign experts on a wide range of second language acquisition issues. The journal is indexed in numerous databases, including Scopus. The journal is published by the prestigious Polish academic publisher, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego (University of Silesia Press), which provides an experienced team of editors to oversee the copyediting and technical side of the production. Updated information and all the issues published so far are available on the journal webpage at www.tapsla.us.edu.pl.

The present volume 9(1) offers a wide variety of interesting topics well-grounded in theoretical considerations and literature overviews, but importantly, also reporting on empirical projects carried out by researchers, some of whom are well-known scholars, others aspiring young academics. The articles selected offer a balanced range of teachers' and learners' perspectives on various aspects of the process of language teaching and learning, in a variety of contexts, with the clearly visible motif of the recent COVID-19 pandemic as an important factor which has shaped both teachers' and learners' experience and attitudes. The opening text by Magdalena Szyszka, entitled "Context-related Beliefs about L2 Language Learning and Teaching of the Millennial Pre-service EFL Teachers as a Prognosis for Future Classroom Actions," offers an outlook into the future of EFL teaching, as it delves upon young trainee teachers' beliefs and predictions related to their future profession. Because the questionnaire used as a data collection tool was administered during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the respondents' responses drew upon their own experience of the changes brought about by isolation and the implementation of various forms of distance learning. They were witnesses of arguably the biggest change in the forms of teaching of our times, so the author considered it important to make a record of their fresh and dynamically changing opinions, attitudes, and predictions. In the next text, "Chinese University Students' Beliefs about English Language Learning and Self-efficacy," Meihua Liu takes us to Beijing to report on a study of Chinese learners of English as a foreign language: their beliefs related to language learning itself and their perceived self-efficacy in the process. Self-efficacy is treated here as one of the most important factors

that lead to ultimate success or failure, so we can say that like the previous text, this one also takes us on a journey into the future, here seen from the learners' perspective. Apart from offering us a comprehensive picture of the factors that potentially influence success in language learning, the author demonstrates that learners' perception of these factors is largely dependent on their proficiency level and individual experience. The third text in the volume returns to the teachers' point of view and focuses on their wellbeing in the difficult times of the pandemic. Astrid Mairitsch, Sonja Babic, Sarah Mercer, Giulia Sulis, and Sun Shin, in their contribution entitled "The Role of Compassion during the Shift to Online Teaching for Language Teacher Wellbeing," look at the rarely investigated issue of compassion for teachers, as people who are particularly burdened with the hardships and complications brought upon us by the pandemic. The study gives us a truly global perspective, as teachers from all around the world participated in the interviews. Thanks to the qualitative nature of the investigation, we receive very rich analytic material from which emerges the vital role of compassion as a factor which helped teachers survive the most challenging and difficult time of the crisis. The paper voices yet another argument for the need to recognize the entire psychological environment of the teaching profession as a vital factor in teachers' performance. Another text that focuses on pandemic-induced complications and challenges, authored by Ahmed Al Shlowiy and Khaled Layali and entitled "EFL Teachers' Perceptions of a Long Shift to Online Learning in a Saudi University during the Coronavirus Pandemic," presents the opinions of EFL teachers working in Saudi Arabia on the drawbacks, but also the benefits, of online learning which was enforced by the crisis. It turned out that the benefits are more numerous than the drawbacks, and that many teachers saw the forced introduction of online learning as an ultimately beneficial side-effect of the pandemic. The fifth text of the present volume marks a shift to the investigation of the learning process and focus on the learners. Monika Kusiak-Pisowacka, in her contribution "Exploring FL Readers' Metacognitive Beliefs: Narrations from Learner Diaries," portrays a diary from two different perspectives: as a valuable data collection tool, but also as an excellent form of developing learners' writing skills and self-reflection abilities. The author decided to focus on metacognition as a predictor of FL reading skills, highly recommendable in the process of language development. Since the learners were asked to keep diaries for a period of at least one month, the author was also able to follow the dynamics of her respondents' attitudes and beliefs. The next article, authored by Babak Mahdavy and Masoomeh Mousavi Namavar and entitled "Listening Strategies and L2 Listening Comprehension: Does the Test Method Matter?," looks at the receptive skill of listening, but more basically comprises a comparative investigation of research methodology application. The authors successfully demonstrate that scores and research results differ when different types of

data collection tools are used. Additionally, they also managed to establish which type of listening strategy turned out to be the strongest predictor of learners' overall performance. The following text, by Eva Maria Luef and Pia Resnik, "Phonotactic Probabilities and Sub-syllabic Segmentation in Language Learning," touches upon selected aspects of acquisition of L2 English phonology by Austrian German and Korean learners. The study supports claims of the influence of learners' L1 pronunciation habits on the acquisition of their L2 language phonemes. In their investigation of the acquisition of L2 segments, the authors took into consideration phonotactic probabilities and typical syllable structure characteristic for the learners' first languages. The article represents a typical hypothesis-testing, quantitative research design, based on previous research findings related to the phonetic description of Austrian German, Korean, and English. The eighth research article in the present volume is a text by Zuzana Nováková, entitled "Making Students Responsible for Grammar Learning: A Report on a Learner-centered Technique Aimed at Accuracy." The paper focuses on the acquisition of learners' grammatical competence in L2, narrowed down to their ability to self-correct noun and verb phrase constructions. The study design follows a learner-centered approach, in which the learners are invited to self-reflect upon their own speaking performance. In this way the authors also show an interesting application of a speaking task, conducive also to the development of learners' metalinguistic awareness. In the last of the research papers published in the present volume, Silvie Válková and Jana Kořínková look at the development of politeness strategies in L2 English and the ways in which they are practiced in selected course-books. Their text "Approaches to Teaching Agreement and Disagreement in Selected Coursebook Series" examines pragmatic aspects of L2 acquisition that are vital for learners' unproblematic performance in encounters with users of English. The investigation shows similarities between the coursebook series at the level of speech act realization patterns, but, at the same time, it reveals differences pertaining to how supportive the books are for teachers and learners in providing explanatory instructions for proper usage and background information.

The present issue offers, atypically, only one book review. This is of the third edition (2019) of the well-known and widely acclaimed volume *An Introduction to Applied Linguistics* by Schmitt and Rodgers, which is reviewed by Muhammad Fahruddin Aziz and Herlandri Eka Jayaputri. The reviewers comprehensively present and comment on all the chapters of the volume, pointing out that the contents have been updated and expanded, reflecting the development of the field. At the same time, however, they indicate a few other topics that are yet absent from the volume, but which in their opinion should be included in subsequent editions.

The articles contained in the present volume examine issues related to the process of foreign language learning and teaching in a broad context, presented from the perspectives of both teachers and learners. All of them represent reports on empirical research, but they are grounded in solid theoretical bases and offer comprehensive reviews of literature in a given area. The theme of the COVID-19 pandemic appears for the first time in TAPSLA, but it seems that it will continue to constitute the background for a considerable number of investigations in the years to come. A clear trend to present a wide array of topics based on research carried out in different parts of the world is continued in the present volume and remains a valuable asset of the journal. Importantly for the contributors, the open access online format of TAPSLA helps them to attract world-wide readership and in this way to become active members of international scientific debates.

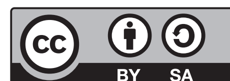
We believe that researchers, teachers, and students can all benefit from this issue of TAPSLA and will find the articles published here not only useful but inspirational. In this place we would like to thank all the authors of the articles in this issue and, as is our usual practice, extend our invitation to all Polish and foreign researchers and academics to share their work with us by submitting it to the journal.

https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0626-0703 *Danuta Gabryś-Barker*

https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0308-4337 *Adam Wojtaszek*

Articles

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition
vol. 9 (1), 2023, pp. 1/20
https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.12575



Magdalena Szyszka
University of Opole, Poland

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6843-3238

Context-related Beliefs about L2 Language Learning and Teaching of the Millennial Pre-service EFL Teachers as a Prognosis for Future Classroom Actions

Abstract

The qualitative study presented in this paper aimed to collect beliefs about learning and teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) from individual representatives of the generation frequently referred to as the millennials. The participants were 47 pre-service EFL trainee teachers from four socio-cultural contexts: Finnish, Israeli, Polish, and Spanish. Their voices have been considered because beliefs are dynamically related to actions and soon the millennial EFL teachers may implement them in the course of their teaching. The contextual approach, followed in this research, provided opportunities for discussing similarities and differences in the beliefs of Finnish, Israeli, Polish, and Spanish pre-service teachers. The identified similarities lead to outlining a tentative picture of a universal, future, post-pandemic EFL classroom.

Keywords: pre-service language teachers, beliefs, language teaching, language learning

Research into the beliefs about second or foreign (L2) language learning and teaching processes can be traced back to the 1980s when Horwitz (1987) and Wenden (1986) sparked scholarly interest in what and how these beliefs relate to language learning success or failure. Since then this research has evolved in its methodology and understanding of the key concept. The more traditional approach—the normative approach (Barcelos, 2003)—perceives beliefs as stable pre-conceptions rooted in cognition, which are often researched quantitatively. Its followers aim to establish typologies of beliefs and their relationships or cause-and-effect outcomes with other variables, such as learning strategies (e.g. Yang, 1999; Zhong, 2015). More recent approaches position learners' beliefs as far more multidimensional and multilayered than they have

previously been understood (Kalaja et al., 2016). The metacognitive approach, for instance, defines beliefs as some type of metacognitive knowledge (Wenden, 1998) that is subjective, fallible, relatively stable but subjected to change over time. In line with this approach, "learners do think about their language learning process and are able to articulate some of their beliefs" (Barcelos, 2003, p. 17). The data is often collected qualitatively through interviews and self-reports. However, only the contextual approach emphasizes the role of learners' and teachers' immediate settings in structuring their beliefs. Cultural and contextual factors, for instance education systems in different countries, or distant learning, or teaching in pandemic conditions, can shape and determine a wide range of students' beliefs about language learning (Lee, 2009) and teachers' beliefs about teaching (Gabryś-Barker, 2012). Moreover, this contextual approach provides a wide range of interpretative opportunities grounded in specific contexts that additionally shape students' beliefs about language learning and teaching.

The qualitative study presented in this paper follows this contextual approach with the aim to collect beliefs about learning and teaching English from pre-service EFL trainee teachers, representing the young generation frequently referred to as millennials, coming from four socio-cultural contexts: Finnish, Israeli, Polish, and Spanish. Their voices need to be considered because, as Borg (2006) and Kalaja and Barcelos (2003) state, beliefs are dynamically related to actions. Therefore, there is a high possibility that soon the millennial EFL teachers will implement their beliefs in the course of their teaching.

Context-related Beliefs about Language Learning and Teaching

Despite the difficulty in establishing a precise and uniform definition, Skott (2014) proposes four core characteristics of beliefs: they refer to an individual's mental concepts which are subjectively perceived as true; they entail both cognitive and affective aspects that are value-related; they are relatively stable but may change, for instance, as a result of an individual's personally significant engagement in social practices, such as "their own schooling, their teacher education programs and their collaboration with colleagues" (p. 19); and they are reflected in actions. Similarly, Kalaja et al. (2016) emphasize the dynamic and emergent nature of beliefs, which, as they underline, are socially constructed and contextually situated. Thus, in this study the beliefs of L2 teacher trainees, who are L2 learners at the same time, are operationalized as a form of cognitive but value-related reflection on various aspects of L2 teaching and

learning that "relates these to experiences of his or her own or those of others, and assigns these aspects his or her own personal meanings" (Kalaja et al., 2016, p. 10). These beliefs are expected to influence future classroom actions (Al Harthy et al., 2013; Borg, 2006; Kalaja & Barcelos, 2003). In other words, the experiences of schooling and teacher training, shaped by socio-cultural contexts and practices in which individuals have been embedded, are reflected in their beliefs, and these in turn determine how future teachers may approach their own teaching as soon as they start their classroom careers. These assumptions are also in line with Kalaja et al.'s (2016) comment that "[i]t is important to study the beliefs held by future teachers as these might turn into mediational means and thus guide their teaching practices in foreign language classrooms once they enter the profession" (p. 129).

The contextual approach has been followed in a number of studies on pre-service and in-service teachers' beliefs about L2 learning and teaching (for an extended overview see Barcelos & Kalaja, 2011; Pusparini et al., 2021). Borg (2003) investigated factors and processes underpinning language teachers' decision-making and pedagogical behaviors in teaching. In his research, context played a role in determining the extent to which teachers teach according to their beliefs. He proposed a framework of contextual factors that co-construct teacher cognitions and beliefs. These included individuals' schooling, which is associated with subjective classroom experiences; more general contextual factors, for instance, functioning within a specific national education system; professional coursework, depending on the teacher training course content and trainers; and classroom practice, which provides opportunities to confront the existent beliefs with teaching experience. Feryok (2010) studied the dynamic nature of language teacher cognition, including beliefs, and found that context had a mediating impact on language teachers' cognitions and beliefs. Chong et al. (2011), for instance, found that teacher trainees in Singapore form positive beliefs about a language teaching career because of the high status that the teaching profession holds in this country. In Brazil, however, teacher trainees' beliefs were revealed to be negative because of the undervalued status of a language teacher (Barcelos, 2016). Overall, the promising outcomes of studies on the role of context in generating beliefs about language learning and teaching justifies the line of enquiry proposed in this paper, which is additionally supported by Li's (2009) statement that "without understanding what the belief system of a learner [and a trainee teacher] is, how it emerges, and how it functions in learning, our knowledge of human learning will be deficient" (p. 38). The contextual approach to researching beliefs provides additional opportunities to compare and contrast the data generated from teacher trainees from various socio-cultural backgrounds, in order to establish which of their beliefs are similar and different.

Teacher education is dependent on education systems and policies offered in various contexts. More specifically, the approaches to teacher training in Finland, Israel, Poland, and Spain vary, which, in turn, might affect teacher trainees' beliefs. Although the detailed analysis of the systems is beyond the scope of this paper, some selected examples of variability in teacher education systems in the four countries are outlined. Finland, for instance, is famous for its excellency in teacher education and the high status of a teacher (Dolton et al., 2018). Having fulfilled competitive entry standards, trainee teachers complete a four-year M.A. program with an additional two-year supervised school practice (Malinen et al., 2012). Finnish trainee teachers' core competences are described as an amalgam of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and personal characteristics that allow teachers to act professionally and appropriately to the class situation (Koster & Dengerink, 2008). The English teacher training objectives in Israel, included in The Professional Framework for English Teachers 2020 (State of Israel Ministry of Education, 2019), comprise specifications of skills and knowledge needed for an English teacher to function competently and professionally. The teacher training courses provided at higher education institutions relate to seven domains detailed in the document: teacher's language and disciplinary knowledge, learning theories and the language learner, language teaching pedagogy, assessment, the language learning context, global competences and professionalism. After a four-year study program EFL trainee teachers are awarded a bachelor of education degree (B.Ed.) and a teaching licence (Szyszka et al., 2018). In Poland, the qualifications needed to become an L2 teacher are specified in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education (2019). More specific objectives are included in institutional syllabuses detailing knowledge, skills, and social competences enabling students to complete the teacher training courses. Teacher education combined with an M.A. degree provides qualifications necessary for teaching at any education level in Poland. In Spain, the national education legislation provides teacher training requirements for various educational stages. The general and subject-specific competences that trainee teachers develop are included in undergraduate programs for primary school teachers and postgraduate programs for secondary school teachers (Fernández & Hughes, 2013).

The Study

The present study aims to investigate the narratives of pre-service EFL teacher trainees coming from four different socio-cultural and education contexts: Finland, Israel, Poland, and Spain in order to identify their beliefs about

L2 language learning, L2 teaching and how they view the future EFL classroom. For this purpose the following research questions have been proposed:

RQ1. What are the beliefs about L2 learning of the pre-service EFL teachers from Finland, Israel, Poland, and Spain?

RQ2. What are the beliefs about L2 teaching of the pre-service EFL teachers from Finland, Israel, Poland, and Spain?

RQ3. What are the beliefs about EFL teaching in the future after the COVID-19 pandemic situation?

Participants

The participants of the study were 47 EFL pre-service teachers who simultaneously studied English at a tertiary level. Their age ranged from 20 to 24, with an average of 22.61. They might be referred to as digital natives (Prensky, 2001) or new-millennium learners (Howe & Strauss, 2000), who will soon enter the profession of teaching English as a foreign language. The majority of them (N = 33) came from Poland, five of them were Finnish, the same number declared they had Israeli citizenship and four individuals were Spanish. The average length of L2 learning for the sample was 15 years. Most of the participants (N = 44) declared they had some sort of L2 teaching experience. For instance, they had completed their teacher training internship at various educational levels: kindergarten, primary and secondary; some of them used to teach in private schools; others gained experience in teaching online. At the time of data collection, they were all enrolled in teacher training programs at their home institutions in Finland, Israel, Poland, and Spain.

Instruments

The instrument applied to collect the data was an open-ended questionnaire on the Beliefs of Pre-service Teachers about Foreign Language Learning and Teaching, designed for the purposes of this study. This type of tool has been frequently used for investigating beliefs (Barcelos & Kalaja, 2013; Navarro & Thornton, 2011; Pan & Block, 2011; Vieira-Abrahão, 2006). Open-ended questionnaires aim for rich and detailed answers that frequently change into longer narratives, which provide more in-depth access into teachers' beliefs and a rich account of the complex contextual factors (Kubanyiova, 2012). The questionnaire included a biographical part and seven sets of open-ended questions in English related to the participants' beliefs about L2 learning and teaching, for example, *What are your beliefs about foreign language learning? What is important to learn to be a proficient L2 user? What do you believe is the best*

method for teaching English? What are your beliefs about being a professional language teacher? What does it mean to you? In November 2020, a set of questions was added: *What are your beliefs about teaching English after the COVID-19 pandemic situation? How do you think this pandemic experience will change English language teaching in schools?*

Procedure and Analysis

The data collection instrument was prepared in an online form with the help of Google Drive. Subsequently, a link to the questionnaire was generated and it was published in February 2020. In order to reach the targeted groups, the researcher used personal contacts. The online survey was open till December 2020. To investigate beliefs from the perspective of the pre-service teacher, in a changing teaching situation triggered by the global pandemic, the researcher decided to include in the questionnaire the additional open-ended question regarding beliefs about L2 teaching after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The data were analysed following the procedures of qualitative research. More specifically, content analysis followed the steps suggested in Creswell (2013). This involved: reading the data from the instrument multiple times and identifying themes; coding the themes into significant units and grouping these units into larger categories; and revising the categories repeatedly to check for consistency, cohesion, significance, and repetition. The responses of individual participants were coded with a letter representing the country of origin and the number, for example, F2 is the response of the participant number two from Finland, I1 is the response of the first participant from Israel, etc.

Results

The responses to the first research question regarding the beliefs about L2 learning were analyzed and categorized into eight groups. Examples are provided in Table 1. The belief that exposure to the target language in the process of learning is valuable was repeated by 47% participants (22 out of 47) coming from all four contexts. More than a half of the trainee teachers (55%) reported that, apart from linguistic exposure, L2 use was essential in L2 learning by individuals. These beliefs were sometimes supported with examples from the participants' experiences of learning, for example,

I2: *First of all you must be exposed to English. I've learnt English through songs and movies;*

P10*: [A] big leap happened when I started watching TV shows, playing video games, and looking for information about my interests in English (in other words, using English in context, in situations I was interested in and mattered to me);*

I1: *It's important to give us [L2 learners] the chance to speak the language in order to master it. We can't just read and listen. We need to talk. That's what helped me in the first place.*

S2: *I started learning English at primary school in a traditional way by learning different language skills separately. However, I was taught the most mechanical skills and content (reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar). Thus, speaking and listening were less taught to me. Personally, I strongly believe that communicative skills are the basis to learn a language.*

Next, the participants (17%) affirmed that the process of L2 learning may be strongly supported by a teacher. For instance, two Finnish individuals believed that a teacher as a provider of formal education is important in L2 learning. Spanish participants emphasized the affective (e.g., S3 in Table 1) and motivational role of an L2 teacher, as, for example, expressed by S4: *[A teacher] should motivate students because the more motivated they are the more knowledge they will acquire*. The belief of one Polish pre-service teacher centered around the role of positive feedback given by a teacher in the process of language learning (P34 in Table 1). However, none of the Israeli respondents mentioned the positive role of an L2 teacher.

The next two categories of beliefs concerned affective and motivational aspects of L2 learning, reported by seven and six participants respectively. There were voices underlining the need for a positive atmosphere (e.g., F4), enjoyment (e.g., I5) and building linguistic self-confidence (e.g., P5). Motivational factors were present in the beliefs of Finnish (e.g., F5), Polish (e.g., P34), and Spanish (e.g., S4) participants; whereas Israeli pre-service teachers did not refer to this openly.

Table 1

Examples of beliefs about L2 learning given by pre-service EFL teachers from Finland, Israel, Poland, and Spain

Category	Examples			
	Finland	Israel	Poland	Spain
L2 exposure	*F2: One needs real-life exposure combined with formal teaching.*	*I2: First of all, you must be exposed to English.*	*P16: The contact with language is crucial.*	*S3: Watching TV series is an outstanding method to improve [an L2].*
L2 use	*F4: In order to be a proficient L2 user, one has to actually start using the language, both in writing and speaking.*	*I3: I believe practice makes perfect. So in order to be proficient in a language you need to practice it more often.*	*P10: Practice and context matter more than formal, explicit instruction.*	*S2: Communicative skills are the basis to learn a language.*
Teacher's role	*F2: One needs real-life exposure combined with formal teaching.*	–	*P34: It is essential to have a positive feedback from the teacher.*	*S3: What really matters is the passion of the teacher.*
Affective needs	*F4: There needs to be this safe environment where the learners can start putting to practice what they have learnt.*	*I5: I learnt English through songs, movies, reading short stories. All of them were fun […] so teaching must be fun.*	*P5: It is important to learn self-confidence in foreign language conversation.*	–
Motivation	*F5: Language learning is most effective when the motivation for it is intrinsic.*	–	*P34: It is essential to have great motivation to learn [an L2].*	*S4: Motivation is very important to learn not only English but all the subjects.*
L2 knowledge	–	*I4: The important thing is to expand your knowledge and try to learn as much vocabulary as you can.*	*P2: It is important to learn vocabulary and grammar.*	–
Language learning strategies	*F3: I think it is important to learn the tools for how we learn new things in a language.*	–	*P22: It is important to repeat new things and be systematic.*	–

Finally, two more categories—the value of L2 knowledge of vocabulary and grammar and language learning strategies—were identified in the narratives of the participants. As many as two Israeli (e.g., I4) and four Polish (e.g., P2) pre-service teachers believed that knowing L2 grammar and vocabulary is important in order to be a proficient L2 user. Two Finnish (e.g., F3) and three Polish (e.g., P22) participants expressed their belief in the value of knowing how to learn.

The second research question was directed towards beliefs about foreign language teaching. Here six categories were identified: preferred teaching method or approach, teacher status, the role of emotions, characteristic features of the good L2 teacher, the need for improved teaching and critical incidents. Table 2 presents these categories and examples of the participants' beliefs regarding RQ2.

The question regarding the beliefs about the most effective method or approach to L2 teaching revealed interesting context-related differences. Pre-service teachers from Finland opted for flexibility in the choice of methods, with more interest given to task-based teaching and group projects. These beliefs were often rooted in their experiences, for example,

F5: *The best method for teaching changes, [depending] on the group. But the one I learnt the best with is task-based teaching.*

F4: *In my opinion, task-based language teaching, in general, is very interesting and the most effective way to learn a foreign language.*

F1: *Group projects hold students' interest.*

Israeli participants believed in student-centered and meaningful learning. They emphasized that the teaching approach should be relevant and engaging, for example,

I1: *[The method] should be relevant to the daily life.*

I2: *[The method] should be student-centred.*

I3: *Teaching should activate meaningful learning (through meaningful activities, useful games).*

A cognitive approach to L2 learning was supported by one Polish individual:

P19: *The awareness of different methods is valuable to assess what works and what doesn't. In my opinion, cognitive approach is the one that really influenced my teaching. The idea of brain-friendly learning made my lessons more meaningful and creative, which resulted in higher motivation of my students and [their] better remembering.*

Both Spanish and Polish participants believed that the best method should be communicative, for example,

S2: *Communicative methods, in which students have an active role while learning in a [...] contextualised way.*

P34: *I personally believe that the best method for teaching English is based on speaking and active listening [...]. Ability to speak and listen is the most important in communication in a foreign language.*

However, there were many voices stating that no single method is best, and the choice depends on both teacher preferences and learners' needs, for example,

P13: *It [the method] really depends on the teacher's both preparation and attitude, and students' needs as well*;

P20: *[It is fine to] mix all methods [according to] students' needs and requirements.*

P32: *The teacher should mix all of the methods and approaches in order to get what's best for students and also give them opportunities to develop different language skills.*

The next category that emerged in the course of data analysis specified the beliefs regarding the status of a teacher in each context. Two Finnish participants (F1 and F2) confirmed the high status of the profession in Finland. The belief of respect towards the education system was also identified among Israeli pre-service teachers (I1 and I3). However, Polish and Spanish contexts triggered differing beliefs from Finnish and Israeli participants, for example,

P11: *Teachers in Poland are underestimated*, S4: *[A teacher's status] should be higher in our society.*

Table 2

Examples of Beliefs about L2 Teaching Given by the Pre-service EFL Teachers from Finland, Israel, Poland, and Spain

Category	Examples			
	Finland	Israel	Poland	Spain
Teaching method/approach	task-based L2 teaching, group projects	student-centred, engaging, relevant to a daily life, meaningful learning	Communicative Language Teaching, meaningful conversations, mixing methods depending on the needs	communicative, contextualised, engaging learners
Teacher's status	*F1/F2: Language teacher is a respected profession.* *F3: Most people respect teachers but [some] complain that teachers have too good salary, long holidays.*	*I3: I believe in our system.* *I1: Teaching English is an essential job.*	*P1/P11: Teachers in Poland are underestimated.* *P2/P7: English teachers have a higher status in Poland than other teachers.* *Teaching is a vocation/mission.*	*S4: Should be higher in our society.*

Emotions	happiness	joy	pride (regarding learners' progress), joy, happiness	joy, pride, happiness, passion
Teachers' characteristic features	*F3: A guide for others to learn the language and all the wonderful things you can do and learn with it. well qualified; keen on working with other people; creative, innovative, adaptable.*	*I5: Responsible (because they educate another generation).*	*P15/P7/P3: Teachers should be patient, knowledgeable, inspirational, supportive, progressive.*	*S2: A teacher needs to be a good model. S4/S1: High expertise is important.*
Need for improved teaching	*F5: My experiences have taught me what not to do.*	*I5: I want to be a different teacher from the ones in my country. I2: I don't want to teach the way I observed teachers teach.*	*P4: Teachers in my country, especially in primary and high schools, are old-fashioned, strict and literal-minded. It is very sad. Always just books, exams, tests. I definitely do not want to be that ordinary teacher. I'd like to be "oh she is the teacher who showed me that English is wonderful."*	*S2: I believe that a professional L2 teacher needs to make the effort of changing what s/he has observed […] in order to improve.*

Several similarities were identified in the beliefs about positive affect in L2 teaching among the participants from Finland, Israel, Poland, and Spain, for example,

S3: *[...] when I see that something [that] I have invested my time in is giving results in my students, I feel happy.*

I5: *[...] teaching must be fun [...]. I want to be a teacher who makes pupils say "we want to learn English all day."*

I2: *[I want] to make my students love the language although they might not be proficient in English. It means a lot, especially in my [Bedouin] society.*

P3: *I enjoy tutoring, and when I see my students get better grades and [are] happy because of it, it makes me happy as well.*

P4: *A professional language teacher is not only a person who instructs or trains others, but a person who makes positive difference in the lives of many, I mean, who inspires and motivates further learning.*

P15: *[...] motivating them [learners] to learn is something that brings me joy.*

P20: *A person who is a teacher has to be passionate about what he/she does.*

F4: *I would like to be able to make the learning process as interesting and rewarding as possible [...] I want to be a language teacher because I want to give others the same happiness which I have received from education.*

Similar teacher characteristics were identified as important for those who want to enter this profession. These were, among others, high level of linguistic expertise, teaching skills and soft skills, for example,

P4: *A professional language teacher is someone who provides knowledge, skills and willingness.*

P6: *Being a teacher requires a lot of patience and understanding.*

P9: *[Teachers] educate the next generation of citizens, not only equipping them with skills and knowledge required as per curriculum, but also social skills, critical thinking; they can influence learners' approaches to learning.*

I3: *I believe that a teacher should be supportive, a good listener, and [he/she should] encourage his/her pupils to do their best.*

S2: *A professional language teacher needs to be a good model for his/her students in order to expose them to a correct input of the language.*

F3: *Being a professional language teacher means that I can be a guide for others to learn the language and all the wonderful things you can do and learn with it.*

Next, in each context-related group of pre-service teachers, there were instances of the beliefs that were rooted in negative experiences of either previous schooling or observation of teachers. Individual participants expressed their need for improved teaching in the future (examples in Table 2).

Additionally, some participants described critical incidents which, as they claimed, had changed their beliefs about teaching, for example,

I4: *Discovering the importance of teacher-student relationship (teacher asking Ls for opinion).*

P9: *Reflecting on a wrong assumption about one student who refused to work on a Mother's Day card.*

S1: *English Day at school as a motivational tool for students' L2 communication.*

Although critical incidents seem to be crucial in the development of every teacher (Gabryś-Barker, 2012), they occurred as a result of single experiences, and because of their individual character, they will not be further analyzed here from the perspective of a contextual approach.

The third research question aimed to analyze the beliefs concerning L2 teaching in a post-pandemic situation. As the item regarding the beliefs about post-pandemic teaching was added to the questionnaire at a later stage of data collection, only five Finnish and twenty Polish participants provided the answers. For this reason, only the main common themes, without regard for context, have been traced and analyzed. Participants (ten out of 25 individuals) generally agreed that teaching will involve the use of technology, for example,

F3: *We will learn to use more digital resources in class.*

F4: *L2 learning in the future after this pandemic could include more technology and virtual possibilities [but] we need classrooms in order to be able to practice our skills.*

P9: *I think the pandemic may bring more tech solutions into classrooms.*

P12: *Many teachers will rely on technologies that are currently used in online teaching; [they] will use many interesting things that they have found to engage their students.*

P14: *Teachers will be more open to use media, helpful websites, etc.*

P20: *Some teachers will more often apply innovative methods of teaching, like using online sources, technical equipment, etc., to improve their methods.*

Three participants believed that distance learning will be continued, though in a changed form, for example,

F1: *More classes will be held online, e.g. a Remote Learning Friday.*

F2: *More distant learning.*

P13: *Society should consider the remote learning strategies in the case another pandemic breaks out.*

However, some participants (six out of 25) denied any changes, for example,

F5: *I think that when the COVID-19 situation is over, language teaching will be pretty much the same as it was before it.*

P1: *I think no visible changes will occur.*

Interestingly, an individual identified the need for millennial teachers to enter the profession in order to meet learners' expectations—P15: *I think that [the] pandemic has shown that schools may require younger generation of teachers or teachers must be more and more creative in order to motivate Ls.* Another one predicted a new role that a language teacher may be challenged to take in the classroom—P19: *Maybe teachers will become less important and the influence of the internet as the source of knowledge will be bigger.*

Many individuals (11 out of 25) were concerned about the immediate post-pandemic outcomes, such as lowered motivation of learners, their competence levels, and psychological needs for social contacts, for example,

> P5: *I think that the level of not only language learning, but also general knowledge of students will drop significantly.*
>
> P6: *[COVID-19 pandemic] may have an impact on the level of motivation and responsibility in students.*
>
> P16: *I believe that students and teachers will appreciate the classes in a school environment.*
>
> F1: *Teachers and students are going to appreciate close proximity again.*

Generally, the beliefs regarding teaching in the post-pandemic classroom centered around technology, teaching skills, and affective factors in L2 learners.

Discussion

The beliefs about L2 learning generated data that were assigned to eight categories: value of exposure to the target language, L2 use, the L2 teacher's supportive role in the process of learning, affective needs, motivation, knowledge of an L2 and language learning strategies. The analysis of the data for the purposes of responding to RQ1 disclosed more cross-contextual similarities than differences. The participants frequently reflected upon their own experiences of learning before disclosing their beliefs, which complies with the operational definition of beliefs provided earlier (Kalaja et al., 2016). Regardless of context, they generally agreed that exposure to language and language use in a communicative and meaningful way are the foundations of L2 learning. The belief in the immense role of exposure and communicative use of the target language goes in line with the input and interaction approach to L2 acquisition (Gass & Selinker, 2008), which describes L2 learning as a process that moves from linguistic input, understood as exposure to language, through linguistic

output, or the production of language, to "feedback that comes as a result of interaction" (p. 317). The last component of the interaction approach was partially reflected in the participants' responses on the role of an L2 teacher (cf. P34). However, apart from a few instances, the role of feedback was generally neglected in the narratives of the EFL pre-service teachers. There were also few participants who believed that positive affect (e.g., joy) and motivation are critical factors, which is widely supported in the psycholinguistic literature (e.g., Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015).

Some very tentative remarks regarding context-related differences might be outlined on the basis of the beliefs about the teacher's role in the process of language learning. Finnish individuals held the belief that a teacher, being a representative of the education system, plays an important supportive role in L2 learning; Polish beliefs focused on specific teaching skills that help in L2 learning; Spanish participants' beliefs referred to the affective side of an effective teacher. The difference was also visible in the last two categories of beliefs: some Finnish and Polish pre-service teachers expressed their belief that learning strategies—knowing how—are important, whereas Israeli and Polish individuals believed in the value of knowing grammar and vocabulary—knowing what. These provisional remarks, however, should be approached with caution because of the scant and unevenly distributed evidence.

The beliefs about L2 teaching of the pre-service teachers were grouped into six categories: preferred teaching method or approach, teacher's status, emotions, characteristic features of the good L2 teacher, and the need for improved teaching. The beliefs about the most effective method or approach to L2 teaching revealed that the pre-service teachers opted for communicative, task-based and learner-centered language teaching, encouraging group projects. As the participants reported, these beliefs were often rooted in their own experiences and compatible with beliefs about the value of L2 use in the process of learning. However, there were also voices favoring the EFL teacher's freedom of choice of method. The beliefs about a teacher's status reflected contextual differences. The high status of the profession in Finland (Malinen et al., 2012) was confirmed by the Finnish individuals. Despite a low score for Israel on the Teacher Status Index scale (Dolton et al., 2018), Israeli participants expressed their respect towards the education system and teaching profession. This might be explained by their cultural background—three of them came from the Bedouin minority that limits professional choices for females—and their gratitude for educational opportunities they had received. Unlike Finnish and Israeli participants, Polish and Spanish held the beliefs that teachers coming from their contexts had low status. Next, the affective side of the teaching process was underscored by several participants, regardless of context. They believed that teaching should mostly be associated with positive emotions of joy, happiness, motivation, and passion, which goes in line with a growing body of

research into the role of positive psychology in L2 learning (cf. Gabryś-Barker & Gałajda, 2016). Such teacher characteristics as high level of linguistic expertise, teaching skills and soft skills were believed to be important for those who wanted to enter the EFL teaching profession. These characteristics might be compared with the trainee teachers' core competences: knowledge, skills, and social competences, included in legislative documents in the four contexts (see Section: Context-related Beliefs about Language Learning and Teaching). Finally, the need for improved teaching was voiced by several participants who had shared their negative past classroom experiences and stated that they would act differently in the future. They often declared they would teach professionally in contrast to their past teacher(s). These beliefs were identified in each of the four contexts. Similar results were reported by Yüksel and Kavanoz (2015).

The beliefs about EFL teaching in the future after the COVID-19 pandemic situation might be roughly divided into those referring to technology, describing changes in EFL teaching, and those concerning learners' problems and needs. In general, the distant form of teaching during COVID-19 pandemic induces the use of digital resources, which add a different dimension to in-class teaching. For this reason, as several participants of the study believe, a post-pandemic teacher with increased virtual teaching abilities might create a classroom in which more digital tools and resources would be used than ever before. Moreover, emotional, post-pandemic effects are clearly identifiable among the beliefs regarding the future EFL classroom. Low motivation and decreased responsibility for one's own learning exemplify the negative issues, whereas the need for student-teacher proximity in the real classroom represents the positive beliefs about the future classroom. A tentative picture of a future classroom inspired by the beliefs of the trainee teachers from the four contexts will be drafted in the concluding section.

Conclusions

The aim of this study was to explore the beliefs of the millennial pre-service teachers coming from four different socio-cultural and educational settings: Finland, Israel, Poland, and Spain. The findings might help to create a preliminary account of future L2 teaching excellence informed by these beliefs because "individual teachers bring to teaching very different beliefs and assumptions about what constitutes effective teaching" (Radwan, 2019, p. 39). Nevertheless, acting is not possible without suitable affordances—the possibilities for action that the environment offers to the individual (van Lier, 2004, p. 79). Therefore,

the contexts that the pre-service teacher trainees live and learn in play a role in generating their beliefs about L2 learning and teaching. Furthermore, any two disparate contexts definitely offer diverse affordances, based on socio-cultural and education systems. However, despite the contextual differences of the study participants, numerous similarities in their beliefs regarding L2 learning and teaching have been traced. These similarities, in turn, form a database for drafting an image of a universal and cross-contextual future L2 classroom.

Tentative as it is, the picture of a post-pandemic classroom conducted by a millennial foreign language teacher might be sketched from three perspectives: the teacher, the learner, and technology. First, an enthusiastic and creative L2 teacher with a high level of linguistic knowledge and passion for the target language and culture would create a supportive and motivating environment. The teacher's main role would be to guide and manage the process of language learning. Teaching would entail student-centered communicative tasks and projects that reflect the real life needs of the learners. Since the L2 learning process is believed to be supported by ample exposure to the target language, learners would be exposed to linguistic input based not only on the teacher's model but also on digital resources and multimedia. Generally, the Internet would be an important provider of linguistic knowledge and input. Following from this, the teacher's role would be to give learners plentiful opportunities to communicate and practice the L2 in a meaningful way. Communicative language teaching supported with task-based and project-based language teaching might serve these purposes. Apart from the student-centered learning that might take place in the classroom, teachers would occasionally be able to organize remote teaching days as an alternative and motivating form of L2 learning. This picture, however, should be addressed with caution as the scope of data collected does not allow for far-reaching generalizations. Moreover, despite the evidence supporting the positive relationship between beliefs and actions (e.g., Al Harthy et al., 2013; Borg, 2006; Kalaja & Barcelos, 2003), there is no guarantee that the participants of the present study will actually implement what they believe in.

Despite the limitations of the study, the results provided rich data regarding the beliefs about learning and teaching a foreign language that come from the new generation of pre-service teachers, being trained in four different socio-cultural settings. The similarities in their beliefs have been summarized in the form of a tentative picture of the future classroom of a millennial teacher. Context-related differences were identified in the participants' beliefs about the teacher's role in the process of language learning, preferred teaching methods or approaches and the status of the teacher. These findings may inform and inspire L2 teacher educators and stakeholders whose aim is to bring excellence to the L2 teaching profession that is to serve future generations.

References

Al Harthy, S. S. H., Jamaluddin, S., & Abedalaziz, N. A. (2013). Teachers' attitudes and performance: An analysis of effects due to teaching experience. *International Interdisciplinary Journal of Education, 2*(9), 888–893.

Barcelos, A. M. F. (2003). Researching beliefs about SLA: A critical review. In P. Kalaja & A. M. F. Barcelos (Eds.), *Beliefs about SLA: New research approaches* (pp. 7–33). Kluwer.

Barcelos, A. M. F. (2016). Student teachers' beliefs and motivation, and the shaping of their professional identities. In P. Kalaja, A. M. F. Barcelos, M. Aro, & M. Ruohotie-Lyhty (Eds.), *Beliefs, agency and identity in foreign language learning and teaching* (pp. 76–90). Palgrave Macmillan.

Barcelos, A. M. F., & Kalaja, P. (2011). Introduction to beliefs about SLA revisited. *System, 39*(3), 281–289.

Barcelos, A. M. F., & Kalaja, P. (2013). Beliefs in SLA: Teacher. In C. A. Chapelle (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of applied linguistics*. Wiley Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0083

Borg, S. (2003). Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe, and do. *Language Teaching, 36*(2), 81–109.

Borg, S. (2006). *Teacher cognition and language education. Research and practice*. Continuum.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Chong, S., Low, E. L., & Goh, K. C. (2011). Developing student-teachers' professional identities: An exploratory study. *International Education Studies, 4*(1), 30–38.

Dolton, P., Marcenaro, O., de Vries, R., & She, P. (2018). *Global Teacher Status Index 2018*. The Varkey Foundation.

Dörnyei, Z., & Ryan, S. (2015). *The psychology of the language learner revisited* (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315779553

Fernández, D. M., & Hughes, S. (2013). Competences and foreign language teacher education in Spain. In: Pérez Cañado M. (Eds.), *Competency-based language teaching in higher education. Educational linguistics* (pp 63–75). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-5386-0_4

Feryok, A. (2010). Language teacher cognitions: Complex dynamic systems? *System, 38*(2), 272–279. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2010.02.001

Gabryś-Barker, D. (2012). *Reflectivity in pre-service teacher education: A survey of theory and practice.* Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.

Gabryś-Barker, D., & Gałajda, D. (Eds.). (2016). *Positive psychology perspectives on foreign language learning and teaching.* Springer.

Gass, S. M., & Selinker, L. (2008). *Second language acquisition* (3rd ed.). Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

Horwitz, E. K. (1987). Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In A. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 119–129). Prentice Hall.

Howe, N., & Strauss, W. (2000). *Millennials rising: The next great generation*. Vintage Original.

Kalaja, P., & Barcelos, A. M. F. (Eds.). (2003). *Beliefs about SLA: New research approaches*. Kluwer.

Kalaja, P., Barcelos, A. M. F., Aro, M., & Ruohotie-Lyhty, M. (2016). *Beliefs, agency and identity in foreign language learning and teaching.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Koster, B., & Dengerink, J. J. (2008). Professional standards for teacher educators: How to deal with complexity ownership and function experience from the Netherlands. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 31*(2), 135–149.

Kubanyiova, M. (2012). *Teacher development in action: Understanding language teachers' conceptual change*. Palgrave MacmillanLee, C. D. (2009). Cultural influences on learning. In J. A. Banks (Ed.), *The Routledge international companion to multicultural education* (pp. 239–251). Routledge.

Li, J. (2009). Learning to self-perfect: Chinese beliefs about learning. In C. K. K. Chan & N. Rao (Eds.), *Revisiting the Chinese learner* (pp. 35–69). Springer.

Malinen, O., Väisänen, P., & Savolainen, H. (2012). Teacher education in Finland: A review of a national effort for preparing teachers for the future. *The Curriculum Journal*, *23*(4), 567–584. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585176.2012.731011

Navarro, D., & Thornton, K. (2011). Investigating the relationship between belief and action in self-directed language learning. *System, 39*(3), 290–301.

Pan, L., & Block, D. (2011). English as a "global language" in China: An investigation into learners' and teachers' language beliefs. *System, 39*(3), 391–402.

Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, digital immigrants. *On the Horizon, 9*, 1–9.

Pusparini, R., Widiati, U., & Susanti, A. (2021). Pre-service teachers' beliefs about English Language Teaching and Learning in EFL classroom: A review of literature. *JEES (Journal of English Educators Society)*, *6*(1), 147–154. https://doi.org/10.21070/jees.v6i1.1212

Radwan, A. (2019). Changes in prospective teachers' beliefs about foreign language learning in a teacher training program. *Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, *10*(2), 37–48.

Skott, J. (2014). The promises, problems and prospects of research on teachers' beliefs. In H. Fives & M. G. Gill (Eds.), *International handbook of research on teachers' beliefs* (pp. 13– 30). Routledge.

State of Israel Ministry of Education (2019). The Professional Framework for English Teachers 2020. Retrieved 2nd December 2021 from meyda.education.gov.il

Szyszka, M., Smirnov, I., Benchetrit, R., (2018). Towards crossing the borders in foreign language teacher training: A report on a pilot phase of the Tandem Learning for Teacher Training project. *Pogranicze. Polish Borderlands Studies, 6*(4), 263–277.

The Regulation of the Minister of National Education, 25 July 2019, specifying detailed qualifications required from teachers in Poland (Journal of Laws from 2021, item 890).

Yang, N.-D. (1999). The relationship between EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategy use. *System, 27*(4), 515–535.

Yüksel, H. G., & Kavanoz, S. (2015). Influence of prior experiences on pre-service language teachers' perception of teaching. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 199*, 777–784.

van Lier, L. (2004). *The ecology and semiotics of language learning: A sociocultural perspective.* Kluwer Academic.

Vieira-Abrahão, M. H. (2006). The construction of theoretical and practical knowledge in initial teacher education. *Profile, 7*, 87–99.

Wenden, A. L. (1986). Helping language learners think about learning. *ELT Journal, 40*(1), 3–12.

Wenden, A. L. (1998). Metacognitive knowledge and language learning. *Applied Linguistics, 19*(4), 515–537.

Zhong, Q. (2015). The nature of language learners' beliefs: A half-told story. *International Journal of English Studies, 15*(2), 41–60. https://doi.org/10.6018/ijes/2015/2/220061

Magdalena Szyszka

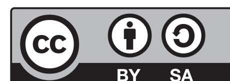
Überzeugungen angehender Englischlehrkräfte der Millennials-Generation aus verschiedenen soziokulturellen Kontexten über das Fremdsprachenlernen und -lehren als Prädiktor für künftiges Lehrerhandeln im Unterricht

Zusammenfassung

Das Ziel der im vorliegenden Artikel geschilderten qualitativen Studie war es, Überzeugungen über das Lernen und Lehren des Englischen als Fremdsprache (EFL) von einzelnen Vertretern der sogenannten Millennials-Generation zu sammeln und einer Analyse zu unterziehen. Die Teilnehmer der Studie waren 47 Lehramtsstudenten in vier soziokulturellen Kontexten: des Finnischen, Israelischen, Polnischen und Spanischen. Ihre Meinung ist von Bedeutung, denn oft sind Überzeugungen dynamisch mit Handlungen verknüpft, und schon bald können EFL-Lehrer aus der Millennials-Generation sie im Unterricht umsetzen. Der in der Studie verwendete kontextbezogene Ansatz bot die Möglichkeit, Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede in den Überzeugungen finnischer, israelischer, polnischer und spanischer Lehrkräfte in den Fokus der Diskussion zu nehmen. Die festgestellten Gemeinsamkeiten bildeten die Grundlage für das Konzept eines universellen, künftigen, post-pandemischen EFL-Unterrichts.

Schlüsselwörter: Lehrerbildung, Überzeugungen, soziokultureller Kontext, Fremdsprachenunterricht

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition
vol. 9 (1), 2023, pp. 1/25
https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.12797



Meihua Liu
Tsinghua University, China

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5951-4167

Chinese University Students' Beliefs about English Language Learning and Self-efficacy

Abstract

Learners' beliefs on language learning and perceived self-efficacy are important to the success of their second/foreign language (SL/FL) learning. To reveal the general profiles of and relationship between Chinese students' beliefs about English learning and self-efficacy, the present study examined beliefs about English learning and self-efficacy held by Chinese university EFL (English as a FL) learners at differing English proficiency levels. A total of 1,698 students from a top university in Beijing answered a battery of questionnaires. The results revealed a general overview of the students' beliefs about the nature of language learning and the roles of teachers, feedback and learning strategies, and self-efficacy. Another major finding was that participants at different English proficiency levels differed significantly from one another in beliefs about language learning and self-efficacy.

Keywords: English learning belief, self-efficacy, difference, proficiency, feedback, strategy

Introduction

Generally concerned with beliefs about the nature and process of language learning, including perceptions of mistakes, self-efficacy and the role of feedback, language learning beliefs are often measured by questionnaires and interviews in specific contexts. It is the same with self-efficacy beliefs which refer to beliefs in one's abilities to do something such as learning a second/foreign language (SL/FL). High self-efficacy seems to motivate students to study harder and achieve more (Woodrow, 2011). Since what learners believe and think what they can do often determines what efforts they will make to study a SL/FL (Gao, 2016; Horwitz, 1988; Wenden, 1991), it is necessary

to research what beliefs are often held by language learners. Although diverse belief patterns have been revealed in learners in different contexts (Al-Roomy, 2015; Daif-Allah, 2012; Yang, 1999), more research is needed considering the large number of learners and variety of contexts. This is especially so in China which houses a large foreign language learning population, while studies on language learning beliefs and self-efficacy are far from adequate. Moreover, few studies have compared beliefs about language learning and self-efficacy between students at different proficiency levels. Hence, the present study intended to explore beliefs about English learning and self-efficacy in Chinese university EFL (English as a FL) students at differing English proficiency levels, hoping to reveal the general profiles of and relationship between their beliefs about English learning and self-efficacy.

Literature Review

Learning beliefs are notions, myths or misconceptions in contrast with "truth" (Alanen, 2003), or subjective and individual understandings that are held to be true (Alexander & Dochy, cited in Wenden, 1998), or the way we think we learn (Riley, 1994). Language learning beliefs are beliefs about how to learn a second language that emerge through one's own experience and the influence of others (Horwitz, 1987). They are generally concerned with beliefs about the nature and process of language learning, including perceptions of mistakes, the role of the teacher, and the role of feedback (Dai & Wang, 2002; Song, 2013; Wenden, 1991; Zhong, 2012). To tap into the profile of students' language learning beliefs, Horwitz (1987) developed the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), which consists of five parts: foreign language aptitude, the difficulty of language learning, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, motivation and expectations. Soon after, many other questionnaires have been developed based on the BALLI to fit different contexts, such as the Language Learner Factors Questionnaire designed by Wen and Johnson (1997), the Belief Survey designed by Sakui and Gaies (1999), the Language Learning Beliefs Questionnaire developed by Liu and Dai (2003), and the Language Learners' Beliefs Scale (LLBS) designed by Birjandi and Mohammadi (2014).

Studies targeting various learners have revealed differing belief patterns among students of different cultures. For example, Korean students are high in their motivation to learn English, place spoken English in a higher place than formal English, while they are not confident enough to speak English with others (Park, 1995). Taiwanese students report to be positive in

self-efficacy about learning English, foreign language aptitude, the communicative function of English and repetitive practice (Yang, 1999). Saudi students seem to be more realistic in beliefs about learning and communication strategies and foreign language aptitude (Al-Roomy, 2015; Daif-Allah, 2012). Mainland Chinese students generally have high beliefs in self-management and foreign language aptitude, great instrumental motivation, and frequent use of learning strategies, but are rather low in self-efficacy, they also rely heavily on their mother tongue to learn English and stress functions more than forms of language learning (Liu & Dai, 2003). Kern (1995) examined the beliefs of 180 Berkeley freshmen from various ethnic groups, including Asians (40%), Caucasians (30%), Hispanics (17%), African-Americans (6%), and American Indians (1.2%), and found that they placed more focus on grammar and were more cautious of making mistakes after having completed 15 weeks of first-year level French. Zhang and Cui (2010) explored beliefs held by distance English language learners in a highly prestigious Chinese university and the differences in beliefs between beginner distance learners and those with more distance education experience. Analyses of 90 questionnaires revealed that most participants regarded insufficient communication with teachers and peer students as the dominant difficulty in distance learning, and that learners with more distance learning experience believed more strongly in the benefits of an autonomous approach to learning. Genç, Kuluşaklı, and Aydın (2016) examined perceived self-efficacy and beliefs on English language learning in 210 Turkish EFL undergraduate English majors. The findings showed that the students had medium scores in their English self-efficacy and strongly believed that motivation factors had a great role on their learning process. The study also showed that the student's beliefs about language learning were affected by their English self-efficacy.

The importance of self-efficacy in SL/FL learning has been well recognized (e.g., Bandura, 1997, 2006; Raoofi, Tan, & Chan, 2012; Sağlam & Arslan, 2018). Grounded within the framework of social cognitive theory of human behavior (Bandura, 1997), self-efficacy beliefs refer to "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). And the efficacy belief system is "not a global trait but a differentiated set of self-beliefs linked to distinct realms of functioning" (Bandura, 2006, p. 307). For example, a learner may believe that they will get a high score in the upcoming English test, another learner may believe that they are better than others in the language class. Thus, "[...] there is no all-purpose measure of perceived self-efficacy" (Bandura, 2006, p. 307). Understandably, different self-reported surveys and questions have been used to measure self-efficacy related to different aspects of SL/FL learning in specific contexts, such as general self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, and web-based learning self-efficacy (Alegre, 2014; Baleghizadeh

& Masoun, 2013; Bandura, 2006; Doménech-Betoret, Abellán-Roselló, & Gómez-Artiga, 2017; Genç, Kuluşaklı, & Aydın, 2016; Kuo, Tsai, & Wang, 2021; Ozer & Akçayoğlu, 2021). For example, Sağlam and Arslan (2018) developed a 29-item English Language Skills Self-Efficacy Scale to measure students' self-efficacy beliefs in four basic language skills. Baleghizadeh and Masoun (2013) divided 57 Iranian learners in an English-language institute into the experimental and control groups to investigate the continuous influence of self-assessment on their self-efficacy in their current English language class. The participants answered the English as a Foreign Language Self-efficacy Questionnaire. The results showed that self-assessment significantly improved the experimental group's self-efficacy. Kuo et al. (2021) administered the self-developed web-based learning self-efficacy questionnaire to 608 university students from Taiwan. The results showed that the components of web-based learning self-efficacy led to different types of engagement: General Internet-based learning self-efficacy contributed to behavioral and emotional engagement, whereas functional Internet-based learning self-efficacy contributed to emotional and cognitive engagement.

These studies, as well as others, generally reveal that self-efficacy helps improve SL/FL learning and is related to many other variables such as academic success, strategy use, and motivation (e.g., Blumenthal, 2014; Bong, 2002; Doménech-Betoret, Abellán-Roselló, & Gómez-Artiga, 2017; Kao et al., 2020; Mills, 2009; Ozer & Akçayoğlu, 2021; Pan & Chen, 2021; Wong, 2005; Woodrow, 2011; Zhan et al., 2021). For example, Woodrow (2011) found that students with high self-efficacy tend to study harder and are more intrinsically motivated. Mills, Pajares, and Herron (2007) found that intermediate-level French learners' confidence beliefs in their ability to attain a particular grade were highly related to their academic success. Mills's (2009) study of 47 university students of French showed that project-based learning significantly improved students' self-efficacy in the areas of communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. Heidari, Izadi, and Ahmadian (2012) explored the relationship between 50 Iranian EFL juniors' self-efficacy beliefs and their employed vocabulary learning strategies. The results revealed that students had fairly high level of self-efficacy and that self-efficacy was significantly positively correlated with their use of vocabulary learning strategies. The results indicated that learners' self-efficacy beliefs had great impact on successful learning experiences and achievements. Doménech-Betoret et al. (2017) administered the self-efficacy and expectancy-value beliefs questionnaires to 797 Spanish secondary education students. Structural equation modeling analyses revealed that students' expectancy-value beliefs mediated the relationship between students' academic self-efficacy and achievement/satisfaction. The findings were partially consistent with those in Zhan et al. (2021), which explored the impact of self-efficacy and learning motives

on 693 Chinese undergraduates' use of deep language learning strategies. 344 university EFL students in Turkey answered a battery of questionnaires in Ozer and Akçayoğlu's (2021) study. Analyses of the data revealed a medium negative correlation between foreign language self-efficacy and anxiety in addition to a small positive correlation between foreign language self-efficacy and self-regulated learning. Pan and Chen (2021) recruited 197 first-year Chinese university students to investigate relations among teacher supports, technology acceptance, technological self-efficacy, and self-directed language learning. The results showed that technological self-efficacy mediated the relationship between teachers' affective supports and students' self-directed language learning as well as the relationship between teachers' behavior supports and students' self-directed language learning.

Research Questions

As reviewed above, most current literature shows that beliefs about language learning and self-efficacy affect how students behave to a great extent and that these beliefs interact with other variables during the process of SL/FL learning. Although the current literature has revealed interesting findings about learners' beliefs of language learning and self-efficacy, more research is called for given the large number of language learners, the huge variety of learning contexts, the complicated nature of language learning and the roles of learning beliefs and efficacy in language learning. It is the same in China with a large number of foreign language learners. Moreover, limited studies can be found which have examined beliefs about language learning and self-efficacy between students at various proficiency levels. Thus, to reveal the general profiles of and relationship between Chinese students' beliefs about English learning and self-efficacy, the present study aimed to examine beliefs about English learning and self-efficacy in Chinese university EFL students at differing English proficiency levels. The following questions were of particular interest:

1. What are the profiles of Chinese university students' language learning beliefs and self-efficacy?
2. Are there any belief and self-efficacy differences among students at varying English proficiency levels?
3. How are the students' learning beliefs related to self-efficacy?

The Present Study

This study was conducted in a top state-owned university in Beijing, which often accepted outstanding high school graduates in each province of China. In this university, all first-year non-English majors had to take the standard English placement test prior to the start of formal classroom teaching when they first registered in the university. The test consisted of listening, reading, and writing, the results of which put the testees into bands 1–3 groups. Students with lower scores went into lower band groups, which signified lower proficiency in English. They then selected English language courses accordingly.

Participants

A total of 1,698 (776 male, 918 female, and four missing genders) students participated in the study, of whom 1,171 were freshmen, 481 sophomores, 41 juniors and four seniors. 833 (324 male, 505 female and four missing) were in the band 1 group, 444 (245 male and 199 female) and 421 (207 male and 214 female) were in bands 2 and 3 groups respectively. With an average age of 19 (SD = 1.10) and an age range of 16 to 24, the participants came from various disciplines such as architecture, civil engineering, medicine, business management, and psychology.

Instruments

The survey consisted of three parts: background information questionnaire, English Learning Belief Inventory, and Self-Efficacy Belief Questionnaire. The background information questionnaire covered such items as gender, age, discipline, and English band level. The 29-item English Learning Belief Inventory (ELBI) (Cronbach alpha a = .749) and the 14-item Self-Efficacy Belief Questionnaire (SEBQ) (a = .644) were adopted from the questionnaire used in Zhang and Cui (2010). The ELBI asked students to report their beliefs about the nature of language learning, the role of the teacher, the role of feedback and language learning strategies. The SEBQ had three parts: The 3-item Self-Efficacy Questionnaire invited students to comment on their language learning abilities, the 8-item Self-evaluation Questionnaire asked students to assess the importance of feedback, opportunities, practice, teachers' help and personal effort in language learning, and the last three items asked students to judge what type of learners they were. The ELBI used a five-point Likert scale with 1 referring to 'strongly agree' and 5 'strongly disagree,' and the SEBQ employed 'no' (1) and 'yes' (2) choices for each item.

Data Collection Procedure and Analyses

The survey was translated into English and back-checked by a teacher researcher with Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics. Then the survey, together with a consent form, was administered to students by their course teachers in class and was answered in about 15 minutes during class break. The collected data was analyzed via SPSS 20. Means and standard deviations of ELBI items as well as frequency and percentages of SEBQ items were computed to explore general patterns of students' language learning beliefs and self efficacy. Post-hoc ANOVA (Duncan) was then run to examine differences in language learning beliefs and self-efficacy between students in different band groups. Finally, correlation analyses were conducted to reveal relations between language learning beliefs and self-efficacy.

Results

English Learning Beliefs

Beliefs about the Nature of Language Learning

As shown in Table 1, the participants scored more than 3 on items 1–6, with a score of nearly 4 (mean = 3.83 ~ 4.00) on items 1–4. Alternatively, 70% to 80% of the participants (strongly) agreed that *making mistakes is a natural part of learning*, that *different people learn languages in different ways*, that *language learning takes a long time*, that *it is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language*, and that *I need to know language rules before I can communicate in English*; and around 60% believed that *women are better than men at learning foreign languages*. Meanwhile, around 40% of the participants endorsed item 11 that *making mistakes is harmful in language learning* (mean = 2.10), further confirming their agreement with item 1 that making mistakes is a natural part of learning. In addition, a score of 2.996 on item 10 suggested that around half of the participants agreed that it is possible to learn a language in a short time. The participants scored 2.42 to 2.76 on items 7–9, indicating that around one third of the participants assumed that they *can communicate in English without knowing the rules*, that *learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules*, and that *learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from Chinese*.

A similar score pattern for items 1 to 11 was observed for all the three bands students. Moreover, as reported in Table 1, band 1 students scored the lowest on items 3–4, 6 and 10 yet the highest on items 7 and 11; band 2 students scored the highest on items 1–6 and 10 but the lowest on items 8–9 and 11; band 3 students scored the lowest on items 1–2, 5 and 7 but the highest on item 8. ANOVA analyses revealed significant differences in items 1 ($F = 6.18$, $p = .002$), 2 ($F = 4.02$, $p = .018$), 5 ($F = 4.02$, $p = .018$), 8 ($F = 13.22$, $p = .000$), 9 ($F = 11.12$, $p = .000$), and 11 ($F = 3.71$, $p = .025$) (Table 1). Alternatively, band 2 students agreed significantly more strongly than their bands 1 and 3 peers that *making mistakes is a natural part of learning* but significantly less strongly than the latter two groups that *learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from Chinese*, and significantly more strongly than their band 3 peers that *different people learn languages in different ways*; band 3 students were significantly less in line with the statement that *women are better than men at learning foreign languages* than their bands 1 and 2 peers; band 1 students believed significantly more strongly than their band 2 peers that *making mistakes is harmful in language learning*; and the students of three bands differed significantly from one another in their agreement with item 8 that *learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules*.

Role of Teachers

The participants scored 2.98 to 3.78 on items (12–18) on the role of teachers (Table 1). Namely, around 80% of the participants believed that the role of teachers was to help them learn effectively or to offer to help them. Around half of them acknowledged that the role of teachers was to tell them what to do, what their difficulties were, and what progress they had made, to set their learning goals and give them regular tests.

A similar score pattern was observed for students of all three bands. Table 1 shows that bands 1–3 students had nearly similar scores on items 12–18. Results of ANOVA analyses (Table 1) revealed significant differences in items 15 ($F = 2.62$, $p = .073$) and 18 ($F = 2.55$, $p = .078$). Namely, band 2 students believed significantly less strongly than their band 3 peers that the role of teachers was to tell them what their difficulties were; and band 1 students were significantly more in line with the role of teachers being to set learning goals than their band 2 peers.

Role of Feedback

The participants scored 2.97 to 3.33 on items 19 to 21, indicating that more than half of them acknowledged: *having my work evaluated by others is helpful* and *I know best how well I am learning*, and that around half of them considered themselves good at language learning.

A similar score pattern was observed for students of all three bands. Meanwhile, band 1 students scored the lowest on items 19–20; band 2 students scored the highest on items 19–21; and band 3 students scored the lowest on item 21. Results of ANOVA showed that significant differences occurred in items 20 (F = 10.87, p = .000) and 21 (F = 2.57, p = .077). Namely, band 2 students agreed significantly more strongly that they were good at language learning than their bands 2 and 3 counterparts and that they knew best how well they were learning than their band 3 peers.

Use of Strategies

The participants scored 3.01 to 3.69 on all items (22–29) on the use of strategies except for item 26 (mean = 2.57). This meant that around 50% to 70% of the students believed that they could explain why they needed English, knew how to set their own learning goals, identify their strengths and weaknesses, find their own ways of practicing, plan their learning, measure their progress and check their work for mistakes. Around 40% of them thought they would go up to practice speaking English when hearing someone speaking English.

A similar score pattern was observed for students of all the three bands. Band 1 students scored the lowest on items 22, 24–25 and 29 yet the highest on item 26; band 2 students scored the highest on all the items; and band 3 students scored the lowest on items 23 and 26–28. Results of ANOVA analyses revealed significant differences in items 24 (F = 6.10, p = .002), 25 (F = 6.20, p = .002), 27 (F = 2.93, p = .054) and 29 (F = 5.51, p = .004). Alternatively, band 2 students believed significantly more strongly than their bands 1 and 3 counterparts that they knew how to identify their strengths and weaknesses, find their own ways of practicing and check their work for mistakes. They also believed significantly more strongly than their band 3 peers that they knew how to plan their learning.

Self-efficacy Beliefs

Self-efficacy

As shown in Table 2, more than 68.9% of the participants acknowledged that they had the ability to learn a language successfully and to get the score they desired in their next English test, and that they knew how to find an effective way to learn English. A similar pattern existed for students of all three bands. Band 2 students had the highest percentages of agreement, followed by bands 3 and 1 groups respectively. Results of ANOVA analyses revealed significant difference in items 31 ($F = 7.31$, $p = .001$) and 32 ($F = 2.70$, $p = .067$). Namely, band 2 students believed significantly more strongly than their bands 1 and 3 peers that they would get the score they desired in their next English test, and significantly more strongly than their band 3 counterparts that they knew how to find an effective way to learn English.

Self-evaluation

As many as 67.1%, 54.6%, and 41.6% of the participants believed that feedback they gave themselves, feedback from teachers, and feedback from other people helped them most, respectively. 62.7%, 81.9%, 80.3%, and 83.1% of the students held the view that feedback, opportunities to use the language, practice and their own effort played the most important role in successful language learning, respectively. Only 39.8% believed that the language teacher played the most important role. Similar patterns existed for students of all three bands. Scoring higher or lower in different items, the three band groups differed significantly from one another in all self-evaluation items except for items 37–38, with F values ranging from 2.82 ($p = .06$) to 11.71 ($p = .000$). Alternatively, band 2 students believed significantly more strongly than their bands 1 and 3 peers that the feedback given by themselves helped them most, yet significantly less strongly than the other two groups that the feedback from the teacher or other people helped them most and that the language teacher played the most important role in successful language learning. In addition, band 1 students believed significantly more strongly than the band 2 group that feedback played the most important role in successful language learning and significantly more strongly than their band 3 peers that their own effort played the most important role in successful language learning.

Type of Learner

62.1%, 59.1%, and 76.5% of the participants considered themselves to be learners who liked to learn with other people, a teacher and on their own, respectively. A similar pattern was observed for students of all the three bands. With similar scores on items 41–43, band 3 students significantly differed from band 2 students in item 42 (F = 2.03, p = .131) and band 1 students in item 43 (F = 2.65, p = .071). Namely, band 3 students rated themselves as learners who liked to learn with a teacher significantly more strongly than their band 2 peers and themselves as learners who liked to learn on their own significantly less strongly than their band 1 peers.

Relationship between Language Learning Beliefs and Self-efficacy Beliefs

As reported in Table 3, most of the ELBI items were significantly related to SEBQ items. The coefficients significant for both the whole sample and the three band groups were those between ELBI items 1–2, 10, 20, 22–25, 27–28 and SEBQ1, between ELBI items 20, 23–29 and SEBQ items 2–3, between ELBI items 20, 23–25, 28–29 and SEBQ4, between ELBI8 and SEBQ5, between ELBI items 9 and 19 and SEBQ6, between ELBI items 9, 17–18 and SEBQ10, between ELBI12 and SEBQ11, and between ELBI19 and SEBQ13. The coefficients significant for three of the four samples were those between ELBI items 11–13, 21, 26 and 29 and SEBQ1, between ELBI items 10 and 21–22 and SEBQ2, between ELBI items 7, 10, 21–22 and SEBQ3, between ELBI items 7–8 and 26–27 and SEBQ4, between ELBI items 9, 10, 16 and 18–19 and SEBQ5, between ELBI items 2, 8, 11 and 18 and SEBQ6, between ELBI items 11–12 and SEBQ8, between ELBI items 6 and 11–12 and SEBQ9, between ELBI items 1–2, 8, 11 and SEBQ10, between ELBI items 2, 11 and SEBQ11, between ELBI items 15, 19 and 26–27 and SEBQ12, between ELBI items 15–16 and SEBQ13, and ELBI items 7, 14 and 23–25 and SEBQ14. The remaining significant coefficients held true for one or two specific samples. All these findings indicated that students' language learning beliefs were generally significantly correlated with their self-efficacy beliefs. For example, the more strongly a respondent agreed that making mistakes was a natural part of learning, the more strongly he/she believed in his/her ability to learn a language successfully.

Furthermore, 182, 131, 103, and 94 significant coefficients existed for the whole sample, band 1, band 2, and band 3 samples, respectively. It seemed that the larger the sample size, the more significant correlations there were between English learning belief statements and self-efficacy items.

Discussion

Findings and Summary

Statistical analyses showed that both the ELBI and SEBQ were fairly reliable in the present study, which also found that most of the ELBI items were significantly related to SEBQ items for both the whole sample and the three band groups. In particular, the SEBQ items were generally significantly correlated with belief statements about strategy use, as found in similar studies (Genç et al., 2016; Heidari et al., 2012; Raoofi et al., 2012; Zhan et al., 2021). In addition, as shown in Table 3, the larger the sample size, the more significant correlations there were between ELBI and SEBQ items. These findings might be largely attributed to the large size of each specific sample. Thus, the results need to be confirmed with samples of varying sizes.

General Profiles of and Differences in Students' Language Learning Beliefs

The findings of this study presented a general overview of English learning beliefs and self-efficacy held by Chinese university EFL learners. The majority of the students, in spite of their English proficiency level, demonstrated similar beliefs and perceptions as learners of foreign languages. For example, to most of them, making mistakes was a natural part of learning; different people learned languages in different ways; learning a language took time; feedback, personal efforts and others' help played important roles in learning foreign languages successfully; people should employ various strategies accordingly to learn foreign languages well. All these beliefs were generally in line with language learning theories. For instance, according to the behaviorism theory (McLeod, 2017; Skinner, 1953) and the input theory (Krashen, 1982, 1985, 2008), practice, interaction, reinforcement, mistakes, and feedback are crucial to the acquisition of a foreign language, especially to adult learners. Moreover, according to the input theory, knowing language rules helps learners monitor their output, which justifies the belief held by many learners that they could not communicate in English without knowing the rules and that learning a foreign language was mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules. Since learning a foreign language takes time and is more than learning grammar rules and vocabulary, learners may experience various emotions such as anxiety and enjoyment, encounter numerous challenges and thus be under varying degrees of pressure during the learning process, as discussed in Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) and Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014). All these findings attest to

the importance of learner-internal and external factors in SL/FL learning and acquisition (Skehan, 1989).

In addition, quite many students expected much of their teachers who should help them learn (more) effectively, tell them how to set goals, plan their learning and provide feedback on their progress. These beliefs might be influenced by traditional Chinese culture which regards teachers as authority figures of knowledge who have supreme power to educate and plan for their students (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Scollon & Scollon, 2000).

Moreover, many participants agreed that learning a FL was mostly a matter of translating from Chinese. This indicated that they were aware of other factors involved in SL/FL learning in addition to grammar and vocabulary, as discussed in Horwitz et al. (1986) and Skehan (1989) and evidenced in empirical research (e.g., Botes, Dewaele, & Greiff, 2020; Gardner, 1985; Liu, 2020).

Concurrently, the present study revealed that most participants knew their motives to study English as well as their strengths and weaknesses, and knew how to plan and assess their learning, implying that they were largely autonomous and independent learners, as found in Zhang and Cui (2010). This might be attributed to the fact that the participants were from a top university in China, which generally accepted outstanding senior high school graduates in each province of the country. These students might have got accustomed to learning on their own to become exceptionally good.

The present study also revealed significant differences in certain beliefs between students in different band groups, especially between band 2 students and their bands 1 and 3 peers. For example, band 2 students agreed significantly more strongly than their bands 1 and 3 peers that making mistakes was a natural part of learning but significantly less strongly than the latter two groups that learning a foreign language was mostly a matter of translating from Chinese. They believed significantly less strongly than their band 3 peers that the role of teachers was to tell them what their difficulties were, and significantly less strongly than band 1 students that the role of teachers was to set learning goals. They also reported to be more significantly independent in learning foreign languages. It was hard to explain these differences, which needs further research.

In addition, band 3 students were significantly less strongly in line with the statement that *women are better than men at learning foreign languages* than their bands 1 and 2 peers. This might be because the band 3 group had the lowest male to female ratio. Moreover, band 1 students believed significantly more strongly than their band 2 peers that making mistakes was harmful in language learning. Furthermore, students of three bands differed significantly from one another in their agreement with the belief that *learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules*, indicating that

the participants had mixed attitudes towards grammar learning. The following two reasons might have contributed to this: (a) English language education has long focused on grammar and continues to be so even now in many places in China, and (b) various teaching approaches have been introduced into classroom teaching and learning, especially communicative teaching and learning, which emphasizes the importance of effective communication. Nevertheless, all these explanations remain assumptions, which need to be confirmed in future research.

General Profiles of and Differences in Students' Self-efficacy Beliefs

As presented above, the participants, in spite of their English proficiency level, acknowledged that they had the ability to learn a language successfully and knew how to learn English effectively. They were also aware of the importance of feedback, opportunities to use the language, practice, their own efforts and the language teacher, and knew what kind of learners they were. All these findings indicated that they had great self-efficacy beliefs, as found in similar studies (Blumenthal, 2014; Mills, 2009; Pan & Chen, 2021; Yang, 1999; Zhan et al., 2021; Zhang & Cui, 2010). These findings not only further supported the participants' beliefs about language learning, but further pinpointed that they were confident and autonomous learners, like their peers in Zhang and Cui (2010).

Likewise, the present study also revealed significant differences in certain self-efficacy beliefs between students in different band groups, especially between band 2 students and their bands 1 and 3 peers. For example, band 2 students believed in their ability to achieve their goals and the supreme importance of their own feedback significantly more strongly than their bands 1 and 3 peers, and in their ability to learn English effectively significantly more strongly than their band 3 counterparts. Band 1 students believed in the supreme importance of feedback in successful language learning significantly more strongly than the band 2 group and in the supreme role of personal efforts in successful language learning significantly more strongly than their band 3 counterparts. These findings seem to contradict with the belief that self-efficacy beliefs positively affect academic success (Alegre, 2014; Mills, 2009; Woodrow, 2011). Thus, they need to be further researched.

Limitations

The present large-scale study provided an overview of Chinese university EFL learners' beliefs and self-efficacy about English learning and revealed the

general relationship between the two, thus contributing to a better understanding of the two issues. Even so, some limitations existed in the study. The biggest limitation was that the study solely relied on survey data. If complemented with qualitative data, the study might be able to better account for the significant differences in certain English learning beliefs and self-efficacy between students at varying English proficiency levels. In addition, the participants of the present study solely came from the same highly prestigious university, who had probably formed the habit of being confident and autonomous learners earlier in secondary schools. Students with other backgrounds might display different belief and self-efficacy patterns, which will be examined in future research. Moreover, as discussed in Amuzie and Winke (2009), Zhang and Cui (2010) and Ozer and Akçayoğlu (2021), language learning beliefs and self-efficacy are dynamic and change at different stages of the learning process. The present study only captured students' English learning beliefs and self-efficacy at a certain moment. Future research should be directed to examine whether, how, and why their beliefs and self-efficacy about language learning change over time.

Conclusions

The present study examined English learning beliefs and self-efficacy held by Chinese university EFL learners. The results revealed a general overview of the students' beliefs about the nature of language learning and the roles of teachers, feedback and learning strategies, and self-efficacy. The whole sample as well as those at varying English proficiency levels demonstrated similar beliefs and perceptions as learners of foreign languages. They generally believed that making mistakes was a natural part of language learning, that learning a foreign language took time, that students should resort to various strategies according to individual needs, and that teachers, feedback, practice, and personal efforts all played important roles in successful language learning. They also believed that they had the ability to learn a foreign language well. All these indicated that the students were generally confident and autonomous learners.

The study also showed that students at different English proficiency levels differed significantly from one another in English learning beliefs and self-efficacy. Though mixed findings occurred, band 2 students had stronger beliefs about the value of independent and autonomous learning and greater self-confidence in successful language learning than the other two groups. Even so, in terms of overall readiness for autonomous and independent learning, there is still room for development. This is especially so for students at lower profi-

ciency levels. Considering the great impact of long-history traditional Chinese culture and classroom education, it may take Chinese learners a lot more efforts to transit from passive to active, independent, and autonomous learners. The underlying mechanisms for this transition deserve research in the future. Concurrently, teachers can help students with the transition by sharing learning experiences, co-setting goals, assigning both individual and collaborative projects and other means.

Meanwhile, as found in Woodrow (2011), students with high self-efficacy tend to study harder and are more intrinsically motivated. Heidari et al.'s (2012) study indicated that self-efficacy beliefs had great impact on successful learning experiences and achievements. Thus, it is beneficial to develop positive self-efficacy beliefs in learners. For example, a positive and encouraging attitude can help facilitate students' positive self-efficacy beliefs (Woodrow, 2011). Teachers can help students hold correct beliefs about foreign language learning to motivate them to study the target language (Genç et al., 2016). Moreover, as discussed in Zhong (2012), learners might be more likely to act upon their beliefs when they are high in their self-efficacy. Therefore, it is necessary to boost students' self-efficacy, in that when they believe in their ability to perform they would invest more efforts into language learning and thus achieve better learning outcomes.

References

Alanen, R. (2003). A sociocultural approach to young language learners' beliefs about language learning. In P. Kalaja & A. M. F. Barcelos (Eds.), *Beliefs about SLA: New research approaches* (pp. 55–85). Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Alegre, A. (2014). Academic self-efficacy, self-regulated learning and academic performance in first-year university students. *Propósitos y Representaciones, 2*(1), 79–120. http://dx.doi.org/10.20511/pyr2014.v2n1.54

Al-Roomy, M. (2015). Evaluating Saudi university students' beliefs about learning English. *International Journal of English Linguistics,* 5(1), 22–31. https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v5n1p22

Amuzie, G. L., & Winke, P. (2009). Changes in language learning beliefs as a result of study abroad. *System, 37*(3), 366–379. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2009.02.011

Baleghizadeh, S., & Masoun, A. (2013). The effect of self-assessment on EFL learners' self-efficacy. *TESL Canada Journal*, *31*(1), 42–58.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W. H. Freeman and Co.

Bandura, A. (2006). Guide for constructing self-efficacy scales. In F. Pajares & T. Urdan (Eds.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents* (vol. 5, pp. 307–337). Information Age Publishing.

Birjandi, P., & Mohammadi, M. (2014). The development and validation of Language Learner Beliefs Scale in the Iranian EFL context. *Journal of Language and Translation, 4*(1), 1–7.

Bong, M. (2002). Predictive utility of subject-, task-, and problem specific self-efficacy judgments for immediate and delayed academic performances. *Journal of Experimental Education, 70*(2), 139–149.

Botes, E., Dewaele, J. M., & Greiff, S. (2020). The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale and academic achievement: An overview of the prevailing literature and a meta-analysis. *Journal for the Psychology of Language Learning, 2*, 26–56. http://www.iapll.com/journal

Blumenthal, L. F. (2014). *Self-efficacy in low-level English language learners*. Dissertations and Theses. Paper 1622. https://doi.org/10.15760/etd.1621

Cortazzi, M., & Jin, L. X. (1996). Cultures of learning: Language classrooms in China. In H. Coleman (Ed.), *Society and the language classroom* (pp. 169–206). Cambridge University Press.

Dai, W., & Wang, D. (2002). An analysis of English-major students' language learning beliefs. *Foreign Language Circle, 91*(5), 24–29.

Daif-Allah, A. S. (2012). Beliefs about foreign language learning and their relationship to gender. *English Language Teaching, 5*(10), 20–33. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n10p20

Dewaele, J. M., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2014). The two faces of Janus? Anxiety and enjoyment in the foreign language classroom. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching, 4*, 237–274. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2014.4.2.5

Doménech-Betoret, F., Abellán-Roselló, L., & Gómez-Artiga, A. (2017). Self-efficacy, satisfaction, and academic achievement: The mediator role of students' expectancy-value beliefs. *Frontiers in Psychology, 8*: 1193. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01193

Gao, W. (2016). An empirical study on the correlation between college EFL learners' beliefs and English achievements. *Journal of Dali University, 1*(9), 105–108. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.2096-2266.2016.09.020

Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. Edward Arnold.

Genç, G., Kuluşaklı, E., & Aydın, S. (2016). Exploring EFL learners' perceived self-efficacy and beliefs on English language learning. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 41*(2). http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2016v41n2.4

Heidari, F., Izadi, M., & Ahmadian, M. V. (2012). The relationship between Iranian EFL learners' self-efficacy beliefs and use of vocabulary learning strategies. *English Language Teaching, 5*(2), 174–182. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n2p174

Horwitz, E. K. (1987). Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In A. L. Wenden & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 119–129). Prentice-Hall.

Horwitz, E. K. (1988). The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *The Modern Language Journal, 72*(3), 283–294. https://doi.org/10.2307/327506

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. A. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal, 70*(2), 125–132. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1986.tb05256.x

Kao, C., Wu, Y., Chang, Y., Chien, H. M., & Mou, T. Y. (2020). Understanding web-based professional development in education: The role of attitudes and self-efficacy in predicting teachers' technology-teaching integration. *Asia-Pacific Education Researcher, 29*, 405–415. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-019-00493-x

Kern, R. G. (1995). Students' and teachers' beliefs about language learning. *Foreign Language Annals, 28*(1), 71–92. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1995.tb00770.x

Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press.

Krashen, S. (1985). *The input hypothesis*. Longman.

Krashen, S. (2008). Language education: Past, present and future. *RELC Journal, 39*(2), 178–187. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0033688208092183

Kuo, T. M., Tsai, C-C., & Wang, J-C. (2021). Linking web-based learning self-efficacy and learning engagement in MOOCs: The role of online academic hardiness. *The Internet and Higher Education, 51*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2021.100819

Liu, M. (2020). L2 Motivation, demographic variables, and Chinese proficiency among adult learners of Chinese. *Journal of Language and Education, 6*(2), 120–131. https://doi.org/10.17323/jle.2020.10341

Liu, R., & Dai, M. (2003). *A study of EFL teaching and development strategy in China*. Beijing Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

McLeod, S. A. (2017). Behaviorist approach. *Simply Psychology*. Retrieved on May 13, 2020 from https://www.simplypsychology.org/behaviorism.html

Mills, N. (2009). A Guide du Routard simulation: Increasing self-efficacy in the standards through project-based learning. *Foreign Language Annals, 42*(4), 607–639.

Mills, N., Pajares, F., & Herron, C. (2007). Self-efficacy of college intermediate French students: Relation to achievement and motivation. *Language Learning, 57*(3), 417–442.

Ozer, O., & Akçayoğlu, D. I. (2021). Examining the roles of self-efficacy beliefs, self-regulated learning and foreign language anxiety in the academic achievement of tertiary EFL learners. *Participatory Educational Research*, 8(2), 357-372. https://doi.org/10.17275/per.21.43.8

Pan X., & Chen, W. (2021). Modeling teacher supports toward self-directed language learning beyond the classroom: Technology acceptance and technological self-efficacy as mediators. *Frontier in Psychology*, 12:751017. https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.751017/full

Park, G. (1995). Language Learning Strategies and Beliefs about Language Learning of University Students Learning English in Korea. Proquest Dissertations and Theses. Retrieved from https://search.proquest.com/pqdtglobal/docview/304257104/fulltextPDF/B8A1B6E3D4E049F4PQ/1?accountid=14426

Raoofi, S., Tan, B. H., & Chan, S. H. (2012). Self-efficacy in second/foreign language learning contexts. *English Language Teaching, 5*(11), 60–73.

Riley, P. (1994). Aspects of learner discourse: Why listening to learners is so important. In E. Esch (Ed.), *Self-access and the adult language learner* (pp. 7–18). Center for information on language teaching.

Sağlam, D., & Arslan, A. (2018). The development of English language skills self-efficacy scale for higher education students. *International Journal of Psycho-Educational Sciences*, *7*(2), 1–15.

Sakui, K., & Gaies, S. (1999). Investigating Japanese learners' beliefs about language learning. *System, 27*(4), 473–492. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X(99)00046-9

Scollon, R., & Scollon, S. (2000). *Intercultural communication*. Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Skehan, P. (1989). Individual differences in second-language learning. Edward Arnold.

Skinner, B. F. (1953). *Science and human behavior*. SimonandSchuster.com.

Song, Z. (2013). A review and critique of foreign language learning beliefs. *Journal of Jinzhong University, 30*(4), 82–84.

Wen, Q., & Johnson, R. K. (1997). L2 Learner variables and English achievement: A study of tertiary-level English majors in China. *Applied Linguistics, 18*(1), 27–48. https://academic.oup.com/applij/article/18/1/27/233474

Wenden, A. (1991). *Learner strategies for learner autonomy: Planning and implementing learner training for language learners*. Prentice Hall.

Wenden, A. (1998). Metacognitive knowledge and language learning. *Applied Linguistics, 19*(4), 515–537. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/19.4.515

Wong, S.-L. (2005). Language learning strategies and language self-efficacy: Investigating the relationship in Malaysia. *RELC, 36*(3), 245–269.

Woodrow, L. (2011). College English writing affect: Self-efficacy and anxiety. *System, 39*, 510–522. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2011.10.017

Yang, N. D. (1999). The relationship between EFL learners' beliefs and learning strategy use. *System, 27*(4), 515–535. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X(99)00048-2

Zhan, Y., Jiang, Y., Wan, Z. H., & Guo, J. J. (2021). Is there an "expectancy × value" effect? Investigating the impact of self-efficacy and learning motives on Chinese undergraduates' use of deep language learning strategies. *Asia-Pacific Education Researcher, 30*(1), 83–94. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-020-00516-y

Zhang, X., & Cui, G. (2010). Learning beliefs of distance foreign language learners in China: A survey study. *System, 38,* 30–40. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2009.12.003

Zhong, Q. (2012). *The beliefs and learner strategy use of low-proficiency Chinese learners and their impact on learning English in a New Zealand context*. Proquest Dissertations and Theses. Retrieved from http://eproxy2.lib.tsinghua.edu.cn:80/rwt/75/https/PNTXC6UDNAYHA6UQPF4XK65VF3SX85B/docview/1323346113?accountid=14426

Meihua Liu

Überzeugungen chinesischer Universitätsstudenten über das Erlernen des englischen Sprache und die Selbstwirksamkeit

Zusammenfassung

Die Überzeugungen der Lernenden in Bezug auf das Sprachenlernen und die wahrgenommene Selbstwirksamkeit sind wichtig für den Erfolg ihres Zweit-/Fremdsprachenunterrichts (SL/FL). Um das allgemeine Profil von und den Zusammenhang zwischen den Überzeugungen chinesischer Studierender über das Englischlernen und die Selbstwirksamkeit aufzuzeigen, wurden im Rahmen der vorliegenden Studie die Überzeugungen chinesischer EFL-Lerner (Englisch als Fremdsprache) mit unterschiedlichen Englischkenntnissen über das Englischlernen und die Selbstwirksamkeit unter die Lupe genommen. Insgesamt beantworteten 1.698 Studierende einer Spitzenuniversität in Peking eine Reihe von Fragebögen. Die Ergebnisse gaben einen allgemeinen Überblick über die Vorstellungen der Studierenden über die Spezifik des Sprachenlernens und die Rolle von Lehrkräften, Feedback und Lernstrategien sowie über die Selbstwirksamkeit. Eine weitere wichtige Erkenntnis war, dass sich die Teilnehmer mit unterschiedlichen Englischkenntnissen in ihren Überzeugungen über das Sprachenlernen und die Selbstwirksamkeit signifikant voneinander unterschieden.

Schlüsselwörter: Überzeugungen über Englischlernen, Selbstwirksamkeit, Unterschiede, Sprachkenntnisse, Feedback, Strategie

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations and ANOVA Results of English Learning Belief Inventory Items

ELBI Items	Whole sample (N = 1698)		Band 1 (N = 833)		Band 2 (N = 444)		Band 3 (N = 421)		ANOVA Results		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	F	p	Places of sig. difference (p = .05)
Nature of language learning											
1. Making mistakes is a natural part of learning.	3.91	.94	3.89	.98	4.03	.83	3.81	.94	6.18**	.002	Bands 2&1 bands 2&3
2. Different people learn languages in different ways.	4.00	.84	3.998	.89	4.08	.75	3.92	.84	4.02*	.018	Bands 2&3
3. Language learning takes a long time.	3.87	.91	3.84	.96	3.90	.88	3.89	.81	.86	.422	/
4. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.	3.83	.94	3.81	.97	3.87	.91	3.84	.89	.72	.489	/
5. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.	3.33	1.05	3.39	1.07	3.34	1.08	3.21	.98	4.02*	.018	Bands 3&1 bands 3&2
6. I need to know language rules before I can communicate in English.	3.53	.95	3.51	.99	3.57	.90	3.55	.92	.59	.555	/
7. I can communicate in English without knowing the rules.	2.76	.93	2.79	.95	2.76	.94	2.71	.88	1.17	.312	/
8. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules.	2.55	.96	2.56	.98	2.37	.87	2.70	.96	13.22**	.000	all
9. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from Chinese.	2.42	.95	2.51	.99	2.25	.89	2.43	.91	11.12**	.000	Bands 2&1 bands 2&3
10. It is possible to learn a language in a short time.	2.996	1.07	2.98	1.11	3.02	1.08	2.995	.99	.17	.841	/
11. Making mistakes is harmful in language learning.	2.10	1.00	2.16	1.05	1.998	.92	2.09	.98	3.71*	.025	Bands 1&2
Role of teacher											
12. Is to help me learn effectively.	3.78	.85	3.78	.85	3.79	.85	3.77	.84	.09	.915	/
13. Is to offer to help me.	3.73	.85	3.72	.88	3.77	.79	3.698	.83	.82	.441	/

14. Is to tell me what to do.	3.24	1.06	3.26	1.09	3.21	1.04	3.23	1.02	.29	.751	/
15. Is to say what my difficulties are.	3.34	1.01	3.32	1.03	3.28	1.01	3.43	.95	2.62	.073	Bands 2&3
16. Is to tell me what progress I am making.	3.33	1.01	3.32	1.02	3.33	1.03	3.35	.97	.15	.858	/
17. Is to give me regular tests.	2.98	1.07	3.02	1.08	2.91	1.07	2.99	1.06	1.68	.187	/
18. Is to set my learning goals.	3.00	1.06	3.04	1.07	2.90	1.07	3.02	1.03	2.55	.078	Bands 1&2
Role of feedback											
19. Having my work evaluated by others is helpful.	3.27	.96	3.25	.98	3.30	.98	3.26	.91	.37	.690	/
20. I am good at language learning.	2.97	.98	2.905	1.02	3.16	.95	2.914	.91	10.87**	.000	Bands 2&1 bands 2&3
21. I know best how well I am learning.	3.33	.96	3.298	.99	3.41	.89	3.29	.94	2.57	.077	Bands 2&3
Strategies											
22. I can explain why I need English.	3.69	.89	3.66	.94	3.77	.82	3.67	.84	2.51	.082	/
23. I know how to set my own learning goals.	3.35	.96	3.34	1.01	3.40	.92	3.32	92	.82	.4411	/
24. I know how to identify my strengths and weaknesses.	3.43	.95	3.37	1.00	3.56	.89	3.43	.896	6.10**	.002	Bands 2&1 bands 2&3
25. I know how to find my own ways of practicing.	3.27	.93	3.20	.96	3.40	.88	3.28	.92	6.20**	.002	Bands 2&1 bands 2&3
26. If I heard someone speaking English, I would go up to practice speaking English.	2.57	.92	2.58	.93	2.58	.93	2.56	.90	.06	.941	/
27. I know how to plan my learning.	3.24	.94	3.22	.97	3.33	.91	3.18	.92	2.93	.054	Bands 2&3
28. I know how to measure my progress.	3.28	.94	3.28	.97	3.31	.93	3.23	.91	.81	.445	/
29. I know how to check my work for mistakes.	3.01	.98	2.95	.998	3.14	.99	3.01	.94	5.51**	.004	Bands 2&1 bands 2&3

Table 2

Frequencies, Percentages and AMOVA Results of Self-Efficacy Belief Questionnaire Items

SEQ Items	Whole sample (N = 1698)		Band 1 (N = 833)		Band 2 (N = 444)		Band 3 (N = 421)		F	p	Places of sig. difference (p = .05)
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes			
Do you believe											
30. I have the ability to learn a language successfully.	199/11.7	1499/88.3	109/13.1	724/86.9	43/9.7	401/90.3	47/11.2	374/88.8	1.70	.183	/
31. I have the ability to get the score you are trying for in your next English test.	441/26	1257/74	245/29.4	588/70.6	87/19.6	357/80.4	109/25.9	312/74.1	7.31**	.001	Bands 2&1; bands 2&3
32. I know how to find an effective way to learn English.	528/31.1	1170/68.9	268/32.2	565/67.8	119/26.8	325/73.2	141/33.5	280/66.5	2.70	.067	Bands 2&3
Self-evaluation questions											
I believe feedback on my language learning …											
33.That I give myself helps me most.	559/32.9	1139/67.1	287/34.5	546/65.5	126/28.4	318/71.6	146/34.7	275/65.4	2.82	.06	Bands 2&1; bands 2&3
34. From the teacher helps me most.	771/45.4	927/54.6	366/43.9	467/56.1	242/54.5	202/45.4	163/38.7	258/61.3	11.71**	.000	Bands 2&1; bands 2&3
35. From other people helps me most.	992/58.4	706/41.6	463/55.6	370/44.4	298/67.1	146/32.9	231/54.9	190/45.1	9.47**	.000	Bands 2&1; bands 2&3
… plays the most important role in successful language learning											
36. Feedback.	633/37.3	1065/62.7	306/36.7	527/63.3	186/41.9	258/58.1	141/33.5	280/66.5	3.37*	.035	Bands 1&2
37. Opportunities to use the language.	308/18.1	1390/81.9	153/18.4	680/81.6	89/20	355/80	66/15.7	355/84.3	1.42	.243	/

38. Practice.	335/19.7	1363/80.3	158/19	675/81	88/19.8	356/80.2	89/21.1	332/78.9	.42	.659	/
39. The language teacher.	1022/60.2	676/39.8	489/58.7	344/41.3	305/68.7	139/31.3	228/54.2	193/45.8	10.39**	.000	Bands 2&1; bands 2&3
40. My own effort.	287/16.9	1411/83.1	122/14.6	711/85.4	78/17.6	366/82.4	87/20.7	334/79.3	3.71*	.025	Bands 1&3
What kind of learner are you?											
41. Learner who likes to learn with other people.	643/37.9	1055/62.1	316/37.9	517/62.1	170/38.3	274/61.7	157/37.3	264/62.7	.05	.954	/
42. Learner who likes to learn with a teacher.	694/40.9	1004/59.1	344/41.3	489/58.7	194/43.7	250/56.3	156/37.1	265/62.9	2.03	.131	Bands 2&3
43. Learner who likes to decide for himself/herself how and what he/she learns.	399/23.5	1299/76.5	179/21.5	654/78.5	105/23.6	339/76.4	115/27.3	306/72.7	2.65	.071	Bands 1&3

Note. The first number is frequency and the second is percentage.

Table 3

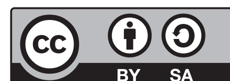
Correlations between ELBI and SEBQ Items (N = 1698)

	SEBQ1	SEBQ2	SEBQ3	SEBQ4	SEBQ5	SEBQ6	SEBQ7
ELBI1	.107[1]**/.092[2]** .151[3]**/.097[4]*	.064[1]**/ /.101[4]*			-.088[1]**/ -.172[3]**	-.083[1]**/ -.206[3]**	
ELBI 2	.140[1]**/.148[2]** .149[3]**/.111[4]*				-.072[1]**/ -.102[3]*	-.088[1]**/-.074[2]* -.129[3]**	
ELBI 3	.060[1]*/.124[2]**		-.057[1]*				
ELBI 4							
ELBI 5							
ELBI 6	.054[1]*/ /.104[4]*	/.109[4]*		3	-.101[3]*	-.104[3]*	
ELBI 7	.073[1]**/ .102[3]*	.060[1]*/ .150[3]**	.118[1]**/.119[2]** .184[3]**	.087[1]**/.088[2]* .119[3]*			
ELBI 8	-.057[1]*			.073[1]**/.084[2]* /.113[4]*	.151[1]**/.104[2]** .195[3]**/.155[4]**	.105[1]**/.090[2]** .135[3]**	.097[1]**/.092[2]**
ELBI 9	-.076[1]**/-.074[2]*	-.057[1]*/ /-.096[4]*	-.055[1]*/ /-.141[4]**		.096[1]**/.074[2]* .122[3]*	.132[1]**/.134[2]** .107[3]*/.112[4]*	.055[1]*
ELBI 10	.103[1]**/.091[2]** .112[3]*/.120[4]*	.073[1]**/.069[2]* .099[3]*	.061[1]**/ .101[3]*/.103[4]*	.055[1]*	/.076[2]*	.062[1]*/.140[2]**	
ELBI 11	-.112[1]**/-.149[2]** -.100[3]*	-.074[1]**/ /-.122[4]*		-.048[1]*	.095[1]**/.107[2]** .130[3]**	.110[1]**/.103[2]** .179[3]**	
ELBI 12	.122[1]**/.145[2]** .152[3]**	/.072[2]*					/.104[4]*
ELBI 13	.081[1]**/.081[2]* .192[3]**						/.100[4]*
ELBI 14		-.074[1]**/ -.086[2]*	-.061[1]**/ -.108[3]*		.071[1]**		/.096[4]*
ELBI 15					.054[1]*/ /.131[4]**		
ELBI 16					.100[1]**/.100[2]** /.129[4]**	/.102[4]*	
ELBI 17					.085[1]**/ .122[3]*	.076[1]**/ .151[3]**	.051[1]*
ELBI 18			-.052[1]*		.108[1]**/.102[2]** .127[3]**	.074[1]**/.074[2]* .105[3]*	
ELBI 19	.057[1]*/ .100[3]*	.055[1]*/ .071[2]*			.111[1]**/.122[2]** /.183[4]**	.124[1]**/.135[2]** .109[3]*/.126[4]**	/.106[4]*
ELBI 20	.162[1]**/.152[2]** .176[3]**/.157[4]**	.229[1]**/.252[2]** .245[3]**/.129[4]**	.222[1]**/.250[2]** .215[3]**/.149[4]**	.151[1]**/.157[2]** .143[3]**/.123[4]*			-.069[1]**/-.102[2]**
ELBI 21	.065[1]**/ /.109[4]*	.081[1]**/.077[2]* /.096[4]*	.104[1]**/.090[2]** .150[3]**	.095[1]**/.113[2]**			
ELBI 22	.168[1]**/.196[2]** .140[3]**/.120[4]*	.100[1]**/.099[2]** .125[3]**	.118[1]**/.113[2]** .165[3]**	.062[1]**	-.079[1]**/ -.152[3]**		
ELBI 23	.174[1]**/.171[2]** .175[3]**/.180[4]**	.198[1]**/.217[2]** .171[3]**/.175[4]**	.260[1]**/.275[2]** .256[3]**/.229[4]**	.180[1]**/.199[2]** .131[3]**/.181[4]**			/-.080[2]*
ELBI 24	.253[1]**/.273[2]** .249[3]**/.197[4]**	.150[1]**/.128[2]** .145[3]**/.178[4]**	.216[1]**/.195[2]** .209[3]**/.255[4]**	.126[1]**/.141[2]** .099[3]*/.103[4]*	-.064[1]**	-.078[1]**	/.097[4]*
ELBI 25	.185[1]**.212[2]** .130[3]**/.165[4]**	.199[1]**/.162[2]** .242[3]**/.214[4]**	.333[1]**/.318[2]** .336[3]**/.352[4]**	.126[1]**/.138[2]** .096[3]*/.112[4]*		-.048[1]*	
ELBI 26	.073[1]**/.076[2]* /.120[4]*	.169[1]**/.202[2]** .135[3]**/.138[4]**	.177[1]**/.184[2]** .151[3]**/.189[4]**	.122[1]**/.151[2]** .127[3]**	.079[1]**/.122[2]**	.101[1]**/.119[2]** /.106[4]*	
ELBI 27	.151[1]**/.167[2]** .126[3]**/.135[4]**	.206[1]**/.220[2]** .202[3]**/.169[4]**	.309[1]**/.292[2]** .346[3]**/.298[4]**	.153[1]**/.199[2]** .122[3]*			
ELBI 28	.132[1]**/.154[2]** .151[3]**	.201[1]**/.216[2]** .208[3]**/.162[4]**	.273[1]**/.273[2]** .306[3]**/.236[4]**	.207[1]**/.240[2]** .189[3]**/.152[4]**			
ELBI 29	.119[1]**/.158[2]** .100[3]*	.204[1]**/.207[2]** .185[3]**/.194[4]**	.247[1]**/.235[2]** .256[3]**/.252[4]**	.128[1]**/.152[2]** .094[3]*/.096[4]*	/.078[2]*		

Note. ELBI = English Learning Belief Inventory; SEBQ = Self-Efficacy Belief Questionnaire
Only significant coefficients are reported in Table 4; 1, 2, 3, 4 refer to the whole sample, bands 1, 2, and 3 groups, respectively
* $p \leqq .05$; ** $p \leqq .01$

SEBQ8	SEBQ9	SEBQ10	SEBQ11	SEBQ12	SEBQ13	SEBQ14
/.178^{4**}		-.123^{1**}/ -.208^{3**}/-.135^{4**}	.067^{1**}/ /.116^{4*}			.162^{3**}
.110^{1**}/ /.209^{4**}	.055^{1**}/ /.125^{4*}	-.113^{1**}/ -.186^{3**}/-.124^{4*}	.077^{1**}/.099^{2**} /.099^{4*}		-.059^{1*}	.065^{1**}/.078^{2*}
.063^{1**}	.103^{1**}/ /.144^{4**}	/.094^{2**}	.052^{1*}/ /.147^{4**}			
.054^{1*}	.050^{1*}		.050^{1*}			
.057^{1*}/ .107^{3*}				-.098^{3*}		
	.089^{1**}/ .111^{3*}/.162^{4**}	-.100^{3*}	.089^{1**}/.099^{2**}		/.130^{4**}	
.116^{3*}				.059^{1*}/.094^{2**}		.094^{1**}/.078^{2*} .121^{3*}
	.116^{3*}	.135^{1**}/.098^{2**} .246^{3**}			.077^{1**}	
		.151^{1**}/.158^{2**} .145^{3**}/.110^{4*}	/-.068^{2*}			
					.055^{1*}	
-.095^{1**}/-.100^{2**} -.105^{3*}	-.051^{1*}/ -.093^{3*}/-.118^{4*}	.127^{1**}/.156^{2**} .133^{3**}	-.117^{1**}/-.148^{2**}/- .150^{4**}		.096^{3*}	-.048^{1*}/ -.093^{3*}
.065^{1**}/.088^{2*} /.154^{4**}	.094^{1**}/.104^{2**} /.141^{4**}		.114^{1**}/.123^{2**} .109^{3*}/.104^{4*}		.080^{1**}/ /.116^{4*}	
	.097^{3*}/.190^{4**}	.103^{1**}	/.118^{4*}	.075^{1**}		
	/.151^{4**}	.070^{1**}/ .130^{3**}			.092^{1**}/.107^{2**}	-.087^{1**}/-.108^{2**} -.097^{3*}
	/.193^{4**}	.059^{1*}/ .114^{3*}	/.109^{4*}	.054^{1*}/.068^{2*} /.098^{4*}	.102^{1**}/ .164^{3**}/.101^{4*}	-.074^{1**}/-.076^{2*}
	.088^{1**}/ /.189^{4**}	.072^{1**}/ /.097^{4*}	/.108^{4*}	.051^{1*}/ /.120^{4*}	.098^{1**}/.111^{2**} .127^{3**}	
	.116^{3*}	.140^{1**}/.104^{2**} .104^{3*}/.233^{4**}			.083^{1**}/.092^{2**}	
		.158^{1**}/.177^{2**} .149^{3**}/.112^{4*}			.099^{1**}/.137^{2**}	-.069^{1**}/-.080^{2*}
	.084^{1**}/ /.228^{4**}	.068^{1**}/.096^{2**}		.091^{1**}/.084^{2*} .123^{3**}	.136^{1**}/.132^{2**} .108^{3*}/.180^{4**}	
			.054^{1*}/.084^{2*} /.107^{4*}	.055^{1*}/.070^{2*}	.061^{1**}/.070^{2*}	.070^{1**}/ .116^{3*}
/.119^{4*}			.052^{1*}	/-.085^{2*}		.088^{1**}/.107^{2**}
.061^{1*}			.090^{1**}/.102^{2**}			.068^{1**}/.080^{2*}
	.055^{1*}/.082^{2*}		.075^{1**}/.083^{2*}	/.117^{4*}		.134^{1**}/.137^{2**} .218^{3**}
.077^{1**}/.112^{2**}	.094^{1**}/.116^{2**}	-.089^{1**}/ -.196^{3**}	.141^{1**}/.202^{2**} .104^{3*}	/.100^{4*}		.143^{1**}/.209^{2**} .130^{3**}
/.088^{2*}		-.122^{3*}	.061^{1*}/.113^{2**}	.051^{1**}/ /.180^{4**}		.135^{1**}/.181^{2**} .100^{3*}
		.123^{1**}/.149^{2**} .151^{3**}		.131^{1**}/.168^{2**} /.102^{4*}	.099^{1**}/.153^{2**}	
			.065^{1**}/.082^{2*}	.056^{1**}/ /.107^{4*}		.117^{1**}/.148^{2**}
			.064^{1**}/.103^{2**}	.080^{1**}/.080^{2*} /.147^{4**}		.077^{1**}/.092^{2**}
/.075^{2*}		/.083^{2*}	/.094^{2**}	.064^{1**}/.081^{2*}	.075^{1**}/.096^{2**}	.048^{1*}

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition
vol. 9 (1), 2023, pp. 1/22
https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.13123

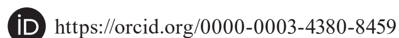


Astrid Mairitsch
University of Graz, Austria

Sonja Babic
University of Graz, Austria

Sarah Mercer
University of Graz, Austria

Giulia Sulis
University of Graz, Austria

Sun Shin
University of Graz, Austria


The Role of Compassion during the Shift to Online Teaching for Language Teacher Wellbeing

Abstract

Research on compassion has received increasing attention over the past decades (Seppälä et al., 2017). However, empirical studies focusing on the role of compassion for teachers still remain sparse to date. This paper reports on a study designed to investigate the wellbeing of 21 language teachers across the globe during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. In particular, the study sought out to examine the ways in which compassion and self-compassion contributed to the wellbeing of language teachers during this time. Data were generated through in-depth, semi-structured individual online interviews and were analyzed from a Grounded Theory perspective (Charmaz, 2006). Findings revealed that acts of compassion in the workplace and in the private lives of the teachers played a crucial role in shaping our participants' wellbeing during this time of crisis. Furthermore, self-compassion emerged as an important factor influencing the wellbeing of teachers during the pandemic crisis. Indeed, compassion and self-compassion served as core elements in their teaching and appeared to affect their relationships with their students, colleagues, and headteachers. In the absence of compassion, the stressful and challenging situation they were already experiencing was exacerbated. These findings imply the potential benefits of compassion and self-compassion training for teachers, administrators, and policymakers to support and promote wellbeing in the educational workplace.

Keywords: compassion, self-compassion, language teacher wellbeing, education, COVID-19 pandemic crisis

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, teachers around the world were required to switch to online teaching with little or no preparation. However, even before the pandemic crisis, teaching was already regarded as an increasingly stressful profession with a higher-than-average risk of burnout (e.g., Reimers et al., 2020). In language teaching specifically, teachers are confronted with additional stressors unique to the language classroom, such as high intercultural demands and low linguistic self-efficacy (Horwitz, 1996), intense levels of emotional labour (Dewaele & Wu, 2021; Gkonou et al., 2020), energy-intense methodologies (Borg, 2006), and poor working conditions (Mercer, 2020). These stressors and strains can threaten their ability to thrive in their professional roles and can, in turn, negatively affect their wellbeing (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020). During the pandemic crisis, teachers across the profession were not only trying to negotiate the unknown domains of online teaching and exploring new digital tools in their professional lives, many teachers were also battling challenges in their personal lives alongside the considerable social constraints resulting from national lockdowns.

In research, compassion and self-compassion have been linked with increased wellbeing and reduced stress and burnout (MacBeth & Gumley, 2012; Neff, 2003, 2011; Zessin et al., 2015). In this paper, we report on a study which aimed to explore language teacher wellbeing among 21 language teachers across the globe using interview data. The analysis revealed the key role played by compassion and self-compassion in both the professional and personal contexts of these teachers.

Literature Review

What is Compassion?

Research on compassion has received increasing attention over the past decades (Seppälä et al., 2017). Especially in challenging and unpredictable times, people strive for a world that is other-oriented and in which positive psychological states such as empathy, sympathy, and compassion are held high in esteem and exercised regularly (Saltzman et al., 2020). Social behavior, including compassion, is evolutionary rooted and has always been playing a central role in shaping human interaction (Carter et al., 2017). In fact, the practice of compassion has its roots in the earliest periods of Buddhism (Lavelle, 2017; Nyanamoli, 1964), being understood as a "supportive practise […] on the path of awakening" (Lavelle, 2017, p. 45). Compassion is also regarded as a core component of all major world religions (Armstrong, 2008). As Cameron (2017)

points out, "compassion lies at the core of what it means to be human. All major religions, moral philosophers, and social theorists have valued compassion as an indication of virtue in human beings" (p. 544). Nowadays, compassion has been integrated into diverse psychological and clinical programs to increase people's health, wellbeing, and prosocial behavior (Lavelle, 2017).

In research, compassion is described as a "cognitive, emotional, and volitional response to the suffering of others" (Peterson, 2017, p. 2) which can lead to actions to alleviate the suffering of others. Similarly, Singer and Klimecki (2014) define compassion as "a feeling of concern for another person's suffering which is accompanied by the motivation to help" (p. 875). Goetz and colleagues (2010) also conceptualize compassion as an affective state established by subjective feelings and defining it as "the feeling that arises in witnessing another's suffering and that motivates a subsequent desire to help" (p. 351).

Although empathy, sympathy, and compassion are closely related terms, research has shown that there are certain features that distinguish these concepts from one another. In the literature, sympathy can be defined as "an emotional reaction of pity toward the misfortune of another, especially those who are perceived as suffering unfairly," while empathy has been described as "an ability to understand and accurately acknowledge the feelings of another" (Sinclair et al., 2017, p. 438). However, compassion is different to sympathy and empathy in terms of one aspect: A compassionate person does not solely recognize the suffering of others but goes a step further and seeks to find ways in which to reduce the suffering through pro-active behavior (Dutton et al., 2014). This suggests a link between compassion and agentic behavior.

When compassion is not directed outward but inward, it is referred to as self-compassion. Self-compassion is, in fact, a form of compassion, where acts of compassion are directed towards yourself (Neff, 2011). Furthermore, Gerber et al. (2015) highlight:

> Since compassion includes being open to the other's suffering and generating the desire to heal the other through kindness, self-compassion would entail applying these same qualities toward oneself. By conceptualizing self-compassion as embodying one's perception of one's self as a subject, one could heal oneself through kindness. (p. 395)

As such, self-compassion portrays a kind, positive, and caring attitude toward oneself in instances of failure, perceived imperfection, and individual shortcomings (Zessin et al., 2015). Neff and Germer (2017) point out the importance of self-compassion and claim that, "just as we can feel compassionate for the suffering of others, we can extend compassion towards ourselves, regardless of whether our suffering resulted from external circumstances or our own mistakes, failures and personal inadequacies" (p. 478). Self-compassion is

as relevant as compassion directed towards others and it can help us overcome challenging times (Neff, 2011). By being self-compassionate, we understand that flaws are simply part of being human, and, as a result, we can approach our perceived weaknesses from a broad, inclusive, and more humane perspective (Neff, 2011). Furthermore, Neff (2021) makes a distinction between kind and fierce self-compassion, stressing that self-compassionate behavior can be viewed as a continuum, with one end being tender, kind, and soft, and the other fierce, strong, and ferocious. The latter, especially, can empower people by making them feel stronger, more competent, and assertive and less afraid of conflict to defend their own rights (Neff, 2021).

Compassion and Teacher Wellbeing in Times of the COVID-19 Crisis

In March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a global pandemic (WHO, 2020). Consequently, many countries quickly started applying measures to reduce risk of transmissions of the virus, such as physical distancing, temporarily closing educational institutions, and implementing national lockdowns (Sohrabi et al., 2020). Due to the shutdown of schools, many teachers across the globe were required to switch to online/remote teaching formats and to use new digital tools with little or no preparation and notice (Reimers et al., 2020). For those teachers who had not had much experience in teaching online and lacked digital skills, the pandemic placed enormous challenges on them, as they not only had to learn to use online formats but also had to guide their students in how to do distance learning, while, simultaneously, battling with their own wellbeing and that of their learners (MacIntyre et al., 2020).

In a time of a global crisis, people typically try to share their common suffering and support others, “creating opportunities for deeper connection, mutual help, and community” (Zaki, 2020, p. 588). As human beings are inherently social and rely on cooperation to survive and thrive, it is not surprising that compassion plays a key role in alleviating stress and loneliness (Zaki, 2020). In respect to the pandemic crisis, Galea (2020) points out that it is an occasion that “ultimately calls for compassion” (p. 1898).

In fact, several studies have shown that compassion appears to be positively related with wellbeing, especially in reducing emotional distress (e.g., Gilbert, 2010; Goetz et al., 2010; Neff, 2003). For example, MacBeth and Gumley’s (2012) meta-analysis revealed that higher levels of compassion appeared to lower levels of depression, stress, and anxiety. Thus, the authors suggested that compassion is a critical variable in understanding mental health, wellbeing, and resilience (MacBeth & Gumley, 2012). Research on self-compassion revealed that individuals who show self-compassionate behavior appeared to

have higher levels of perceived wellbeing (Zessin et al., 2015). Furthermore, a body of empirical studies has found that self-compassion can lower negative emotions, such as depression and anxiety, and can increase positive emotions, such as life satisfaction, optimism, happiness, self-confidence, resilience, and wellbeing (Neff, 2011; Zessin et al., 2015). As such, both compassion and self-compassion play a crucial role in positively influencing individuals' wellbeing during times of crisis and beyond.

In teacher research, the focus of identifying stressors and strains that can lead to teacher attrition and might result in teacher burnout has slowly shifted from a deficit viewpoint towards examining the lives of teachers from a more holistic perspective (e.g., MacIntyre et al., 2019; Mercer et al., 2016), underscored by a positive psychology approach (e.g., Seligman, 2018). It is equally, if not even more important, to not lose sight of the factors that keep teachers in the profession and contribute to their overall thriving and wellbeing, than focusing on what makes them leave (Mercer et al., 2016; Mercer & Gregersen, 2020). Factors that can potentially support teacher wellbeing are, for instance, teachers' positive relationships with their students, colleagues, and headteachers (Spilt et al., 2011), a high sense of self-efficacy (Han et al., 2020), resilience (Ergün & Dewaele, 2021), supportive school culture (Brady & Wilson, 2021), having a sense of meaning and purpose (Roffey, 2012), high job satisfaction (Dreer, 2021), and high teacher status (Troman, 2000).

However, compassion can play an equally important role in the lives of teachers. In fact, several studies have been conducted to understand the link between teacher wellbeing and compassion in the workplace. For example, De Stasio et al. (2019) investigated compassion in pre-school teachers' work engagement. Their findings showed that subjective happiness and compassion at work triggered positive feelings and enhanced teachers' wellbeing and their attitudes toward work. In another study by De Stasio et al. (2020), the authors reported that experiencing compassion with colleagues made teachers feel more involved in their work and enhanced their perceptions of their working environment. These findings align with research by Eldor and Shoshani (2016), who examined the influences of compassion from colleagues and principals on teachers' engagement and subjective wellbeing in their professional lives. They found that, when teachers receive compassion from headteachers specifically, it can positively influence their job satisfaction and commitment, and reduce teacher burnout. It appears crucial, to implement (self-)compassion and other compassion-based skills into our educational contexts, in order to create more caring, thoughtful, and mindful classroom experiences, which are beneficial for both teachers and students (Kudo & Hartley, n.d.).

During the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, only a small number of studies have looked at compassion in the school context to date. For example, Lepp et al. (2021) showed that online teaching has shifted teachers' focus from subject

matter competences to a greater valuing of socialization and the wellbeing of students, and thus, the importance of teacher compassion. Another study by Gates and colleagues (2021) found that having implemented principles of both compassion and self-compassion in their university in Australia during the shift to online teaching helped teachers and students to overcome challenges and better deal with stressors that the pandemic brought along.

In this study, we aim to contribute to the field of research on compassion and teacher wellbeing by examining what acts of compassion were important for the wellbeing of 21 language teachers across the globe during the pandemic crisis. Although the data were generated during the crisis, the insights are relevant for the field of wellbeing more broadly and help contribute to understandings about the role compassion can play in fostering positive mental health and job satisfaction in the workplace.

Methodological Design

This study explores the role of acts of compassion in the wellbeing of 21 foreign language teachers during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. It seeks to answer the following research question: What is the role of compassion for the wellbeing of 21 foreign language teachers during the shift to online teaching in the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis?

Context and Participants

Before the global pandemic occurred, as part of our broader research project, a global survey was administered to secondary-school foreign language teachers across the globe. The survey aimed to investigate language teacher wellbeing and remained open from January to March 2020. The participating teachers were given the opportunity to provide an email address if they wished to take part a follow-up interview; from among 472 completed responses, 114 teachers left their email addresses and were contacted to ask if they would still be willing to participate in a follow-up online interview. Twenty-three participants agreed to be interviewed; however, the data of two participants who were teaching in the university settings were not analyzed in this reporting of the study in order to retain a focus on secondary education. The interviews took place between June and September 2020. In this article, we present the data based on these interviews which focused on the role of compassion in participants' wellbeing during the pandemic crisis.

All participants in this study (*n* = 21) were foreign language teachers at secondary schools, and they were working in the following continents: Europe (*n* = 10), Oceania (*n* = 3), North America (*n* = 4), Central America (*n* = 1), and South America (*n* = 3). Detailed background data about the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Participants' Biodata and Demographic Information

Pseudonym	Country of residence	Gender	Years of teaching	First language	Teaching subject(s)	Living situation during the pandemic
Alice	New Zealand	F	24–30	English	French, Spanish	with a partner/ spouse
Maria	Argentina	F	16–23	Spanish	English	with a partner/ spouse and children
Jennifer	UK	F	4–7	English	French, German, Spanish	with a partner/ spouse and children
Liliana	Hungary	F	4–7	Hungarian	English	with a partner/ spouse
Robin	Netherlands	wishes not to specify	4–7	Dutch	French	with a partner/ spouse and children
Charlotte	US	F	0–3	Spanish	Spanish	with parents or extended family
Hilary	Argentina	F	4–7	Spanish	English, German	with roommates
Naomi	Argentina	F	24–30	Spanish	English	alone
Christine	Australia	F	24–30	Estonian	English, French	with a partner/ spouse
Eliza	US	F	16–23	German	German	with a partner/ spouse and children
Jakob	Austria	M	8–15	German	English	with a partner/ spouse and children
Maddison	Australia	F	8–15	English	Japanese, Spanish	with a partner/ spouse
Louise	Switzerland/ France	F	4–7	English	French	with children
Adrian	Germany	M	24–30	German	German	alone
Penelope	Greece	F	16–23	Greek	English	alone
Victoria	UK	F	16–23	English	French, German, Spanish	with a partner/ spouse
Amber	US	F	4–7	English	German	with a partner/ spouse
Gabriela	Nicaragua	F	4–7	Spanish	English	with parents or extended family

cont. table 1

Jane	UK	F	8–15	English	French, Spanish	with a partner/ spouse
Suzy	US	F	8–15	English	English, German	no answer provided
John	UK	M	8–15	English	French, German	alone

Research Tools and Procedures

Before the interviews took place, all participants were asked to complete a survey on their wellbeing during the pandemic, which was divided into two sections. The first section addressed their work and living situation during the pandemic. The second section aimed at gathering quantitative data and included the following measures: PANAS (Positive and Negative Affect Schedule) (Watson et al., 1988), PERMA (Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment) (Butler & Kern, 2016), work engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2006), Psychological Capital (PsyCap; Luthans et al., 2007) and coping strategies (Carver, 1997). However, in this article, we focus only on the qualitative data from the interviews.

To promote a more conversational style of interviews, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted. These allowed researchers to compare data across participants but remain flexible and responsive to individuality and uniqueness (Dörnyei, 2007; O'Leary, 2021). The interview protocol included questions regarding seven main themes, including the participants' teaching biography, their teaching life (e.g., workload, online/remote teaching, job satisfaction, and engagement), professional relationships (e.g., school climate, relationships with parents and students), their perceived teacher status, identity and meaning, overall wellbeing (e.g., coping strategies, physical wellbeing work-life balance, sources of stress), and personal relationships, both prior to and during the first pandemic wave. All interviews were conducted online via Skype or Zoom between June 25 to September 13, 2020, and each interview lasted between 55 and 90 minutes. In total, 24 hours, 27 minutes, and 38 seconds of data were transcribed for content analysis, and this generated a corpus of 205,162 words.

Ethics

In this study, before data were collected, ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee from our institution. Prior to the interviews, participants were given a participant information sheet and a consent form which included

detailed information of the study, participants' right and involvement, any foreseeable risks, storage of data, and assurance of confidentiality and anonymity throughout the research process. Participants were also made aware that they have no obligation to answer any questions they perceived as uncomfortable and right to withdraw any time up to the point of publication without giving a reason. All interviews were audio-recorded only and transcribed by our research team. Audio-recordings were saved on password-protected computers and destroyed upon transcription. Pseudonyms were given to each participant at all stages of the research and any identifying markers were removed during the transcription process.

Data Analysis

All members of the research team familiarized themselves with the data by carefully reading through all the transcribed interviews and adding memos and comments in a joint document which served as a basis for discussion. Interview transcripts were then put into Atlas.ti for the coding process. An inductive line-by-line coding approach (Charmaz, 2006) was adopted for the first cycle of coding. Then, the researchers discussed the dataset and first set of codes in a team meeting and decided on the next stage of focused coding of the dataset. All the codes were then compared and refined, and a unified code list was generated. During the final stage, through frequent discussions about coding and memos, compassion emerged as the main theme across the data.

Four categories of compassion became apparent: self-compassion, compassion for/from learners, compassion for/from colleagues and headteachers, and compassion for/from personal relationships. These themes are elaborated on in the following findings section.

Findings

Self-compassion

Self-compassion is understood as compassionate behavior directed inward and includes being caring towards ourselves through being mindful, kind, and accepting that as human beings, we are all imperfect and make mistakes (Neff & Germer, 2017). During times of crisis, Kotera and Van Gordon (2021) explain that self-compassion and self-care competencies can lead to more resilience and

stability and can therefore serve as a useful resource to protect one's wellbeing during periods of difficulty and beyond.

In this study, the analysis revealed that 14 out of 21 participants explicitly mentioned that self-compassion played a key role in shaping their wellbeing during the pandemic crisis. One teacher (John, UK) mentioned that he found it difficult to be compassionate with himself during the stressful situation of the pandemic. Throughout his whole interview, John showed a lack of self-compassion and reported on being unconfident, unhappy, and unsatisfied in his professional role, even before the pandemic, as he struggled with student behavior and had the feeling that his "career might be coming to an end." Six teachers did not explicitly discuss self-compassion and did not report on any self-compassionate behavior in their interviews.

Among the 14 teachers, 12 teachers mentioned the importance of self-compassion even before the pandemic crisis. For them, self-compassionate behavior mostly included assigning more time to themselves and seeking to reduce workload. One example was provided by Jakob (Austria), who realized that he could not fulfill his excessive workload anymore and therefore needed to reduce the amount of work in order to improve his wellbeing, without feeling guilty about it: "I think it has definitely become even more of a concern to me that I want to care more about life and not just work. And so that has changed."

To do so, he decided to say no to all non-essential work opportunities and made a note of this in a calendar, so he had a visual reminder of "seeing stuff that [he] didn't have to do in [his] to-do-list." He further added: "That really helped and that sort of strengthened this idea of doing less [and] that made it a bit easier." Another example was Jennifer who was aware of the importance of affording time for herself and protecting her boundaries: "I actually quite like some time to myself, I try to cut corners with workload wherever I can."

Indeed, the transition to online teaching and the high levels of stress experienced in this situation triggered 12 teachers to become more aware of the need to prioritize self-care and their wellbeing. Eliza (US), for example, mentioned that during the pandemic she decided to "remove [herself] from a lot of things" since she juggled multiple obligations at the same time. She even concluded that this act of putting herself first was "the one good thing the pandemic has done." Similarly, Naomi (Argentina) also realized that she had to be more compassionate towards herself during the pandemic crisis. At first, she felt "down and cried all the time," but soon she consciously engaged in positive self-talk and took a social comparison perspective to realize how this situation not only affected her but other people globally as well. Indeed, one core component of self-compassion is the ability to recognize common humanity and reframe one's own perspective; understanding that we are not alone during challenging times, helps us to feel less isolated and eases one's pain (Neff & Germer, 2017).

In contrast, a lack of self-compassion appeared to affect one teacher's (John, UK) wellbeing negatively. John's interview showed that throughout his life he has struggled with self-regulation and self-compassion. He reported often feeling tired, depressed, and engaging negative self-talk:

> I'm not self-disciplined enough to be working from home […] And it is frustrating that we don't know what the students are doing. And I think that's going to be very hard to fix next year when we start—hoping that we see the next year, that's still far from certain.

His negative feelings were further amplified by the pandemic crisis. Although he was aware that he had to take care of his wellbeing and treat himself kindly, he just could not manage this and constantly reported feeling guilty "for wasting that time" during the pandemic. In contrast to the social comparison which highlighted the shared humanity for many participants, John's social comparison processes implied to him a failure and missed opportunity:

> I've done the reading, […] I've watched a lot of TV, but I haven't tidied my house. It's those things that there's always an opportunity, I could have spent my time more productively and when we get back, I will regret that my house is still untidy when I had this opportunity to deal with it.

Studies have shown that a lack of self-compassion is associated with anxious behavior, depressive symptoms, and rumination, whereas self-compassionate people tend to have higher levels of wellbeing and experience less emotional exhaustion and burnout (e.g., Raes, 2010). Therefore, findings from these interviews showed that teachers who were self-compassionate and proactive in enhancing their wellbeing were better able to regulate their stress during the pandemic crisis.

Compassion for/from Learners

In the educational workplace, compassion is a crucial asset and is typically expressed by teachers towards their students through forms of "affection, caring, generosity, and tenderness" (Eldor & Shoshani, 2016, p. 126). Teachers who express acts of compassion towards their students experience higher job commitment, feel more satisfied in their chosen profession, and make their work more meaningful, thus affecting their wellbeing (Dutton & Worline, 2020).

Findings revealed that all 21 teachers in our study were compassionate towards their students during the pandemic. These acts of compassion were

expressed in different ways: Focusing on socio-emotional learning in the classroom, trying to reach out to all students even if they appeared disengaged, and generally putting their students' needs first. Eleven teachers explicitly said that in light of the pandemic crisis they had shifted their focus from content-based teaching to the wellbeing of their students. For example, Maria (Argentina) explained: "When the pandemic started, there was a moment at its top, and I said, 'Okay, what do I want my students to have at this moment? Content? Support? What?' And what I realized was that they need my support." She continued: "So I left content aside, I planned my lessons focusing on their emotions [and] how I can help them realize that among these negative situations, they could find something positive." In another example, Louise (Switzerland) also explained that she was very concerned about her student's wellbeing during the pandemic: "I think it was really important that we focus on the welfare of the children while they were isolated in their rooms." Although, at first glance, teachers in this study were more occupied with the wellbeing of their students, they were also aware that the social interaction with them and their compassionate behavior towards them could be beneficial for their own wellbeing, as highlighted by Penelope (Greece):

> The thing about wellbeing is that it is a dynamic process. […] We are social beings. Our wellbeing depends on other people to a various extent. And we should be kind to other people so that we can be kind to ourselves.

Similarly, teachers are not only the ones to express compassion for their learners, but they may also receive compassion which can, in turn, affect their wellbeing. Indeed, the "act of receiving compassion may reenergize teachers and provide them the strategies to effectively cope with stress" (Eldor & Shoshani, 2016, p. 133). All 21 teachers mentioned that some of their relationships with students had changed in context of the pandemic crisis and, as such, affected their wellbeing. These changes were both positive and negative, depending on individual students. Thirteen teachers reported on how some of their relationships to students had improved and described acts of mutual compassion. For example, Charlotte (US) explained: "I think it's a great relationship. I keep on getting emails every week, like 'Hey, I really miss you, I want to go back to school. Please tell us if we are going back to school!'" In another example, Amber (US) talked about a similar experience with her students: "Some of the students sent me some really nice emails, like, 'Thank you. You've still tried to make remote learning interesting for us and we appreciate your hard work!'" These forms of compassion affected the teachers positively and gave them a welcome motivational boost.

However, thirteen teachers reported that learners showed disengagement and a lack of interest in schoolwork, which was damaging to the student-

teacher relationship. John (UK), for example, explained: "In some cases, the relationship is no longer there, because I'm not in any meaningful contact with them […]. They don't do the work and they don't respond to messages I send them." Nevertheless, all of the teachers explained that although they could not reach every student during the pandemic crisis, they still felt compassionate towards them and tried to do their best. A good example was provided by Penelope (Greece), who said:

> I try to do my best for them. What I think is best for them, of course, might not be what they think is best for them […] At the very least, I try to talk to them. And I try to be open to them.

These acts of compassion between students and teachers played a key role in the wellbeing of these educators during the crisis. If teachers receive compassion from their students, it can simultaneously affect their wellbeing positively and improve their work engagement (Eldor & Shoshani, 2016).

Compassion for/from Colleagues and from Headteachers

Compassion in the workplace is understood as behavior and acts of kindness that are intended for the wellbeing of others, without expecting any organizational benefits in return (Sprecher & Fehr, 2005).

In the current study, eight teachers reported that they felt their colleagues were compassionate towards them during the time of the pandemic crisis by offering help, support, and sharing workload. For instance, Naomi (Argentina) described her distress when she encountered technological problems and the way in which her colleague showed compassion and practical advice:

> I contacted her crying and crying. I said, "I cannot do this." She said, "[Naomi], relax. When you are ready, when you feel that you can speak without crying, call me. […] I'm going to explain with a cell phone on the computer part by part by taking pictures and everything how Zoom works […]." And we did it.

Not only did these teachers report that they felt supported by their colleagues, but the interview data revealed that nine teachers also tried to help their fellow teachers. Jennifer (UK) explained that in her school all language teachers split their workload and supported each other in this way. In another instance, Jane (UK) helped a colleague by taking over her Spanish classes and doing her marking, as she had family obligations and was struggling to balance work and private life. Similarly, Eliza (US) explained: "All of us teachers

are trying to help each other out. Just keep our heads up in the water." Such collegiality appeared to be extremely important for the teachers in practical as well as emotional terms.

Five teachers also felt they received compassion and support from their headteachers. For example, Alice (New Zealand) mentioned that her headteacher was very supportive and did not pressure them to be "amazing teachers." Alice further explained that her headteacher said: "We know that it's not going to be easy, and you just have to do what you can do and don't beat yourself up about things that you can't do." It appeared that such compassionate behavior eased teachers' distress, helped them cope during the pandemic, supported their self-efficacy, and, on the whole, positively influenced their wellbeing, as is in line with previous research (Griffith, 2000).

However, seven teachers also reported experiencing a lack of compassion from their colleagues and headteachers. In Suzy's case (US), she was forced to make a life decision due to lack of understanding and support from her headteacher. Suzy was teaching online in another country and due to her sister getting COVID-19, she asked her school to go back to her home country and teach. However, her headteacher told her: "You signed the contract, you have to be here." She further explained: "So they just weren't really willing to discuss things with me or negotiate things. And I was like, well, if my sister dies, I want to be at home. [And] I resigned." In another example, Louise (Switzerland) felt disappointed about the lack of compassion and lack of contact from her headteacher: "I don't think she was that interested in the teaching. You know, she wasn't a teacher. Only interested in the money." She added: "I think I spoke to her once during the pandemic."

Moreover, nine teachers reported that during the pandemic, relationships between colleagues deteriorated and they experienced uncompassionate and uncollegial feelings in the workplace. For example, Gabriela (Nicaragua) explained: "[A colleague] was screaming at me. [...] Those situations happened because all of this, the tension, the stress. And so yes, the relationships between some teachers are different. Everything has changed. Everything." Penelope (Greece) also mentioned that some of her colleagues were "not willing to take the extra step" for other colleagues. This lack of understanding and compassion discouraged her: "This is a low for me, because obviously, this is a case where I cannot change my colleagues' minds."

It seemed that a lack of compassion from colleagues and headteachers added to teachers' stress in already difficult times and, indeed, is a key factor underlying teacher stress and attrition under normal working conditions (Prilleltensky et al., 2016). In contrast, reciprocal compassion has been shown to be linked to positive emotions and can serve as a buffer against stress (Cosley et al., 2010). These data show the importance of compassion in the workplace not only from leadership but amongst colleagues.

Compassion for/from Personal Relationships

Compassion was also a key factor in participants' private relationships. All 21 teachers in this study discussed compassion in their personal relationships including family members, partners, and friends during the pandemic crisis. Acts of compassion included protecting their loved one's health, staying physically distant but remaining in close contact, and supporting each other in daily life matters, such as housework chores, grocery shopping, and looking after their children.

Eight teachers worried about their family's health during the pandemic crisis and as such, put their family's needs first. For example, Maria (Argentina) explained that, although she had the urgent need to see her parents, she opted not to, in order to keep them safe: "My parents are at risk because of the pandemic, so we don't have so much contact with them, just for urgency." However, she added that they are in frequent contact via phone. Similarly, Amber (US) mentioned that she tried to take care of her health, not to put her family in any danger: "My mom and my sister [are] both immunocompromised. So […] I just want to try to stay healthy because if I want to be around them ever, I don't want to get them sick, because that would be awful." John (UK) couldn't see his partner during the pandemic, since he belonged to the risk-group, but John made a constant effort to call him every day and to encourage him as his partner was feeling lonely and vulnerable. Another example was provided by Gabriela (Nicaragua) whose whole family depended on her taking care of them:

> I live with my parents and my sister and my grandma. […] So, I had everything on my back. I was the one cleaning, I was the one making sure everything is okay, I was going to the supermarket, I was doing pretty much everything. […] It's kind of hard.

As such, these teachers' compassionate behavior stemmed from their worry about keeping their families healthy and safe, even if this meant putting their own needs behind for a period of time.

Similarly, five teachers reported on receiving compassion from their loved ones. Jane (UK) provided an example of her husband, who has been "really supportive" during the pandemic crisis. Likewise, Naomi (Argentina) explained how much she depends on the help of her sister, who does all the shopping, cooking, and cleaning for her: "So, it's my sister helping me all the time" which eased her stress during online teaching. Family members living in the same household as the teachers could see how stressful online teaching was, and therefore tried to be supportive and compassionate.

This effort of perspective-taking can be relevant for creating a compassionate relationship between family members and beloved ones, which, subsequently,

can serve as a motivating force to understand when and how someone needs help (Davis, 2017). In the case of the participants of this study, they offered and received both emotional (showing genuine interest, understanding, and providing encouragement) and instrumental support (taking over housework, going shopping, taking care of children) (Davis, 2017) that in turn led them to develop compassionate relationships with their partners and family members in a time of crisis.

Discussion

The aim of this research paper was to shed light on the role played by acts of self-compassion and compassion on language teacher wellbeing during the first wave of the pandemic crisis. The study has shown that these two psychological constructs played a crucial role in shaping language teachers' wellbeing and the ways in which they handled the challenges posed by the pandemic crisis. Firstly, a sense of self-compassion helped these teachers to prioritize their own wellbeing. As shown by the data, participants displayed different forms of self-compassion. Some teachers in this study adopted more fierce forms of self-compassion (Neff, 2021) by actively putting their own needs first to protect their wellbeing, while others showed acts of kind self-compassion through positive self-talk and reappraisal. These acts of self-compassion helped teachers to better regulate their own stress response during the time of crisis, but also made them aware to be more compassionate towards people around them. Indeed, self-compassion and other-oriented compassion are inherently interwoven and influence each other (Neff & Germer, 2017).

Furthermore, teachers in our study foregrounded compassion as a core element in their teaching during the pandemic and beyond. A time of crisis can enhance the community's wish to support other members of society; this positive prosocial tenor can "also generalize beyond the situation and over time" (Vollhardt, 2009, p. 76). Not only did teachers in our study enact compassion but they also received it from their students. Indeed, compassionate behavior for and from students influenced teachers' motivation and wellbeing. However, especially within collegial settings, several teachers in this study reported on a lack of compassion from their fellow teachers and headteachers, which added to their stress and amplified the negative emotions teachers were experiencing due to the pandemic crisis (Prilleltensky et al., 2016).

Finally, language teachers in this study did not solely take meaning from acts of compassion in the workplace, but also showed and received forms of compassion in their private life domains. In fact, research has found that

being kind and compassionate towards others is not only beneficial for the receiver of the act of kindness, but also for the giver, as it can enhance one's own subjective wellbeing and self-esteem (Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013; Malti, 2020).

Conclusion

In this study, we aimed to highlight the crucial role that compassion and self-compassion play in the workplace of teachers as well as in their private domains. We would like to emphasize the central role of compassion in the educational setting in order to make teachers, policy makers, and educational stakeholders aware of its relevance and links to teacher wellbeing. In recent years, research has argued for a more compassionate style of leadership (de Zulueta, 2016), and we argue that this supportive form of management should also become established in educational contexts, as headteachers need to positively engage and enable their staff to thrive in their professional roles, not only in times of crisis but beyond. Furthermore, we also emphasize the need for (self-)compassion interventions both for students and teachers to make them aware of the health benefits compassionate behavior can induce throughout their whole personal and professional life domains. Indeed, these interventions can increase participant's self-regulation, motivation, sense of agency, resilience, and overall wellbeing (e.g., Bluth & Eisenlohr-Moul, 2017; Dundas et al., 2017). This research has highlighted the need to cultivate acts of compassion and self-compassion in educational settings, in order to increase teacher wellbeing, but also to encourage teachers and students to become compassionate towards each other and to help create a more compassionate society in the long term.

Funding:
This work was supported by the Austrian Science Fund [FWF] under Grant [P 31261-G29].

Disclosure statement:
No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Data availability statement:
Due to the nature of this research, participants of this study did not agree for their data to be shared publicly, so supporting data is not available.

References

Armstrong, K. (2008, November 14). *Do unto others*. The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2008/nov/14/religion

Bluth, K., & Eisenlohr-Moul, T. A. (2017). Response to a mindful self-compassion intervention in teens: A within-person association of mindfulness, self-compassion, and emotional well-being outcomes. *Journal of Adolescence, 57*, 108–118. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2017.04.001

Borg, S. (2006). The distinctive characteristics of foreign language teachers. *Language Teaching Research, 10*(1), 3–31.

Brady, J., & Wilson, E. (2021). Teacher wellbeing in England: Teacher responses to school-level initiatives. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 51*(1), 45–63. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2020.1775789

Butler, J., & Kern, M. L. (2016). The PERMA-Profiler: A brief multidimensional measure of flourishing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, *6*(3). https://doi.org/10.5502/ijw.v6i3.526

Cameron, K. (2017). Organizational compassion manifestations through organizations. In E. Seppälä, E. Simon-Thomas, S. L. Brown, M. C. Worline, C. D. Cameron, & J. R. Doty (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of compassion science* (pp. 541–559). Oxford University Press.

Carter, C. S., Bartal, I., & Porges, E. (2017). The roots of compassion: An evolutionary and neurobiological perspective. In E. Seppälä, E. Simon-Thomas, S. L. Brown, M. C. Worline, C. D. Cameron, & J. R. Doty (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of compassion science* (pp. 234–252). Oxford University Press.

Carver, C. S. (1997). You want to measure coping but your protocol's too long: Consider the Brief COPE. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 4*(1), 92–100. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327558ijbm0401_6

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage.

Cosley, B., McCoy, S. K., Saslow, L. R., & Epel, E. S. (2010). Is compassion for others stress buffering? Consequences of compassion and social support for physiological reactivity to stress. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 46*(5), 816–823. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2010.04.008

Davis, M. H. (2017). Empathy, compassion, and social relationships. In E. Seppälä, E. Simon-Thomas, S. L. Brown, M. C. Worline, C. D. Cameron, & J. R. Doty (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of compassion science* (pp. 387–408). Oxford University Press.

De Stasio, S., Benevene, P., Pepe, A., & Buonomo, I. (2020). The interplay of compassion, subjective happiness and proactive strategies on kindergarten teachers' work engagement and perceived working environment fit. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 17*(13), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17134869

De Stasio, S., Fiorilli, C., Benevene, P., Boldrini, F., Ragni, B., Pepe, A., & Maldonado Briegas, J. J. (2019). Subjective happiness and compassion are enough to increase teachers' work engagement? *Frontiers in Psychology, 10,* 2268. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02268

Dewaele, J. M., & Wu, A. (2021). Predicting the emotional labor strategies of Chinese English Foreign Language teachers. *System, 103*, 102660. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102660

De Zulueta P. C. (2015). Developing compassionate leadership in health care: An integrative review. *Journal of Healthcare Leadership, 8*, 1–10. https://doi.org/10.2147/JHL.S93724

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in Applied Linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies*. Oxford University Press.

Dreer, B. (2021). Teachers' well-being and job satisfaction: The important role of positive emotions in the workplace. *Educational Studies*, 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2021.1940872

Dundas, I., Binder, P.-E., Hansen, T., & Stige, S. H. (2017). Does a short self-compassion intervention for students increase healthy self-regulation? A randomized control trial. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 58*, 443–450. https://doi.org/10.1111/sjop.12385

Dutton, J., Workman, K. M., & Hardin, A. E. (2014). Compassion at work. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 1*, 277–304. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091221

Dutton, J., & Worline, M. (2020, April 3). *Educators, it's time to put on your compassion hats*. Harvard Business Publishing Education. https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/educators-its-time-to-put-on-your-compassion-hats

Eldor, L., & Shoshani, A. (2016). Caring relationships in school staff: Exploring the link between compassion and teacher work engagement. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 59*, 126–136. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.06.001

Ergün, A. L. P., & Dewaele, J. M. (2021). Do well-being and resilience predict the foreign language teaching enjoyment of teachers of Italian? *System, 99*, 102506. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102506

Galea, S. (2020). Compassion in a time of COVID-19. *The Lancet, 395*(10241), 1897–1898. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)31202-2

Gates, T. G., Ross, D., Bennett, B., & Jonathan, K. (2021). Teaching mental health and well-being online in a crisis: Fostering love and self-compassion in clinical social work education. *Clinical Social Work Journal*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10615-021-00786-z

Gerber, Z., Tolmacz, R., & Doron, Y. (2015). Self-compassion and forms of concern for others. *Personality and Individual Differences, 86*, 394–400. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2015.06.052

Gilbert, P. (2010). An introduction to compassion focused therapy in cognitive behavior therapy. *International Journal of Cognitive Therapy, 3*(2), 97–112. https://doi.org/10.1521/ijct.2010.3.2.97

Gkonou, C. Dewaele, J.-M., & King J. (Eds.). (2020). *The emotional rollercoaster of language teaching*. Multilingual Matters.

Goetz, J. L., Keltner, D., Simon-Thomas, E. (2010). Compassion: An evolutionary analysis and empirical review. *Psychological Bulletin, 136*(3), 351–374. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018807

Griffith, M., Dubow, E., & Ippolito, M. (2000). Developmental and cross-situational differences in adolescents' coping strategies. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 29*, 183–204.

Han, J., Yin, H., Wang, J., & Bai, Y. (2020). Challenge job demands and job resources to university teacher well-being: The mediation of teacher efficacy. *Studies in Higher Education, 45*(8), 1771–1785. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1594180

Horwitz, E. K. (1996). Even teachers get the blues: Recognizing and alleviating non-native teachers' feelings of foreign language anxiety. *Foreign Language Annals, 29*, 365–372.

Kotera, Y., & Van Gordon, W. (2021). Effects of self-compassion training on work-related well-being: A systematic review. *Frontiers in Psychology, 12*, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.630798

Kudo, I., & Hartley, J. (n.d.). *Teaching (with) empathy and compassion in schools*. Unesco. https://mgiep.unesco.org/article/teaching-with-empathy-and-compassion-in-schools

Lavelle, B. D. (2017). Compassion in context: Tracing the Buddhist roots of secular, compassion-based contemplative programs. In E. Seppälä, E. Simon-Thomas, S. L. Brown, M. C. Worline, C. D. Cameron, & J. R. Doty (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of compassion science* (pp. 44–55). Oxford University Press.

Lepp, L., Aaviku, T., Leijen, Ä., Pedaste, M., Saks, K. (2021). Teaching during COVID-19: The decisions made in teaching. *Education Sciences, 11*(2), 1–21. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11020047

Luthans, F., Avolio, B. J., Avey, J. B., & Norman, S. M. (2007). Positive psychological capital: Measurement and relationship with performance and satisfaction. *Personnel Psychology, 60*, 541–572. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2007.00083.x

Lyubomirsky, S., & Layous, K. (2013). How do simple positive activities increase well-being? *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 22*(1), 57–62. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721412469809

MacBeth, A., & Gumley, A. (2012). Exploring compassion: A meta-analysis of the association between self-compassion and psychopathology. *Clinical Psychology Review, 32*(6), 545–552. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2012.06.003

MacIntyre, P., Gregersen, T., & Mercer, S. (2019). Setting an agenda for positive psychology in SLA: Theory, practice, and research. *The Modern Language Journal, 103*(1), 262–274. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12544

MacIntyre, P., Gregersen, T., & Mercer, S. (2020). Language teachers' coping strategies during the Covid-19 conversion to online teaching: Correlations with stress, wellbeing and negative emotions. *System, 94*(102352), 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102352

Malti, T. (2020). Kindness: A perspective from developmental psychology. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2020.1837617

Mercer, S., Oberdorfer, P., & Saleem, M. (2016). Helping language teachers to thrive: Using positive psychology to promote teachers' professional well-being. In D. Gabryś-Barker & D. Gałajda (Eds.), *Positive psychology perspectives on foreign language learning and teaching* (pp. 213–229). Springer.

Mercer, S. (2020). The well-being of language teachers in the private sector: An ecological perspective. *Language Teaching Research*. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820973510

Mercer, S., & Gregersen, T. (2020). *Teacher wellbeing*. Oxford University Press.

Neff, K. D. (2003). Self-compassion: An alternative conceptualization of a healthy attitude toward oneself. *Self and Identity*, *2*(2), 85–101. https://doi.org/10.1080/15298860309032

Neff, K. D. (2011). Self-compassion, self-esteem, and well-being. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 5*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2010.00330.x

Neff, K. D., & Germer, C. (2017). Self-compassion and psychological well-being. In E. Seppälä, E. Simon-Thomas, S. L. Brown, M. C. Worline, C. D. Cameron, & J. R. Doty (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of compassion science* (pp. 478–497). Oxford University Press.

Neff, K. D. (2021). *Fierce self-compassion: How women can harness kindness to speak up, claim their power, and thrive*. Harper Collins.

Nyanamoli, B. (1964). *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga) by Buddhaghosa*. A. Semage Publications.

O'Leary, Z. (2021). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. Sage.

Peterson, A. (2017). *Compassion and education: Cultivating compassionate children, schools and communities.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Prilleltensky, I., Neff, M., & Bessell, A. (2016). Teacher stress: What it is, why it's important, how it can be alleviated. *Theory into Practice, 55*(2), 104–111. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2016.1148986

Raes, F. (2010). Rumination and worry as mediators of the relationship between self-compassion and depression and anxiety. *Personality and Individual Differences, 48*(6), 757–761. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2010.01.023

Reimers, F., Schleicher, A., Saavedra, J., & Tuominen, S. (2020). Supporting the continuation of teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Annotated resources for online learning. *OECD*. https://www.oecd.org/education/Supporting-the-continuation-of-teaching-and-learning-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf

Roffey, S. (2012). Pupil wellbeing–teacher wellbeing: Two sides of the same coin? *Educational and Child Psychology, 29*, 8–17.

Saltzman, L. Y., Hansel, T. C., & Bordnick, P. S. (2020). Loneliness, isolation, and social support factors in post-COVID-19 mental health. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy, 12*(1), 55–57. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/tra0000703

Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B., & Salanova, M. (2006). The measurement of work engagement with a short questionnaire: A cross-national study. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *66*(4), 701–716. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164405282471

Seligman, M. E. (2018). PERMA and the building blocks of well-being. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 13*, 333e335. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2018.1437466

Seppälä, E. M., Simon-Thomas, E., Brown, S. L., Worline, M. C., Cameron, C. D., & Doty, J. R. (Eds.). (2017). *The Oxford handbook of compassion science*. Oxford University Press.

Sinclair, S., Beamer, K., Hack, T., McClement, S., Raffin Bouchal, S., Chochinov, H., & Hagen, N. (2017). Sympathy, empathy, and compassion: A grounded theory study of palliative care patients' understandings, experiences, and preferences. *Palliative Medicine, 31*(5), 437–447. https://doi.org/10.1177/0269216316663499

Singer, T., & Klimecki, O. M. (2014). Empathy and compassion. *Current Biology, 24*(18), 875–878. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cub.2014.06.054

Sohrabi, C., Alsafi, Z., O'Neill, N., Khan, M., Kerwan, A., Al-Jabir, A., Iosifidis, C., & Aghad, R. (2020). World Health Organization declares global emergency: A review of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19). *International Journal of Surgery, 76*, 71–76. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijsu.2020.02.034

Spilt, J. L., Koomen, H. M. Y., & Thijs, J. T. (2011). Teacher wellbeing: The importance of teacher-student relationships. *Educational Psychology Review, 23*, 457e477. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-011-9170-y

Sprecher, S., & Fehr, B. (2005). Compassionate love for close others and humanity. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 22,* 629–651. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407505056439

Troman, G. (2000). Teacher stress in the low-trust society. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 21*(3), 331e353. https://doi.org/10.1080/713655357

Vollhardt, J. R. (2009). Altruism born of suffering and prosocial behavior following adverse life events: A review and conceptualization. *Social Justice Research, 22*, 53–97. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11211-009-0088-1

Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54*(6), 1063–1070. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.54.6.1063

World Health Organization (WHO). (2020, March 11). *WHO Director-general's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 – 11 March 2020*. https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020

Zaki, J. (2020). Catastrophe compassion: Understanding and extending prosociality under crisis. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 24*(8), 587–589. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2020.05.006

Zessin, U., Dickhäuser, O., & Garbade, S. (2015). The relationship between self-compassion and well-being: A meta-analysis. *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-being, 7*(3), 340–364. https://doi.org/10.1111/aphw.12051

Astrid Mairitsch, Sonja Babic, Sarah Mercer, Giulia Sulis, Sun Shin

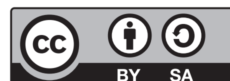
Die Rolle des Mitgefühls in Bezug auf das Wohlbefinden von Sprachlehrenden während der Umstellung auf Online-Unterricht

Zusammenfassung

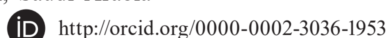
Forschung über Mitgefühl hat in den letzten Jahrzehnten zunehmend an Aufmerksamkeit gewonnen (Seppälä et al., 2017). Empirische Studien, die sich mit der Rolle des Mitgefühls für Lehrkräfte befassen, gibt es allerdings nur wenige. In diesem Beitrag wird über eine Studie berichtet, in der das Wohlbefinden von 21 Sprachlehrer:innen aus aller Welt während der ersten Welle der COVID-19-Pandemie untersucht wurde. Insbesondere sollte erforscht werden, wie Mitgefühl mit anderen und mit sich selbst zum Wohlbefinden von Sprachlehrer:innen in dieser Zeit beitrugen. Die Daten wurden durch ausführliche, semi-strukturierte Online-Einzelinterviews gewonnen und aus der Perspektive der Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2006) analysiert. Die Ergebnisse zeigten, dass Mitgefühl am Arbeitsplatz und im Privatleben der Lehrkräfte eine entscheidende Rolle bei der Gestaltung des Wohlbefindens unserer Teilnehmer:innen in dieser Zeit der Krise spielten. Darüber hinaus erwies sich Selbstmitgefühl als ein wichtiger Faktor, der das Wohlbefinden der Lehrer:innen während der Pandemiekrise beeinflusste. Tatsächlich waren Mitgefühl und Selbstmitgefühl Kernelemente ihres Unterrichts und schienen sich auf die Beziehungen zu ihren Schüler:innen, Kolleg:innen und Schulleiter:innen auszuwirken. Ohne Mitgefühl wurde die stressige und schwierige Situation, in der sie sich ohnedies durch die Pandemie befanden, oft noch verschlimmert. Diese Ergebnisse deuten auf den potenziellen Nutzen von Trainings und Fortbildungen im Bereich Mitgefühl und Selbstmitgefühl für Lehrpersonen hin, wodurch ihr Wohlbefinden am Arbeitsplatz gefördert werden kann. Dies kann sowohl den Lehrpersonen selbst, als auch den Schüler:innen, Eltern, und dem Bildungssystem als Ganzes zu Gute kommen.

Schlüsselwörter: Mitgefühl, Selbstmitgefühl, Wohlbefinden von Sprachlehrer:innen, Bildung, COVID-19-Pandemie

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition
vol. 9 (1), 2023, pp. 1/18
https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.12096



Ahmed Al Shlowiy

http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8441-1987
English language and Preparatory Year Institute, Jubail, Saudi Arabia
Khaled Layali

http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3036-1953
Dept. of Languages and Publishing, Police Academy, Cairo, Egypt

EFL Teachers' Perceptions of a Long Shift to Online Learning in a Saudi University during the Coronavirus Pandemic

Abstract

Discovering the new variants of coronavirus by the end of 2020 pushed many countries to continue suspending universities and schools. A complete change to online learning seemed the only available option to continue education given the detection of new coronavirus variants. Such a long time of using online learning can display how teachers experience this hard time of the pandemic. The researchers performed this study to explore EFL teachers' perceptions of online learning in a Saudi university during this period. They aimed to have a closer look at EFL teachers' perceptions of the sudden shift into online learning. They focused on the teachers' benefits, drawbacks, and suggestions. They used a questionnaire and interviews to collect qualitative data to answer research questions. Results showed five benefits and two drawbacks of using online learning to teach English in that Saudi university. The benefits are being a good and useful option for teaching during the coronavirus pandemic, motivation of teachers, ease of access and use, interacting between teachers and students, and being less teacher-centered. The drawbacks are disruption by poor Internet and technical issues and cheating by students on assessments. The participants provided some suggestions to improve the benefits and overcome the drawbacks.

Keywords: benefits and drawbacks, COVID-19, online learning, Saudi EFL context, teachers' observations

Introductory Remarks

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 as a world pandemic in March 2020. The confirmed cases in the world were 509,167 with 23,335 deaths including 1012 cases with three deaths in Saudi Arabia as per WHO situation report 67 (WHO, 2020). Therefore, many countries decided to shut down universities and schools. Similarly, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) suspended educational institutions (Saudi Gazette, 2020).

After months of border closure, the KSA partially resumed air travel in August 2020. Certain precautionary measures were enforced, such as the use of face masks, hand sanitizers, and social distancing. The US Food and Drugs Administration issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for the COVID-19 vaccine in December 2020 ("Pfizer-BioNTech," 2021). The new Pfizer vaccine was used to vaccinate people in several countries including the KSA.

Unfortunately, new coronavirus variants were discovered in the UK with more contagious than the original strain ("Coronavirus latest," 2021; WHO, 2021), and in South Africa and Brazil ("About Variants of the Virus," 2021). To combat the new variants, many countries shut down borders again and imposed a lockdown to prevent the spread of these new variants (Reuters Staff, 2020). The KSA detected the new coronavirus variant in January 2021 (Taha, 2021), and it extended the border closures extension till May 2021.

Universities and schools were closed in many countries as a result of the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020 (WHO, 2020). A sudden shift to online learning took place to continue education (Hassan, Mirza, & Hussain, 2020). Indeed, online learning was used in many countries including the KSA via various platforms, such as Blackboard before the pandemic (Alshehri, Rutter, & Smith, 2019). However, online learning platforms were used to complement face-to-face learning. Because of COVID-19 and its new variants in many countries, education came to a full online mode.

The problem then was to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of online learning from the perceptions of Saudi university EFL teachers in light of the overnight change to online education as the only teaching option in the near future. This study aimed to describe the teachers' perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of online learning in teaching English when new coronavirus variants appeared. In addition, it aimed to have a closer look at the teachers' experiences and suggestions to develop the benefits and lessen the drawbacks of online learning.

Research Questions

The research questions were:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of online learning for EFL in a Saudi university during the coronavirus pandemic?
2. What are teachers' suggestions to enhance such benefits and to alleviate drawbacks?

It was important to explore EFL teachers' perceptions of the whole shift into online learning in a Saudi University during COVID-19. Moreover, this shift lasted for a long period and was the only accessible option to teach especially after the presence of the new variants (Taha, 2021). In online teaching, teachers are responsible to ensure that the content offered to students is engaging and not very difficult because students get bored and frustrated easily. Therefore, teachers attempt to make lessons more interesting and easier (Almansour & Alahdal, 2020).

Literature Review

Many research studies reported several benefits and drawbacks of online learning in several language learning settings (Arkorful & Abaidoo, 2014; Al-Qahtani, 2019; Al Shlowiy, 2021; Coman et al., 2020; Dhull & Sakshi, 2017; Guatam, 2020). Online learning can be defined as promoting and supporting teaching and learning through suitable information and communication technologies (Ellis, Ginns, & Piggott, 2009). With this definition in mind, online learning can comprise educational platforms, such as Blackboard and Moodle; video-conferencing tools, such as Skype and Zoom; mobile applications, such as Telegram and WhatsApp; and social media sites, such as Facebook and blogs. These technologies include both synchronous and asynchronous means of communication used for teaching and learning purposes.

Before coronavirus appeared in 2019, many studies discussed the benefits and drawbacks of online learning. For instance, Islam, Beer, and Slack (2015) conducted a review of e-learning studies in the UK higher education. The benefits included flexibility of teaching and learning, encouraging students to learn resulted in better engagement and interaction between teachers and students beyond the limitations of location. On the other hand, the drawbacks were the lack of clarity of students' learning styles, inability to prepare appropriate teaching materials, technical challenges, failure to build online assessments, lack of training to use e-learning effectively, time skills of management, and loss of students' interest.

Arkorful and Abaidoo (2014) reviewed the literature concerning the use of e-learning in tertiary education in Ghana as well as internationally. They found

several advantages, such as flexibility in time and place, ease of access and use of information, motivation of students to interact with each other and with their teachers, cost-effectiveness as it eliminates travel expenses, and students' learning at their own pace as the classes are recorded. The disadvantages were feeling remote and isolated because of the lack of physical interaction between teachers and students; inferiority to face-to-face education in respects of clarifications, explanations, and giving feedback; worse communication skills of learners, cheating in assessments and plagiarism in assignments; deterioration of the socialization role of the educational institutions; and being suitable only for social sciences and humanities not for sciences that require hands-on applications.

In another study at Maharshi Dayanand University in India, Dhull and Sakshi (2017) found these benefits: ease of access, convenience, paced learning that suits different students, and teachers being facilitators not transmitters of knowledge. The drawbacks included frustration caused by technical glitches, computer anxiety by some learners that prevented proper interaction with technology, and stress caused by over-involvement with the Internet (compulsive web surfing or database searching).

In the KSA, several studies about online learning found similar advantages, such as ease of access (Khalawi & Halabi, 2020) and student motivation (Al-Qahtani, 2019). Similar disadvantages were reported including the absence of human-like communication, facial expressions, and physical interaction (Khalawi & Halabi, 2020).

Al-Qahtani (2019) studied EFL teachers' and students' perceptions of virtual classes and whether these perceptions enhanced communication skills. This study was performed with 15 teachers and 15 students at King Khaled University. It shows that 62% of the teachers had positive attitudes towards virtual classes. They benefited from the convenience of the classes that were sensory-rich media to motivate students and enhance the learning process. On the disadvantages side, teachers reported technical issues, needed more training, and required blended classes rather than virtual-only classes. Nine teachers disagreed that virtual classes can develop the EFL four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Nine students agreed that online classes can develop their EFL four skills.

A year later, Khalawi and Halabi (2020) investigated the EFL teachers' and students' perceptions of online learning and its relation to learner autonomy in another Saudi university. Twenty teachers and 22 students participated in a questionnaire. The results showed that 75% of the teachers had positive attitudes towards virtual classes although 80% of them preferred face-to-face classes rather than online classes. They faced many technical issues and Internet disconnections. They also missed the human-like communication, facial expressions, body language, and students' interests and punctuality. On the

other hand, students believed that the virtual classes made them autonomous learners.

Focusing on EFL teachers' perceptions of using online learning, Freihat (2020) used a survey and interview to collect data from 81 instructors at Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University. The results showed that the instructors' perceived drawbacks of online teaching were the following: cheating on online exams by students, teachers' lack of knowledge in using some applications, and restricting the time of some applications such as Zoom. They expressed their need for more training to develop online materials, teaching techniques, and classroom management skills.

Online Learning in a Pandemic

The researchers sought to find out EFL teachers' perceptions of online learning when the new variants of the coronavirus appeared. In the KSA, Almansour and Alahdal (2020) described the state of online education during COVID-19 in the Electronic University and Qassim University. They explored the teachers' and students' attitudes towards online education and their skills in dealing with online education. The results showed that both teachers and students had positive attitudes towards online education in both universities. However, teachers reported the technical problems and Internet issues that disrupted online classes. Besides, teachers called for more interactive, interesting, and engaging courses as some students become bored easily. It was suggested to break long lessons into shorter parts to appeal to students because learners' boredom was the main drawback.

In five Saudi universities, Khafaga (2021) studied EFL teachers' and students' perceptions of using Blackboard Collaborate-based instructions. Online questionnaires and interviews were used by 29 teachers and 311 students. Despite some challenges, Blackboard provided a flexible teaching environment that offered synchronous and asynchronous means of communication between teachers and students. It provided several opportunities to engage in discussions and take tests online. Regardless of their positive attitude, about 59% of the teachers required the technical skills to use Blackboard. About 50% of the teachers faced difficulties to teach via Blackboard and needed face-to-face teaching. About 35% of them faced technical issues while teaching on Blackboard. As many as 71% of the students communicated easily with their teachers via Blackboard. However, only 37% of the students were able to complete their assignments and get feedback from their teachers. About 65% of them reported that the time allotted for online tests was not sufficient.

At King Abdulaziz University, Hakim (2020) found that 50 EFL teachers enjoyed teaching their classes via the Blackboard Ultra platform during

COVID-19 in spite of weak Internet connectivity, inability to access modern equipment, and learners' low motivation. About 76% of them believed online classes could improve the learners' skills of communication and writing. About 88% of the teachers thought that online teaching could accommodate the learners' learning styles. About 84% of them reported online teaching motivated students. However, low tech-savvy teachers needed intense training to deal with technology. Some teachers struggled to track their students' writing and grade them. Some teachers complained about the learners' low motivation, while others demanded a revisiting of the online assessment.

In non-Saudi EFL contexts, it seems that teachers' perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of online learning during COVID-19 are the same. Nugroho, Ilmiani, and Rekha (2020) employed self-reported reflections and interviews to collect data from 17 EFL teachers in Indonesia. The main problems were lack of online learning platform, students' demotivation, Internet disconnection, and cheating in online assessments. Teachers offered insights to solve these problems by adopting free, open-resource online learning as well as developing special materials for online teaching. To them, online learning was a way to connect with their students and to keep education going through the coronavirus pandemic.

Moving to Romanian universities, Coman et al. (2020) analyzed 762 students' perceptions of using online learning platforms and their capacity to integrate information. Although the study was primarily on students' perceptions, many references involved teachers. The students accepted online platforms and saw their importance during the pandemic although they encountered the following drawbacks: disruption by slow Internet connection, teachers' unpreparedness, distraction by chatting and games, the feeling of isolation because of lack of physical interaction, and concerns about physical health including back problems. Teachers used only limited functions of the available teaching tools and needed to adapt their teaching methods to suit online classes and to motivate students.

A systematic review to explore the strengths and weaknesses of online learning during the coronavirus pandemic and similar crises was conducted by Dhawan (2020). The strengths of online learning included flexibility of time and place, ability to accommodate a large number of students, interaction, and collaboration between teachers and students. However, the weaknesses of online learning were technical difficulties, disparity of students' various abilities and confidence levels, students' anxiety, frustration, distraction, lack of personal attention, and missing physical interaction.

Previous studies and reviews shed light upon several benefits and drawbacks of online learning. It is clear that teachers accept online education, especially during the pandemic. They have a positive attitude towards it although they lack some technical skills to teach. As with any teaching method, online teach-

ing may have its benefits and drawbacks (Guatam, 2020). Understanding such benefits and drawbacks is important to make the utmost of online teaching. Teachers can be effective online via the use of a variety of modes such as text, audio, and video to facilitate students' learning to overcome the challenges of online teaching including screen issues, training issues, technical issues, and physical-distance issues.

This existing review of literature guides the study to go beyond the teachers' positive perceptions of online learning as one of the learning options. What about using online learning as the only learning option? What about forcing teachers and students to use online learning without any preparation or notice? Therefore, this study investigates the advantages and disadvantages of online learning during COVID-19 as the only teaching option, which teachers were forced to use. This is the gap that the researchers aim to enrich the literature with some in-depth details. They explore the participants' perceptions and experiences to teach English in the pandemic and how they observe the sudden changes in the learning contexts and students' skills and behaviors.

Research Context

Setting

This study was conducted at the Foundation Program (FP) in one of the Saudi universities. The FP is a one-year program that is also called the Preparatory Year Program. Commonly, the FP adopts the quarter, rather than the semester system of study, which lasts for eight weeks. It teaches English, Mathematics, and computer skills to prepare the learners to start their undergraduate studies. There were about 57 EFT teachers at FP.

Participants

All EFL teachers at FP were invited through their management to participate in this study. Ten male EFL teachers in the FP agreed to participate in an online questionnaire and interview. Their ages ranged from 30 to 50 with the mean age as 40. They were four Saudis, two Americans, one British, one South African, one Sudanese, and one Jordanian teacher. They all had earned Master's or Doctoral degrees in Applied Linguistics and held the rank of lecturer or assistant professor. They taught a four-level integrated-skills course called Interchange (Richards, Hull, & Proctor, 2017). It ranged from beginner level (A1) to intermediate level (B1) as per the Common European Framework of Reference for languages. The textbook used in this study was at B1 level (intermediate level) that was taught online by Blackboard.

Data Collection Methods

This study follows the qualitative nature to access the inner world of perception and make meaning by understanding, describing, and explaining the social process from the participants' perspectives and experiences (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). The researchers attempted to make conceptual comparisons across the functional contexts and rich data to produce formal theories. To collect in-depth data, the researchers employed a questionnaire and interviews to answer the research questions.

Questionnaire. The researchers used a fifteen item self-devised online questionnaire (Appendix A). It contained four main sections: (a) Availability of digital devices, Internet, and platform; (b) Benefits of online learning; (c) Drawbacks of online learning; and (d) An open-ended question. The questionnaire was shared with two professors of Applied Linguistics who went through them and provided constructive feedback to finalize the questions. It was sent via Google Forms to the ten teachers to complete it and return it anonymously.

Interviews. The interviews were conducted individually via Zoom with the same ten teachers who completed the questionnaire to obtain in-depth answers and meaningful information about their thoughts, experiences, and perceptions. The interviews included five questions (Appendix B) corresponding to the four sections of the questionnaire (excluding the section of Availability of devices, Internet, and platform) to ensure teachers' consistency of answers. The items included: (a) Benefits of online learning; (b) Suggestions for enhancing the benefits; (c) Drawbacks of online learning; (d) Suggestions for minimizing the drawbacks; and (e) Future use of online learning the after coronavirus pandemic ends. Conducting interviews helped the researchers to employ some prompts that built comprehensive details about teachers' answers.

Data Analysis

The researchers started analyzing the data when they collected them. Data analysis occurred across the entire study. It was intertwined with data collection. They were continually comparing data items to understand and describe the participants' perceptions. Therefore, they followed the means of the Constant Comparative Method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) to explain the study problem based on participants' words and experiences. This method assists in dealing with data and investigating the verbal data from questionnaires and interviews. It combines inductive category coding with a simultaneous comparison of all data across patterns, which are redefined as newly obtained data.

Data analysis was flexible in creating initial themes and categories as well as modifying the themes and categories upon more perusal and analysis of

verbal data. In addition to looking for themes to emerge, the researchers coded all items of data to compare and conceptualize them (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Therefore, two main categories were identified in the data: (a) Benefits of online learning and (b) Drawbacks for online learning. Under each category, different themes were identified (Table 1). To validate the analysis process, these categories were shared with professors of Applied Linguistics at the same university to peruse the qualitative data several times and confirm the themes and categories.

Table 1

Benefits and Drawbacks of Online Learning as per Teachers' Perceptions

Benefits of online learning	Drawbacks of online learning
1. Being a good and useful option of teaching during the coronavirus pandemic.	1. Disruption by poor Internet and technical issues.
2. Motivation of teachers.	2. Cheating by students on assessments.
3. Ease of access and use.	
4. Interacting between teachers and students.	
5. Being less teacher-centered.	

Findings

The ten EFL teachers who participated in this study had laptops and/or mobile phones with Internet connection at their homes. Their university had an online learning platform called Blackboard. Five teachers used Blackboard to teach as an additional resource before the coronavirus pandemic started. Seven teachers used social media, websites, and/or mobile applications to teach along with Blackboard, including WhatsApp, Quizlet, Kahoot, Examenglish.com, and Test-english.com.

All of the ten EFL teachers explained that online learning was a good and useful option to teach during the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, teacher #1 explained in the questionnaire that it was a good choice for teaching because it kept education going while taking safety measures, such as physical distancing between individuals. The same teacher #1 stated in the interview that online learning was suitable for teachers and learners as it allowed for more educational and communication opportunities.

Another participant, teacher #5, reported in the questionnaire that he kept good interaction with his students and managed to motivate them but still he preferred face-to-face classes for issues of interaction and motivation. Teacher #5 further stated in the interview that his students spoke more and participated in an online class as they were less afraid to interact as in traditional classes (Table 2).

Table 2

Teacher #1 and Teacher #5 Answers in Benefits of Online Learning Section

Participant	Questionnaire	Interview
Teacher #1	Yes. Due to the need for social distancing during the pandemic and because learning should be a continuous endeavor, online learning becomes a very good option for teaching.	More convenient to both students and teachers, more educational tools and technology available, and more communication channels.
Teacher #5	I maintain good interactions with my students using my skills and experience to motivate them. However, this cannot be compared to the face-to-face mode.	My students are less intimidated than in actual classrooms. They are more comfortable when speaking and asking questions online.

Furthermore, in the questionnaire, teachers #2, #3, #4, #6, #7, #8, #9, and #10 expressed their perceptions of the benefits of online learning which included motivation for teachers, ease of access, and use for EFL teaching, interactions between teachers and students and among students, and creating less teacher-centered classes. They also expressed their satisfaction with online learning and Blackboard as good means of education and communication during the pandemic. However, EFL teachers did not like the disruption sometimes caused by slow Internet or the cheating of students in online assessments.

Teacher #4 reported in the questionnaire that the unreliable Internet connection caused delays in classes or submitting grades to students. He explained that the same Internet problem happened to his students as well and that it was unavoidable. He further explained in the interview that some learners had limited Internet quota or could not access the Internet in certain areas.

Teacher #8 stated in the questionnaire that despite many measures taken to prevent cheating, learners found ways to cheat online, which showed in high marks for low-achievers. He further explained in the interview that cheating was very difficult to control in online assessments than in traditional assessments on campus (Table 3).

Table 3

Teacher #4 and Teacher #8 Answers in Drawbacks of the Online Learning Section

Participant	Questionnaire	Interview
Teacher #4	Yes. I sometimes lose my Internet connection and need to log in again to the Blackboard as a result of the poor Internet. It happens to my students as well. It also causes some delays in submitting grades or being on time to do your job. The problem is that the speed of the Internet is different from one area to another. It's a problem that we can't control.	Some students have limited access to the Internet in some areas or have specified Internet quota.
Teacher #8	Yes. We used many different tools to prevent cheating, but we found that we still have high grades for low-level students in some sections.	Cheating is unavoidable. Students can cheat in online assessments more easily than in classroom-based tests.

Discussion

This study explores teachers' perceptions of the long shift to online learning during COVID-19. It examines the benefits and drawbacks of using online learning as the only teaching way to deliver English lessons in the pandemic time. It looks at teachers' experiences with the benefits and drawbacks that were reported in the literature (Al-Qahtani, 2019; Al Shlowiy, 2021; Coman et al., 2020; Dhull & Sakshi, 2017; Guatam, 2020). This section discusses the findings according to the previous studies and learning theories.

Online platforms and websites are part of Web 0.2 technology, which is marked by an interactive interface that enables communication between teachers and students and among students (Hartshorne & Ajjan, 2009). As an online educational platform, Blackboard has features that allow for synchronous (video/audio conferencing and real-time chat) as well as asynchronous (email and threaded discussion) communication.

Owing to such features of Web 0.2 and the affordances of Blackboard, the participants had a positive attitude to online learning for EFL teaching and learning in the FP at this university. As was stated in the section above (Findings), all the ten teachers expressed the following perceptions of the benefits of online learning and Blackboard for EFL:

- Being a good and useful teaching option during the coronavirus pandemic.
- Motivation of teachers.
- Ease of access and use.
- Interacting between teachers and students.
- Being less teacher-centered.

These benefits are similar to the results of other studies performed in Saudi Arabia. For instance, having a positive attitude to teach EFL in online settings was found in several studies including Almansour and Alahdal (2020), Khafaga (2021), and Khalawi and Halabi (2020). The second benefit that focuses on teachers' motivation to teach online is supported by Al-Qahtani's (2019) study, which showed that teachers were motivated to teach in online settings and develop their teaching approaches. It also supported the third findings of allowing students to learn anywhere and at their convenience. The third and fourth benefits go with the findings of Khalawi and Halabi (2020) and concern convenience, ease of access and use, and interactivity. Khafaga (2021) also confirms that online learning can enhance students' interactions and communication. For the last benefit, it is repeated by the students who believed that online classes made them autonomous learners (Khalawi & Halabi, 2020). Al Shlowiy (2021) indicates that serious students develop the required skills to succeed as autonomous learners in online learning settings.

Technology and Learning Theories

EFL teachers in this study found online learning, especially Blackboard, a useful teaching choice during the coronavirus pandemic. They further stated that for EFL teaching it was easy to access and use. Such ease of use and usefulness reminded us of Davis's (1989) Technology Acceptance Model. Davis (1989) posited that such variables as perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness may affect one's attitude towards using technology. Attitude in turn may affect the behavioral intention to use technology eventually leading to its actual use.

In other words, since EFL teachers perceived online learning to be an easy to use and valuable teaching option during the coronavirus pandemic, this affected their attitude towards online learning and Blackboard, which in turn affected their behavioral intention to use them and thus resulted in using online learning and Blackboard to teach EFL. Furthermore, online learning and Blackboard led to interaction between teachers and students and among students as well, which was facilitated by Blackboard's asynchronous threaded discussion and synchronous chat features. This was in line with Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory of learning where interaction between teacher-student and among students leads to a scaffolding process that enhances the students learning of EFL.

Although the ten EFL teachers expressed perceptions of the benefits of online learning, they all stated two drawbacks of it. The first one is the teachers suffering from the disruption that is caused by poor Internet connections and technical issues. Many teaching classes were disrupted by slow Internet or some technical glitches of Blackboard. Such a drawback was found in several studies (Almansour & Alahdal, 2020; Khafaga, 2021; Khalawi & Halabi, 2020). Most teachers spent their time fixing these issues and training themselves to cope with them. Al-Qahtani (2019) and Hakim (2020) discuss the teachers' lack of technical skills and their need for training that could help them in overcoming this inconvenience.

It also affected negatively the reporting of students' grades or giving them feedback on assignments. In addition, one teacher felt isolated by the lack of physical interaction with students and other teachers in online learning classes. Another teacher stated that it was time-consuming to adapt teaching materials for online use and yet another reported it was sometimes more difficult to give his students clarifications and feedback in online learning than in face-to-face classes.

The second drawback is students cheating in online assessments. All teachers disapproved of the fact that some students cheated in online assessments. Students were unrestricted to copy their colleagues' answers or to use different resources without stating the reference (Al Shlowiy, 2021). Despite taking measures to prevent cheating, it persisted and showed high marks for low-achieving students. This issue matches what is mentioned in the earlier studies, such as

students cheating when they took online examinations at a university-level (Freihat, 2020) or a secondary school (Al Shlowiy, 2021). Cheating in an online context is expected because learners can find many simple ways to cheat online to obtain high marks, especially for careless students. It is difficult to manage the behavior in online-based exams compared to traditional-based exams (Al Shlowiy, 2021; Coman et al., 2020, Freihat, 2020, & Nugroho et al., 2020).

Implications

The findings lead to discussing some implications of the best practices in Saudi EFL contexts. The study presents suggestions for EFL teachers, learners, and policymakers to use online learning technologies, platforms, resources, and applications. These suggestions guide the EFL teachers to maximize the benefits and minimize the drawbacks of online learning.

First, training and re-training of teachers and students in the online learning platform, other websites, and mobile applications that are useful for online teaching and learning. Second, equipping both teachers and students with laptops and reliable Internet connection along with providing necessary technical support in case of technical glitches. Third, choosing the best teachers to prerecord the EFL educational videos and upload them on Blackboard thus freeing the live sessions for questions and more interaction on the part of students. In other words, teachers called for converting the live sessions into flipped online classes. Fourth, providing teachers with all online materials ready to use before the semester starts, as it was time-consuming for some teachers to adapt materials for online teaching and learning. Fifth, preparing suitable teaching materials and supportive online resources to promote students' learning autonomy. Sixth, having both summative tests and ongoing formative quizzes on campus to combat cheating online while taking the necessary safety measures for both students and teachers.

Conclusion

Understanding the advantages and disadvantages of online learning depending on the perceptions of Saudi EFL teachers was the focus of this qualitative study. It investigated the participants' words, thoughts, and experiences about the situation of the sudden shift into online education during coronavirus. It

aimed to answer both research questions: (a) What are teachers' perceptions of the benefits and drawbacks of online learning for EFL in a Saudi university during coronavirus variants?; and (b) What are teachers' suggestions to enhance such benefits and to alleviate drawbacks?

The accumulation of rich qualitative data from ten EFL teachers enabled to formulate two main categories of concepts, that is, benefits and drawbacks. However, these findings cannot be generalized to a larger population because of their qualitative nature that focused on gaining deep insights about the perceptions of a specific number of EFL male teachers and their experience of online teaching in a Saudi university during the COVID-19 variants. It was not a longitudinal study that lasted a full academic year. It lasted only eight weeks. Because perceptions may change over time, it is recommended to conduct the study in a longitudinal nature. This is to seek participants' perceptions over a whole academic year and expose them to the experience of online studies more deeply.

Moreover, their perceptions were not quantitatively measured. It is advisable to plan a quantitative study with a large sample of teachers for comparing purposes. As for future research, it is suggested to replicate this study in various universities in non-English-speaking countries to find out if perceptions of EFL teachers are consistent or different. In addition, it would be advisable to conduct a study of female EFL teachers in Saudi universities in order to compare the results of both studies. Finally, another option is to conduct similar studies with EFL teachers of secondary and intermediate schools.

References

About Variants of the Virus that Causes COVID-19. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, February 12). https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019/ncov/transmission/variant.html#:~:te=Multiple%20variants%20of%20the%20virus%20th%20causes%20COVID 2D19%20are,and%20quickly%20than%20other%20variants

Coronavirus latest: How bad is the outbreak and can you catch Covid twice? Beating Heartbreak Together. (2021, February 10). https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/heart-matters-magazine/news/coronavirus-and-your-health/covid-news

Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine. *US food and Drug Administration*. (2021, January 5). https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine

Almansour, M. I., & Alahdal, A. A. M. H. (2020). University education in KSA in COVID times: Status, challenges and prospects. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change, 14*(3), 971–984.

Al-Qahtani, M. H. (2019). Teachers' and students' perceptions of virtual classes and the effectiveness of virtual classes in enhancing communication skills. *Arab World English*

Journal, Special Issue: The Dynamics of EFL in Saudi Arabia. 223–240. https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/efl1.16

Alshehri, A., Rutter, M., & Smith, S. (2019). Assessing the relative importance of an e-learning system usability design characteristics based on students' preferences. *European Journal of Educational Research, 8*(3), 839–855.

Al Shlowiy, A. (2021). Tracking Saudi EFL students' reflections of online learning during coronavirus: Different rounds. *Frontiers in Education, 6*, 770–786. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2021.770786

Arkorful, V., & Abaidoo, N. (2014). The role of e-learning, advantages and disadvantages of its adoption in higher education. *International Journal of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning, 12*(1), 29–42.

Coman, C., Țîru, L. G., Meseșan-Schmitz, L., Stanciu, C., & Bularca, M. C. (2020). Online teaching and learning in higher education during the coronavirus pandemic: Students' perspective. *Sustainability, 12*(24), 10367. https://doi.org/10.3390/su122410367

Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly, 13*, (3) 319–340.

Dhawan, S. (2020). Online learning: A panacea in the time of COVID-19 crisis. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems, 49*(1), 5–22.

Dhull, I., & Sakshi, A. (2017). Online learning. *International Education & Research Journal (IERJ), 3*(8), 32–34.

Ellis, R., Ginns, P., & Piggott, L. (2009). E-learning in higher education: Some key aspects and their relationship to approaches to study. *Higher Education Research & Development, 28*(3), 303–318.

Freihat, N. (2020). Needs and obstacles of using the Internet in language teaching from instructors' perspective; the case of the department of English at Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), 11*(4), 163–180. https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no4.11

Guatam, P. (2020, October 10). *Advantages and disadvantages of online learning. eLearning Industry.* https://elearningindustry.com/advantages-and-disadvantages-online-learning

Hakim, B. (2020). Technology integrated online classrooms and the challenges faced by the EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia during the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature, 9*(5), 33–39. http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.9n.5p.33

Hartshorne, R., & Ajjan, H. (2009). Examining student decisions to adopt Web 2.0 technologies: Theory and empirical tests. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 21*(3), 183–198.

Hassan, M., Mirza, T., & Hussain, M. (2020). A critical review by teachers on the online teaching-learning during the COVID-19. *International Journal of Education and Management Engineering (IJEME), 10*(5), 17–27. https://dx.doi.org/10.5815/ijeme.2020.05.03

Islam, N., Beer, M., & Slack, F. (2015). E-learning challenges faced by academics in higher education. *Journal of Education and Training Studies, 3*(5), 102–112.

Richards, J., Hull, J. & Proctor, S. (2017). *Interchange.* (4th ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Khafaga, A. F. (2021). The perception of blackboard collaborate-based instruction by EFL majors/teachers amid COVID-19: A case study of Saudi universities. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 17*(Special Issue 2), 1160–1173.

Khalawi, A., & Halabi, M. (2020). An inquiry into Saudi EFL teachers and students' perceptions of EFL virtual classes and its relation to learner autonomy. *International Journal of English Language Education, 8*(2), 57–76. https://doi.org/10.5296/ijele.v8i2.17065

Maykut, P., & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research, a philosophic and practical guide.* The Falmer Press.

Nugroho, A., Ilmiani, D., & Rekha, A. (2020). EFL teachers' challenges and insights of online teaching amidst global pandemic. *Metathesis: Journal of English Language, Literature, and Teaching, 4*(3), 277–291.

Reuters Staff (2020, December 21). Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman to close borders over new COVID strain. *Reuters*. https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKBN28U0UH

Saudi Gazette (2020, March 20). Entry and prayer in courtyards of the Two Holy mosques suspended. *Saudi Gazette*. http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/article/591064

Taha, R. (2021, January 7). Coronavirus: Saudi Arabia detects ten new COVID-19 variant infections. *Alarabiya News*. https://english.alarabiya.net/coronavirus/2021/01/07/Coronavirus-Saudi-Arabia-detects-ten-new-COVID-19-variant-infections

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978*). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Harvard University Press.

WHO. (2020). *Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): Situation report 67.* https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/331613

WHO. (2021). *New strain of Coronavirus discovered in UK.* https://www.who.int/csr/don/31-december-2020-sars-cov2-variants/en/

Ahmed Al Shlowiy, Khaled Layali

Wahrnehmungen der EaF-Lehrer hinsichtlich der langzeitigen Umstellung auf Online-Lernen an einer saudischen Universität in der Corona-Zeit

Zusammenfassung

Die Entdeckung der neuen Varianten des Coronavirus Ende 2020 veranlasste viele Länder dazu, Universitäten und Schulen weiterhin auszusetzen. Eine komplette Umstellung auf Online-Lernen schien angesichts der mutierten Corona-Varianten die einzige Möglichkeit zu sein, den Unterricht fortzusetzen. Eine Langzeiterfahrung mit dem Online-Lernen lässt nachvollziehen, wie Lehrkräfte die schwere Zeit der Pandemie erlebt haben. Das Ziel der durchgeführten Studie war es zu untersuchen, wie die EaF-Lehrer an einer saudischen Universität das Online-Lernen in der Corona-Zeit wahrgenommen hatten. In den Fokus der Untersuchung rückten insbesondere ihre Wahrnehmungen hinsichtlich der abrupten Umstellung auf Online-Lernen. Der Schwerpunkt lag dabei auf den Vor- und Nachteilen bzw. Vorschlägen vonseiten der Lehrkräfte. Mithilfe eines Fragebogens und der durchgeführten Interviews wurden qualitative Daten zur Beantwortung der Forschungsfragen erhoben. Die Ergebnisse der Untersuchung zeigten fünf Vorteile und zwei Nachteile des Online-Lernens für den Englischunterricht an der betreffenden saudischen Universität. Zu den ersteren gehören: eine gute und nützliche Alternative für den Unterricht während des Coronavirus, Motivation der Lehrkräfte, ein einfacher Zugang und Nutzung, Interaktion zwischen Lehrkräften und Studierenden sowie die Tatsache, dass der Unterricht weniger lehrerzentriert gestalten werden kann. Die Nachteile sind hingegen: Unterbrechung durch schlechte Internetverbindung bzw. technische Probleme sowie das Betrügen bei den Klausuren. Die Studienteilnehmer machten einige Vorschläge, um die Vorteile zu verbessern und die Nachteile zu überwinden.

Schlüsselwörter: Vor- und Nachteile, COVID-19, Online-Lernen, saudischer EaF-Kontext, Wahrnehmungen der Lehrer

Appendix A

Questionnaire

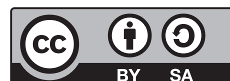
EFL teachers' perceptions of e-learning during the coronavirus pandemic variants questionnaire	**استبيان عن اراء مدرسي اللغه الانجليزية كلغه اجنبية حول التعليم الاليكترونى فى زمن كورونا المتحور**
Availability of digital devices, Internet and Platform	**توفر الاجهزة الرقمية والانترنت والمنصه**
1. Do you have a computer/smart phone and a reliable access to the Internet?	هل لديك جهاز كمبيوتر / هاتف ذكي واتصال موثوق إلى الإنترنت؟
2. Does your university have a platform for e-learning? What is the platform's name?	هل تمتلك جامعتك منصة للتعلم الإلكتروني؟ ما هو اسم المنصة؟
3. Did you use e-learning to teach (as an additional resource) before the coronavirus pandemic start?	هل استخدمت التعلم الإلكتروني للتدريس (كمصدر إضافي) قبل ظهور فيروس كورونا؟
4. Do you use social media, websites and mobile applications along with your university e-learning platform?	هل تستخدم مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي والمواقع الإلكترونية وتطبيقات الهاتف المحمول إلى جانب منصة التعلم الإلكتروني في جامعتك؟
Benefits of e-learning	**فوائد التعليم الاليكترونى**
5. Is e-learning a good option to teach during coronavirus pandemic? Explain how?	هل التعلم الإلكتروني خيار جيد للتدريس أثناء فيروس كورونا؟ إشرح كيف؟
6. Do you feel motivated to use e-learning to teach? Explain how?	هل تشعر بالتحفيز لاستخدام التعلم الإلكتروني في التدريس؟ إشرح كيف؟
7. Do you feel e-learning is easy to use for teaching EFL? Explain how?	هل تشعر أن التعلم الإلكتروني سهل الاستخدام لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية؟ إشرح كيف.
8. Do you think e-learning facilitates interaction with your students? Explain how?	هل تعتقد أن التعلم الإلكتروني يسهل التفاعل مع طلابك؟ إشرح كيف؟
9. Do you think e-learning makes your classes less teacher-centered and makes you more of an advisor or guide? Explain how?	هل تعتقد أن التعلم الإلكتروني يجعل فصولك أقل اعتماداعلى المعلم ويجعلك كمرشد؟ إشرح كيف؟
Drawbacks of e-learning	**مساوئ التعليم الاليكترونى**
10. Do you feel disrupted by slow or no Internet connectivity? Explain how?	هل تشعر بالتعطيل بسبب بطء الاتصال بالإنترنت أو انعدامه؟ إشرح كيف؟
11. Do you feel isolated because of lack of physical interaction with your students and other teachers? Explain how?	هل تشعر بالعزلة بسبب قلة التفاعل الجسدي مع طلابك والمدرسين الآخرين؟ إشرح كيف؟
12. Is it time consuming to adapt materials for online teaching? Explain how?	هل يستغرق تكييف المواد للتدريس عبر الإنترنت وقتًا طويلاً؟ إشرح كيف؟
13. Is it difficult to control students' cheating in online assessment? Explain how?	هل من الصعب التحكم في غش الطلاب في التقييم عبر الإنترنت؟ إشرح كيف؟
14. Is it more difficult to give your students clarifications and explanations in e-learning than in traditional face to face classes? Explain how?	هل من الصعب إعطاء الطلاب توضيحات وشروحات في التعلم الإلكتروني مقارنة بالفصول التقليدية وجهاً لوجه؟ إشرح كيف؟
Open-ended question	**سؤال مفتوح**
15. What are your suggestions to enhance e-learning benefits and alleviate its drawbacks?	ما هي اقتراحاتكم لتعزيز فوائد التعلم الإلكتروني والتخفيف من عيوبه؟

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Semi-structured interview	مقابلة شخصية
1. What are the benefits of e-learning from your point of view?	ما هى مميزات التعليم الالكترونى من وجهة نظرك؟
2. What are your suggestions for enhancing the benefits of e-learning?	ما هى مقترحاتك لدعم مميزات التعليم الاليكترونى؟
3. What are the drawbacks of e-learning from your point of view?	ما هى مساوئ التعليم الالكترونى من وجهة نظرك؟
4. What are your suggestions for minimizing the drawbacks of e-learning?	ماهى مقترحاتك لتقليل مساوئ التعليم الاليكترونى؟
5. Will you use e-learning after coronavirus ends? Explain reasons.	هل ستسخدم التعليم الالكترونى بعد انتهاء كورونا؟ اشرح الاسباب

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition
vol. 9 (1), 2023, pp. 1/26
https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.12691



Monika Kusiak-Pisowacka
Jagiellonian University, Cracow, Poland

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4043-9144

Exploring FL Readers' Metacognitive Beliefs: Narrations from Learner Diaries

Abstract

Metacognition is a complex construct widely investigated in SLA studies, also those that focus on reading skills and reading comprehension. Ample research points to metacognition as a strong predictor in developing foreign language reading skills, thus promoting metacognitive strategies in FL education is highly recommended. This paper presents a report on a study in which Polish FL learners kept a diary for a period of one month and wrote comments in reference to the reading classes in which they participated. The data obtained from the students' narrations allowed to examine the learners' metacognitive beliefs defined in the study as knowledge about cognition, consisting of three components: person knowledge, task knowledge, and strategy knowledge (Flavell, 1981). The diary data were analyzed in a global narrative way, which enabled the researcher to examine a complex character and a dynamic nature of metacognition in relation to the reading lessons. The findings underline a double role that learner diaries played in this study: as a research tool useful in investigating learners' metacognition and an effective task that seemed to facilitate the learners' reflection skills.

Keywords: metacognition, strategy training, reading strategies, diaries, student beliefs

Metacognitive strategies "appear to have 'ecological validity'; that is, they are recognizable components in 'real-life situations'" (Brown, 1980, p. 454). When one checks the outcomes of an activity against certain criteria of effectiveness or common sense, one applies a metacognitive strategy. Although metacognition seems to be such an omnipresent aspect of everyday life, researchers have found it rather fuzzy and difficult to define.

The present article discusses metacognition in relation to reading skills. Plenty of different frameworks have been developed for the purpose of investigating this contract; however, they all seem to resonate with Flavell's (1978, 1981) conceptualizations of metacognition. At the beginning, the paper analyzes

the models suggested by Flavell in 1978 and 1981, and proceeds to revise several examples of reading studies that drew on Flavell. Next, the paper presents an overview of metacognition studies into differences between effective and less effective FL/L2. The last section of the theoretical part discusses several models of reading strategy training. The empirical part of the article is a report on a study which has explored Polish students' metacognitive beliefs as revealed by the learners in the diaries they kept during a reading strategy training. The training involved explicit strategy training, raising learners' metacognitive awareness, and developing their interactive skills. The analysis of diary data brought interesting results and implications concerning educating FL readers and conducting further metacognition studies.

Literature Review

Metacognition and Its Various Conceptualizations

The term "metacognition" was first defined by Flavell in 1978 as a result of his studies in the field of educational psychology. In a nutshell, metacognition means "knowledge that takes as its object or regulates any aspect of any cognitive endeavor" (cited in Baker and Brown, 1984, p. 353). This concept encompasses two aspects of metacognition: knowledge about cognition and regulation of cognition. In 1981, Flavell extended his view of metacognition and suggested a model consisting of metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive experiences, strategy use, and cognitive goals. In this section, the later perspective is discussed in more detail as it was implemented in the study.

Knowledge about cognition is defined by Baker and Brown (1984) as "a person's knowledge about his or her own cognitive resources and the compatibility between the person as a learner and the learning situation" (p. 353). *Regulation of cognition* involves self-regulatory strategies used by the learner when performing a task, such as checking the result of any learning action, planning one's next step, monitoring the effectiveness of any attempted action, as well as testing, revising, and evaluating one's learning strategies. Regulation of cognition is present in the conceptualization developed by Paris and Lindauer (1982), who explored three categories in the context of reading: evaluation, planning, and regulation. Evaluation involves analyzing task characteristics and one's personal abilities that can effect comprehension. Planning entails selecting particular strategies which can help the reader to reach the aims that have been set earlier. Regulation is a process of monitoring and redirecting one's activities during the course of reading to reach the desired goals.

In the later version of metacognition developed by Flavell (1981), knowledge of cognition has been extended into the concept of metacognitive knowledge. *Metacognitive knowledge* is the knowledge we possess about ourselves, the tasks we are to perform and the strategies we apply. In the literature, it is usually called *person*, *task*, and *strategy knowledge*. Knowledge about tasks is usually related to task difficulty, for example, texts with unfamiliar words may be more difficult than those with familiar vocabulary. Knowledge about strategies involves the ability to choose the strategies that may appear more useful in particular situations, for example, previewing the title of the articles may aid comprehension. Flavell (1981) stresses the fact that these three variables, that is, person, task, and strategy knowledge, are highly interactive. For example, while completing a summary task a reader invents a topic sentence and, by doing so, employs a combination of task and strategy knowledge.

Flavell (1985) discusses an important question whether metacognitive knowledge is declarative or procedural. He assumes that metacognitive knowledge is qualitatively similar to any other kind of knowledge, for example, knowledge about computers or elephants. Therefore, he claims that some metacognitive knowledge is declarative, and some is procedural. In fact, the concepts of declarative and procedural knowledge in relation to cognitive knowledge have been adopted by several researchers, among others, Cross et al. (1983), Paris et al. (1983), Desoete and Roeyers (2003), Veenman (2005). For example, in their study on strategic reading, Cross et al. (1983) categorized cognitive knowledge in three ways: declarative, procedural, and conditional. *Declarative knowledge* about reading includes information about one's individual knowledge as a learner and awareness of the factors that might affect reading ability. *Procedural knowledge* reflects an awareness and management of cognition, including knowledge about strategies. Finally, *conditional knowledge* is knowledge of why and when to use a given strategy.

Person, task, and strategy knowledge, identified by Flavell (1981) as components of metacognitive knowledge, serve as a base for *metacognitive experiences*, another component in Flavell's (1981) metacognition model. Metacognitive experiences may occur before, during and after reading. The before-reading knowledge relates to person knowledge, for example, learners' awareness about their strengths to perform the task; the during-reading knowledge can be strategy information, that is, knowledge about how to perform the task; the after-reading knowledge is task information, namely, knowledge about the difficulty of the task. Flavell (1981) claims that metacognitive experiences are likely to occur when cognition processes fail. Such cognitive failures may be noticed or not by the learner. When they are detected (e.g., by the feeling of confusion in performing a task), metacognitive experiences may lead to the activation of metacognitive knowledge and, consequently, help to solve the detected problem. However, when the reader is not aware of their cognitive failure,

this situation may be followed by metacognitive failure. For example, we may be reading a text daydreaming, gradually understanding less and less without realizing what is happening (Markman, 1981). In other words, metacognitive experiences function as insights or perceptions that one experiences during cognition and can serve as "quality control" checks that can induce readers to revise their cognitive goals.

The next component in Flavell's (1981) conception of metacognition is *strategy use*, which involves applying cognitive and metacognitive resources. Flavell (1979, as cited in Garner, 1988) assumes that "cognitive strategies are involved to make cognitive progress, metacognitive strategies to monitor them" (p. 20), thereby emphasizing the interrelation of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. The last element in the model, *cognitive goals*, seems to be the most practical. For example, in reading a text accompanied by questions, the goal could mean performing a concrete task to find information in the text necessary to answer a specific question.

Summing up, in Flavell's (1981) model all the components of metacognition form a sequence and can prompt each other. Metacognitive knowledge serves as a basis for metacognitive experiences, which in turn invoke the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and encourage the learner to revise their metacognitive knowledge and cognitive goals.

Metacognition in Reading

Although the term "metacognition" may be relatively new, this type of knowledge in relation to reading has been recognized since the beginning of the 20th century (e.g., Dewey, 1910; Huey, 1968; Thorndike, 1917). Dewey calls for inducing reflective thinking in reading, which today may be named metacognitive training. Thorndike defines reading as reasoning; he describes understanding a paragraph as similar to a math problem: "It consists of selecting the right elements of the situation and putting them together in the right relations […] [the mind] must select, repress, soften, emphasize, correlate and organize, all under the influence of the right mental set or purpose or demand" (Thorndike, 1917, p. 329, as cited in Brown, 1988). All the enumerated authors emphasize the role of metacognition in reading.

One of the aims of metacognition studies has been to explore differences between effective and less effective readers. As regards reading in L1, numerous studies point to certain differences in metacognitive knowledge and strategy use between the two groups of readers. The results of FL/L2 research are reminiscent of L1 reading studies. More skilled FL readers demonstrate greater awareness of the reading process (Geladari & Konstantinos, 2010). They are more consistent and effective in monitoring their reading (Yang & Zhang, 2002).

In fact, a significant positive correlation between strategy use and reading achievement has been found (Rastegar et al., 2017; Yang & Zhang, 2002; Zhang & Seepho, 2013). More effective readers are more sensitive to inconsistencies in the text and respond to them appropriately (Yang & Zhang, 2002). They also show more effective self-evaluation skills and use a wider range of "top-down" strategies (Kusiak, 2001). Devine (1988), Hosenfeld (1977) and Wang et al. (2009) point to a crucial role of perceptions that FL readers hold of reading and themselves as readers and explain the relationship between readers' perceptions and their performance. Successful readers view reading more as a meaning-oriented process than a decoding exercise. They also show more confidence in their abilities. Not surprisingly, in comparison with L1 studies, the results of FL/L2 studies underline the importance of readers' language competence in reading. Zhang (2002) found that more advanced learners demonstrated greater awareness of the strategies they use in reading.

To sum up, studies into the features of good and poor readers have resulted in interesting results. They gave rise to numerous investigations concerning the effectiveness of strategy training, whose aim is to equip learners with "good reader" knowledge and skills.

Strategy Training

Studies into FL/L2 reading instruction provide evidence that strategy instruction can bring promising results. Training can enhance reading performance (Carrell et al., 1989; Dabarera et al., 2014). It can result in developing an appropriate use of reading strategies (Fung et al., 2003). The instruction was found successful in sensitizing students to the facilitating role of top-down strategies (Kusiak, 2001; Salataci & Akyel, 2002) and improving learners' self-evaluation skills (Kusiak, 2001). Strategy instruction was also effective in raising strategy awareness (Brown et al., 1996; Dabarera et al., 2014).

In ESL pedagogy, several instructional models have been found effective, for example, the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach—CALLA (Chamot & O'Malley, 1986) and the Forsee Approach—Communication, Cognitive Academic Language Development and Content Instruction in the Classroom (Kidd & Marquardson, 1994). In the instruction, the self-control stage is implemented by encouraging learners to evaluate their work by means of learning strategy logs and checklists. Both programs proved successful in developing students' content knowledge, language proficiency, and learning strategy use. The CALLA was effective in developing FL reading comprehension as demonstrated by Cubukcu (2008), and Nejad and Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki (2015).

It is important to emphasize that contemporary strategy instruction has taken a social turn; reading motivation and engagement have attracted research attention as factors contributing to reading achievement. Koukourikou et al. (2018) investigated the effectiveness of *Collaborative Strategic Reading* (CSR), which drew on reciprocal teaching (Palincsar & Brown, 1986) and cooperative learning, and found this teaching perspective successful in developing reading performance of FL students. Collaborative techniques recommend developing peer interaction, for example, by involving students in group discussions about reading strategies (Hennessey, 1999). This way of teaching helps students to develop "metacognitive" discourse and is likely to provoke conceptual conflict, which in turn can assist learners in the construction and refinement of their concepts and attitudes (i.e., metacognitive knowledge). Changes in this area of metacognition prepare learners for the next step in their metacognitive development—the integration of metacognitive knowledge with regulation of cognition (Schraw & Moshman, 1995).

Other examples of contemporary reading strategy instruction are *Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction* (CORI), which was applied in elementary and middle school classrooms, for example, by Guthrie & Klauda (2014) and Wigfield et al. (2014), as well as the engagement model of reading comprehension development suggested by Guthrie and Klauda (2016). In the engagement model, reading comprehension is viewed as the consequence of an extended amount of engaged reading, which is defined as motivated, strategic, knowledge driven, and socially interactive. Taboada Barber & Klauda (2020, p. 28) assume that

> reading motivation produces reading engagement, which promotes achievement. That is, when students set reading goals, value reading, and believe in themselves as readers, they more willingly and fully engage in reading activities. In turn, consistent, active reading engagement helps individuals build the varied cognitive processes requisite to deep reading comprehension.

As a summary of the interrelated dimensions of the model, the acronym SMILE has been suggested. The letters stand for the following aspects of reading practice:

> S for sharing or the social dimension; M for me, or the referent of the self-efficacy dimension; I for importance, a key aspect of the value dimension; L for liking, which reflects the intrinsic dimension; and E for engagement, which comes last as a product of each of the preceding dimensions but also engendered by additional specific supports. (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2017, p. 28)

Since this model was implemented in the strategy training which is the core of the study presented in this paper, it will be discussed in more detail in the empirical section of this text.

The Study

Participants and the Context of the Study

The subjects in the study were 60 secondary school students of EFL. They participated in a reading strategy training, which took place over eight lessons of 45 minutes each. The students' competence in English was at the B1 level, as was measured by the learners' teacher based on the syllabus and the tests administered before the training. In the course of their education, the learners had already been exposed to some forms of strategy training that had the features of blind training.[1]

The Training

The training which was conducted by the author of this paper was inspired by the engagement model of reading comprehension (Guthrie & Klauda, 2016). The main aims of the instruction were: (1) to present or revise a selection of strategies readers can use when dealing with different types of texts; (2) to create a variety of opportunities so that students can practice the strategies and reflect on themselves as readers; (3) to create a positive classroom atmosphere in which the participants would be willing to share their opinions and observations; (4) to introduce basic terms connected with the strategies discussed. The principles, goals, and content of the training are presented in Table 1. They are organized according to the acronym SMILE suggested by Guthrie and Wigfield (2017, p. 28). It is important to note that the following activities presented in Table 1 were completed by the learners at two stages, that is, first individually, then in pairs or groups: semantic mapping of expository text structures (Carrell et al., 1989), activating background knowledge by means of the ETR, that is, experience, text, relationship method[2] (Carrell et al., 1989), making predictions

---

[1] Blind training, as described by Brown et al. (1986), does not require learners' strategic consciousness. Students are instructed what to do (which corresponds to their declarative knowledge of strategies), but are given no explanation why they should perform certain tasks.

[2] The ETR consists of three stages. At the *experience* stage, learners discuss their knowledge and experiences related to the text to be read, for example, on the basis of the title of the text.

and developing monitoring skills by means of the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity[3] (Stauffer, 1969), answering reading comprehension questions, guessing the meaning of unknown vocabulary, making inferences and cohesion awareness exercises.

It was believed that the learners would be prepared for this kind of instruction and that the training would motivate the participants to express their reflection in their diaries.

Table 1

The SMILE Aspects of the Strategy Training

Aspects of the training	Aims	Examples of activities
S – sharing	– to encourage cooperation among students; – to show students that "shared" reading can mean deeper and less difficult reading.	– reciprocal teaching (Palincsar & Brown, 1986); writing a diary; sharing observations about the way of reading; thinking aloud when working on a text in a group; observing the reading of the peers; students' generated questions.
M – me	– to foster students' reading self-efficacy by making texts more "reader friendly"; – to foster students' feelings of success by suggesting a variety of strategies.	– writing a diary; think aloud exercises; observing one's reading; self-questioning strategies; guided discovery and metaphor-based activities.
I – importance	– to make learners reflect on the importance and usefulness of reading; – to develop positive attitudes to the strategies recommended in the training.	– discussions about the role of reading in education and everyday life; discussions about the usefulness of the strategies practiced, e.g., study strategies, such as underlining and note taking; advance organiser exercises; discovery activities.
L – liking	– to create a supportive classroom atmosphere; – to give learners a choice, e.g. in texts and homework tasks.	– giving the students a choice: (1) a variety of texts: essays, blogs, narrative; (2) homework tasks; (3) partners in groupwork activities.
E – engagement	– to enhance learners' reflection on their development as readers.	– class discussions.

At the *text* stage, students read the text. At the *relationship* stage, they seek relationships between the content of the text (as developed at the *text* stage) and their outside knowledge and experience (as discussed at the *experience* stage).

[3] The Directed Reading-Thinking Activity consists of three steps. First, students are encouraged to make predictions about the text on the basis of the title of the text, headings, etc. Then, learners read the text part by part and evaluate their predications. At the final step, students read the whole text again and by referring to the text explain if their predictions were correct or not.

Aims of the Study

The study aimed to explore metacognitive beliefs that the participants of the training expressed in their diaries. It was assumed that metacognitive beliefs correspond to metacognitive knowledge, which is reflected in its three components, that is, person knowledge, task knowledge, and strategy knowledge as defined by Flavell (1981). In the present study, the term "metacognitive beliefs" refers to the following beliefs: (1) *Beliefs in relation to the learners (BL)*: the beliefs that the students revealed about themselves and other students as FL learners and readers as well as their opinions about the learning process in general and about reading; (2) *Beliefs in relation to the tasks (BT)*: the learners' opinions about the tasks they performed during the training as well as the students' knowledge concerning the information and resources they needed to complete the activities; (3) *Beliefs in relation to the strategies (BS)*: the learners' opinions concerning the strategies that were recommended to the students during the training as the resources that they may apply when reading texts.

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

(1) What are the students' beliefs in relation to the learners themselves (BL) as expressed in their diaries?
(2) What are the students' beliefs in relation to the tasks they performed during the training (BT) as expressed in their diaries?
(3) What are the students' beliefs in relation to the strategies presented during the training (BS) as expressed in their diaries?

Research Method

The diary method is the main methodology used in the present study. A diary study involves asking people to keep a regular record of their experiences and activities in which they are involved (Bartlett & Milligan, 2015). Diaries can be used in a variety of disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, medicine, economics, and second language acquisition. In SLA "[d]iary studies are case studies in which language learners or teachers keep an intensive journal using introspection or retrospection and self-observation over a period of time" (McKay, 2009, p. 235). When diarists are L2 learners, data can provide valuable insights into affective factors, learning strategies, motifs, and perceptions concerning the process of learning—"facets of the language learning experience which are normally hidden or largely inaccessible to an external observer" (Bailey & Ochsner, 1983, p. 189). It is worth noting that despite undeniable advantages, diaries can pose problems such as difficulties in analyzing subjective data and the reluctance of informants (Dörnyei, 2007; Wilczyńska & Michońska-Stadnik, 2010).

In SLA, research diaries have been used for a number of purposes, which can be categorized into three groups: pedagogical purposes, course evaluation, and research (Howell-Richardson & Parkinson, 1988). However, as observed by McKay (2009), there are not many published studies that have utilized diaries as a research technique to explore L2 learning and teaching, the fact which makes a comparison of research findings difficult. Although in the last decade in SLA studies, the diary technique has been gaining popularity, there is still a need for more research especially in relation to metacognition of L2 readers, the gap which the author of the present study intends to address.

In relation to metacognition, diaries have been used mostly for pedagogical purposes, usually as a teaching technique to raise learners' and teachers' self-awareness and self-reflection. In the present study, diaries served two purposes—as a tool to raise learners' reflection and as a research technique to collect data on students' beliefs concerning their metacognitive knowledge. Diaries were distributed to the students before the training. They took the form of traditional notebooks and contained a short introduction and some prompt sentences. The introduction and the prompts were in the learners' native language, that is, Polish (below a translated version of the prompts is presented). The students were asked to write their comments at home and sign their diaries with nicknames.

A: I think during this lesson I have learnt ……………….

B: I consider it ………………… (necessary, unnecessary, interesting, boring) because ……………

C: It is a pity I have not learnt …………………

D: Other comments …………………

Analysis of Diary Data

Following the advice of Pavlenko (2007), to obtain a comprehensive interpretation of the data, three aspects of the diaries were examined: (1) *the content*, that is, what the informants reported; (2) *the context*, that is, where they reported, and (3) *the form*, that is, how they reported. As regards the content, diary data can be analyzed in two ways: an analytical one, which can allow for detailed quantitative calculations of strategies reported by subjects, and a global narrative way, which provides researchers with qualitative data and enables them to examine motivational and attitudinal factors (Oxford & Leaver, 1996). In the present study, the latter approach was adopted. Thematic analysis of the content took two steps. The first one entailed reading the entries and deciding which type of metacognitive beliefs the data under inspection reflected: those related to learners, tasks or strategies. The second step involved rereading all the

fragments concerning one type of metacognitive beliefs and identifying themes which reoccurred in them. The examination of the form of diaries focused on the structure of the entries and the elements of the language used by the students which were considered crucial in the analysis of the content of diaries. As regards the context of diaries, in the interpretation of the results, two factors were taken into account: the learning background of the informants (a macro-level factor) and the location in which writing diaries took place (a micro-level factor).

Results

General Comments on the Form and Content of the Diaries

Thirty out of 60 students submitted the diaries after the training. The participants of the training were asked to write diaries in Polish; while some did so in English. The diaries varied in content, form, and length; some took the form of reflective diaries, others—short notes. It seems that 22 diaries were kept systematically; entries were written after each meeting. Eight diaries seem incomplete; some were written as summative reflections after the training, the others included very sparse comments. The length of one comment concerning one lesson or one two-lesson meeting varied from 250 words to one short sentence; the average was approximately 50 words per comment. The average length of a diary was approximately three A5 pages. A preliminary analysis of the content of the comments showed that although not all the students explicitly answered the prompt questions provided in the instruction, the prompts must have directed their reports.

An analysis of the content is presented below; it is organized according to the three components of metacognition specified in the research questions: Beliefs in relation to the learners (BL), Beliefs in relation to the tasks (BT), and Beliefs in relation to the strategies (BS). The analysis is illustrated with samples taken from the students' diaries. The structure of the entries and the language used by the informants are discussed as well.

Beliefs in Relation to the Learners (BL): Research question #1

In the diary data, a number of themes were identified related to this type of metacognitive knowledge. Most of them illustrate the learners' opinions concerning various aspects of the training and demonstrate in what way the training encouraged the students to reflect on their learning and themselves as learners. The themes are discussed in detail below.

The Training as a Surprising Experience. It seems useful to start this discussion with the following diary entry:

> During the first lessons I was surprised that there is someone who is interested in how I (and others) learn; what was even more interesting is why someone is doing it.[4]

The quotation shows that the learner was aware of one of the main aims of the training, which was to encourage the learners to reflect on certain aspects of reading and to raise their awareness about how they learn. Comments about the students' learning appeared at the very beginning of their diaries.

The Training as a Factor Enhancing the Learners' Understanding of the Reading Skill. An ample amount of data is related to the students' learning. It is possible to distinguish several types of students. The first type are those who claimed that the training had enhanced their understanding of what reading texts involves. Some students realized that the way of reading they had applied before the training was inefficient; this opinion is demonstrated in the following entry.

> I think that the first classes revealed before me a completely new discovery how one should read English texts. This fact really surprised me. Till then I had been almost certain that my failures were due to not knowing single words of a text. Therefore, I didn't work hard enough to provide correct answers to reading comprehension questions. Till then none of my English teachers had shown me any clues how to cope with this problem.

There were students who wrote that before the training they had never reflected on the way they read. They expressed their opinions in relation to the activities they had performed during the training, which is shown in the quotations below.

> Personally, I have never thought about such exercises, but now I will try to make up for it.
>
> Besides, I have never realized that the way texts are organized […] may help to answer reading comprehension questions.

The Training as an Unnecessary Practice of Previously Learnt Skills. There were students who claimed that the training had not taught them anything new. They had already been familiar with the techniques presented to

[4] For the sake of this paper, the entries that the learners produced in Polish were translated into English.

them and found it difficult to relate them to their learning. In many cases, the students wrote as if in the name of the whole class, probably with the intention of strengthening their personal point of view. For some examples, see the entries below.

> During the first lessons I was surprised that there is someone who is interested in how I am familiar with everything that you tried to present to us.
>
> It's a pity but after 5 minutes of the lesson I gave up. I realized that I would not benefit from this lesson. […] We are 18 years old. You should realize that we can read with understanding in a satisfactory way.

Relating the Training to Previous Learning Experiences. The students related the training to their former learning experiences. Some students saw the training as a completely new learning experience; they complained that their regular school classes lacked direct instruction on how to read English texts. The other learners stressed the fact that the training activities were similar to the English courses or private lessons that they were attending or had attended before. Several students explained that they did not find reflective activities particularly helpful as it was sufficient for them to read texts without being aware of how they did so. The following entries illustrate this finding.

> I'd like to write about us analyzing the steps of reading during answering the reading comprehension questions. Well, during my short life I have been forced quite a few times to do similar analyses (also when attending various language courses) and nothing has ever come of it (perhaps because there was never any continuation).
>
> I do realize that understanding the main idea of the text is important, and only then details and message of every paragraph—but I never think about such things when I read a text. I simply read it and try to understand.

Reporting on the Process of Learning during the Training. The students reported on the process of learning they experienced during the training. Very often they began their diary entries with describing the class activities in which they were engaged. Then, the students focused on the reading strategies that the tasks aimed to demonstrate (it is an aspect of students' metacognition classified as strategy knowledge, which will be discussed later). The students also described what they thought they were learning when completing the tasks, for example, beginning to pay attention to certain aspects of reading, learning how to read faster, improving certain skills, etc. In many cases, the students diagnosed their learning difficulties, evaluated their skills and reflected on possible remedies, which can be seen in the two examples presented below (written by

the same student). The comments indicate that the training was successful in encouraging the students to reflect on the difficulties they encountered when reading texts.

> I had slight difficulties about the titles; I didn't know, I was not sure if the sentence I wanted to select would reflect the content of the whole text.
>
> I still don't know which things are more crucial, and which are less crucial. What distracts me is the fact that I don't understand the meaning of all the words in a text.

Disagreeing with the Advice Suggested during the Training. In some cases, the comments took the form of personal judgements, for example, the students took issue with the "theories" suggested by the teacher. This is reflected in the entries presented below.

> Reading a text and then writing a map to this text is perhaps interesting as a task itself. But nobody really does it every time one reads a text, anyway I don't do it.
>
> I don't agree with the theories announced during the lesson. I think it makes no sense.

Reflections on the Sense of Improvement and Success. Some of the students reflected on their feelings of improvement and success. They felt that the aspects of reading they had found difficult before seemed easier. Many students reported that the activities helped them to improve concentration during reading. The learners saw a positive impact of the training on their sense of confidence. It was attributed to certain tasks and the overall atmosphere of the training. In some diaries, it is possible to observe how the students evaluated their progress in the course of the training and how their evaluation evolved. The quotations below are taken from the diary of the same student.

> I manage to understand more and more at the lesson.
>
> I've done the homework well. It proves that I'm managing to understand more and more. At the beginning I couldn't.
>
> I'm disappointed with the results of the test.
>
> I liked this lesson a lot. I participated in it more actively than usual.
>
> I've managed to do the homework without any problems. I'm proud of myself.

Beliefs in Relation to the Tasks (BT): Research Question #2

This component of metacognition knowledge is reflected in the comments in which the students referred to the activities conducted during the training. The learners were able to describe the activities they performed; they were also able to successfully identify and name the aims of the activities. They commented on the difficulty of the tasks and reflected on the abilities they needed to perform the tasks efficiently. There were students who did not find the advice concerning skillful reading useful and, in a persuasive way, explained their point of view. A more detailed examination of this part of the students' metacognition knowledge is presented below.

Commenting on the Tasks. Two forms of comments were identified. In the first one, the learners focus on the task they found representative of the whole lesson, which is followed by an explanation as to why they found this activity useful in their learning. In the second type, the students narrow down their report to the skill that, in their opinion, a particular lesson helped them to practice. The examples are provided below.

> I think that the exercises with cartoons and sentences help to ignore details in reading texts.
>
> I learnt how to answer the questions in a direct way, without beating about the bush.

The Link between Theory and Practice. There were comments that concern what some students called "the link between theory and practice." The entries reflect the learners' views on the usefulness of the tasks in real-life situations. The learners commented on the reading strategies (often called by them "principles") that were modelled in the tasks. Some students related the "principles" to their own abilities and described the situations in which the strategies can be applied. A few examples of such comments are presented below.

> The most important thing I learnt at this lesson is the fact that in most texts the first paragraph is the most crucial one. I consider this piece of information very useful, because it facilitates reading and helps to understand a text faster.
>
> I think that during the lesson I learnt how to pay attention to so called details in a completely unknown text. I regard it as very useful when one has to deal with a big amount of information, e.g., during a visit in a foreign country. It makes such attempts fast and skillful.

> The way of taking notes is a kind of task that requires from everyone a maximum amount of concentration on a text. What is necessary is a sort of creative thinking, which helps to analyze notes in an efficient and skillful way.

There were students who criticized the training because of its overly theoretical character. They claimed that the "theories" presented during the training were not fully developed in the tasks. The two extracts produced by the same student are an example of this opinion.

> Taking notes in a graphical way could be very useful. I think, however, that we should learn more about how to do such notes. We saw the examples of such notes, now it would be good to see a text which was used to produce such notes. We could see some pattern which can be used to take notes in this way. It could make life easier.
>
> All the things that I lacked last time were done today! Well done!

These comments indicate that the students distinguished two aspects of their knowledge of English: theoretical and practical. It is also clear that the students were aware of the link between the two.

The Usefulness of the Skills Practiced. The students found the training helpful in developing reading skills, writing (e.g., taking notes) and speaking (e.g., planning a speech). Also, some more general cognitive skills were mentioned such as creative and logical thinking. In most of the diaries, the students emphasize the usefulness of the strategies practiced for school tests and exams, for example, the secondary school leaving exam or FC exams.

Arguing with the Advice Suggested during the Training. In many cases, the students argued with what they thought the classes had sought to teach them, as demonstrated in the following extracts.

> I do understand that the topic is important in reading, but in 80% of the cases it has nothing to do with the content of a text. Only in 20% a topic goes with the content of a text—it is in the case of serious texts, scientific texts, and sometimes articles. A good text has a topic only slightly connected with itself; and it is possible to understand a topic only after reading a text, and sometimes even this can be difficult. Therefore, I think that paying attention to a topic and then to the content of a text may lead to irreparable results; i.e., incomplete comprehending of the text.

> It is true that a title can give us certain clues, but it also creates in our mind certain inclination about the passage, the effect which I consider a mistake. It limits our horizons in a very peculiar way; it narrows our imagination regarding the idea expressed in the title. This inability to move our fantasy is restricted by the ideology of reading with understanding (practiced before). When a clever reader is not able to immerse in a text in a free and complete way (because of the earlier limitations), one loses a lot. And it is how […] (not clear in the diary) evaluations about the purpose and meaning of a text are made.

The last extract is a very clear example of how the student reacted to one of the lessons and how the reading strategies presented in class challenged their "philosophy of reading." The comment is a response to the lesson about skimming, for example, identifying the topic of a text before reading the text in a more detailed way. It is interesting to observe the author's emotional involvement in their "fight" with the arguments presented during the training.

Beliefs in Relation to the Strategies (BS): Research Question #3

This component of metacognition knowledge is reflected in the comments in which the students referred to the strategies presented by the teacher. The students' BS along with the language used in the diaries are discussed below.

Language Used by the Students to Write about the Strategies. When writing about the tasks, the learners pointed to the strategies presented during the training. The students named the strategies; the words that they used to refer to the reading strategies are: "principles," "techniques," "methods," "ways," "mechanisms," and "strategies." Another way of writing about the strategies was recalling them in a general way, that is, "we learnt how to find important information." The students used a rich range of metalanguage; words such "main idea," "topic," "synonyms," "main message" or "content," "details," "text organization," "context," "key words," etc. It is worth noting that English terms were used also in the diaries written in Polish, which could be due to the fact that the classes were conducted in English.

Opinions about the Strategies. All the students expressed their opinion about the strategies; they either accepted or rejected them—in both cases the students explained their views, usually in relation to their abilities and learning experiences. Two examples of such comments are provided below.

> I think that it's useful to give names/titles for texts. If I'm able to give the title, it means that I know what the text is about.

> Mind-mapping a text is a stupid method. It may make taking notes more effective, but it is very uncomfortable to use it to repeat the information expressed by means of it. One loses the sequence and logical links and relationships among the facts.

Evaluating one's Abilities and Specifying Problems. The students reflected on their abilities to cope with certain aspects of reading and evaluated their progress. Some students extrapolated to other out-of-training reading situations. It is worth highlighting that vocabulary knowledge was reported as the most common factor causing problems in comprehending texts. For an example of such opinions, see the entry below.

> I experience difficulty in catching the main message expressed in the answers. I find it easier to formulate the main idea in my own words. However, there are texts that are really difficult. I think my difficulties are connected with not understanding key words.

Discussion and Conclusions

The diaries elicited rich information, which enabled the author to answer the research questions concerning the students' metacognitive beliefs in relation to the learners themselves (BL), the tasks (BT) and strategies connected with the training (BS).

As regards BL, the results of the analysis show that the learners differed in their views on reading in a FL. For some students, the training was a kind of eye opener as it created a unique opportunity to "discover" new learning techniques. It seems that the learners appreciated the techniques recommended; they expressed an opinion that reading English texts requires complex skills and using strategies can facilitate this process. There was another group of students that treated reading as a skill that they simply apply when they want to understand a text; in their opinion, strategies are "fuss," which they do not need. The students who did not show much enthusiasm about the training seem to demonstrate the features of fluent readers, whose reading behavior Grabe and Stoller (2002) explain in the following way:

> Using strategies effectively does not typically involve conscious decisions on the part of the fluent reader. Strategic readers are able to verbalize consciously the strategies that they use when asked to reflect, but they usually do not think consciously of these strategic choices because they have used them effectively so often. (p. 82)

In other words, a possible reason behind the learners' dissatisfaction with the training is the fact that, as more experienced readers, they had already been using the strategies suggested during the training. It seems that bringing strategies into consciousness was not what they would have expected from this kind of training.

The data point to another important preference concerning reading. For many learners, it is vocabulary that plays a key role in reading comprehension. Similarly, not knowing vocabulary in the text is a common problem reported by many learners. It suggests that for some students, vocabulary knowledge is one of the most important aspects of FL competence that they would like to develop. A possible explanation of this finding could be the influence of the students' learning background, namely, not many opportunities to get engaged in awareness-raising activities and to test the effectiveness of this type of learning. While lexical exercises, also those that accompany reading comprehension tasks, are popular in an EFL classroom, strategy-based tasks are still rare.

When it comes to the research questions which concern BT and BS, the analysis revealed that comments on the tasks and those regarding the strategies intertwine. Therefore, in this discussion the findings reflecting both aspects of students' metacognitive knowledge are presented together. The diaries show that the students were able to identify the objectives of the tasks that they were asked to complete. They were also able to identify and name the strategies that the training demonstrated. The learners evaluated the difficulty of the tasks and discussed the effectiveness of the strategies involved in the tasks. There are several skills that the learners emphasized as resources which they utilized while performing the reading tasks. Apart from vocabulary knowledge, they stressed the importance of the skill of concentration, the use of creative thinking and analytical reasoning. As regards the usefulness of the strategies presented, it seems that it is not possible to point to one strategy evaluated by all the learners as the most helpful. This finding indicates that strategy knowledge is individual. Different students can approve of different strategies for different reasons.

As regards the information and resources the students used in order to complete the tasks, some learners found it very beneficial to draw on their earlier learning experiences. They recalled similar tasks that they had performed in their school or out-of-school learning. It seems that this group of learners took

the "high road" of learning (in contrast to the "low road"), which according to Chamot and O'Malley (1994) means recognizing similarities between familiar tasks and new tasks, and being able to utilize the strategies that one used to apply in the past. It is probable that among the participants of the training, there were also learners who took the "low road"; they did not remember the previous use of strategies and viewed them as new ones. It is worth adding that the process of diary keeping offered the learners an opportunity to verbalize their strategy use; this unique experience could have equipped them with the metacognition knowledge necessary to recognize familiar situations and strategies in their future learning, as suggested by Paris and Winograd (1990) and Pressley et al. (1992).

It was interesting to observe the learners' emotional engagement with what the training had to offer, especially to follow changes in the reactions and attitudes throughout the training. For example, students who at the beginning did not understand the purpose of the classes changed their attitudes during the training.

To sum up, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The training encouraged the learners to reflect on themselves as learners and participants of the classes as well as the activities in which they were engaged.
2. The diary proved to be an effective elicitation technique.
3. The students differed in their opinions related to the effectiveness of the training, which may reflect the fact that they were at different levels of reading strategy development.
4. For most of the students, vocabulary seems to play a crucial role in reading comprehension.
5. Participating in the training seemed to be an emotional issue.
6. The opinions and attitudes of the students evolved during the training.

Implications and Suggestions for Further Research

There are several issues which were elucidated by this study and call for further investigation. They are discussed below.

The results indicate that although the participants were at the same level of general language competence (B1), they represented different levels of reading strategy development. By way of revision, the students varied in their opinions concerning the strategies presented during the training and probably in their experience in strategy use. At this point of discussion, it seems useful to quote Pressley (2001), who advances the following suggestion to educators:

> Although much is known about how to teach comprehension strategies when students are first learning them, very little is known about how teaching should occur as students are internalizing and automatizing strategies. (p. 9)

In the future, more research attention should be devoted to the students who are at the stage of internalizing and automatizing strategies. Additionally, it would be useful to explore in more detail the specificity of teaching reading strategies to mixed ability classes, i.e., those that consist of more and less experienced learners as far as strategy use is concerned.

In the analysis of diary data, certain aspects of the language used by the informants were examined. As pointed out in the theoretical section of this paper, developing "metacognitive" discourse is a very important part of strategy training as it can facilitate the process of restructuring beliefs and constructing new metacognitive knowledge. Thus, in future studies it can be beneficial to follow changes in learners' discourse and look at the relation between such changes and students' metacognitive beliefs.

Pavlenko (2007) points out that in analyzing narrative data, it is crucial to "consider not only what was said or written but also what was omitted and why" (p. 274). One of the aims of the SMILE training (see Table 1) was to create an atmosphere conducive to the exchange of knowledge and experiences. However, it was found that not many comments in the diaries focus on the social side of the teaching/learning situation. Although many students valued the atmosphere of the training, there are no comments regarding the learners' participation in groupwork activities, which may indicate that the learners did not appreciate a facilitating role that such tasks may play in their learning. This finding implies a suggestion that teachers devote more time to sensitizing learners to the usefulness of interactive activities. As regards research, it would be valuable to explore in more detail the "caring and sharing" aspects of a FL classroom, as emphasized by Gabryś-Barker (2016).

The study has a number of limitations, which should be taken into consideration by those who would like to conduct a similar investigation. Different prompt statements could elicit different narrations. For example, more open questions can allow learners more freedom to express their opinions. In the present study, the students were instructed to write entries at home. Asking them to complete diaries in class may elicit more introspective reports. Adopting a different mode of diary keeping, such as recording narrations on smartphones, can be more motivating for learners in the era of developing technology, as suggested by Bartlett and Milligan (2015).

In the present study, diary data were analyzed by means of thematic analysis. An alternative way could be to look at the diaries with a narrative lens. The narrative research perspective would enable researchers to treat learners' individual reports as stories and students as story tellers, which would mean

gaining more insight into the dynamic nature of metacognition knowledge. Another possible change in the procedure of the study can be the use of other research methods along with diaries. To ensure methodological triangulation, that is, the use of different research methods to investigate the same issue, interviews with informants can be conducted as well.

It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss other advantages of strategy training and diary keeping, such as their impact on learners' reading and writing skills, and metalinguistic knowledge. It is the belief of the author of the paper that the present study contributes to the picture of metacognition in EFL teaching and will encourage both teachers and academics to explore the benefits of introspective techniques in their future research.

References

Bailey, K. M., & Ochsner, R. (1983). A methodological review of the diary studies: Windmill tilting or social science? In K. M. Bailey, M. H. Long, & S. Peck (Eds.), *Second language acquisition studies* (pp. 188–198). Newbury House.

Baker, L., & Brown, A. L. (1984). Metacognitive skills and reading. In P. D. Pearson, R. Barr, M. L. Kamil, & P. Mosenthal (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research* (pp. 353–394). Longman.

Bartlett, R., & Milligan, C. (2015). *What is Diary Method?* Bloomsbury Academic. www.bloomsburycollections.com.

Brown, A. L. (1980). Metacognitive development and reading. In R. J. Spiro, B. C. Bruce, & W. F. Brewer (Eds.), *Theoretical issues in reading comprehension* (pp. 453–482). Lawrence Erlbaum.

Brown, A. L. (1988). Metacognition: The development of selective attention strategies for learning from texts. In H. Singer & R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (pp. 501–526). International Reading Association.

Brown, A. L., Armbruster, B. B., & Baker, L. (1986). The role of metacognition in reading and studying. In J. Orasanu (Ed.), *Reading comprehension: From theory to practice* (pp. 49–73). Lawrence Erlbaum.

Brown, R., Pressley, M., Van Meter, P., & Schuder, T. (1996). A quasi-experimental validation of transactional strategy instruction with low-achieving second-grade students. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 88*, 18–37.

Carrell, P. L., Pharis, B. G., & Liberto, J. C. (1989). Metacognitive strategy training for ESL reading. *TESOL Quarterly*, *23*(4), 647–678.

Chamot, A. U., & O'Malley, J. M. (1986). *A cognitive academic language learning approach: An ESL content-based curriculum.* National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.

Chamot, A. U., & O'Malley, J. M. (1994). Language learner and learning strategies. In N. C. Ellis (Ed.), *Implicit and explicit learning of languages* (pp. 371–392). Academic Press.

Cross, D. R., & Paris, S. G. (1988). Developmental and instructional analyses of children's metacognition and reading comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 80*, 131–142. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.80.2.131

Cubukcu, F. (2008). Enhancing vocabulary development and reading comprehension through metacognitive strategies. *Issues in Educational Research, 18*(1), 1–11.

Dabarera, C., Renandya, W. A., & Zhang, L. J. (2014). The impact of metacognitive scaffolding and monitoring on reading comprehension. *System, 42*, 462–473. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.12.020

Desoete, A., & Roeyers, H. (2003). Can off-line metacognition enhance mathematical problem solving? *Journal of Educational Psychology, 95*, 188–200.

Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think* (2nd ed.). Heath. (Original work published 1910).

Devine, J. (1988). A case study of two readers: Models of reading and reading performance. In P. L. Carrell, J. Devine, & D. E. Eskey (Eds.), *Interactive approaches to second language reading* (pp. 127–139). Cambridge University Press.

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. Oxford University Press.

Flavell, J. H. (1978). Metacognitive development. In J. M. Scandura & C. J. Brainerd (Eds.), *Structural / process theories of complex human behavior* (pp. 213–245). Sijthoff and Noordoff.

Flavell, J. H. (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive-developmental inquiry. *American Psychologist, 34*, 906–911.

Flavell, J. H. (1981). Cognitive monitoring. In W. P. Dickson (Ed.), *Children's oral communication skills* (pp. 35–60). Academic Press.

Flavell, J. H. (1985). *Cognitive development* (2nd. ed.). Prentice-Hall.

Fung, I. Y. Y., Wilkinson, I. A. G., & Moore, D. W. (2003). L1-assisted reciprocal teaching to improve ESL students' comprehension of English expository text. *Learning and Instruction, 13*(1), 1–31. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0959-4752(01)00033-0

Gabryś-Barker, D. (2016). Caring and sharing in the foreign language classroom: On a positive classroom climate. In D. Gabryś-Barker & D. Gałajda (Eds.), *Positive psychology perspectives on foreign language learning and teaching* (pp. 155–174). Springer. https://doi.org.10.1007/978-3-319-32954-3

Garner, R. (1988). *Metacognition and reading comprehension*. Ablex.

Geladari, A., & Konstantinos, M. (2010). A record of poor Bilingual Readers' approaches to narrative texts and strategy use in L2. *International Journal of Learning, 17*, 151–164. https://doi.org/10.18848/1447-9494/CGP/v17i07/47153

Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. L. (2002). *Teaching and researching reading.* Longman.

Guthrie, J. T., & Klauda, S. L. (2014). Effects of classroom practices on reading comprehension, engagement, and motivations for adolescents. *Reading Research Quarterly, 49*, 387–416. https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.81

Guthrie, J. T., & Klauda, S. L. (2016). Engagement and motivational processes in reading. In P. Afflerbach (Ed.), *Handbook of individual differences in reading: Reader, text, and context* (pp. 41–53). Routledge.

Guthrie, J. T., & Wigfield, A. (2017). Literacy engagement and motivation: Rationale, research, teaching, and assessment. In D. Lapp & D. Fisher (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teaching the English language arts* (pp. 57–84). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315650555-3

Hennessey, M. G. (1999, March 28–31). *Probing the dimensions of metacognition: Implications for conceptual change teaching-learning* [Conference session]. The Annual Meeting of the National Association for Research in Science Teaching, Boston, MA.

Hosenfeld, C. (1977). A preliminary investigation of the reading strategies of successful and nonsuccessful second language learners. *System, 5*(2), 110–123.

Howell-Richardson, C., & Parkinson, B. (1988). Learner diaries: Possibilities and pitfalls. In P. Grunwell (Ed.), *Applied linguistics in society* (pp. 74–79). CILT/BAAL.

Huey, E. B. (1968). *The psychology and pedagogy of reading.* MIT Press. (Original work published 1908).

Kidd, R., & Marquardson, B. (1994). *Secondary sourcebook for integrating ESL and content instruction using the Foresee Approach*. Curriculum Support Document. Manitoba Education and Training Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Koukourikou, M., Manoli, P., & Griva, E. (2018). Explicit collaborative reading strategy instruction: A pilot intervention in the EFL context. *Research Papers in Language Teaching and Learning, 9*(1), 195–210.

Kusiak, M. (2001). The effect of metacognitive strategy training on reading comprehension and metacognitive knowledge. In S. Foster-Cohen & A. Niżegorodcew (Eds.), *EUROSLA Yearbook, Vol. 1* (pp. 255–274). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Markman, E. M. (1981). Comprehension monitoring. In W. P. Dickson (Ed.), *Children's oral communication skills*. Academic Press.

McDonough, J., & McDonough, S. (1997). *Research methods for English language teachers*. Arnold.

McKay, S. L. (2009). Introspective techniques. In J. Heigham & R. A. Croker (Eds.), *Qualitataive research in applied linguistics. A practical introduction* (pp. 220–241). Palgrave Macmillan.

Nejad, B. S., & Mahmoodi-Shahrebabaki, M. (2015). Effects of metacognitive strategy instruction on the reading comprehension of English language learners through Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA). *International Journal of Languages' Education and Teaching, 3*(2), 133–164.

Oxford, R. L., & Leaver, B. L. (1996). A synthesis of strategy instruction for language learners. In R. L. Oxford (Ed.), *Language learning strategies around the world: Cross-cultural perspectives* (pp. 227–246). Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center, University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Palincsar, A. S., & Brown, A. L. (1986). Interactive teaching to promote independent learning from text. *Reading Teacher, 39*(8), 771–777.

Paris, S. G., Lipson, M. Y., & Wixson, K. K. (1983). Becoming a strategic reader. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 8*, 293–316.

Paris, S. G., & Lindauer, B.K. (1982). The development of cognitive skills during childhood. In B. Wolman (Ed.), *Handbook of developmental psychology* (pp. 333–349). Prentice-Hall.

Paris, S. G., & Winograd, P. (1990). How metacognition can promote academic learning and instruction. In B. F. Jones & L. Idol (Eds.), *Dimensions of thinking and cognitive instruction* (pp. 15–51). Lawrence Erlbaum.

Pavlenko, A. (2007). Autobiographic narratives as data in applied linguistics. *Applied Linguistics*, *28*, 289–322.

Pressley, M. (2001). Comprehension instruction: What makes sense now, what might make sense soon. *Reading Online, 5*(2). http://www.readingonline.org/articles/art_index.asp?HREF=/articles/handbook/pressley/index.html

Pressley, M., El-Dinary, P. B., Gaskins, I., Schuder, T., Bergman, J. L., Almasi, J., & Brown, J. R. (1992). Beyond direct explanation: Transactional instruction of reading comprehension strategies. *The Elementary School Journal, 92*(5), 511–553.

Rastegar, M., Mehrabi Kermani, E., & Khabir, M. (2017). The relationship between metacognitive reading strategies use and reading comprehension achievement of EFL learners. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics, 7*, 65–74. https://doi.org/10.4236/ojml.2017.72006

Salataci, R., & Akyel, A. (2002). Possible effects of strategy instruction on L1 and L2 reading. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 14*(1), 1–17. http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/rfl/April2002/salatci/salatci.html

Schraw, G., & Moshman, D. (1995). Metacognitive theories. *Educational Psychology Papers and Publications. Paper 40.* http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/edpsychpapers/40
Stauffer, R. G. (1969). *Directing reading maturity as a cognitive process.* Harper and Row.
Taboada Barber, A., & Klauda, S. L. (2020). How reading motivation and engagement enable reading achievement: Policy implications policy insights. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 7*(1), 27–34. https://doi.org/10.1177/2372732219893385
Thorndike, E. L. (1917). Reading as reasoning: A study of mistakes in paragraph reading. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 8*, 323–332.
Yang, X., & Zhang, W. (2002). The correlation between metacognition and EFL reading comprehension of Chinese college students. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research, 34*, 213–218.
Wigfield, A., Mason-Singh, A., Ho, A. N., & Guthrie, J. T. (2014). Intervening to improve children's reading motivation and comprehension: Concept-oriented reading instruction. In S. A. Karabenick & T. C. Urdan (Eds.), *Motivational interventions (Advances in motivation and achievement, Volume 18)* (pp. 37–70). Emerald Group.
Wilczyńska, W., & Michońska-Stadnik, A. (2010). *Metodologia badań w glottodydaktyce. Wprowadzenie*. Avalon.
Veenman, M. V. J. (2005). The assessment of metacognitive skills: What can be learned from multimethod designs? In C. Artelt & B. Moschner (Eds.), *Lernstrategien und Metakognition: Implikationen für Forschung und Praxis* (pp. 75–97). Waxmann.
Zhang, L. J. (2002). Exploring EFL reading as a metacognitive experience: Reader awareness and reading performance. *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching, 12*, 65–90.
Zhang, L., & Seepho, S. (2013). Metacognitive strategy use and academic reading achievement: Insights from a Chinese context. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Languages Teaching, 10*, 54–69.

Monika Kusiak-Pisowacka

Metakognitive Überzeugungen über das Lesen in einer Fremdsprache auf der Basis von Einträgen aus Schülertagebüchern

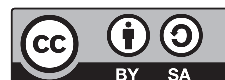
Zusammenfassung

Der Artikel befasst sich mit der Metakognition und metakognitiven Strategien in Bezug auf das Leseverstehen. Obwohl metakognitive Strategien ein fester Bestandteil der kognitiven Handlungen sind, die jeder Mensch alltäglich vornimmt, z. B. bei Bewertung der Wirksamkeit des eigenen Handelns, stellt das Konstrukt nach wie vor eine Herausforderung für die Forschung dar, auch im Bereich der Lesekompetenz. Im Artikel werden die von Flavell (1978, 1981) vorgeschlagenen theoretischen Ansätze dargelegt und ein Überblick über die Forschung zur Metakognition bezogen auf das Lesen in einer Fremdsprache gegeben, wobei ein besonderer Schwerpunkt darauf gelegt wird, die mehr und weniger „effektiven" Leser in die Untersuchung miteinzubeziehen. Des Weiteren werden die Unterrichtsprinzipien geschildert, welche auf die Entwicklung von Lernstrategien abgezielt sind, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Lesekompetenz. Der theoretische Teil des Artikels bildet eine Einführung in den empirischen Teil, in welchem über ein von der Autorin durchgeführtes Forschungsprojekt berichtet wird. Ziel der Studie war es, die metakognitiven Überzeugungen und Meinungen (eng. *metacognitive beliefs*) der Teilnehmer am Lesestrategietraining herauszufinden, die von den Schülern in den im Rahmen des Unterrichts geführten Tagebüchern

(eng. *diaries*) formuliert wurden. Die Analyse der Tagebucheinträge führte zu einigen interessanten Schlussfolgerungen, die bei der Entwicklung von Lernstrategien bzw. bei der Durchführung ähnlicher Untersuchungen zur Metakognition hilfreich sein können.

Schlüsselwörter: Metakognition, Strategietraining, Lesestrategien, Tagebücher, Überzeugungen der Schüler

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition
vol. 9 (1), 2023, pp. 1/22
https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.12097



Babak Mahdavy https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2944-0942
Department of English, Qaemshahr Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran
Masoomeh Mousavi Namavar https://orcid.org/0009-0002-4333-8864
Department of English, Qaemshahr Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran

Listening Strategies and L2 Listening Comprehension: Does the Test Method Matter?

Abstract

Many studies have so far tried to examine the relationship between listening strategies and listening comprehension. However, it seems that none of them have focused on the effect of the test method on the findings. The present study has investigated the issue by having 55 English language learners respond to pictorial and non-pictorial listening test items with different response formats. The listening section of the Preliminary English Test (PET) and a 36-item listening strategies questionnaire were administered in the first session and after a week's interval, the participants took a modified version of PET listening. The data were collected in a language laboratory. Several correlation and regression tests were run to investigate the relationships between listening comprehension as measured by the original and modified PET listening tests and metacognitive, cognitive and socio-affective listening strategies. The results showed that L2 learners' use of metacognitive listening strategies is the strongest predictor of listening performance. In addition, the findings indicated that the relationship between the use of listening strategies and listening performance is mediated by the kind of test method which is used for measuring L2 listening. Directions for future research and implications for practice are presented.

Keywords: listening comprehension, listening strategies, test method

Introduction

Various studies have shown that the use of strategies is associated with higher levels of L2 listening comprehension (Chien & Wei, 1998; Smidt & Hegelheimer, 2004), learners with higher listening abilities use metacognitive and cognitive strategies more effectively (Goh, 2002) and use of metacognitive and cognitive strategies significantly correlates with L2 listening proficiency (Kök, 2018). In addition, it has been claimed that language learners can greatly benefit from metacognitive instruction. For example, Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010) examined the effects of a metacognitive, process-based method of teaching listening on learners' comprehension and concluded that the less skilled listeners benefit most from this process-based instruction. Maftoon and Fakhri Alamdari (2020) who also used a process-based approach to explore the effects of metacognitive listening instruction on L2 listening comprehension pointed out that the intervention can significantly improve listening performance.

The research studies which investigated the role of listening strategies in listening comprehension, however, neglected the fact that comprehension is a dynamic process and continuously evolves in response to variations in the test methods (Bachman, 1990). In 1996, Bachman and Palmer posited that methods of testing affect test performance, and Kobayashi (2002) provided empirical support for the effect of response format on L2 learners' reading performance. In a meta-analysis of test format effects on listening and reading, In'nami and Koizumi (2009) showed that in L2 listening multiple-choice (MC) formats are easier than open-ended formats. These results are in line with the findings which revealed that the type of listening item affects L2 listeners' performance (Becker, 2016) and the type of listening test format (MC listening vs. integrated listening-to-summarize tasks) impacts listeners' use of different listening strategies (Rukthong, 2021). Despite all the empirical evidence which supports the role of item/task characteristics in L2 listening comprehension, research studies which have examined the contribution of various listening strategies to listening comprehension (Bozorgian, 2014; Kök, 2018; Maftoon & Fakhri Alamdari, 2020) have not tried to triangulate the findings by employing multiple forms of assessment. Therefore, the present study aimed to fill in these research gaps by answering the following questions:

1. Are listening strategies significantly related to English language learners' listening comprehension as measured by listening tests with different test methods?
2. Is L2 listeners' use of metacognitive strategies a significant predictor of listening strategies as measured by listening tests with different methods?

Literature Review

Second language learners utilize a variety of strategies in the process of language learning. Results of different research studies have indicated that use of these strategies is context-dependent (Huang, 2018) and is related to gender (Liyanage & Bartlett, 2012), learning style (Sahragard, Khajavi, & Abbasian, 2016), age (Tragant & Victori, 2012), shyness, anxiety, and ambiguity of tolerance (Sadeghi & Soleimani, 2016). Many studies have tried to identify these strategies and discussed the complexities involved in the use of them. Oxford (1990), for example, distinguished between direct and indirect strategies and noted that direct strategies consist of memory, cognitive and compensation strategies and indirect strategies comprise metacognitive, social, and affective strategies. Oxford (1990) also devised Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) for measuring language learners' strategy use. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) proposed another taxonomy of language learning strategies by making a three-way distinction to introduce metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies. The models were later used to investigate language learners' use of strategies in listening, speaking, reading, and writing performance. For example, Vandergrift (1997) and Goh (2002) drew on O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) classification to present a list of listening strategies under the three broad categories of metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies.

Metacognitive strategies have been conceptualized as part of metacognition. Flavell (1979) pointed out that metacognitive monitoring includes metacognitive knowledge or beliefs, metacognitive experiences, tasks or goals and strategies. Later conceptualizations of metacognition also included similar components (Paris & Winograd, 1990; Wenden, 1991, 1998). According to Iwai (2011), metacognition has two dimensions. The first dimension is identified with the knowledge of cognition consisting of declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, and conditional knowledge. And the second dimension is concerned with the regulation of cognition which includes strategies associated with planning, monitoring, testing, revising, and evaluating.

Chamot and O'Malley (1987) suggested that metacognition is an essential aspect of cognitive processes which are related to the comprehension and production of language and involves planning for learning, monitoring linguistic behaviour, and evaluating achievement. Research findings have shown that the use of metacognitive strategies is significantly correlated with L2 proficiency (Khezrlou, 2012) and metacognitive instruction (Cross, 2015) has positive effects on language learners' performance in listening (Maftoon & Fakhri Alamdari, 2020; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010). In addition, metacognitive strategy instruction has been found to affect reading comprehension (Teng, 2020) and writing performance (Forbes & Fisher, 2020).

Cognitive strategies have been defined as learners' mental interactions with the input and manipulation of the materials to facilitate comprehension and learning (Chamot & O'Malley, 1987). Examples of such interactions are repetition, note-taking, analyzing, generalizing, associating words, outlining, summarizing, and using imagery (Chamot & O'Malley, 1987; Oxford, 1989; Oxford, 1990). It has been shown that cognitive strategies are significantly related to L2 proficiency (e.g., Oxford & Ehrman, 1995). In a more recent attempt, Kök (2018) provided empirical evidence that indicates use of cognitive strategies significantly contributes to listening proficiency.

Social and affective strategies have been also included in various models of language learning. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) argued that behaviours associated with this type of strategy are concerned with a person's interaction with other individuals or regulation of one's own affection. According to the authors, when learners cooperate to solve a problem or use mental techniques to diminish anxiety, they are involved in the process of using socio-affective strategies to accomplish goals in a learning task. Dreyer and Oxford (1996) reported that use of social strategies was positively linked to L2 proficiency. They also suggested that affective strategies and L2 proficiency were significantly related (Dreyer & Oxford, 1996). However, Mullins's (1992) study contradicted some of their findings as in this study it was shown that affective strategies were negatively related to some measures of L2 proficiency. Similarly, Kök (2018) concluded that the correlation between socio-affective strategies and listening proficiency was not statistically significant. Goh and Kwah (1997) reported that language learners utilize socio-affective strategies less frequently and cognitive and metacognitive strategies are used more often.

Results of studies which explored the role of different strategies in listening comprehension revealed that more proficient listeners employ a wider variety of listening strategies more effectively (e.g., Chien & Wei, 1998; Smidt & Hegelheimer, 2004). The studies have also demonstrated that metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies directly contribute to successful listening comprehension. Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010), for example, reported that learners who were given metacognitive instruction and learned how to use prediction, planning, monitoring, evaluating, and problem-solving through a process-based approach to teaching second language listening outperformed the participants in the control group. O'Malley, Chamot, and Kupper (1989) found that listeners who were less successful in listening comprehension easily lost their concentration whereas more successful listeners used inferencing, self-monitoring, and elaboration. More recently, empirical evidence in support of metacognitive instruction has been provided and it has been shown that it can enhance L2 learners' listening performance (Bozorgian, 2014; Maftoon & Fakhri Alamdari, 2020; Rahimirad & Shams, 2014).

In many studies conducted to investigate the role of listening strategies in listening comprehension, a listening test was mostly used to assess the participants' comprehension. However, it seems that the issue needs to be re-examined as various research studies have provided evidence concerning the impact of the test method on test performance (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Bachman (1990) indicated that test tasks are concerned with the attributes of methods used for eliciting test performance and test performance can be impacted by personal attributes, communicative language ability, random elements which are unpredictable and temporary, and test method facets which cover five aspects including input, testing condition, test rubric, expected response, and the relationship between input and response. Bachman and Palmer (1996) stated that test methods are among the most significant variables attracting language measurement specialists' and instructors' attention. To investigate the issue empirically, several research studies examined the role of test methods in language learners' test performance. Yi'an (1998), for instance, conducted a retrospective study to see what listening comprehension tests measure and came to the following conclusion:

> MC method posed threats to the construct validity of the test in two ways: it favoured the more advanced listeners, but put the less able at a disadvantage, and it allowed much uninformed guessing and resulted in the subjects giving the correct answers for the wrong reasons. (p. 40)

In another study In'nami and Koizumi (2009) performed a meta-analysis of the effects of open-ended and MC formats on test takers' performance. The results indicated that with a format effect of small to large open-ended tests of L1 reading and L2 listening are more difficult than L1 reading and L2 listening MC tests. In this study, the authors emphasized the role of contextual factors in the usefulness of a test and noted that there is no flawless test format that functions well in all circumstances. Rukthong (2021) also showed that the test method (MC questions vs. integrated listening-to-summarize) influences L2 learners' listening comprehension performance. According to the results of this study, integrated listening-to-summarize tasks measure listening abilities in real-life situations and L2 listeners can complete these listening tasks successfully if they depend on cognitive processing at a higher level.

The results of different research studies, therefore, suggest that the characteristics of a language test including the kind of test method affect L2 learners' listening comprehension performance (Bachman, 1990; In'nami & Koizumi, 2009). However, research studies exploring the role of strategies in listening comprehension (e.g., Kök, 2018; Maftoon & Fakhri Alamdari, 2020) did not utilize listening tests with a variety of test methods. As it was argued by Rukthong (2021), different listening abilities can be assessed by the use

of different test formats and learners may rely on different kinds of listening strategies in different listening environments.

Method

Participants

The study sample consisted of 101 female and male undergraduate students who had completed high school and were enrolled in the first year of a bachelor's program in English translator training. They were in the age range of 19 to 22 and volunteered to take part in the study after completing a consent form. Convenience sampling was used to recruit the participants. Those who did not respond to all the items in the questionnaire and/or listening tests were excluded from the study. Boxplot method was used to identify and remove the outliers, which are data points that do not follow the usual pattern within the data (Riazi, 2016). Results of preliminary data analysis also showed that the relationships between strategies and listening comprehension could become statistically significant when learners who performed below the mean, 15, were removed. This might mean that the use of strategies is not significantly related to listening comprehension among learners at the lower levels of listening (e.g., Goh, 2002). Weaker relationships might also indicate that the listening test items which were relatively more difficult for the examinees with lower levels of proficiency displayed more unusual patterns of responses and were less valid for this population of test takers (Reynolds, Perkins, & Brutten, 1995). Therefore, 55 more proficient listeners who were able to answer at least 15, out of 25, listening questions correctly were finally included in the study.

Instrumentation

Several instruments were employed to measure listening comprehension and language learners' ability to use listening strategies. The listening section of PET was utilized to assess listening and the same test was adapted to see if there were any changes in the relationships between use of listening strategies and listening comprehension when the test method changed. Learners' use of listening strategies was assessed by a questionnaire adapted by Chen (2009) (Appendix A, Appendix B).

The Preliminary English Test (PET)

PET or B1 Preliminary is a standardized English test prepared by Cambridge English Language Assessment. The two versions of the test are PET and PET for School. According to the information made available through the website (see http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams/preliminary/), PET results show to what degree the learner has acquired the basics of English and to what extent they can use English for every day purposes. The test measures learners' comprehension of spoken materials including announcements and discussions. The listening section of the test contains 25 items which are presented in four sections.

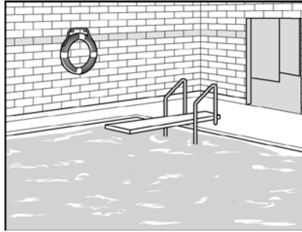
In the first part, the participants listened to a short recording and responded to seven questions by choosing one of the three pictures. In the second section of the test, they listened to an interview with a writer and selected one of the three options which appeared before the stem. There were six questions in this part. In the third section, which contained six items, students were supposed to listen to an announcement and fill in the blanks. Finally, in the last section, they listened to a discussion and showed their comprehension by choosing 'yes' or 'no.' They were supposed to answer six questions in this part. In the present study, students' answers to the listening comprehension questions were first entered into SPSS. Then, Cronbach's alpha value was computed for the 25 listening items and a reliability score of .70 was obtained from the data collected from 94 participants who responded to all the items in the pilot stage. The listening test was, therefore, reliable (Dörnyei, 2007).

Modified Listening Tests

Since the purpose of the study was to investigate the role of listening strategies in listening comprehension as measured by listening tests with different formats, attempts were made to modify them. Therefore, the pictures which appeared in the first part of listening were replaced with words or short phrases describing the pictures. The choices were removed in the second section and, as a result, the participants responded to essay-type items after listening to an interview. With the addition of these two modified parts, six listening tests with different formats were included in the study: (1) listening section of PET as a whole (25 items), (2) MC pictorial PET (original/seven items), (3) MC non-pictorial PET (modified/seven items), (4) MC PET (original/six items), (5) essay-type PET (modified/six items), and (6) fill-in-the-blank PET (original/six items). In Figure 1, sample test items have been presented.

Figure 1. Sample test items

A. A multiple choice pictorial item
Where are they at the moment?


a

b

c

B. A multiple choice non-pictorial item
Where are they at the moment?
a: swimming pool b: park c: supermarket

C. A multiple choice item
What problem did Peter have in the desert?
A. His vehicle broke down
B. He didn't have enough water
C. He was frightened by an animal

D. An essay-type item
What problem did Peter have in the desert? ……………………………..

E. Fill-in-the-blank items
PLAZA CINEMA – 2.30 p.m.
A programme of...................films for all the family
CYCLE RACE
This year's route is through the...................

After examining Skewness and Kurtosis tests for normality (see Table 2), Pearson correlation tests were run to measure the relationships between the tests. As it is displayed in Table 1, there are statistically significant correlations between performance on each subtest and the total listening score obtained through the listening section of PET ($p < .01$).

Table 1

Correlations between Listening Section of PET, MC Pictorial PET, MC Non-pictorial PET, MC PET, Essay-type PET and Fill in the Blank PET

Test types	*N* of items	Listening section of PET
MC pictorial PET	7	.55**
MC non-pictorial PET	7	.55**
MC PET	6	.67**
Essay-type PET	6	.30*
Fill in the blank PET	6	.56**

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to Table 1, except for the essay-type listening scores, which have a weak relationship with the performance on the listening section of PET, correlations between other listening scores and performance on the listening section of PET fall within the acceptable range. As it has been suggested, when "two tests correlate with each other in the order of 0.60, we can say that they measure more or less the same thing" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 223). The correlation results reported in Table 1 are based on the data obtained from 55 participants who were able to answer at least 15 out of 25 listening comprehension questions correctly. The data were also entered into SPSS to compute Cronbach's alpha reliability. It was found that the value for each listening test was above .60, and therefore it was concluded that the listening tests were reliable (Dörnyei, 2007).

Listening Strategy Questionnaire

The instrument utilized to collect information about listening strategies that the learners used was adapted from Vandergrift (1997) and Goh (2002) by Chen (2009), who developed a listening strategies questionnaire. Vandergrift (1997) and Goh (2002), who were inspired by O'Malley and Chamot (1990), presented a collection of metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies in L2 listening. The questionnaire contains 36 questions and the participants can report their use of various strategies on a five-point scale: (1) almost never, (2) seldom, (3) sometimes, (4) usually, and (5) almost always. The first 16 items of the questionnaire assess metacognitive strategy use and items 17 through 32 are intended to measure cognitive strategy use preferences. The other four items are associated with learners' use of socio-affective strategies (Appendix A, Appendix B). The questionnaire was translated into learners' mother tongue considering the guidelines proposed by Dörnyei (2003). The answers provided by 55 participants in the main phase of the study were submitted to SPSS and the reliability of the data for each scale was separately calculated. The results

showed that Cronbach's alpha for metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategy use was .85, .80, and .45, respectively. The values indicate that metacognitive and cognitive data were quite reliable. However, the results associated with socio-affective strategies should be interpreted with caution as Cronbach's alpha fell below .60 (Dörnyei, 2007). Relatively lower reliability values of socio-affective listening strategies were also reported in other studies (e.g., Kök, 2018).

Data Collection Procedure

Before initiating the process of data collection, arrangements were made with the instructor who undertook the responsibility of administering the listening tests and the questionnaire and explanations about the study and process of collecting data were provided. The students who showed their agreement to participate in the study by completing a consent form were included in the study and were first asked to take the listening proficiency test. The listening strategy questionnaire was next distributed among them in the same session. The participants took 35 minutes to answer the listening comprehension questions. After the answer sheets were collected, the questionnaire was administered. They took 15 minutes to complete it. Finally, the modified listening test which consisted of MC non-pictorial (seven items) and essay-type (six items) subtests was administered after a week's interval. The test contained 13 (seven non-pictorial and six essay-type) listening comprehension questions which the participants answered in 20 minutes. The tests and questionnaire were administered in a language laboratory during class time. Students were wearing headphones while answering the questions in the listening tests. The listening scores were later shared with the students as the majority of them felt eager to know how well they performed on the tests.

Results

In the first stage of analysis the data were examined to identify the outliers and check normality of the distributions. Table 2 indicates skewness and kurtosis values fell within the acceptable ranges, and therefore it was concluded that normality was not violated. The table also reports the mean and standard deviation associated with each variable in the study. The mean score associated with the participants' performance on the listening section of PET was 17.96. By comparing the means associated with the essay-type PET and MC PET, it can be suggested that the participants performed less satisfactorily on the essay-type PET. In other words, essay-type PET seems to have been more difficult than MC listening PET.

In addition, Table 1 provides information about learners' use of cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies. It is evident that compared with cognitive and socio-affective strategies, metacognitive strategies were used more frequently.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Listening Tests and Listening Strategies

Test types and strategies	*N*	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Listening section of PET	55	15	22	17.96	2.11	.18	–.92
MC pictorial PET	55	2	7	4.27	1.09	.30	–.52
MC non-pictorial PET	55	1	7	4.98	1.29	–.44	.34
MC PET	55	2	6	4.54	.93	–.20	–.15
Essay-type PET	55	0	6	4.14	1.37	–.71	.26
Fill in the blank	55	2	6	4.72	1.07	–.52	–.59
Cognitive strategies	55	39	70	51.72	7.80	.14	–.73
Metacognitive strategies	55	40	72	57.85	8.21	–.14	–.88
Socio-affective strategies	55	7	19	12.98	2.99	–.05	–.80

The first research question probed the relationships between listening strategies and L2 listening performance. The scores were analyzed through several correlation tests and, as Table 3 shows, there are variations in the magnitude of positive correlations between different types of strategies and performance on the listening tests. According to the results, use of cognitive strategies significantly correlated with performance on MC non-pictorial PET ($r = .29$, $p < .001$). The highest correlations could be found between listeners' use of metacognitive strategies and performance on different listening tests. Metacognitive strategies and the listening section of PET significantly correlated ($r = .38$, $p < .001$) and use of these strategies was also significantly related to performance on MC non-pictorial PET ($r = .38$, $p < .001$) and MC PET ($r = .27$, $p < .001$).

Table 3

Correlation Tests between Cognitive, Metacognitive and Socio-affective Strategies and Listening Performances

Strategy	Listening section of PET	MC pictorial PET	MC non-pictorial PET	MC PET	Essay-type PET	Fill in the blank PET
Cognitive	.13	.24	.29*	–.05	.24	.16
Metacognitive	.38**	.27*	.38**	.27*	.12	.26
Socio-affective	.07	.04	.13	.08	.03	.22

*. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

The R-Squared value was also calculated for the weakest (.03) and strongest (.38) correlation using the information displayed in Table 3. The value is the square of correlation and measures the proportions of variation in the dependent variable which can be attributed to the independent variable. As it can be seen in Table 3, the R-Squared values range between .09 (.03×.03) and .14 (.38×.38). The results showed that cognitive and socio-affective strategies did not account for a large percentage of the variance in listening comprehension. Use of metacognitive strategies, however, could explain a much larger percentage of variation in the performance on most of the listening tests.

The second research question was answered by running several stepwise and hierarchical regression tests to see to what extent different kinds of listening strategies can contribute to performance on different listening tests. Linear regression which is a form of predictive modelling technique is used to identify the strength of the relationship between one or more predictor variable(s) and one dependent variable. In the present study, the results of stepwise linear regression tests revealed that use of metacognitive strategies was the only variable which could predict performance on the listening section of PET ($R^2 = .14$, $F(1, 53) = 9.06$, $p < .01$), MC non-pictorial PET ($R^2 = .14$, $F(1, 53) = 9.14$, $p < .01$) and MC pictorial PET ($R^2 = .07$, $F(1, 53) = 4.22$, $p < .05$). However, the results showed the regression model which could significantly predict performance on MCPET consisted of both metacognitive and cognitive strategies. Metacognitive strategies accounted for .07 of the variance ($R^2 = .07$, $F(1, 53) = 4.23$, $p < .05$) and since cognitive strategy was not excluded, the model could finally explain .14 of the total variance ($R^2 = .14$, $F(2, 52) = 4.28$, $p < .05$). None of the variables, however, could significantly predict performance on essay-type and fill-in-the-blank listening tests ($p > .05$).

Hierarchical regression tests were next used to further examine the relationships. As it can be seen in Tables 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, the use of cognitive and socio-affective strategies alone was not able to predict listening performance on different listening tests, but the addition of metacognitive strategies could improve almost all the predictive models which consisted of metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies as the independent variables and performance on the listening section of PET, MC non-pictorial PET, MC pictorial PET, MC PET, and fill in the blank PET as the dependent variables (Table 4, Table 5, Table 6, Table 8, Table 9). Metacognitive listening strategies, however, could not improve prediction of performance on the essay-type listening test (see Table 7).

As it is depicted in Table 4, when the use of metacognitive strategies is entered into the model, the R^2 value turns out to be .18. This significant increase in the magnitude of R^2 ($p < .01$) indicates that the variable can improve the model and predict performance on the listening section of PET.

Table 4

R-square Values for Correlation Coefficients between Predictor Variables (Socio-affective, Cognitive, and Metacognitive Strategies) and the Dependent Variable (Listening Section of PET)

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard error of the estimate	Change statistics				
					R Square change	*F* change	df1	df2	Sig. F change
1	.13	.01	–.02	2.13	.01	.46	2	52	.63
2	.43	.18	.13	1.96	.16	10.61	1	51	.00*

1. Predictors: Socio-affective, Cognitive
2. Predictors: Socio-affective, Cognitive, and Metacognitive
Dependent Variable: Listening section of PET

Similarly, Table 5 illustrates that much of the variance in the performance on the MC non-pictorial PET can be explained after the use of metacognitive strategies is added to the model. The change in the magnitude of shared variance R^2 is statistically significant ($p < .05$).

Table 5

R-square Values for Correlation Coefficients between Predictor Variables (Socio-affective, Cognitive, and Metacognitive Strategies) and the Dependent Variable (MC Non-pictorial PET)

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard error of the estimate	Change statistics				
					R square change	*F* change	df1	df2	Sig. F change
1	.29	.08	.04	1.26	.08	2.39	2	52	.10
2	.40	.16	.11	1.21	.08	5.04	1	51	.02*

1. Predictors: Socio-affective, Cognitive
2. Predictors: Socio-affective, Cognitive, and Metacognitive
Dependent Variable: MC non-pictorial PET

Table 6 provides information about the contribution of metacognitive strategies to the scores on the MC pictorial PET. As it is shown in the table, although there is an increase in the value of R^2 after the use of metacognitive strategies is added to the model, the change is not statistically significant ($p > .05$).

Table 6

R-square Values for Correlation Coefficients between Predictor Variables (Socio-affective, Cognitive, and Metacognitive Strategies) and the Dependent Variable (MC Pictorial PET)

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard error of the estimate	Change Statistics				
					R square change	*F* change	df1	df2	Sig. *F* change
1	.25	.06	.03	1.07	.06	1.82	2	52	.17
2	.33	.10	.05	1.06	.04	2.47	1	51	.12

1. Predictors: Socio-affective, Cognitive
2. Predictors: Socio-affective, Cognitive, and Metacognitive
Dependent Variable: MC pictorial PET

According to Table 7, the use of cognitive and socio-affective listening strategies does not significantly predict performance on the essay-type listening test. R-square change value in Table 7 also shows that adding metacognitive strategies does not significantly improve the regression model ($p > .05$).

Table 7

R-square Values for Correlation Coefficients between Predictor Variables (Socio-affective, Cognitive, and Metacognitive Strategies) and the Dependent Variable (Essay-type PET)

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard error of the estimate	Change statistics				
					R square change	*F* change	df1	df2	Sig. *F* change
1	.25	.06	.02	1.36	.06	1.75	2	52	.18
2	.25	.06	.00	1.37	.00	.01	1	51	.99

1. Predictors: Socio-affective, Cognitive
2. Predictors: Socio-affective, Cognitive, and Metacognitive
Dependent Variable: Essay-type PET

Table 8, however, provides stronger evidence in support of metacognitive strategy use. As shown in the table, the magnitude of R^2 change is statistically significant ($p < .05$) indicating that performance on the MC PET can be predicted if metacognitive strategy use is included in the model.

Table 8

R-square Values for Correlation Coefficients between Predictor Variables (Socio-affective, Cognitive, and Metacognitive Strategies) and the Dependent Variable (MC PET)

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard error of the estimate	Change Statistics				
					R square change	*F* change	df1	df2	Sig. *F* change
1	.12	.01	–.02	.94	.01	.41	2	52	.66
2	.38	.14	.09	.89	.12	7.69	1	51	.00*

1. Predictors: Socio-affective, Cognitive
2. Predictors: Socio-affective, Cognitive, and Metacognitive
Dependent Variable: MC PET

And finally, as presented in Table 9, a regression model which also consists of metacognitive strategies does not increase the R-squared value significantly ($P > .05$).

Table 9

R-square Values for Correlation Coefficients between Predictor Variables (Socio-affective, Cognitive, and Metacognitive Strategies) and the Dependent Variable (Fill in the Blank PET)

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard error of the estimate	Change statistics				
					R square change	*F* change	df1	df2	Sig. *F* change
1	.23	.05	.01	1.06	.05	1.53	2	52	.22
2	.27	.07	.02	1.06	.02	1.11	1	51	.29

1. Predictors: Socio-affective, Cognitive
2. Predictors: Socio-affective, Cognitive, and Metacognitive
Dependent Variable: Fill in the blank PET

It can be, therefore, suggested that use of metacognitive strategies plays a determining role in predicting performance on the listening section of PET, MC non-pictorial test, and MC listening test (Table 4, Table 5, Table 8). In addition, after the use of metacognitive strategies is added to a regression model which consists of cognitive and socio-affective strategies as the independent variables and performance on the MC pictorial listening test as the dependent variable, it slightly increases the predictive power. The three kinds of strategies, however, do not predict MC pictorial test scores significantly (see Table 6). Furthermore, the results did not provide support for the higher significance of metacognitive

listening strategies over cognitive and socio-affective strategies in predicting performance on essay-type and fill-in-the-blank listening tests (Table 7, Table 9).

Discussion

The findings have verified the role of metacognitive strategies which include planning, directed attention, selective attention, and monitoring (see Appendix B) in L2 listening comprehension and are consistent with those of Vogely (1995), Vandergrift and Tafaghodtari (2010), Bozorgian (2014), Wang & Treffers-Daller (2017), Kök (2018), Maftoon & Fakhri Alamdari (2020) and Becker (2021). In addition, the results support Kassem (2015) and Kök (2018) who showed that use of cognitive strategies such as inferencing, elaboration, prediction, etc. (see Appendix B) is positively related to L2 listening comprehension. The findings are also in congruence with the results indicating that use of socio-affective strategies which include cooperation and confidence building (see Appendix B) does not significantly contribute to successful L2 listening (Kassem, 2015; Kök, 2018).

Metacognitive strategies have been found to be positively related to all the measures of L2 listening. And as the regression tables indicate, this variable can make L2 listening more predictable. The use of cognitive and socio-affective strategies, however, could not predict listening performance as measured by different types of response formats although both kinds of strategies positively contribute to L2 listening. Compared with cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies have been generally considered more important in L2 listening comprehension (Janusik & Varner, 2020). The fact that the use of metacognitive listening strategies makes a larger contribution to L2 listening comprehension might be interpreted as confirming that these strategies help learners manage and regulate cognitive processes and products during listening (Flavell, 1979; Iwai, 2011) and success of the cognitive operations under different conditions at least partly depends on learners' ability to use metacognitive listening strategies effectively.

The results also throw new light on the role of test methods in the relationship between the use of listening strategies and L2 listening comprehension. Metacognitive strategy use did not make a statistically significant contribution when it was added to increase the predictive power of regression models which included performance on essay-type and fill-in-the-blank listening test. This might have been due to the fact that assessment of listening through these tasks does not seem to be merely related to listening comprehension and other skills such as writing and reading seem to contribute to learners' performance

on these listening tests. However, items containing multiple choice response formats seem to elicit information about learners' listening ability as in the process of listening learners are not supposed to read and/or write to show their comprehension.

The study has presented evidence in support of the robust role of metacognitive listening strategies in listening comprehension especially when it is assessed through multiple choice tests. This is partly confirmed by the results of other studies which used a variety of listening tests to assess L2 listening and reported varying degrees of positive relationships (Vandergrift, Goh, Mareschal, & Tafaghodtari, 2006; Kassem, 2015; Vogely, 1995; Wang & Treffers-Daller, 2017). In other words, as it has been theorized and empirically shown test method affects test performance (Bachman, 1990; Bachman & Palmer, 1990; In'nami & Koizumi, 2009; Kobayashi, 2002). Accordingly, the results of the present study showed that metacognitive listening strategies might play a less important role if listening comprehension ability is assessed through writing and/or reading tasks.

Considering the fact that different listening tests might measure different listening abilities (Becker, 2016; Rukthong, 2021), follow up research may investigate the effects of other test methods on the results. The findings are also restricted to lower intermediate and intermediate EFL learners and therefore it is recommended that future research also investigate combined effects of the test method and proficiency level on the relationships between L2 listening strategies and listening comprehension. And since the construct of listening comprehension also embraces a test input aspect (e.g., Monteiro & Kim, 2020), future studies may focus on the nature of the relationships between L2 listening strategies and listening tests with a variety of input characteristics.

Conclusions

The study investigated the predictive power of metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective listening strategies as three independent variables on English language learners' performance on different listening tests. The results provided empirical evidence in support of the superior role metacognitive strategies play in the process of listening (Vogely, 1995; Wang & Treffers-Daller, 2017). Cognitive strategies were shown to be related to listening performance but the results indicated that they play a less important role (Kök, 2018). Socio-affective strategies, however, did not contribute to L2 listening significantly. Another finding of the study was that the relationships between listening strategies and comprehension are mediated by the type of test methods (Bachman, 1990;

Rukthong, 2021) as the results of correlation and regression tests revealed that metacognitive listening strategies can significantly improve our prediction of listening performance especially if the test takers' listening ability is measured by a multiple-choice test.

References

Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford University Press.

Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (1996). *Language testing in practice*. Oxford University Press.

Becker, A. (2016). L2 students' performance on listening comprehension items targeting local and global information. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 24*, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2016.07.004

Becker, S. R. (2021). Metacognitive instruction in L2 French: An analysis of listening performance and automaticity. *Foreign Language Annals, 54*(1), 9–26. https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12506

Bozorgian, H. (2014). The role of metacognition in the development of EFL learners' listening skill, *International Journal of Listening, 28*(3), 149–161, https://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2013.861303

Chamot, A. U., & O'Malley, J. M. (1987). The cognitive academic language learning approach: A bridge to the mainstream. *TESOL Quarterly*, *21*(2), 227–249. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.2307/3586733

Chen, A. (2009). Listening strategy instruction: Exploring Taiwanese college students' strategy development. *Asian EFL Journal, 11*(2), 54–85.

Chien, C., & Wei, L. (1998). The strategy use in listening comprehension for learners in Taiwan. *RELC Journal, 29*(1), 66–94. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F003368829802900105

Cross, J. (2015). Metacognition in L2 listening: Clarifying instructional theory and practice. *TESOL Quarterly, 49*(4), 883–892. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.258

Dörnyei, Z. (2003). *Questionnaires in second language research: Construction, administration, and processing*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Dornyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics.* Oxford University Press.

Dreyer, C., & Oxford, R. (1996). Learning strategies and other predictors of ESL proficiency among Afrikaans-speakers in South Africa. In R. L. Oxford (Ed.), *Language learning strategies around the world: Cross-cultural perspectives* (pp. 17–18). University of Hawaii Press.

Flavell, J. H. (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive-developmental inquiry. *American Psychologist, 34*(10), 906–911. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0003-066X.34.10.906

Forbes, K., & Fisher, L. (2020). Strategy development and cross-linguistic transfer in foreign and first language writing. *Applied Linguistics Review, 11*(2), 311–339. https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2018-0008

Goh, C. (2002). Exploring listening comprehension tactics and their interaction patterns. *System, 30*(2), 185–206. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X(02)00004-0

Goh, C., & Kwah, P. F. (1997). Chinese ESL students' learning strategies: A look at frequency, proficiency, and gender. *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics, 2*(1), 39–53.

Huang, S. C. (2018). Language learning strategies in context. *The Language Learning Journal, 46*(5), 647–659. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2016.1186723

In'nami, Y., & Koizumi, R. (2009). A meta-analysis of test format effects on reading and listening test performance: Focus on MC and open-ended formats. *Language Testing*, *26*(2), 219–244. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0265532208101006

Iwai, Y., (2011). The effects of metacognitive reading strategies: Pedagogical implications for EFL/ESL teachers. *The Reading Matrix, 11*(2), 150–157.

Janusik, L. A., & Varner, T. (2020). (Re)discovering metacognitive listening strategies in L1 contexts: What strategies are the same in the L1 and L2 context? *International Journal of Listening*, Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2020.1833724

Kassem, H. M. (2015). The relationship between listening strategies used by Egyptian EFL college sophomores and their listening comprehension and self-efficacy. *English Language Teaching, 8*(2), 153–169. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n2p153

Khezrlou, S. (2012). Cognitive strategy training: Improving reading comprehension in the language classroom. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills, 3*(4), 77–98. https://dx.doi.org/10.22099/jtls.2011.372

Kobayashi, M. (2002). Investigation of test method effects: Text organization and response formats. *Language Testing, 19*(2), 193–220.

Kök, Z. (2018). Relationship between listening comprehension strategy use and listening comprehension proficiency. *International Journal of Listening, 32*(3), 163–179. https://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2016.1276457

Liyanage, I., & Bartlett, B. J. (2012). Gender and language learning strategies: Looking beyond the categories. *The Language Learning Journal, 40*(2), 237–253. https://doi.org/10.1191%2F0265532202lt227oa

Maftoon, P., & Fakhri Alamdari, E. (2020). Exploring the effect of metacognitive strategy instruction on metacognitive awareness and listening performance through a process-based approach. *International Journal of Listening*, *34*(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2016.1250632

Monteiro, K., & Kim, Y. (2020). The effect of input characteristics and individual differences on L2 comprehension of authentic and modified listening tasks. *System, 94*, 102336. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102336

Mullins, P. (1992). *Successful English language learning strategies of students enrolled in the faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, United States International University, San Diego, CA.

O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition.* Cambridge University Press.

O'Malley, J. M., Chamot, A. U., & Kupper, L. (1989). Listening comprehension strategies in second language acquisition. *Applied Linguistics, 10* (4), 418–437. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/10.4.418.

Oxford R. L. (1989). Use of language learning strategies: a synthesis of studies with implications for strategy training. *System, 17*(2), 235–247. https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X(89)90036-5

Oxford, R. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know.* Heinle & Heinle.

Oxford, R. L., & Ehrman, M. E. (1995). Adults' language learning strategies in an intensive foreign language program in the United States. *System, 23*, 359–386. https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X(95)00023-D

Paris, S. G., & Winograd, P. (1990). Promoting metacognition and motivation of exceptional children. *RASE: Remedial & Special Education, 11*(6), 7–15. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F074193259001100604

Rahimirad, M., & Shams, M. R. (2014). The effect of activating metacognitive strategies on the listening performance and metacognitive awareness of EFL students. *International Journal of Listening, 28*(3), 162–176. http://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2014.902315

Reynolds, T., Perkins, K., & Brutten, S. (1994). Comparative item analysis: Study of a language placement test. *Language Testing, 1*(1), 1–13.

Riazi, A. M. (2016). *The Routledge encyclopedia of research methods in applied linguistics: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods research*. Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.

Rukthong, A. (2021). MC listening questions vs. integrated listening-to-summarize tasks: What listening abilities do they assess? *System, 97*, 102439. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102439

Sadeghi, K., & Soleimani, M. (2016). The relationship between anxiety, shyness, ambiguity tolerance, and language learning strategies. *International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning*, *11*(1), 70–87. https://doi.org/10.1080/22040552.2016.1187652

Sahragard, R., Khajavi, Y., & Abbasian, R. (2016). Field of study, learning styles, and language learning strategies of university students: Are there any relations? *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 10*(3), 255–271. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2014.976225

Schmidt, E., & Hegelheimer, V. (2004). Effects of online academic lectures on ESL listening comprehension, incidental vocabulary acquisition, and strategy use. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 17*(5), 525–564. https://doi.org/10.1080/0958822042000319692

Teng, F. (2020). The benefits of metacognitive reading strategy awareness instruction for young learners of English as a second language: Metacognitive instruction in reading. *Literacy, 54* (1), 29–39. https://doi.org/10.1111/lit.12181

Tragant, E., & Victori, M. (2012). Language learning strategies, course grades, and age in EFL secondary school learners. *Language Awareness*, *21*(3), 293–308. https://doi.org/10.1080/09658416.2011.609622

Vandergrift, L. (1997). The comprehension strategies of second language (French) listeners: A descriptive study. *Foreign Language Annals, 30*, 387–409. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1997.tb02362.x

Vandergrift, L., Goh, C. C. M., Mareschal, C., & Tafaghodtari, M. H. (2006). The metacognitive awareness listening questionnaire (MALQ): Development and Validation. *Language Learning, 56*(3), 431–462. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2006.00373.x

Vandergrift, L., & Tafaghodtari, M. (2010). Teaching L2 learners how to listen does make a difference: An empirical study. Language Learning, *60*(2), 470–97. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2009.00559.x

Vogely, A. (1995). Perceived strategy use during performance on three authentic listening comprehension tasks. Modern Language Journal, *79*(1), 41–55. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1995.tb05414.x

Wenden, A. L. (1991). *Learner strategies for learner autonomy*. London: Prentice Hall.

Wenden, A. L. (1998). Metacognitive knowledge and language learning. *Applied Linguistics, 19*(4), 515–537.

Wang, Y. & Treffers-Daller, J. (2017). Explaining listening comprehension among L2 learners of English: the contribution of general language proficiency, vocabulary knowledge and metacognitive awareness. *System, 65*, 139–150. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2016.12.013

Yi'an, W. (1998). What do tests of listening comprehension test? A retrospection study of EFL test-takers performing a multiple choice task. *Language Testing, 15*(1), 21–44. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F026553229801500102

Babak Mahdavy, Masoomeh Mousavi Namavar

Hörstrategien und Hörkompetenz in der Zweitsprache: Zur Rolle der gewählten Testmethode

Zusammenfassung

Mehrere bisherige Studien haben versucht, den Zusammenhang zwischen Hörstrategien und Hörkompetenz zu untersuchen. Es scheint jedoch, dass bei keiner davon der Einfluss der Testmethode auf die Ergebnisse in den Mittepunkt der Analyse gestellt wurde. In der vorliegenden Studie wurde diese Frage untersucht, indem man 55 Englischlernern illustrierte und nicht illustrierte Hörverstehensaufgaben mit unterschiedlichen Antwortformaten zu lösen gab. Der Hörteil im Preliminary English Test (PET) und ein aus 36 Punkten bestehender Fragebogen zu den Hörstrategien wurden in der ersten Sitzung bearbeitet, und nach einer Woche Pause legten die Studienteilnehmer eine modifizierte Version des PET-Hörverstehenstests ab. Die Daten wurden in einem Sprachlabor erhoben. Dabei wurden mehrere Korrelations- und Regressionstests durchgeführt, um das Verhältnis zwischen der Hörkompetenz, die mit dem ursprünglichen und modifizierten PET-Hörverstehenstest bewertet wurde, und den metakognitiven, kognitiven und sozio-affektiven Hörstrategien zu untersuchen. Die Ergebnisse zeigten, dass die Verwendung von metakognitiven Hörstrategien bei Zweitsprachenlernern der stärkste Indikator für die Hörkompetenz ist. Darüber hinaus deuteten die ausgewerteten Daten darauf hin, dass der Zusammenhang zwischen Verwendung von Hörstrategien und Hörkompetenz durch die Art der Testmethode vermittelt wird, die zur Bewertung der Hörkompetenz in der Zweitsprache eingesetzt wird. Es werden Wege für zukünftige Forschung und Implikationen für die Praxis aufgezeigt.

Schlüsselwörter: Hörkompetenz, Hörstrategien, Testmethode

Appendix A

Sample Items of Listening Strategies Questionnaire

Strategies	Sample items
Metacognitive	I have a plan in my mind for how I am going to listen. When my mind wanders, I recover my concentration right away. I evaluate how much I've understood this time, e.g., I could comprehend 80% of the text.
Cognitive	I use mental or actual pictures to help me comprehend the texts. I use what I have just heard to guess what the next part is. I write down the words and concepts that I heard in my mind.
Socio-affective	I ask my classmate or friends to clarify my comprehension. I am not anxious and keep calm while listening.

Appendix B

Listening Strategies Classification Scheme (Vandergrift, 1997; Goh, 2002) by Chen (2009)

Cognitive Strategies	Metacognitive Strategies
Topdown processing **1. Listen for gist** ▪ Listen for main ideas first. **2. Inferencing** (Filling in missing information and guessing meaning of words) ▪ Use contextual clues; ▪ Use information from familiar content words; ▪ Draw on knowledge of the world; ▪ Apply knowledge about the target language; ▪ Use visual clues. **3. Elaboration** (Embellishing an initial interpretation to make it meaningful and complete); ▪ Draw on knowledge of the world; ▪ Draw on knowledge about the target language. **4. Prediction** (Anticipating the contents of a text) ▪ Anticipate general contents (global); ▪ Anticipate details while listening (local). **5. Visualization** (Forming a mental picture of what is heard) ▪ Imagine scenes, events, objects etc. being described; ▪ Mentally display the shape (spelling) of key Words. ***Bottomup processing*** **6. Understanding each word and detail** ▪ Try to figure out the meanings of most of words or sentences of the input; ▪ Try to understand most of the details of the input. **7. Translation** (Changing words, phases or sentences into L1 before interpretation) ▪ Find L1 equivalents for selected key words; ▪ Translate a sequence of utterances. **8. Fixation** (Focusing attention on understanding a small part of text) ▪ Stop to think about the meaning of words or parts of the input; ▪ Memorize/repeat the sounds of unfamiliar words. ***Cognitive*** **9. Summarization** ▪ Organise important information in my mind. **10. Notetaking** ▪ Write down key words and concepts while listening.	**1. Planning** (Preparing mentally and emotionally for a listening task) ▪ Preview contents; ▪ Rehearse sounds of potential content words. **2. Directed Attention** (Monitoring attention and avoiding distractions) ▪ Concentrate hard; ▪ Continue to listen in spite of difficulty. **3. Selective Attention** (Decide in advance to listen for specific aspects of input) ▪ Decide in advance to: – listen for familiar content words; – notice how information is structured (e.g.discourse markers); – pay attention to repetitions; – notice intonation features (e.g. falling and rising tones). **4. Monitoring** (checking/ confirming understanding while listening) ▪ Confirm that comprehension has taken place; ▪ Identify words or ideas not understood; ▪ Check current interpretation with the context of the message; ▪ Check current interpretation with prior knowledge. **5. Evaluation** (Checking interpretation of accuracy, completeness and acceptability after listening) ▪ Check interpretation against external sources; ▪ Check interpretation using prior knowledge; ▪ Match interpretation with the context of the message. **Social/ Affective Strategies** **1. Cooperation** ▪ Ask for explanation/clarification. 2. Confidence Building (encouraging oneself) ▪ Tell oneself to relax; ▪ Use positive selftalk.

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition
vol. 9 (1), 2023, pp. 1/31
https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.12468

Eva Maria Luef https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2362-2422
Charles University in Prague, The Czech Republic
Pia Resnik https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0948-9546
University College of Teacher Education Vienna/Krems, Austria

Phonotactic Probabilities and Sub-syllabic Segmentation in Language Learning

Abstract

High phonotactic probabilities are known to exert a facilitative effect on word learning in children and adults in their first language. The present study was designed to investigate the role of phonotactic probabilities when learning a foreign language. Focusing on Austrian and Korean learners of English, we investigated two hypotheses related to phonotactic frequency effects: (1) High-frequency segments have more deeply entrenched phonetic representations, with more automatized pronunciation patterns, rendering phonetic learning of homophonous segments more difficult; (2) High-frequency segments are associated with higher phonetic variability in the first language, which can facilitate phonetic learning in a foreign language. Additionally, the locus of phoneme/ bigram frequency effects was analyzed in relation to left-branching and right-branching syllable structure in German and Korean. We found that proximity to English voice-onset time is correlated with phoneme and bigram frequencies in the first language, but results varied by learner group. Sub-syllabic segmentation of the first language was also shown to be an influential factor. Our study is grounded in research on frequency effects and combines its central premise with phonetic learning in a foreign language. The results show a tight relationship between first language statistical probabilities and phonetic learning in a foreign language.

Keywords: Austrian German, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), frequency distribution, Korean, sub-syllabic segmentation

Background

Phonotactic probability is defined as the position-specific frequency of segments and segment combinations (Vitevitch, 1997; Vitevitch & Sommers, 2003) and is thus a measure of how frequent (and probable) particular segments of words and sequences of phonemes are (Vitevitch & Luce, 1999). Different phonotactic constraints apply to different languages and (first and foreign) language learners accumulate knowledge on phonotactic probabilities based on experience (Weber & Cutler, 2006). High-frequency phonotactic combinations serve an important purpose in word recognition, as words including such combinations are generally recalled faster and more accurately (Frisch, Large, & Pisoni, 2000; Luce & Large, 2001; Vitevitch, Armbruster, & Chu, 2004; Vitevitch & Luce, 1998). High phonotactic probability has not only been linked to more rapid word learning in adults but also in child language acquisition (Storkel, 2001; Storkel & Maekawa, 2005; Storkel & Rogers, 2000). The advantage in word learning involving high-probability phonotactic combinations could result from strengthened cognitive representations of the frequent phonotactic combinations (Bybee, 2007). Storkel (2001), for example, suggested that high phonotactic probability segments also influence the formation of semantic representations and the association between semantic and lexical ones, thus furthering learning.

While some studies have linked phonotactic probabilities to word learning in general (e.g., Storkel, Armbruster, & Hogan, 2006), less is known about phonetic learning. Based on previous work on word frequencies, several predictions can be inferred regarding frequency and probability effects in relation to phonotactic combinations. It has been shown that high-frequency words may be more deeply engrained in linguistic memory, and thus have more entrenched phonetic patterns (Bybee, 2007; Levy & Hanulikova, 2019; Pierrehumbert, 2001; Schweitzer et al., 2015). The special role of high-frequency distributions of particular words in connection to phonological changes has long been acknowledged in studies on linguistic change (Bybee, 2002; Phillips, 1984; Pierrehumbert, 2001). Under certain circumstances low-frequency words may be phonetically more malleable and thus more prone to sound change than high-frequency words (Phillips, 1984, 2006; Todd, Pierrehumbert, & Hay, 2019). An alternative hypothesis describes high-frequency words as having larger exemplar clouds, that is, being associated with more phonetic variation in the speaker's mind (Levy & Hanulikova, 2019; Schweitzer et al., 2015). This implies that speakers have more numerous and diverse phonetic targets associated with each high-frequency speech sound. Low-frequency sounds have smaller exemplar clouds and thus show less phonetic variability (Levy & Hanulikova, 2019). The crucial difference between these hypotheses is whether high-frequency rates limit or increase variability, and this has implications

not only for sound change but also for language learning. While the above-mentioned studies focused on the word level, similar tendencies may be at work at the segmental level. Lexical frequency rates and phonotactic probabilities have shown to be correlated (Storkel & Maekawa, 2005) in English, allowing the cross-fertilization of theories in the two strands of linguistic investigation.

What is suggested for phonological change may also apply to foreign language learning of novel phonetic detail in a known phonotactic combination (i.e., cross-linguistic phonotactics). When learners of a foreign language encounter a high-frequency phonotactic combination that is similar to one in their first language (e.g., /bi/), they may either be phonetically limited by their first language, or they may have access to a highly variable phonetic inventory and thus be better able to approximate the foreign-language phonetics. In contrast, low-frequency phonotactic combinations in the first language may be either more malleable to phonetic learning due to their shallow cognitive entrenchment, or learners may have a smaller phonetic inventory and face more difficulty in finding a suitable pronunciation. The two hypotheses lead to very different predictions with respect to how learners can acquire the phonetics of phonotactic combinations in the foreign language. The following study focuses on learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and investigates how phonotactic probabilities of utterance-initial segments in their first languages (Korean, German) impact phonetic learning of the cross-linguistic variants of the combinations in English.

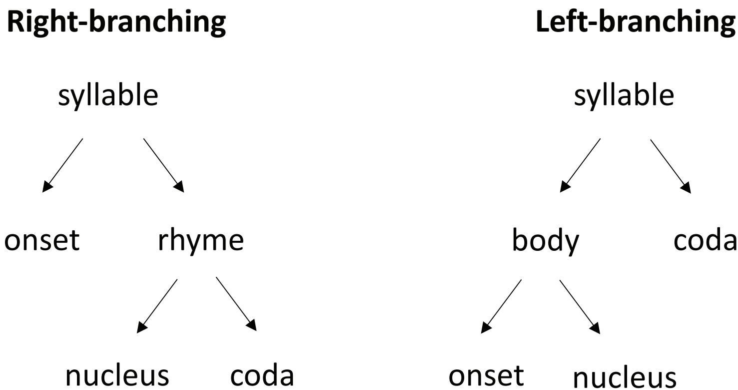
Korean and German are typologically different languages, and one key difference concerns the structure of the syllable. While syllable universals have been hard to define, the general outline of onset-rhyme (i.e., right-branching syllables) and body-coda (i.e., left-branching syllables) is an accepted categorization (Berg & Koops, 2010; J.-Y. Kim & Lee, 2011). The difference between the two types is the linkage strength between the initial segments. Whereas the onset-rhyme structure separates the initial phoneme from the rhyme in closed syllables, the body-coda system binds the initial phoneme and the following vowel together (J. Kim, 2015). For instance, a syllable such as /ban/ would be perceived with /b/ separate from /an/ in the German onset-rhyme structure, whereas in the Korean body-coda structure, /ba/ would go together and /n/ would be perceived as a separate entity (see Figure 1).

Berg and Koops (2010) and Kim (2015) speculate whether the left- and right-branching preferences found across Korean and English are also related to phonotactic dependencies between segments. How robustly the nucleus vowel is formed in phonetic memory in connection with either the onset or the coda is unclear at the moment. Phonotactic probabilities have been shown to have an effect on the perception and processing of syllable structure, with Korean speakers being better at processing the onset and nucleus of a syllable rather than only the initial phoneme (J. Kim, 2015; J. Kim & Davis, 2002; Witzel, Witzel,

& Choi, 2013). The sub-syllabic characteristics of Korean indicate that initial bigrams are a crucial unit in speech processing in the language. In German, the initial segment may be more influential.

Figure 1

Sub-syllabic Structuring in Right-branching and Left-branching Syllables (J.-Y. Kim & Lee, 2011)



The present study analyzes phonotactic probabilities of word-initial phonemes and bigrams (or biphones) in English, Korean, and German, and relates them to phonetic learning of English as a Foreign Language in speakers of Korean and German. The following two inter-linked research questions are posed:

1. Are high-frequency phonotactic combinations more difficult to adapt through learning than low-frequency phonotactic combinations?
2. Does sub-syllabic structure play a role? Specifically, is Koreans' EFL speech more strongly impacted by initial bigram frequencies, while Germans' EFL speech is more strongly influenced by initial phoneme frequencies?

Two groups of EFL learners, Korean first language (L1) users from Seoul and Austrian speakers of L1 German, are compared in terms of phonetic learning of voice onset time in word-initial fortis and lenis plosives in English. Confounding factors that may influence phonotactic probability and/ or word-initial voice onset time (VOT), such as lexical frequency rates, neighborhood density, English phoneme and bigram frequency, and EFL phoneme and bigram frequency are considered in the analysis.

Voice onset Time in English, Korean and Austrian Plosives

English distinguishes two phonation types of plosives, commonly referred to as “lenis” and “fortis” (or “voiced” and “voiceless”). In utterance-initial position, American English lenis plosives are phonologically voiced, phonetically voiceless and unaspirated, with a mean VOT range of 8 to 17 msec. (Chodroff, Godfrey, Khudanpur, & Wilson, 2015). The utterance-initial fortis plosives are phonologically and phonetically voiceless and aspirated, with a mean VOT range of 65 to 120 msec. in American English speakers (Berry & Moyle, 2011). In other positions, including word-initial but utterance-medial, American English plosives are more likely to have voicing (Davidson, 2016). Regional differences in VOT have been noted, with speakers from Southern states displaying a tendency to pre-voice word-initial lenis plosives (Hunnicutt & Morris, 2016; Morris, 2018). Lenis VOTs of speakers from Southern British English (e.g., London) range from 10–22 msec. (Sonderegger, 2015), but speakers from Scotland may show significant pre-voicing of up to 100 msec. (Watt & Yurkova, 2007). British English fortis VOTs most frequently range between between 50 and 100 msec. for Northern England and Scottish speakers (Docherty, Watt, Llamas, Hall, & Nycz, 2011) but are shorter for Southern England speakers, ranging between 35–75 msec. (Sonderegger, 2015). There is significant overlap between British and American English voice onset times, and both are different from Austrian German and Korean in certain respects.

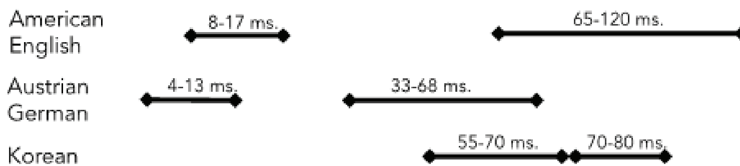
The terms lenis and fortis are also used to describe the two phonation types of German plosives. German shows no voicing of plosives in word-initial position and has longer VOTs of lenis plosives than English. Southern German (including Austrian) plosives differ from Northern/ Middle German and a near-merger of word-initial fortis-lenis contrasts in some articulatory positions complicates the pattern (Moosmüller & Ringen, 2004; Moosmüller, Schmid, & Brandstätter, 2015). Aspiration is absent (Moosmüller, 1987; Siebs, de Boor, Moser, & Winkler, 1969) and contemporary Austrian lenis plosives are characterized by short VOTs, while fortis plosives show no aspiration in bilabial, little aspiration in alveolar and strong aspiration in velar position (Luef, 2020). In younger Austrian speakers, who are in the process of phonetically splitting the near-merger, mean lenis VOTs range between 4 and 13 msec., while fortis plosives show an average range of 33 to 68 msec.

Korean shows a three-way distinction in plosives (lax or lenis, aspirated, and tense, see J. Y. Kim, 2010; Shin, Kiaer, & Cha, 2013). The so-called fortis plosives in Korean usually refer to the tense category (e.g., [p*], characterized by very short VOT), and are thus not equivalent to the Germanic fortis plosives. The Korean lenis plosives are phonologically voiceless and show mean VOT values of approximately 55 to 70 msec.; the aspirated plosives are phonologi-

cally voiceless, with long VOT values between 70 and 80 msec. (Kang, 2014; Silva, 2004, 2006). A merger of lax and aspirated plosives in all three articulatory positions has led to VOT overlap of phrase-initial lenis and aspirated plosives (Jucker & Smith, 2006; Silva, 2006). Recent studies have shown that the VOT ranges for lax stops have increased, while those for aspirated ones have decreased, with the VOT difference between these two categories reducing accordingly (Chang & Kwon, 2020). This change in Korean has implications for the realignment of the Korean and English stop categories, with both lax and aspirated stops approximating the VOT ranges associated with English voiceless stops, as schematized in Figure 2. While the Korean plosive merger has obscured phonetic distinctions between lax and aspirated plosives, the F0 distinction at the onset of the following vowel has been amplified: the F0 values for aspirated stops are higher than those of lax stops, a trend that has led to distinct tonal levels (Kang, 2014). The vowel environment of a word-initial plosive can have influences on VOT duration in different languages (Esposito, 2002; Grassegger, 1996; Klatt, 1975; Moosmüller & Ringen, 2004; Mortensen & Tøndering, 2013). Vowel height plays a role here and constricting the air passage through the vocal tract (such as when raising the tongue) will lead to a delay in voice onset time (Fischer-Jørgensen, 1980). Thus, high vowels will cause VOT to be prolonged, while low vowels cause it to be shortened.

Figure 2

Mean VOT Values of Short-lag VOT (Lenis, Lax) and Long-lag VOT (Fortis, Aspirated) in American English (Based on Berry & Moyle, 2011, and Chodroff et al., 2015), Austrian German (Based on Luef, 2020), and Korean (Based on Kang, 2014 and Silva, 2004, 2006)



The mapping of Austrian and Korean plosives onto English ones is phonetically complicated. Austrian lenis and American English lenis can be regarded as corresponding; however, Austrian fortis only has small overlaps with American English fortis. The Korean lenis category ranges within the Austrian fortis category, with significant overlaps with American English fortis

plosives. Korean aspirated plosives range within the American English fortis plosives. While phonetic mapping of the three languages is difficult, grapheme mapping is clear. German and English graphemes of lenis and fortis plosives are identical and German readers of English will immediately map them correspondingly. A widely used language Romanization system in South Korea ("Revised Romanization of Korean"/ 국어의 로마자 표기법) transcribes the word-initial lenis plosives <ㅂ>, <ㄷ>, and <ㄱ> as <b>, <d>, and <g> and the aspirated plosives <ㅍ>, <ㅌ>, and <ㅋ> as <p>, <t>, and <k> (note: tense plosives are transcribed with double consonants, e.g., <bb>). Here, grapheme correspondences between Korean and American English lenis and aspirated/fortis categories are established and may guide Korean readers of English in their mapping of plosive correspondences. The present study tests phonetic learning of Korean and Austrian learners of English and is based on reading stimuli. Therefore, grapheme mapping is expected to be influential in the process. Austrian learners certainly map their lenis and fortis contrasts onto the English lenis/fortis distinction, and Korean learners may be more inclined to map their lenis onto the English lenis and their aspirated contrasts onto the English fortis category.

According to the *UCLA Phonological Segment Inventory Database* (see Maddieson, 1984), plosive consonants (especially fortis) are among the most frequent phonemes in languages world-wide (also see Everett, 2018). Even though individual languages utilize them to different degrees, their articulatory and perceptual ease makes them pervasive to the human language capacity (Ohala, 1983). From such a universal view of phonological complexity (e.g., Romani, Galuzzi, Guariglia, & Goslin, 2017), it could be assumed that differences between their individual frequency rates may not lead to significant differences in foreign language learning.[1] In usage-based accounts of language acquisition and development, phonemic frequency generally plays a role, with different predictions resulting for production and perception of phonemes (Bybee, 2001). Studies have shown that VOT contributes to transfer effects in second language learners (e.g., Schoonmaker-Gates, 2015; Skarnitzl & Rumlová, 2019), suggesting an effect of language-specific phonological patterns, which impede or facilitate phonological learning in a second language.

[1] We are grateful to an anonymous reviewer for pointing this out.

Methods

Participants and Procedures

Speakers whose first language was Korean (*N* = 22, male: 5; female: 17) and Austrian German (*N* = 21, male: 3; female: 18) were recruited in their home countries in the cities Seoul and Vienna, respectively, for a sentence-reading task in their foreign language English. Participants were students whose ages ranged from 19 to 27 (mean = 23.2), and who were enrolled in foreign-language programs at their respective universities (Seoul National University, University of Vienna), where admission required English proficiency levels of B2 or higher according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2018). The majority of students were in advanced years of their program, some of them in graduate programs. They primarily reported using their first languages in their daily lives but were highly exposed to American English through online media and, in the case of Koreans, by American pronunciation teachers (Ahn, 2011). Austrian students of English may be exposed to British English to a higher degree, having travelled to Great Britain or being tutored by British pronunciation teachers. All participants were first informed about the recording procedures (but not told about the objective of the study) and their rights as participants. After having given their consent, they completed a survey that collected demographic information and details about the participants' linguistic habits (e.g., first language, dialect, exclusion of speech impediments). The participants were paid for their participation and the experiment took place between November 2018 and June 2019. The study compared two experimental groups but no control group was included in the experimental design.

The sentence-reading task consisted of 86 short English sentences or phrases (mean words per sentence = 6.3, SD = 2.1) which were read once at a comfortable speed and in the same order by each participant. The sentences were typed with a word processor and printed on a piece of paper that was given to each participant. Each sentence contained a target lexeme with a word-initial plosive consonant in sentence-initial position (e.g., 'Buffaloes are large animals' or 'Cats are active at night,' see supplementary material Table A1 for the list of carrier sentences), resulting in similar prosodic/rhythmic structure of the sentences. Participants were not familiar with the sentences and phrases before the start of their reading and were asked to assess the level of difficulty afterwards in their first language by speaking aloud the terms for 'easy,' 'medium,' and 'difficult' (Sino-Korean: 'ha': 하, 'jung': 중, 'sang': 상; German: 'leicht,'

'mittel,' 'schwer'). By uttering a Korean or German term after each sentence/phrase, we attempted to minimize habituation effects. The order of word-initial plosive appearance was shuffled so that no consecutive sentences started with the same plosive. All target lexemes had the primary stress on the first syllable. Each plosive type (lenis/lax and fortis/aspirated variants of bilabials, alveolars, and velars) appeared in word-initial bigrams with high vowels ([i, ɪ]), mid ([e, ɛ, æ]), and low vowels ([ɑ, ʌ, a]). We grouped the vowels according to height in order to account for the VOT differences in relation to vowel height. Each bigram combination appeared a minimum of four times, resulting in each plosive type appearing at least 14 times throughout the sentence-reading task. For instance, the bigram [di, dɪ] started the five sentences 'Deans of colleges have to work long hours,' 'Dishwashers are too expensive for me,' 'Deals in the business world are hard to make,' 'Differences in opinion should not be expressed,' and 'Dill is an herb used for Italian cooking.' Sentences belonging to the same bigram class (e.g., lenis alveolar + i/ɪ) were spaced apart at a minimum of ten sentences. All sentences were semantically unrelated to their neighboring sentences and no phonological neighbors in target words were presented in consecutive sentences. Cases of deviant phonology (e.g., [ʤɪl] instead of [gɪl]) or stress placement (e.g., 'dessert' instead of 'desert') were removed from the sample. The possible difference in isochronous temporal patterns between Korean (Lee, Jin, Seong, Jung, & Lee, 1994) and German (Port, 1983) was negligible in the present study as only sentence-initial syllables with primary stress were the focus of analysis.

The participants' speech was recorded with a ZoomH4n digital audio recorder with an attached Sennheiser ME67 microphone. Speech was sampled at 44.1 kHz at 16-bit depth, and was subsequently saved and stored as .WAV files. Target lexemes were cut manually from the audio stream and saved as separate files, which were later processed with the open-source acoustic software Praat (Boersma & Weenink, 2019). Overall lexeme duration as well as the duration of the word-initial VOTs were manually annotated on two different tiers in the program that allowed automated extraction of the durations (in seconds) via a script.

The start of each lexeme/VOT was marked at the burst of the stop (Abramson & Whalen, 2017); the end of VOT was determined at the onset of glottal pulsing (settings: 100-600 Hertz for women and 75 to 300 Hertz for men, Vogel, Maruff, Snyder, & Mundt, 2009). The majority of words (78%) ended in alveolar fricatives (of which 97% were <s>, voiced or unvoiced) and here the end point was marked when the frication had ceased (i.e., the nearest zero crossing) as visible on the waveform and spectrogram. In the case of plosives (10%), nasals (7%), liquids (3%), or vowels (2%) constituting the final phonemes of the target lexemes, the end point was determined when the waveform cycle had ceased and the sound had completely faded.

VOT was normalized for speech rate by calculating a measure of syllables per second on 5% of each participant's speech (= eight sentences per participant taken from the middle of the reading texts; the sentences were the same for each participant). This value was then multiplied with VOT (in seconds) and later converted to milli-seconds by multiplying it by 1000.

Approximately 7% of the data was coded for reliability by a second observer and Pearson's R along with the root mean square error (RMSE) were calculated to see whether the two coders agreed on (a) overall word duration and (b) start of VOT (= initial burst). For word durations, an excellent *R* value of .99 (RMSE = .023) and for VOT durations, an acceptable R value of .71 (RMSE = .014) are reported.

Variables *VOT Distance*

In order to determine the degree of similarity of the Korean and Austrian learners' VOTs to those of native English speakers, VOTs of American English speakers were extracted from the TIMIT Corpus, a collection of sentences read by American English speakers from different dialect regions, which is widely used in the phonetic sciences (Garofolo et al., 1993). Even though American English VOTs show socio-phonetic and regional stratification (see, e.g., Lipani, 2019), the present study will focus on average VOTs across the variety of American English speakers. We identified sentences starting with nouns with initial bigrams that were the focus of our study (see Participants and Procedures). Primary stress had to be on the first syllable (*N* = 146). We measured VOT in the identical way as described for the EFL learners. Due to an underrepresentation of the sentence-initial bigrams b, d, and g plus [i, ɪ], d and g plus [e, ɛ, æ], selected recordings of the American radio show "This American Life" (https://www.thisamericanlife.org) were added to the corpus (*N* = 21). After identifying speakers whose biographical information (e.g., age) were available, bigrams representing the initial segments of sentence-initial nouns were manually cut from the .WAV files that were downloaded from the website of the show. Acoustical measurements followed the procedures as outlined for the EFL learners and the TIMIT Corpus. Speech rates of each American English sentence in the TIMIT corpus were calculated (syllables per second) and each VOT was normalized for speech rate. See Appendix Table A2 for more information on the American English speaker data.

The phonetic distance between the Korean/Austrian VOTs to the American English target VOT spaces was assessed by calculating the Mahalanobis distance (Kartushina, Hervais-Adelman, Frauenfelder, & Golestani, 2015), which computes the distance of a test point from the distribution mean by considering the covariance matrix (Martos, Muñoz, & González, 2013). The Mahalanobis

distance takes into account natural variability in speech production by calculating the number of standard deviations from a learner's VOT to the mean of the target spaces (computed per plosive type) derived from the American English speakers, along each principal component axis of the target spaces (Kartushina et al., 2015). A Mahalanobis distance of 0 indicates that a learner VOT value is at the mean of the target space. After analzying z-scores of Mahalanobis distance scores and removing those over three standard deviations, the highest Mahalanobis distance in the present study was 14.21.

Frequency Variables

Frequency rates of Korean initial phonemes were taken from Shin, Kiaer, and Cha (2013) who based their calculations on the *Yonsei Korean Language Dictionary* and the *Standard Korean Language Dictionary* in combination with the SLILC Spoken Language Information Lab Corpus (Shin, 2008). To determine the frequency rate of plosive-plus-vowel bigrams in word-initial position in Korean (which are not included in Shin et al., 2013), we used the Korean corpus of the *Leipzig Corpora Collection/ Deutscher Wortschatz Corpus*, comprising over 109 million tokens and over seven million types extracted from Korean newspapers between 2011 and 2019 (Goldhahn, Eckart, & Quasthoff, 2012). We analyzed the first 100 types of each specific bigram (collapsing the nearly merged 애 and 에), noted down their token frequencies, and divided the token frequencies by the overall tokens of the corpus.

Frequencies of word-initial German phonemes and bigrams were calculated using CLEARPOND for German (GermanPOND, Marian, Bartolotti, Chabal, & Shook, 2012), which is based on the SUBTLEX-DE Corpus, a corpus of movie and TV subtitles that is considered an excellent corpus for spoken German (Brysbaert et al., 2011). Austrian German differs from Middle/Northern German; however, the majority of German corpora include only small portions of Bavarian and/or Austrian varieties. In order to establish the applicability of the GermanPOND resource for Austrian data, the only available Austrian language corpus was compared to CLEARPOND to see whether Austrian and German lexical frequency rates are correlated and CLEARPOND can be used to analyze Austrian speech data. The ANNO Corpus of the Austrian National Library ("Austrian Newspapers Online," http://anno.onb.ac.at) is a collection of 20 million pages of Austrian newspapers and magazines published between 1527 to 2014. It is the only sizable corpus of Austrian German. There is a corpus of spoken Austrian German, the GRASS Corpus (Schuppler, Hagmueller, Morales-Cordovilla, & Pressentheiner, 2014); however, it contains only spoken language and a limited number of speakers and tokens that can be analyzed with it. In the ANNO Corpus, the uninflected target words were searched between the

time period of 1950 and 2000 and the number of occurrences were noted down. As this corpus does not include a total token number but only gives the number of newspapers/magazines for a search period, token frequency was calculated per newspaper/magazine. For example, the word *Bank* (Engl. 'bank') occurred 652 times within the corpus, which was constituted of 3,124 newspapers and magazines for the respective time period. Frequency was calculated by dividing 652 by 3,124. This resulted in a lexeme frequency of 0.21 for *Bank*. Next, uninflected target words were searched in GermanPOND and their frequencies were extracted. The database underlying the German Clearpond calculators is the SUBTLEX-DE Corpus. The frequency values obtained from the ANNO and Clearpond corpora were z-scored, and then checked for correlations. They were correlated (Pearson's $r = 0.65$) and thus reliability of the GermanPOND resource for Austrian speech was assumed.

VOTs of EFL learners may be influenced by frequencies of items in the learned language. Thus, word-initial phoneme and bigram frequencies of EFL were calculated and compared to the frequency rates from the native languages. We used different EFL corpora from which we calculated the phoneme and bigram frequency rates for the EFL learners of Korean or German language background. For the Korean learners of English, the "ICNALE/ International Corpus Network of Asian Learners of English Corpus" (Ishikawa, 2013) was used. We calculated the frequency rate of word-initial phoneme and bigrams of the sub-corpus spanning only Korean learners of English by dividing the overall occurrences of the phoneme and bigrams by the number of tokens of the Korean corpus (= 246,879).

For the Austrian learners of English, data was extracted from two corpora, the "Louvain International Database of Spoken English Interlanguage" or LINDSEI (Gilquin, de Cock, & Granger, 2010) and the "Giessen-Long Beach Chaplin Corpus/GLBCC" (Jucker et al., 2006). We selected materials produced by speakers whose first language was German and determined initial phoneme and bigram frequencies by dividing the overall occurrences of the word-initial phonemes and bigrams by the corpus tokens (combined corpus size = 489,270).

CLEARPOND for English (Marian et al., 2012) was used to obtain English lexical frequency rates of the target words, initial plosive and initial bigram frequency rates. In addition, neighborhood density (i.e., number of phonological neighbors of the English target words differing by one phoneme) was calculated, as this variable plays an important role in lexical processing of first and foreign languages (Fricke, Baese-Berk, & Goldrick, 2016). Syllable frequencies were not calculated as the majority of word-initial syllables of the stimuli do not appear in Korean or German (e.g., 'bath,' 'dance'). This was due to the fact that many target words were monosyllabic (e.g., 'bills,' 'banks') and, thus, syllable frequency would be conflated with lexical frequency.

All phoneme and bigram frequency variables (L1, EFL, English) were first log transformed [LOG(x+1)] (to account for zero values in the data) and then rescaled to range between 0 and 1 in order to account for the different frequency distributions of phonemes and bigrams in the fortis and lenis category and per learner group. This allowed a direct comparison between Koreans and Austrians and between lenis and fortis consonants.

Statistical Analyses

First, a collinearity diagonistic was run on the independent variables (with the R packages “performance” and “car”) and correlation coefficients and variance inflation factors were computed (see Table 1).

Table 1

Correlation Matrix of Fixed Effects (Correlations Are Indicated in Bold)

	L1 phoneme frequency	L1 bigram frequency	EFL phoneme frequency	EFL bigram frequency	English phoneme frequency	English bigram frequency	English lexical frequency	English neighborhood density
L1 bigram frequency	–0.06							
EFL phoneme frequency	0.03	0.07						
EFL bigram frequency	0.14	0.32	0.29					
English phoneme frequency	0.22	–0.05	–0.27	–0.13				
English bigram frequency	–0.07	–0.02	0.001	–0.11	**–0.46**			
English lexical frequency	0.0	0.01	0.02	0.58	–0.12	–0.16		
English neighborhood density	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.08	–0.02	0.04	–0.23	
English neighborhood frequency	–0.02	0.003	0.002	–0.03	0.11	0.02	–0.21	**–0.62**

English phoneme frequency was shown to be correlated with English bigram frequency, and neighborhood density was correlated with neighborhood frequency. For each correlated pair, the first principal component (PC1) was computed via Principal Components Analysis in order to combine the two variables into one that can account for the majority of the variability of the two variables (Salem & Hussein, 2019). The first principal component (PC1) of "English phoneme frequency" and "English bigram frequency" was correlated negatively at –0.71 with each of the two variables and explained 75% of the data variability. The combination variable was termed "English phoneme/bigram frequency." PC1 of "neighborhood density" and "neighborhood frequency" (termed "neighborhood density/frequency") was correlated with each of the original variables at –0.7 and was able to account for 86% of the data variability.

A series of linear mixed models was then calculated (Bates, Maechler, Bolker, & Walker, 2014), with the dependent variable being the Mahalanobis distance scores of the learners and the fixed effects being (1) L1 phoneme frequency and (2) L1 bigram frequency. As control variables we entered (3) EFL phoneme frequency, and (4) EFL bigram frequency, (5) English phoneme/bigram frequency, (6) English lexical frequency rate, and (7) neighborhood density/frequency. As random effects (intercepts) we included 'subject' and 'word.' To keep type I error at the nominal level of 0.05, we included the maximal random slope structure (all fixed effects) per subject and per word (Barr, Levy, Scheepers, & Tily, 2013). Different models were computed with the Korean and the Austrian data.

As an overall test of the effect of the fixed effects, we compared the full model with a respective null model lacking the fixed effects (but being otherwise identical to the full model) using a likelihood ratio test (Dobson, 2002; Forstmeier & Schielzeth, 2011). We also tested the significance of individual fixed effects by comparing the full model with a respective reduced model lacking the effect to be tested. Due to low variance inflation factors, collinearity did not appear to be an issue (Field, 2005; Quinn & Keough, 2002). The models were implemented in R (R Studio Team, 2020) using the function *lmer* of the package *lme4* (Bates et al., 2014). The sample size for the models was 3,590 tokens, involving 86 types, and 43 speakers.

Figures were created with the R packages "interact" and "ggplot2."

Results

American English speakers generally showed shorter VOTs before low vowels (see Table 2). The same pattern was true for Korean and Austrian learners of English, and these results are in agreement with previous literature on the influence of vowel height on VOT (Mortensen & Tøndering, 2013).

Table 2

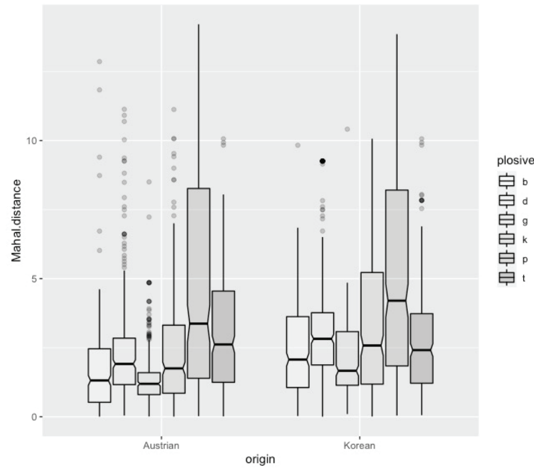
Speech-rate-adjusted Lenis VOTs (in Milliseconds) of the American, Korean, and Austrian Speakers of English for Each Bigram (Means, Standard Deviations)

LENIS	B			D			G		
	ɑ, ʌ, a	e, ɛ, æ	i, ɪ	ɑ, ʌ, a	e, ɛ, æ	i, ɪ	ɑ, ʌ, a	e, ɛ, æ	i, ɪ
American English	53.1±39	75 ±23	116±32	84±11	109.8±38	177.8±55	118.2±37	293.3±218	160.3±43
Korean EFL	38±37	27±29	41±70	46±36	44±36	61±48	52±51	65±53	116±84
Austrian EFL	77±88	78±65	53±29	96±47	81±37	87±39	106±54	108±41	107±58
FORTIS	**P**			**T**			**K**		
	ɑ, ʌ, a	e, ɛ, æ	i, ɪ	ɑ, ʌ, a	e, ɛ, æ	i, ɪ	ɑ, ʌ, a	e, ɛ, æ	i, ɪ
American English	353±36	256±92	244±14	270.6±59	262.5±59	237.3±39.	262.9±29	243.2±41	263.7±53
Korean EFL	147±94	124±91	148±111	180±99	154±92	230±199	150±117	225±120	215±111
Austrian EFL	169±103	169±85	117±95	163±126	163±125	250±123	242±106	257±117	265±96

In total, 21.8% of Koreans' and 38.5% of Austrians' VOTs had a Mahalanobis distance of less than 1, which is close to the benchmark targets of the American English VOTs for their respective plosive types. Fortis plosives generally showed larger distances from the American English VOTs and the lenis plosives of the learners were closer to the American English phonetic spaces (see Figure 3). VOT distances of the lenis plosives were larger in Korean speakers, a fact that can be explained by the larger phonetic distance between Korean lenis and American English lenis VOTs. In addition, VOT distances of Koreans' /k/ also exceeded those of the Austrians. Both learner groups achieved the best VOT results for /g/. The largest Mahalanobis distances and variability in distances were measured for /p/ in both Koreans and Austrians.

Figure 3

Mahalanobis Distance per Plosive Type and First Language Background



Korean Results

Results showed that Koreans' VOT distances were influenced by L1 bigram frequencies but not by L1 plosive frequencies (see Table 3 and Figure 4). Lower bigram frequencies facilitated smaller VOT distances to the American English model.

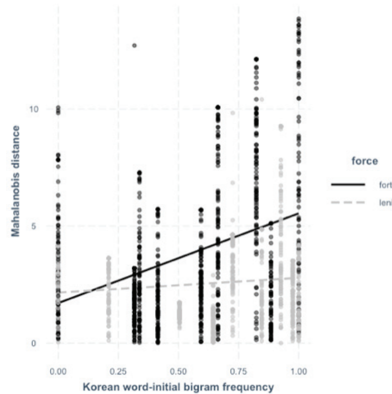
Table 3

Results of the Korean Linear Mixed Effects Models

Predictors	Estimate	SE	t	χ^2	p
(Intercept)	3.13	0.87	3.22		
L1 plosive frequency	–3.1	0.8	–3.9	1.21	0.27
L1 bigram frequency	0.46	0.1	5.7	8.48	0.004**
EFL plosive frequency	0.35	0.97	0.37	0.03	0.87
EFL bigram frequency	2.88	0.58	4.89	10.31	0.001**
English plosive/bigram frequency (PC1)	–2.93	0.43	–6.72	22.9	<0.001***
English lexical frequency	–0.15	0.14	–0.9	2.14	0.34
English neighborhood density/ frequency (PC1)	0.13	0.24	0.56	0.29	0.58

Figure 4

Low Bigram Frequencies in Korean Facilitated Phonetic Learning in Word-initial Bigrams in Fortis and Lenis Plosives



In addition, EFL bigram frequencies and English plosive/bigram frequencies had an effect on VOT distances in the Korean learners (see Table 3), with the latter showing the opposite effect on VOT distances than L1 and EFL bigram frequencies: high-frequencies in the interaction variable of English plosives and bigrams led to smaller VOT distances in the Korean learners.

Austrian Results

VOT distances of the Austrian learners were affected by the frequency of the word-initial plosive in Austrian German (L1 plosive frequency), but not by L1 bigram frequencies (see Table 4 and Figure 5). High-frequency plosives showed more English VOTs than low-frequency ones.

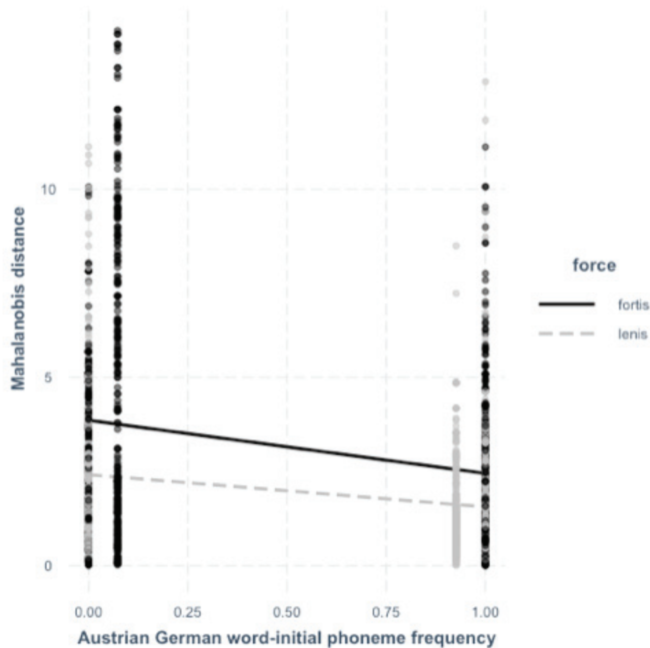
Table 4

Results of the Austrian Linear Mixed Effects Models

Predictors	Estimate	SE	t	χ^2	p
(Intercept)	2.95	0.27	10.9		
L1 plosive frequency	–1.89	0.24	–7.9	46.79	<0.001***
L1 bigram frequency	–12.1	6.5	–1.8	3.09	0.08
EFL plosive frequency	2.1	0.46	4.4	14.46	<0.001***
EFL bigram frequency	1.04	0.28	3.7	11.63	<0.001***
English plosive/bigram frequency (PC1)	–1.17	0.26	–4.57	21.54	<0.001***
English lexical frequency	–0.2	0.1	–2.02	8.82	0.003**
English neighborhood density/ frequency (PC1)	0.13	0.15	0.88	6.16	0.013**

Figure 5

Austrian Learners Produced Better Approximations of American VOTs when German Phoneme Frequency of Fortis and Lenis Plosives Was High



EFL plosive and bigram frequencies also had an effect on Austrians' VOT distances, with low frequencies being indicative of shorter phonetic distances. High English plosive/bigram frequencies also had a measurable effect and minimized VOT distances. Words of high lexical frequency rate and words residing in sparser and lower frequency neighborhoods also showed improved VOT scores.

Discussion

The experiment conducted for the present study followed two investigative threads. First, we analyzed the role of phonotactic probability of initial phonemes (plosives) and phoneme combinations (bigrams: plosive plus vowel) on phonetic learning of voice-onset time in learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Two competing hypotheses were tested: (1) high frequency rates of L1 segments slow down phonetic learning, and (2) high frequency segments have larger and more variable exemplar clouds, equipping

a speaker with more phonetic variability, and thus facilitating phonetic learning. We were specifically interested in analyzing the influence of the phonotactic probabilities that exist in the first language of EFL learners (Korean, German), as well as the influence of those probabilities formed through exposure to EFL of the two learner groups. Second, we tested whether sub-syllabic units play a role in phonetic learning and hypothesized that right-branching German syllable structure would influence phonetic learning of phonemes, while left-branching Korean syllable structure would influence the learning of bigrams. Thus, high-frequency German word-initial phonemes were expected to interfere with the learning of phonetic detail of equivalent structures in EFL in the Austrian group. In Koreans, high frequency rates of word-initial bigrams were proposed to be influential. The results show that frequency rates of word-initial segments were predictive in how far learners had progressed in their acquisition of English VOTs: high L1 frequencies affected phonetic learning in Austrian learners, while Korean learners were influenced by low L1 frequencies. Sub-syllabic segmentation was also shown to have an impact.

In general, the Austrian learners' English was influenced by a wider variety of factors analyzed in the present study. Neighborhood density and lexical frequency rate of target words were shown to have effects on VOT distances in Austrians but not in Koreans. The closer phonetic distance between English and German could play a role in this.

Concerning the first hypothesis, we found evidence that low-frequency items in the first language facilitate phonetic learning in English as a Foreign Language in Korean learners. In contrast, Austrians relied on high-frequencies to improve their English VOTs. These findings do not neatly fit into one of the proposed hypotheses. The Austrian results could be explained in the context of the exemplar-based hypothesis, where speakers have more numerous and diverse phonetic targets associated with high-frequency speech segments. When producing a novel sound in a foreign language, the Austrian learners may have a greater choice of phonetic patterns (or exemplars) for pronunciation. The Korean learners showed better VOT approximation to the American English model when frequencies of the respective segments in their L1 Korean were low. Here, the less automatized phonetic patterns associated with low-frequency bigrams may enable the phonetic learning process. The discrepancy between Austrians and Koreans could be related to the learning potentials that are different for each learner group. Austrians' VOTs were generally closer to the English model on the distance scale, whereas Koreans' VOT generally showed greater distances. When phonetic distances are small, the numerous phonetic competitors associated with the high-frequency segments could help hone in on the exact target. When phonetic distances are large, learners may have to ignore their L1 phonetic repertoire and acquire novel phonetic patterns in order to produce good approximations of a phonetic target. Low frequency rates

could facilitate that process, as they provide conditions where only a few and less deeply engrained phonetic targets exist, making it easier to adopt a new variant that is independent of the pre-existing phonetic variants.

The second hypothesis of sub-syllabic structure having an impact on phonetic learning in a foreign language was supported by our results. Due to left- and right-branched syllable structures differentiating the languages, we predicted Koreans to be mainly influenced by bigram frequencies, while Austrians to be mainly influenced by phoneme frequencies of their first languages. These expectations were borne out by the results, and Koreans' VOTs were shown to be affected by bigram frequencies of L1 Korean, whereas Austrians' VOTs were affected by L1 German plosive frequencies. The differences in cognitive linking of segments in language users' minds may be reflected in the differences in locus of frequency effects in EFL.

In sum, VOT distance reduction (i.e., more L1-user-like pronunciation of plosives) was most successful in cases where the first language probabilities of segments and segment combinations were low in Korean and high in Austrian German. Furthermore, in Koreans, distance reduction was largest when L1 Korean bigram frequency was involved, whereas in Austrians the reduction was largest when L1 German phoneme frequency was involved. This points to a role of sub-syllabic units in the cognitive processing of phonological features of a foreign language.

For better interpretation of the findings presented here, some limitations of the study should be considered. Carrier sentences differed in terms of subject phrase complexity and consequently higher rhythmic variability. In addition, a few cases of secondary stress on the initial syllable of a target word (such as in "punctuation" and "pizzerias") might have contributed to differences in VOT values. In general, the phonetics of VOT are heavily influenced by a variety of factors, including language experience (Stoehr, Benders, van Hell, & Fikkert, 2017), gender (Koenig, 2000), biological (hormonal) causes (Whiteside, Hanson, & Cowell, 2004), fluency of speech production (Beckman, Helgason, McMurray, & Ringen, 2011), and dialectal region of origin in Korea (Cho, 2005) and Austria (Moosmüller, 1987). In addition, the large inter-individual variation that is generally recorded in VOT measurements (e.g., Allen, Miller, & DeSteno, 2003) renders experimental designs complicated when trying to control for all of these factors. Future studies could compare L1 and L2 VOTs per person (paired data design) to document the exact VOT changes in a speaker switching from their first to their second language. A more detailed and separate investigation of the fortis and lenis categories may also yield interesting results that can qualify some of the findings presented here.

Conclusion

The results of the present study indicate that phonotactic probabilities in the first language exert influence over phonetic learning in a foreign language. Sub-syllabic structuring contributes to this effect by providing different segmental combinations where the frequency effects unfold.

In sum, our findings suggest an interaction between the statistical probabilities arisen in the first language, their cognitive entrenchment, and phonetic learnability in a foreign language, which is mediated by sub-syllabic segmentation of the first language.

Acknowledgements

The study was approved by the Internal Review Board of Seoul National University under IRB No. 1710/002-002. This work was supported by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea and the National Research Foundation of Korea (under grant NRF-2018S1A5A8028985 awarded to E. M. L.). We would like to thank Yaejin Jang and Jong-seung Sun without whose help this research would not have been possible. We are also grateful to Tomas Graf for assistance with the ESL corpora.

References

Abramson, A. S., & Whalen, D. H. (2017). Voice onset time (VOT) at 50: Theoretical and practical issues in measuring voicing distinctions. *Journal of Phonetics, 63*, 75–86.

Ahn, K. (2011). Conceptualization of American English native speaker norms: A case study of an English language classroom in South Korea. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 12*, 691–702.

Allen, J. S., Miller, J. L., & DeSteno, D. (2003). Individual talker differences in voice-onset-time. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 113*(544). https://doi.org/10.1121/1.1528172

Barr, D. J., Levy, R., Scheepers, C., & Tily, H. J. (2013). Random effects structure for confirmatory hypothesis testing: Keep it maximal. *Journal of Memory and Language, 68*, 255–278.

Bates, D., Maechler, M., Bolker, B., & Walker, S. (2014). {lme4}: Linear mixed-effects models using Eigen and S4. *R Package version 1.1–7.*

Beckman, J., Helgason, P., McMurray, B., & Ringen, C. (2011). Rate effects on Swedish VOT: Evidence for phonological overspecification. *Journal of Phonetics, 39*(1), 39–49.

Berg, T., & Koops, C. (2010). The interplay of left- and right-branching effects: A phonotactic analysis of Korean syllable structure. *Lingua, 120*(1), 35–49.

Berry, J., & Moyle, M. (2011). Covariation among vowel height effects on acoustic measures. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 130*, EL 365.

Boersma, P., & Weenink, D. (2019). Praat, http://www.praat.org (Version 6.0.46).

Brysbaert, M., Buchmeier, M., Conrad, M., Jacobs, A. M., Boelte, J., & Boehl, A. (2011). The word frequency effect: A review of recent developments and implications for the coice of frequency estimates in German. *Experimental Psychology, 58*(5), 412.

Bybee, J. (2001). *Phonology and language use*. Cambridge University Press.

Bybee, J. (2002). Word frequency and context of use in the lexical diffusion of phonetically conditioned sound change. *Language Variation and Change, 14*, 261–290.

Bybee, J. (2007). *Frequency of use and the organisation of language*. Oxford University Press.

Chang, C. B., & Kwon, S. (2020). The contributions of crosslinguistic influence and individual differences to nonnative speech perception. *Languages, 5*(4), 49.

Cho, Y.-H. (2005). VOT and its effect on the syllable duration in Busan Korean. *Speech Sciences, 12*(3), 153–164.

Chodroff, E., Godfrey, J., Khudanpur, S., & Wilson, C. (2015). Structured variability in acoustic realization: A corpus study of voice onset time in American English stops. *Proceedings of the 18th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences*.

Council of Europe. (2018). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Companion volume with new descriptors*.

Davidson, L. (2016). Variability in the implementation of voicing in American English obstruents. *Journal of Phonetics, 545*, 35–50.

Dobson, A. J. (2002). *An introduction to generalized linear models*. Chapman & Hall/ CRC.

Docherty, G. J., Watt, D. J. L., Llamas, C., Hall, D. J., & Nycz, J. (2011). Variation in voice onset time along the Scottish-English border. *Proceedings of the 17th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences*, 591–594.

Esposito, A. (2002). On vowel height and consonantal voicing effects: Data from Italian. *Phonetica, 59*, 197–231.

Everett, C. (2018). The similar rates of occurrence of consonants across the world's languages: A quantitative analysis of phonetically transcribed word lists. *Language Sciences, 69*, 125–135.

Field, A. (2005). *Discovering statistics using SPSS*. London: Sage Publications.

Fischer-Jørgensen, E. (1980). Temporal relations in Danish tautosyllabic CV sequences with stop consonants. *Annu. Rep. Inst. Phonet. (University of Copenhagen), 14*, 207–261.

Forstmeier, W., & Schielzeth, H. (2011). Cryptic multiple hypotheses testing in linear models: Overestimated effect sizes and the winner's curse. *Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology, 65*, 47–55.

Fricke, M., Baese-Berk, M., & Goldrick, M. (2016). Dimensions of similarity in the mental lexicon. *Language, Cognition and Neuroscience, 31*(5), 639–645.

Frisch, S. A., Large, N. R., & Pisoni, D. B. (2000). Perception of wordlikeness: Effects of segment probability and length on the processing of nonwords. *Journal of Memory & Language, 42*, 481–496.

Garofolo, J., Lamel, L., Fisher, W., Fiscus, J., Pallett, D., & Dahlgren, N. (1993). *TIMIT: Acoustic-phonetic continuous speech vorpus*. Linguistic Data Consortium.

Gilquin, G., de Cock, S., & Granger, S. (2010). *Louvain International Database of Spoken English Interlanguage*. Presses Universitaires de Louvain.

Goldhahn, D., Eckart, T., & Quasthoff, U. (2012). *Building large monolingual dictionaries at the Leipzig Corpora Collection: From 100 to 200 languages.* Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 8th International Language Ressources Evaluation (LREC'12).

Grassegger, H. (1996). Koartikulatorische Einflüsse auf die Produktion von Anlautplosiven bei österreichischen (steirischen) Sprechern. In A. Braun (Ed.), *Untersuchungen zu Stimme und Sprache – Papers on speech and voice* (pp. 19–32). Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.

Hunnicutt, L., & Morris, P. (2016). Pre-voicing and aspiration in Southern American English. *University of Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics, 22*, 215–224.

Ishikawa, S. (2013). The ICNALE and sophisticated contrastive interlanguage analysis of Asian learners of English. In S. Ishikawa (Ed.), *Learner corpus studies in Asia and the world* (pp. 91–118). Kobe, Japan: Kobe University.

Jucker, A., S., M., & Smith, S. (2006). GLBCC (Giessen – Long Beach Chaplin Corpus). In *Oxford Text Archive*.

Kang, Y. (2014). Voice onset time merger and development of tonal contrast in Seoul Korean stops: A corpus study. *Journal of Phonetics, 45*, 76–90.

Kartushina, N., Hervais-Adelman, A., Frauenfelder, U. H., & Golestani, N. (2015). The effect of phonetic production training with visual feedback on the perception and production of foreign speech sounds. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 138*(2), 817–832.

Kim, J. (2015). Effects of phonotactic probabilities on syllable structure. *Working Papers in LInguistics, 46*(3), 1–16.

Kim, J., & Davis, C. (2002). Using Korean to investigate phonological priming effects without the influence of orthography. *Language and Cognitive Processes, 17*, 569–591.

Kim, J.-Y., & Lee, Y. (2011). A study of Korean syllable structure: Evidence from rhyming patterns in Korean contemporary rap-songs. *Sociolinguistics Journal of Korea, 19*, 1–22.

Kim, J. Y. (2010). *L2 Korean phonology*. VDM.

Klatt, D. H. (1975). Voice-onset time, frication, and aspiration in word-initial consonant clusters. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Research, 18*, 686–706.

Koenig, L. L. (2000). Laryngeral factors in voiceless consonant production in men, women, and 5-year-olds. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 43*, 1211–1228.

Lee, H. B., Jin, N., Seong, C., Jung, I., & Lee, S. (1994). *An experimental phonetic study of speech rhythm in Standard Korean*. Paper presented at the International Conference on Spoken Language Processing (ICSLP), Yokohama, Japan.

Levy, H., & Hanulikova, A. (2019). Variation in children's vowel production: Effects of language exposure and lexical frequency. *Laboratory Phonology: Journal of the Association for Laboratory Phonology, 10*(9), 1–26.

Lipani, L. (2019). Voice onset time variation in natural southern speech. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 146*(4). https://doi.org/10.1121/1.5137433

Luce, P. A., & Large, N. R. (2001). Phonotactics, density, and entropy in spoken word recognition. *Language and Cognitive Processes, 16*, 565–581.

Luef, E. M. (2020). Development of voice onset time in an ongoing phonetic differentiation in Austrian German plosives: Reversing a near-merger. *Zeitschrift für Sprachwissenschaft, 39*(1), 79-101. https://doi.org/10.1515/zfs-2019-2006

Maddieson, I. (1984). *Patterns of sounds*. Cambridge University Press.

Marian, V., Bartolotti, J., Chabal, S., & Shook, A. (2012). CLEARPOND: Cross-linguistic easy access resource for phonological and orthographic neighborhood densities. *PLoS ONE, 7*(8), e43230.

Martos, G., Muñoz, A., & González, J. (2013). On the generalization of the Mahalanobis distance. In J. Ruiz-Shulcloper & G. Sanniti di Baja (Eds.), *Progress in pattern recognition, image analysis, computer vision, and applications* (Vol. 8258). Springer.

Moosmüller, S. (1987). *Soziophonetische Variation im gegenwärtigen Wiener Deutsch: Eine empirische Untersuchung*. Franz Steiner.

Moosmüller, S., & Ringen, C. (2004). Voice and aspiration in Austrian German plosives. *Folia Linguistica, 38*, 43–62.

Moosmüller, S., Schmid, C., & Brandstätter, J. (2015). Standard Austrian German. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association, 45*(3), 339–348.

Morris, P. A. (2018). Rate effects on Southern American English VOT. *Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America, 3*(60), 1–10.

Mortensen, J., & Tøndering, J. (2013). *The effect of vowel height on voice onset time in stop consonants in CV sequences in spontaneous Danish.* Paper presented at the Proceedings of Fonetik 2013, Linköping, Sweden.

Ohala, J. J. (1983). The origin of sound patterns in vocal tract constraints. In P. F. MacNeilage (Ed.), *The production of speech* (pp. 73–95). Springer.

Phillips, B. (1984). Word frequency and the actuation of sound change. *Language, 60*(2), 320–342.

Phillips, B. (2006). *Word frequency and lexical diffusion*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Pierrehumbert, J. B. (2001). Exemplar dynamics: Word frequency, lenition, and contrast. In J. Bybee & P. Hopper (Eds.), *Frequency effects and the emergence of lexical structure* (pp. 137–157). John Benjamins.

Port, R. (1983). Isochrony in speech. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 73*, 66.

Quinn, G. P., & Keough, M. J. (2002). *Experimental designs and data analysis for biologists*. Cambridge University Press.

RStudio Team (2020). RStudio: Integrated Development for R. RStudio, PBC, Boston, MA. http://www.rstudio.com/.

Romani, C., Galuzzi, C., Guariglia, C., & Goslin, J. (2017). Comparing phoneme frequency, age of acquisition, and loss in aphasia: Implications for phonological universals. *Cognitive Neuropsychology, 34*(7–8), 449–471.

Salem, N., & Hussein, S. (2019). Data dimensional reduction and principal components analysis. *Procedia Computer Science, 163*, 292–299.

Schoonmaker-Gates, E. (2015). On voice-onset time as a cue to foreign accent in Spanish: Native and nonnative perceptions. *Hispania, 98*(4), 779–791.

Schuppler, B., Hagmueller, M., Morales-Cordovilla, J. A., & Pressentheiner, H. (2014). *GRASS: The Graz Corpus of Read and Spontaneous Speech.* Paper presented at the 9th edition of the Language Resources and Evaluation Conference, Reykjavik, Iceland.

Schweitzer, K., Walsh, M., Calhoun, S., Schuetze, H., Moebius, B., Schweitzer, A., & Dogil, G. (2015). Exploring the relationship between intonation and the lexicon: Evidence for lexicalised storage of intonation. *Speech communication, 66*, 65–81.

Shin, J. Y. (2008). Phoneme and syllable frequencies of Korean based on the analysis of spontaneous speech data (Seongin jayu balhwa jaryo bunseogeul batangeuro han hangueoui eumso mit eumjeol gwallyeon bindo). *Eoneocheonggakjangaeyeongu, 13*(2), 193–215.

Shin, J. Y., Kiaer, J., & Cha, J. (2013). *The sounds of Korean*. Cambridge University Press.

Siebs, T., de Boor, H., Moser, H., & Winkler, C. (1969). *Siebs deutsche Aussprache: Reine und gemäßigte Hochlautung mit Aussprachewörterbuch*. de Gruyter.

Silva, D. J. (2004). Phonological mapping as dynamic: The evolving contrastive relationship between English and Korean. *Linguistic Research, 21*, 57–74.

Silva, D. J. (2006). Variation in voice onset time for Korean stops. *Korean Linguistics, 13*, 1–16.

Skarnitzl, R., & Rumlová, J. (2019). Phonetic aspects of strongly-accented Czech speakers of English. *Phonetica Pragensia, 2*, 109–128. https://doi.org/10.14712/24646830.2019.21

Sonderegger, M. (2015). Trajectories of voice onet time in spontaneous speech on reality TC. *Proceedings of the 18th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences.*

Stoehr, A., Benders, T., van Hell, J. G., & Fikkert, P. (2017). Second language attainment and first language attrition: The case of VOT in. immersed Dutch-German late bilinguals. *Second Language Research, 33*(4). https://doi.org/10.1177/0267658317704261

Storkel, H. L. (2001). Learning new words: Phonotactic probability in language development. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 44*, 1321–1337.

Storkel, H. L., Armbruster, J., & Hogan, T. P. (2006). Differentiating phonotatic probability and neighborhood density in adult word learning. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 49*, 1175–1192.

Storkel, H. L., & Maekawa, J. (2005). A comparison of homonym and novel word learning: The role of phonotactic probability and word frequency. *Journal of Child Language, 32*, 827–853.

Storkel, H. L., & Rogers, M. A. (2000). The effect of probabilistic phonotactics on lexical acquisition. *Clinical Linguistics and Phonetics, 14*, 407–425.

Todd, S., Pierrehumbert, J. B., & Hay, J. B. (2019). Word frequency effects in sound change as a consequence of perceptual asymmetries: An exemplar-based model. *Cognition, 185*, 1–20.

Vitevitch, M. S. (1997). The neighborhood characteristic of malapropisms. *Language and Speech, 40*, 211–228.

Vitevitch, M. S., Armbruster, J., & Chu, S. (2004). Sublexical and lexical representations in speech production: Effects of phonotactic probability and onset density. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition, 30*, 1–16.

Vitevitch, M. S., & Luce, P. A. (1998). When words compete: Levels of processing in perception of spoken words. *Psychological Science, 9*, 325–329.

Vitevitch, M. S., & Luce, P. A. (1999). Probabilistic phonotactics and neighborhood activation in spoken word recognition. *Journal of Memory & Language, 40*, 374–408.

Vitevitch, M. S., & Sommers, M. (2003). The facilitative influence of phonological similarity and neighborhood frequency in speech production. *Memory & Cognition, 31*, 491–504.

Vogel, A. P., Maruff, P., Snyder, P. J., & Mundt, J. C. (2009). Standardization of pitch range setting in voice acoustic analysis. *Behavior Research Methods, 41*, 318–324.

Watt, D., & Yurkova, J. (2007). Voice onset time and the Scottish vowel length rule in Aberdeen English. *Proceedings of the 16th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences*, 1521–1524.

Weber, A., & Cutler, A. (2006). First-language phonotactics in second-language listening. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 119*(1), 597–607.

Whiteside, S. P., Hanson, A., & Cowell, P. E. (2004). Hormones and temporal components of speech: Sex differences and effects of menstrual cyclicity on speech. *Neuroscience Letters, 367*(1), 44–47.

Witzel, N., Witzel, J., & Choi, Y. (2013). The locus of the masked onset priming effect: Evidence from Korean. *The Mental Lexicon, 8*, 339–352.

Eva Maria Luef, Pia Resnik

Phonotaktische Wahrscheinlichkeiten und subsilbische Segmentation im Fremdsprachenerwerb

Zuammenfassung

Es ist bekannt, dass hohe phonotaktische Wahrscheinlichkeiten das Erlernen von Wörtern in der Erstsprache erleichtern. Die vorliegende Studie wurde konzipiert, um die Rolle phonotaktischer Wahrscheinlichkeiten beim Erlernen einer Fremdsprache zu untersuchen. Im Fokus standen österreichische und koreanische Englischlernende. Gegenstand der Untersuchung waren zwei Hypothesen, die mit phonotaktischen Frequenzeffekten in Zusammenhang stehen: (1) Hochfrequente Segmente haben tiefer verwurzelte phonetische Repräsentationen mit automatisierten Aussprachemustern, was das phonetische Lernen von homophonen Segmenten erschwert; (2) Hochfrequente Segmente sind mit einer höheren phonetischen Variabilität in der Erstsprache verbunden, was das phonetische Lernen in einer Fremdsprache erleichtern kann. Darüber hinaus wurde der Ort der Phonem-/Bigramm-Frequenzeffekte in Bezug auf die links- und rechtsverzweigte Silbenstruktur im Deutschen und Koreanischen analysiert. Dabei wurde festgestellt, dass die Nähe zur englischen Voice Onset Time mit den Phonem-/Bigramm-Frequenzen in der Erstsprache korreliert, allerdings variierten die Ergebnisse je nach Lernergruppe. Die subsilbische Segmentation der Erstsprache erwies sich ebenfalls als maßgebender Faktor. Die Studie stützt sich auf die Forschung zu Frequenzeffekten und kombiniert deren Grundannahme mit dem phonetischen Lernen in einer Fremdsprache. Die Ergebnisse zeigen einen engen Zusammenhang zwischen den statistischen Wahrscheinlichkeiten der Erstsprache und dem phonetischen Lernen in einer Fremdsprache.

Schlüsselwörter: Österreichisches Deutsch, Englisch als Fremdsprache (EaF), Frequenzverteilung, Koreanisch, subsilbische Segmentation

Appendix Table A1

Carrier sentences with sentence-initial plosives/bigrams

1. Touch screens are very useful nowadays.
2. Buffalos are large animals.
3. Gardening can be fun.
4. Tellers have to work long hours.
5. Gettysburg is a town in Pennsylvania.
6. Desk jobs can be boring.
7. Puff adders are very dangerous.
8. Tummy ache in little kids should not be underestimated.
9. Beavers live in lakes and rivers.
10. Gum ruins your teeth.

11. Cupboards in the kitchen need to be fixed.
12. Deans of colleges have to work long hours.
13. Pack horses have to be very strong.
14. Cats are active at night.
15. Gills of fish can look different ways.
16. Customs is an agency responsible for collecting tariffs at the airport.
17. Pucks are the balls of ice hockey.
18. Death by car accident.
19. Pictures of Tom can be found everywhere in this house.
20. Text writing is a central feature of this class.
21. Garry is his first name.
22. Bathrooms are green nowadays.
23. Tusks of elephants can be quite long.
24. Battles of World War 2 included the one at Normandy.
25. Duffel bags are convenient for travelling.
26. Passion for sports runs in my family.
27. Kitties are little cats.
28. Dish washers are too expensive for me.
29. Kerosene is fuel for jet engines and lamps.
30. Geese can swim.
31. Bees make honey.
32. Dust gathers easily in the corners of apartments.
33. Bats live in hollow trees.
34. Tim is my brother.
35. Peanuts can be bad for your health.
36. Dance balls are old-fashioned.
37. Custard recipes are typically milk-based.
38. Buck is his nickname.
39. Deals in the business world are hard to make.
40. Gifts are given for Christmas.
41. Tea ceremonies are known from Japan.
42. Guesswork is the process of making a guess when you do not know all the facts.
43. Pumpkins are my favorite vegetable.
44. Dusk is the time before the sun rises.
45. Buddy systems for language learning are a great invention.
46. Gut microbes are important for your health.
47. Pieces of the cake are in his hair.
48. Cutlery can be bought at the supermarket.
49. Tins have to be recycled.

50. Pillows can be expensive in this store.
51. Geckoes are little reptiles.
52. Deserts are defined as dry lands.
53. ‘Pancake-House’ is open today.
54. Kings of England.
55. Buns for burgers can be very soft.
56. Guns are used for killing people.
57. Punch contains a lot of sugar.
58. Teak wood comes from the rainforest.
59. Bundles of joy.
60. Guests are not welcome at my house.
61. Pills are generally prescribed by your doctor.
62. Differences in opinion should not be expressed.
63. Punctuation marks need to be inserted.
64. Telegrams are not used anymore nowadays.
65. Chemicals in your clothes are bad for your skin.
66. Bishops work for the church.
67. Tussles should be avoided!
68. Cans have to be recycled.
69. Bills just keep piling up.
70. Gutters can be found on the street.
71. Ducks live in lakes and ponds.
72. Tennis players need to have strong muscles in their arms.
73. Cups you can find in the upper left shelf.
74. Pepper can be spicy.
75. Duds are expensive to buy.
76. “Killerbird” is the name of a movie.
77. Ticks carry lots of diseases.
78. Pets are not allowed in the apartments.
79. Kids have to go to school.
80. Dill is an herb used for Italian cooking.
81. Beach houses were affected by the hurricane.
82. Tests will not be written this semester.
83. Gears in the car are for shifting.
84. Banks reliably store your money.
85. Decks of cards.
86. Kiss for you, kiss for me.

Appendix Table A2

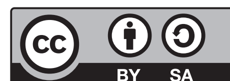
Corpora (T = TIMIT, TAL = This American Life), carrier sentences, and speaker information of American speakers

Nbr.	Bigram	Corpus	Sentence	Nbr. of speakers (m, f)	Mean speaker age
1	b + ɑ, ʌ, ɒ	T	Barb's gold bracelet was a graduation present.	1, 1	31
2		T	Bob found more clams at the ocean's edge.	1, 0	28
3		T	Bob papered over the living room murals.	4, 1	34.6
4		T	Barb burned paper and leaves in a big bonfire.	3, 3	29.8
5		T	Butterscotch fudge goes well with vanilla ice cream.	1, 0	30
6	b + e, ɛ, æ	T	Bagpipes and bongos are musical instruments.	5, 2	31.7
7		T	Beverages are made from seeds the world over.	1, 0	27
8		T	Basketball can be an entertaining sport.	3, 3	29.8
9	b + i, ɪ	T	Beer, generally fermented from barley, is an old alcoholic beverage.	1, 0	27
10		T	Biblical scholars argue history.	3, 4	25.3
11		TAL	Beers are $2.50.	1, 0	40
12	d + ɑ, ʌ, ɒ	T	Ducks have webbed feet and colorful feathers.	7, 0	35.1
13	d + e, ɛ, æ	T	Death reminds man of his sins.	0, 1	24
14		T	Dances alternated with sung or spoken verses.	0, 1	35
15		TAL	Dad, are you doing OK?	0, 1	41
16		TAL	Dad, I'm so sorry I always used to say you were stinky.	0, 1	41
17		TAL	Dad?	1, 0	50
18		TAL	Dan was born in South Bend in 1946, same year as the club.	1, 0	40
19		TAL	Dan told me he thinks that it wasn't what Obama said.	0, 1	39

20	d + i, ɪ	T	Differences were related to social, economic, and educational backgrounds.	0, 1	25
21		TAL	Deanna got a postcard of him that year when her family went to Universal.	0, 1	33
22		TAL	Deanna called her Aunt Rose from the basement, distressed.	0, 1	33
23		TAL	Dishwasher Pete, a real live dishwasher.	1, 0	38
24		TAL	Dish out of water.	1, 0	38
25		TAL	Dishwashers are invisible to most restaurant customers.	1, 0	30
26	g + ɑ, ʌ, ɒ	T	Gus saw pine trees and redwoods on his walk through Sequola National forest.	4, 3	35.7
27	g + e, ɛ, æ	TAL	Gamblers in Dixon's lab will inevitably say that the near misses are closer to a win than a loss.	0, 1	43
28		TAL	Gambling's wrong.	1, 0	55
29		TAL	Gary did not want to become a football player.	1, 0	60
30		TAL	Gary is a comedian today.	1, 0	60
31		TAL	Gary, they will kill you.	1, 0	49
32		TAL	Ghetto hoochie mama.	1, 1	27
33	g + i, ɪ	TAL	Geese were on the other side of this area when I was talking.	1, 0	42
34		TAL	Geese are nasty.	0, 1	64
35		TAL	Geeks move in.	1, 0	38
36		TAL	Geese are laying.	1, 0	56
37	p + ɑ, ʌ, ɒ	T	Publicity and notoriety go hand in hand.	3, 3	25.5
38		T	Palm oil protects the surfaces of steel sheets before they are plated with tin.	1, 0	44
39		T	Pa don't care about the kid.	0, 1	26
40	p + e, ɛ, æ	T	Penguins live near the icy Antarctic.	5, 2	30.5
41		T	Pam gives driving lessons on Thursdays.	1, 2	40
42	p + i, ɪ	T	Pizzerias are convenient for a quick lunch.	5, 2	32.8
43		T	People never live forever.	1, 0	25
44	t + ɑ, ʌ, ɒ	T	Tugboats are capable of hauling huge loads.	5, 2	28.1
45		T	Todd placed top priority on getting his bike fixed.	6, 1	29

46	t + e, ɛ, æ	T	Technical writers can abbreviate in bibliographies.	6, 1	29.7
47		T	Tetanus could be avoided by pouring warm turpentine over a wound.	0, 1	27
48	t + i, ɪ	T	Tim takes Sheila to see movies twice a week.	2, 5	32
49		T	Teaching guides are included with each record.	0, 1	26
50	k + ɑ, ʌ, ɒ	T	Carl lives in a lively home.	7, 0	30.8
51		T	Cottage cheese with chives is delicious.	4, 2	26.5
52		T	Coffee is grown on steep, jungle-like slopes in temperate zones.	4, 3	29.2
53	k + e, ɛ, æ	T	Calcium makes bones and teeth strong.	4, 3	37.1
54		T	Castor oil, made from castor beans, has gone out of style as a medicine.	1, 0	45
55		T	Cattle which died from them winter storms were referred to as the winter kill.	0, 1	28
56	k + i, ɪ	T	Kindergarten children decorate their classrooms for all holidays.	6, 1	34.4

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition
vol. 9 (1), 2023, pp. 1/23
https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.11512



Zuzana Nováková
University of Prešov in Prešov, Slovakia

https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1475-6987

Making Students Responsible for Grammar Learning: A Report on a Learner-centered Technique Aimed at Accuracy

Abstract

Learner-centered approaches to learning and teaching alongside education for sustainable development (ESD) emphasize the education of engaged and active global citizens (UNESCO, 2017). The development of students' reflective skills and metacognitive strategies is the center of this study that aims at investigating the learner language of a group of adult learners at an upper-intermediate level. It sets out to investigate to what extent learners are able to notice and correct their errors after reflecting on their spoken production. Moreover, it seeks to examine the students' perception of their self-reflection and their attitude towards using speaking tasks for grammar learning. Comparative error analysis showed that the participants were able to amend 34.6% of total errors. These were made mainly in noun phrases (30% of total errors in Task 1 and 31% in Task 3) and verb phrases (40% of total errors in both tasks). Although no general conclusions could be drawn, the results seem to suggest that after critical, evidence-based reflection, the participants were able to notice and correct some errors, namely, in determination and the use of the past simple. The results of the survey analysis showed that all participants reported on an improved awareness of the gaps in their interlanguage, and all of them considered speaking tasks beneficial to grammar development. The study indicates that carefully planned, repeated speaking tasks might be helpful for learners' language processing, consolidation of their grammatical knowledge and the improvement of their reflection skills and metacognitive strategies.

Keywords: grammar, error analysis, repeated speaking tasks, learner autonomy, metacognitive strategies, learner-centered approach

Learner-centered Approach to Teaching

"At the core of present-day thinking on language teaching lies the idea of learner-centeredness, which is broadly understood […] as a focus on learners and learning in language and teaching, as opposed to a focus on language and instruction" (Benson, 2012, p. 30). The idea of making students actively involved in the learning process and be responsible for their own learning is not new. It started in the 1970s and 1980s (Nunan, as cited in Benson, 2012, p. 31) and was influenced by the development of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics (Ellis, as cited in Benson 2012, p. 31). Benson (2012) points out that the term learner-centered approach to teaching covers "humanistic education and communicative language teaching" (p. 31). The latter approach with its focus on learners and their communicative competence is considered a norm in the field of language teaching (Straková, 2013). Educators are well aware of the fact that learners with different learning styles, educational needs, beliefs about and attitudes towards learning grasp concepts most effectively if they are actively engaged in a learning process. Thus, teachers try to combine different methods to create favorable conditions for learning and teaching. Taking into consideration individual learning styles and also a local and broad socio-cultural context, they make an effort to select the most optimal method of teaching, usually by applying an eclectic approach. In addition to that, they make an effort to help learners develop their autonomy, which will help them function independently in real-life situations. The task is by no means easy and requires a teacher's mastery, knowledge, experience and continuous professional development, but it is definitely worth the effort.

The significance of autonomous learners who actively participate in the learning process is also emphasized and broadly discussed by UNESCO (2017) within its agenda for sustainable education supporting and promoting learner-centered approaches that "require learners to reflect on their knowledge and learning processes to manage and monitor them" (p. 55). Alongside modern pedagogy, education for sustainable development highlights the development of knowledge and competencies that would enhance learners' development as responsible individuals, able to make informed choices and decisions in favor of sustainable progress (UNESCO, 2017).

Teachers can encourage learners' autonomy and the development of transferable skills also in the context of English language learning and teaching. One way of doing it is to promote the development of learners' strategies, that is, "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations" (Oxford, 1990, p. 8). Influenced by the development in cognitive psychology, self-regulated theory and autonomy concept (Oxford, 2011,

pp. 168–169), strategy theory and research started to influence the pedagogy of language teaching in the 1990s (pp. 168–169) and they have been continuing ever since then. Although strategy theory and research are still in progress and widely debated by experts (Griffiths & Oxford, 2013), their impact on language pedagogy seems undeniable. Teachers worldwide appear to be encouraged to enhance students' strategy development (Oxford, 2017) for the achievement of learners' goals and success in language learning.

Among other strategies, metacognitive strategies play a significant role in the learner-centered method. They help learners arrange and plan their learning as well as evaluate it (Oxford, 2017; Straková, 2013). These strategies can be developed by creating opportunities and tasks to practice them. They are part of higher-order thinking skills (Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT, n.d.) that are necessary for building up critical thinking competency and for promoting learner autonomy. This paper reports on a technique promoting the development of students' metacognitive strategies in a grammar course.

It has always been the author's passion to promote deep learning, learners' self-regulation and autonomy in her teaching practice. A grammar course created an opportunity for the enhancement of self-monitoring and self-correction within the context of grammar learning and teaching. The development of these strategies as well as students' self-reflection was encouraged in the task focused on language use because such a task enabled learners to apply learnt grammar rules and concepts in a situation simulating a real-life scenario.

A Grammar Teaching Technique

The role of grammar instruction in English language teaching has been extensively discussed for decades (Thornbury, 2005; Brown, 2007). Currently, researchers and teachers are aware of the significance of explicit and implicit instruction (Thornbury, 2005; Fotos & Ellis, as cited in Brown, 2007; Ellis, 2009; Oxford, 2017). Practitioners tend to select and combine various methods lying on the continuum between the explicit and implicit focus on form, taking into consideration learners' styles and broader situational and cultural contexts (Thornbury, 2005; Ellis, 2006; Oxford, 2017). Based on current research (Thornbury, 2019; Ellis, 2006) and the author's personal experience in teaching grammar to adults, the combination of explicit and implicit instruction seems to be an effective way of developing students' grammar.

An intensive grammar course with prevailing explicit instruction (both deductive and inductive) and controlled or semi-controlled practice was enriched with short communicative tasks. These were performed in class and outside it and thus provided the learners with more opportunities for productive language practice. Communicative speaking tasks enabled them to use language in a new

situation. Moreover, they created space for promoting the development of the students' metacognitive strategies.

Short speaking tasks were designed to induce the linguistic forms attended to in class, and they were done during the lessons. However, one major speaking activity, a repeated task, was performed outside class. It was selected because of being cognitively less demanding and enabling learners to focus more on the structures used (Bygate, 1998; Thornbury, 2005; Kim & Tracy-Ventura, 2012). The students did not need to go over the formulation process again (Levelt, 1995). The students' output served as input since they reflected on their production and noticed appropriate and inappropriate use of grammatical forms. This conscious attention to the input activating the students' explicit knowledge of grammar made them compare their performance with their interlanguage (Truman, 2008). The cognitive comparison helped them notice the gaps in their performance, and they were encouraged to make necessary modifications to it. Needless to say, learners can notice only those mistakes that are "within their ability" (Truman, 2008, p. 265); and their ability to self-correct is determined by their knowledge and ability to self-monitor and self-regulate their learning (Truman, 2008).

During the repeated speaking task, self-monitoring and self-reflection were encouraged. Reflection enabled the learners to think about their previous experiences and search for insights about themselves, "their behaviours, values or knowledge gained" (Desjarlais & Smith, n.d., p. 3). It also helped them become more aware of their interlanguage and the gaps in it.

To account for the mistakes beyond the learner's knowledge (Truman, 2008), individualized feedback was provided to the students by their instructor. The analysis of the students' language made it possible for the instructor to identify students' errors and focus on the most problematic areas more effectively. It also enabled the instructor to suggest treatment tailored to a particular student's needs. Being inspired to incorporate this kind of task into grammar lessons by the Cambridge Assessment English webinar (Cambridge English, 2018), I was interested in investigating to what extent the students are able to correct and self-assess their oral production in terms of accuracy. Moreover, I sought to examine the students' perception of self-reflection and their opinion on using speaking tasks for grammar development.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find out to what extent the students were able to self-correct their oral production in terms of accuracy. It also examined the learners' perception of self-reflection and their opinion on using speaking tasks for grammar development.

Based on the primary and secondary aim, the following research questions were formulated:

Question 1: To what extent are students able to self-correct errors in their oral production?

Question 2: What is the students' perception of self-reflection and self-correction?

Question 3: What is the students' attitude towards speaking tasks used for grammar development?

Methodology

To answer the research questions, qualitative and quantitative methods were employed. A method of error analysis (Ellis & Burkhuizen, 2005) was used to address the primary research question. It was employed to identify and categorize the students' errors in a repeated speaking task.

The repeated speaking task consisted of three parts. Part 1 (Task 1) was a short student's talk that was recorded and submitted following the instructions specified in the procedure section. The second part (Task 2) was a short reflection task in which the students were asked to listen to their talks, evaluate them in terms of accuracy as well as other aspect of speaking skills they themselves considered important and to set personal goals for the improvement of their talks. The students' reflective tasks were also recorded and submitted. The last part (Task 3) was a recording of an improved talk. Task 3 differed from Task 1 in that it included the students' improvements of their talks.

The identified and categorized errors in Task 1 and Task 3 were quantified and compared. The comparative analysis was used to determine the percentage of the errors the students were able to notice and self-correct.

Following the procedure proposed by Corder (1975) and elaborated by Ellis and Burkhuizen (2005), several steps were taken to analyze learner language. First, the recorded talks Task 1 (the first narrative) and Task 3 (an improved narrative) were transcribed. An AS-unit (Analysis of Speech Unit) proposed by Foster et al. (2000) was used as a basic unit for analyzing students' output. Foster et al. (2000, p. 365) define an AS-unit "as a single speaker's utterance consisting of an independent clause or sub-clausal unit, together with any subordinate clause(s) associated with either." Then students' errors were identified and reconstructed, and a record of them was kept. In the third stage, they were categorized based on linguistic and surface structure taxonomy proposed by Ellis and Burkhuizen (2005). The linguistic description of errors was based on grammatical categories elaborated by Quirk et al. (1985). The surface structure taxonomy comprised the following categories: omission, selection, addition, and misordering (Corder, 1975). It is based on the four kinds of errors that learners

tend to make when producing target forms (Ellis & Burkhuizen, 2005). They may add an unnecessary form, omit a certain element, select an inappropriate form or put words into incorrect order (Ellis & Burkhuizen, 2005).

Although it is beyond the scope of grammar, the category of a mispronounced word was also used to identify pronunciation inaccuracies. These were included in the analysis due to their significance for comprehensibility of the students' short talks and due to the fact that students themselves regarded them to be of great importance.

Table 1 shows a sample account of an error identified in the excerpt from the narrative produced by S8:

2 |Since there are not direct flights from Slovakia :: we had to fly from Vienna to Amsterdam and from there to St. Petersburg. |

3 |On the way back to Amsterdam after spending 11 days there :: beautiful city by the way, :: there was a terrible storm|

Table 1

A Sample Record of an Error

Error	Reconstruction	Surface structure description	Linguistic description
…beautiful city…	…a beautiful city …	omission	noun phrase: determiners, the indefinite article – a

To measure the length of learners' narratives, the number of words and AS-units was calculated using MS word functions and a manual calculation. The results and findings of the qualitative and quantitative error analysis are presented, interpreted and discussed in the respective sections of this paper.

A non-standardized questionnaire was employed to tackle the secondary research questions. To examine the students' perception of speaking tasks used for consolidating their grammar, an anonymous end-of-the term survey was conducted at the last lesson. The survey consisted of 14 questions, the first five of which aimed at the general evaluation of the course and the remaining nine focused on the assessment of the technique employed at grammar lessons, namely, the use of a repeated speaking task promoting self-reflection and self-monitoring (see Appendix 1). Questions 6 and 7 paid attention to the usefulness of the speaking tasks for improving grammar. Questions 8–11 investigated students' perception of reflection, and questions 12–14 concentrated on students' opinions on using productive skills for developing their grammar. All nine questions in the second part of the survey were closed ones. Questions 7, 11, 12, and 14 required respondents to choose from Likert-scale items while questions 8, 9, 10, and 13 were yes/no questions. Question 6 was a yes/no question requiring a short explanation. The results of the quantitative analysis

of the survey are presented in graphs and discussed in the section below. For the purpose of this study, only the selected items were analyzed.

Participants

The participants of the study were first-year undergraduates undertaking an English language teacher-training program. The study group was multinational with Slovak and Ukrainian students and one Polish participant. Nineteen students in the group had different linguistic backgrounds and various language levels (ranging from a lower to higher upper-intermediate level).

The talks of two students were excluded from the analysis because one student's repeated task was completely different, and the other learner was a student with special educational needs. Seventeen samples of learner language were analyzed. However, 18 learners submitted the questionnaire.

Procedure

The study was carried out at a higher education institution during one term. As a compulsory part of their study program, the students took a grammar course. They had a ninety-minute class once a week. During 13 weeks, they received explicit instruction that was combined with short speaking tasks. The practice of target language structures proceeded from traditional, controlled exercises to free productive tasks. Doing the tasks, the students had the opportunity to test their hypotheses about language structures (Ellis, 2004). Mini speaking tasks were performed in class, except for one task that was done outside of class. The tasks in class were monitored and corrective feedback was provided to the students depending on the teacher's capacity. The repeated speaking task performed at home was an extensive task consisting of several stages. It was done outside of class to engage the students in the process of reflection and self-evaluation without the instructor's intervention. At the very beginning of the course, the students and the teacher agreed on the components of a speaking performance that they considered crucial for successful communication. Among them, the following components were identified: accuracy (grammar and vocabulary), pronunciation, and organization.

The repeated speaking task was administered in Moodle, an educational platform widely used at a given institution. The task itself consisted of three parts. Firstly, the students were asked to tell an anecdote that was either invented or true. They could choose from a list of topics or they could come up with their own story. The speaking task targeted the usage of past tenses. The instructions included a simple story plan to be elaborated on by the learners.

The first stage was set in the third week of the course and the learners had a week to submit the story. They were instructed to plan a short talk (maximum two minutes), record it using their mobile phones and upload it to Moodle. During the planning stage, they could make notes but they were asked not to write down the whole sentences. Nonetheless, it was beyond the researcher's control how they fulfilled the task.

After a two-week break, they moved through stages 2 and 3. In the second stage, they were asked to listen to their story, reflect on it and make notes about how it went. They were supposed to focus mainly on the accuracy in their output as well as on any other components of the speaking production they chose to focus on. After that, they were asked to set their personal goals for improvement. Their reflection was also recorded and uploaded to Moodle. In the final stage of the task, the learners were instructed to record their improved talks paying attention to accuracy and the selected component of the speaking production. The second and third stages were completed in the course of two weeks.

The submitted assignments were listened to, and the students were provided with explicit feedback on inaccuracies that occurred in their improved talk as well as on the completion of their personal goals. In addition to that, the analysis of students' language performance in terms of errors was carried out. The analysis with individualized feedback served pedagogical purposes and was meant to help students raise awareness of their interlanguage. Self-reflection helped learners critically evaluate their short speeches based on evidence (provided by audio recordings) and gave them opportunities to get to know their strengths and weaknesses in speaking English. It also made them responsible for their learning and empowered them to set their own personal goals for improving their speaking performance.

The samples of learner language were produced by upper-intermediate learners of English not sharing the same first language. They had the form of an oral planned narrative. The two samples are referred to as Task 1 and Task 3 in this paper. Task 1 was performed first and Task 3, an improved talk, was performed after the students' reflection (Task 2).

Results of the Error Analysis

The following part of the paper describes the results of the error analysis. It begins with looking at the measures of length, and it goes on to present the analysis results based on the surface structure and linguistic description.

As Table 2 shows, the length of the students' talks varied. The two narratives produced by two different speakers (S15 and S8) contained 24 AS-units. The shortest narrative comprised 5 AS-units, and it was produced by one speaker (S16). On average, the learners' spoken turns consisted of 14 AS-units

and 221 words in Task 1. While in Task 3, they were more concise (on average 13 AS-units and 213 words). In the first task, 44% of total AS-units were erroneous, while in the repeated task 40% contained errors. It seems that the learners' conscious effort to attend to inaccuracies in their talks and to think about their own speaking performance relying on the clear evidence of their speech (in the reflection task) as well as reduced pressure of a repeated task helped them improve their accuracy only to a small extent.

Table 2

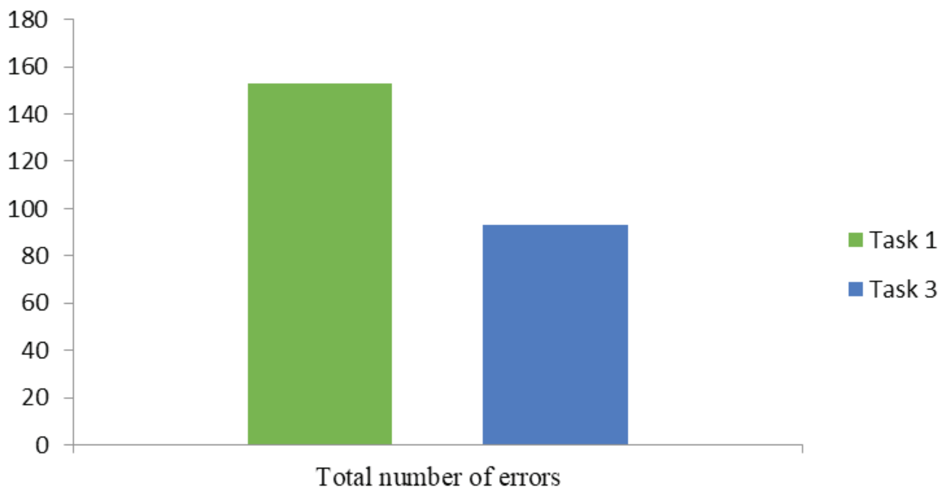
Task 1 and Task 3 – Number of AS-Units

ID	Words T 1	AS-units T 1	AS-units with errors T 1	Words T 3	AS-units T 3	AS-units with errors T3
Total	3217	221	98	3156	213	86
Average	201	14	6	197	13	5

The total number of errors identified and reconstructed in Task 1 and 3 is displayed in Figure 1. As can be seen from it, the number of identified errors has fallen by almost 40%. The reduction might have been caused by a combination of factors. Doing the repeated task, the students slightly reformulated their narratives and made them shorter. Moreover, they were able to notice and to correct some of their inaccuracies.

Figure 1.

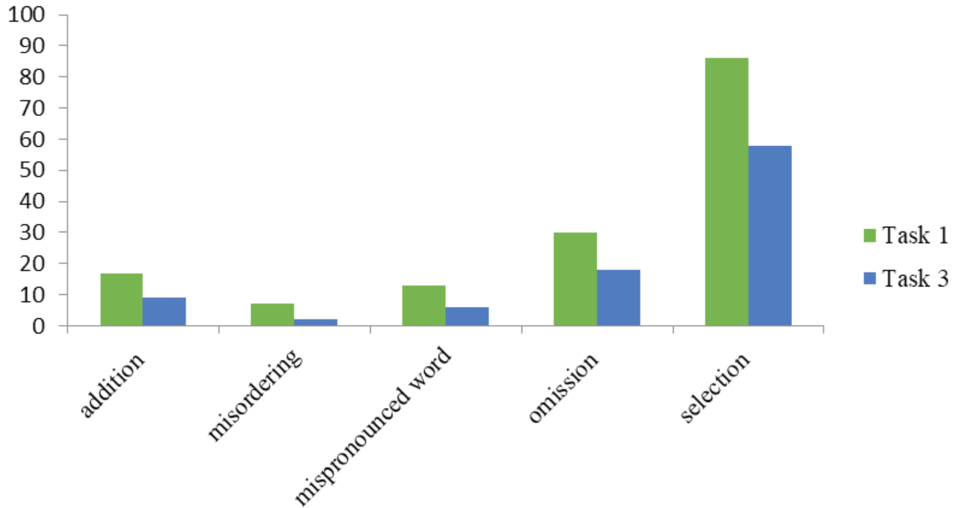
Total Number of Errors



As far as error categories are concerned, as given above, errors were analyzed according to the surface structure and linguistic description. During the process of coding, a wider context of errors was taken into consideration, which

helped the researcher reconstruct utterances. An account of errors identified according to the surface structure and their breakdown is shown in Figure 2 which compares Task 1 and Task 3.

Figure 2.
Surface Structure Description of Errors



It can be seen from the data in the graph that students most frequently modified a target form by selecting an inappropriate structure. This type of error accounts for 56.2% of total errors in Task 1 and 62.4% of total errors in Task 3. On the other hand, they seemed to have the least difficulty with appropriate word order. Such a classification of errors is superficial and does not reveal much about the nature of errors (Corder, 1975); however, a more detailed linguistic description of errors revealed the problematic areas discussed in the section below.

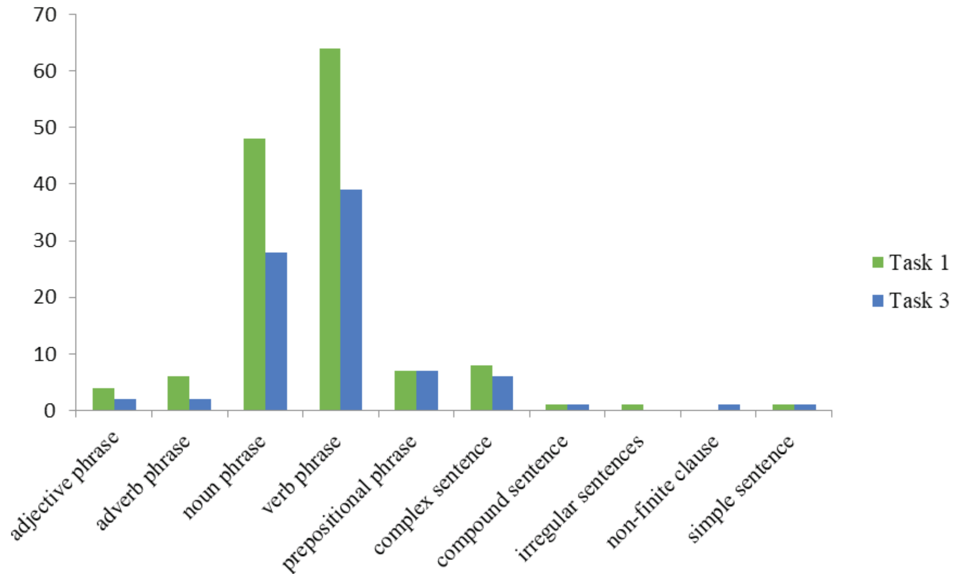
Within the context of the narrative, the following broad categories of errors were identified: an adjective phrase, an adverb phrase, a noun phrase, a verb phrase, a prepositional phrase; a simple, complex, compound sentence; a non-finite clause and irregular sentences. These categories were further broken down according to grammatical categories that learners failed to produce appropriately. Due to the complexity of errors made, certain broader categories will be dealt with separately and more detailed attention will be paid to the most frequent errors.

Figure 3 compares the frequency of errors in Task 1 and Task 3 according to the linguistic description. It can be seen from the graph below that erroneous noun phrases and verb phrases were the most frequent in both tasks. Inaccurate verb phrases accounted for over 40% of total errors in Task 1 and 3 and inaccurate noun phrases accounted for over 30% of total errors in Task 1 and 31% in Task 3. Another area that seemed problematic for the students was

related to complex sentences and wrongly used prepositions. Given the nature of the speaking task, it seems natural that students made errors in noun and verb phrases bearing the main meaning of utterances.

Figure 3.

Breakdown of Errors According to Linguistic Description



If we now turn to errors in noun phrases, we can see from Table 3 that students made the most errors in determination in both Tasks.

Table 3

Linguistic Description of Errors – Noun Phrases

Linguistic description of errors – noun phrase	Task 1	Task 3
Noun phrase: determiner (which)	1	
Noun phrase: determiners, the definite article – the	17	8
Noun phrase: determiners, the indefinite article – a	12	8
Noun phrase: determiners, the indefinite article – an		1
Noun phrase: determiners, the zero article	7	4
Noun phrase: determiner (possessive)		1
Noun phrase: head (noun)	5	3
Noun phrase: head (pronoun)	3	2
Noun phrase: modifier (adjective)	2	1
Noun phrase: postmodifier	1	
Grand Total	48	28

A more detailed account of errors (Table 3A) revealed that the participants either omitted articles (the definite or the indefinite one), or they selected an inappropriate one. In four cases, they added the definite or indefinite article in a noun phrase where the zero one should have been used. The comparison of Task 1 and Task 3 indicates that the number of errors in Task 3 decreased. The account of corrected errors showed that the learners were able to identify and to correct some wrong usage of articles.

Table 3A

Errors in Noun Phrases – A Detailed Account

Linguistic description of errors – noun phrase	Task 1	Task 3
Noun phrase: determiner (which)	**1**	
selection	1	
Noun phrase: determiners, the definite article – the	**17**	**8**
omission	15	7
selection	2	1
Noun phrase: determiners, the indefinite article – a	**12**	**8**
omission	11	7
selection	1	1
Noun phrase: determiners, the indefinite article – an		**1**
selection		1
Noun phrase: determiners, the zero article	**7**	**4**
addition	4	1
omission		1
selection	3	2

Concerning verb phrases, the types of errors are shown in Table 4. Among the most common errors were errors in tense usage, more precisely in the past simple. There were some incorrect past perfect forms too, but these were much less frequent. The second area that appeared to be problematic was the use of inappropriate verbs to express a particular idea. This means that the learners used an appropriate verb form of an inappropriate verb, or they failed to express their idea fully by omitting the object of a transitive verb. Among other errors were faulty uses of infinitives, non-finite verb phrases, modal verbs, and phrasal verbs.

Table 4

Linguistic Description of Errors – Verb Phrases

Verb phrase	Task 1	Task 3
Verb phrase: tense, future seen from the past	1	
Verb phrase: infinitive	1	1
Verb phrase: non-finite verb form, infinitive	1	
Verb phrase: non-finite verb form, infinitive (transitive verb)	1	2
Verb phrase: non-finite verb form, negative infinitive	1	
Verb phrase: non-finite, infinitive	1	1
Verb phrase: non-finite, the -ing participle	1	
Verb phrase: non-finite, compound, the past participle	1	1
Verb phrase: past simple, modal verb (ability)	1	2
Verb phrase: past simple, modal verb (duty)	1	
Verb phrase: past simple, regular verb	4	2
Verb phrase: phrasal verb	2	
Verb phrase: tense, past perfect, irregular verb	1	
Verb phrase: tense, past perfect, regular verb	1	1
Verb phrase: tense, past simple, irregular verb	15	14
Verb phrase: tense, past simple, modal verb	1	
Verb phrase: tense, past simple, regular verb	16	7
Verb phrase: tense, present simple	2	1
Verb phrase: transitive verb	3	3
Verb phrase: irregular verb	9	4
Total	64	39

The last category to be dealt with in this paper is errors that learners made when producing complex sentences. The errors are summarized in Table 5. The data below show that errors related to indirect questions and speech were the most frequent ones. These were followed by adverbial if-clauses (conditional clauses) as well as clauses of purpose and wh-clauses.

Table 5

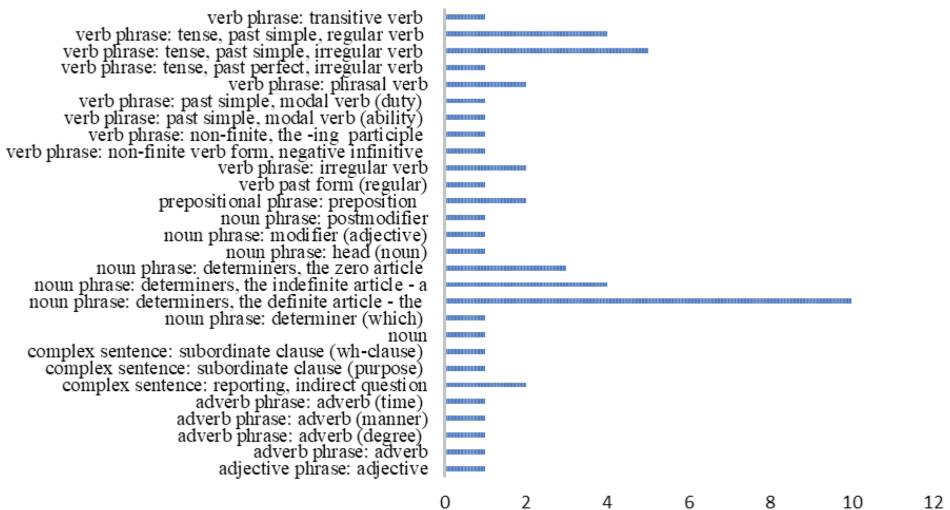
Linguistic Description – Errors in Complex Sentences

Linguistic description	Task 1	Task 3
Complex sentence: adverbial if-clauses, present tense	1	1
Complex sentence: pseudo-cleft sentence	1	
Complex sentence: reporting, indirect question	4	2
Complex sentence: reporting, indirect speech, backshifting		1
Complex sentence: subordinate clause (purpose)	1	1
Complex sentence: subordinate clause (wh-clause)	1	
Complex sentence: subordinator (condition)		1

Comparing Task 1 and Task 3, data seem to suggest that the students were able to notice and amend some of their own errors. Table 6 shows the account of the errors corrected in the repeated task. In total, the participants self-corrected 53 faulty forms (34.6 % of total errors in Task 1). They seemed to be well aware of the determination of noun phrases as their self-corrected use of articles accounted for 34% of total corrected errors. They were also able to modify some faulty verb phrases. More precisely, they noticed and modified inappropriately used tenses, namely, the past simple tense. Total corrected verb phrases accounted for 20.8% of total corrected errors.

Table 6

Overview of Corrected Errors in Task 3 According to Linguistic Description

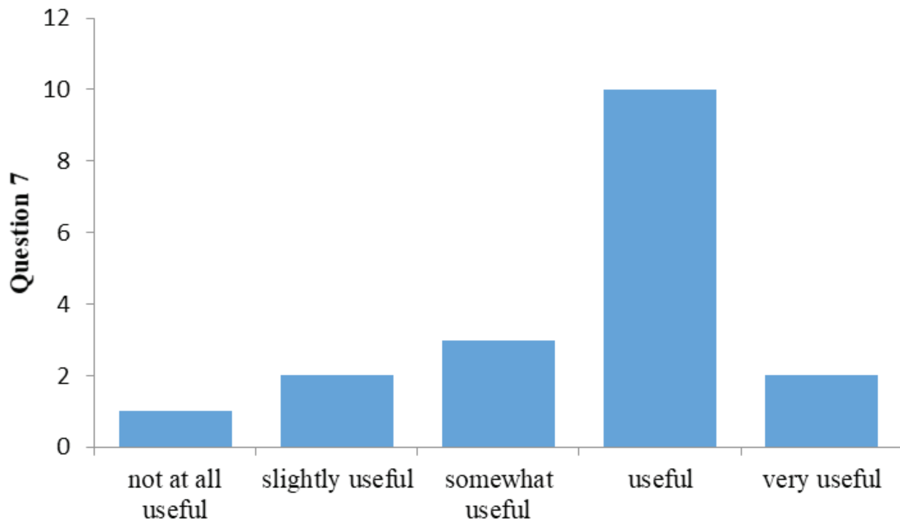


Results of the Quantitative Analysis of Students' Perception of Speaking

The results of the survey analysis showed that only 83% of the participants considered the speaking tasks helpful for improving their grammar. Three participants did not think that the tasks could be beneficial to their grammar. As Figure 4 illustrates, over half of the learners considered the speaking tasks to be either useful (56%) or very useful (11%). One participant thought they were not useful at all, and two participants considered them to be only slightly useful. Seventeen percent of the learners took a neutral stance.

Figure 4.

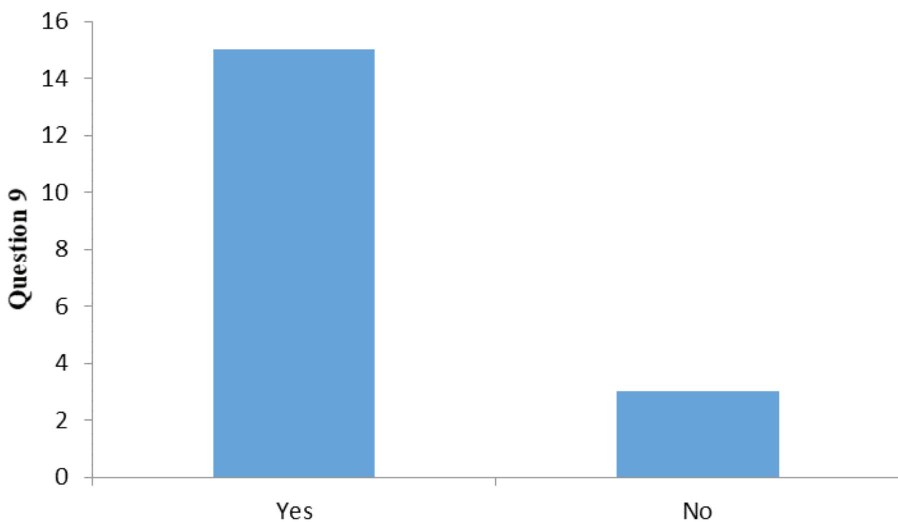
Question 7 To what extent do you think the speaking tasks were useful?



In terms of students' opinions on self-reflection, Figure 5 displays that the majority of them (83%) thought self-reflection helped them become more aware of the language structures they used. Seventeen percent did not consider it to be the case.

Figure 5.

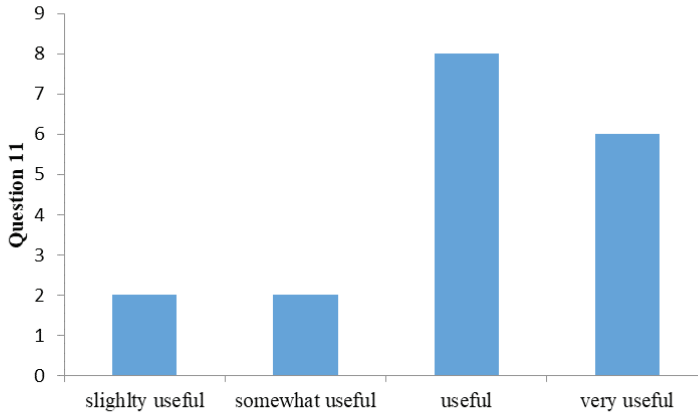
Question 9 Did the reflection on your speaking performance help you become more aware of the grammar structures you use?



Nevertheless, all the participants thought that self-reflection made them more aware of the grammar mistakes they make. As Figure 6 displays, the majority of them (77%) considered the reflection to be either useful (44%) or very useful (33%). Eleven percent of the participants believed that it was only slightly useful, and 11% took a neutral stance.

Figure 6.

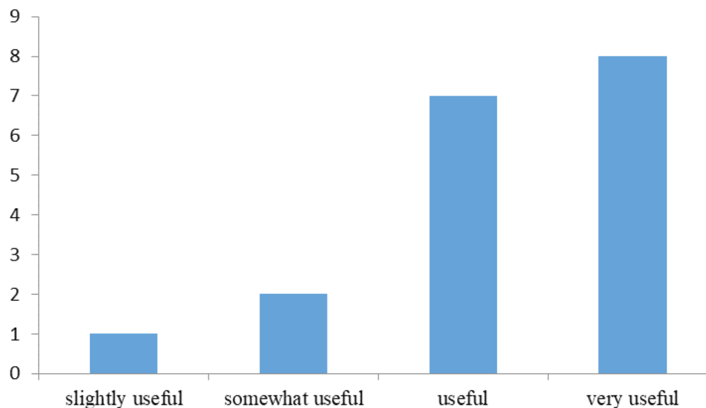
Question 9 To what extent do you think the reflection task was useful?



As for the students' opinion on using productive skills for developing grammar, all the learners believed that they were beneficial. As can be seen from Figure 7.83% regarded them to be useful or very useful. Eleven percent of the learners thought they were somewhat useful, and one participant considered them slightly useful.

Figure 7.

Question 14 To what extent are speaking and writing tasks useful in developing your grammar?



Discussion

As Ellis and Burkhuizen (2005) highlight, samples of learner language are influenced by many factors, namely, the learner, language, and production. Being aware of the multinational character of the group of learners whose samples of language were collected and analyzed, no general conclusions could be drawn. The error analysis served mainly pedagogic purposes and aimed at the identification of structures mastered by the students.

The study was designed to determine to what extent the students were able to self-correct their oral production in terms of accuracy. It also investigated the learners' perception of self-correction and their opinion on the use of speaking tasks for grammar development.

Although the overall results and findings were not encouraging, the study showed that the learners were able to amend 34.6% of the total errors they made in Task 1. Within their ability (Truman, 2008), they were able to activate the explicit knowledge of some grammar rules and to deal with problems with determination and narrative tenses. Nonetheless, more practice and language use are required before their explicit knowledge becomes fully automatized.

In addition to that, the participants were provided with the opportunity to reflect on the accuracy of their speaking performance and assess it. The reflection task played a crucial role in the whole process as it helped the students gain insights into their speaking skills. Furthermore, it enabled them to think about the content as well as the structure and form of their talk relying on the evidence provided by audio recordings. This experience in self-monitoring and self-correction facilitated the development of the students' metacognitive strategies. The students' selection of a speech component they wanted to improve affected their engagement, created a sense of ownership of their learning process and made them responsible for their goal setting. Such active involvement of the students in the learning process, activation of their higher-order thinking skills and the shift of responsibility created a unique opportunity for the promotion of the students' autonomy. Autonomous, self-directed and critically thinking learners might apply their skills not only to their grammar and language competence development but also to other areas of their lives. It is believed that more training and experience in developing learner autonomy might enhance the education of actively engaged and responsible citizens of our global world.

With respect to the questions related to the students' perception of reflection and self-correction and their attitude towards speaking tasks used for grammar development, the results seem to be ambiguous. Although all of the participants seem to believe that productive tasks are beneficial to the improvement of their grammar, one of them does not consider speaking tasks to be useful at all. Further research might shed more light and bring more clarity to this issue. More discussions with students and more experience in self-monitoring and self-

evaluating might also help students gain more confidence in these strategies. In addition, improved grammar knowledge could develop the students' ability to track their mistakes and to deal with them. One of the most encouraging results was that all the participants reported on the improved awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in English language production. This is a crucial step on the journey of improvement. Although it is just a small step, regular engagement in a reflective cycle might lead to improved achievement as well as the development of critical thinking that can be applied to other contexts. However, regular practice in a reflection and self-evaluation process is necessary (Straková & Cimermanová, 2018, p. 4).

The results of the analysis also seem to indicate that some students need more practice before mastering narrative tenses. There is also a need for further practice regarding the use of articles in English. And last but not least, more attention should be paid to more complex language structures. Different causes of errors, whether they are developmental processes or L1 interference or other ones (Ellis & Burkhuizen, 2005), and their various levels of significance made the author more confident in the inclusion of productive speaking tasks in grammar lessons. The analysis has also given the author some insight into the learner language of Slovak and Ukrainian students.

Speaking tasks intended to help learners notice the gaps in their interlanguage and to promote learner autonomy were also meant to develop their English grammar competence. It appears that the tasks together with provided feedback and students' own reflection might have an effect on the learners' grammar. The number of corrected errors seems to suggest that not all learners were able to recognize and correct their errors. The more form-focused instruction and practice is required. Nevertheless, speaking tasks including self-reflection will be used by the researcher to provide more opportunities for students' output and more experience in reflective practice.

Limitations

The major limitation of the study was the size and the multilingual character of the group, which did not allow for drawing general conclusions. The students came from various linguistic backgrounds and did not share the same L1. This affected their performance because, as current research (Thornbury, 2019; Ortega, 2015) argues, mother tongue affects learners' second language acquisition, and some mistakes tend to be typical for speakers of specific languages. Another weakness of the study is that it was conducted in a mixed-ability class, which might have affected the results of the error analysis. Furthermore, the study should have paid more attention to the causes of errors and their evaluation. Finally, the employment of other methods aimed at investigating

students' attitudes towards speaking tasks and their perception of reflection for grammar development could reveal students' deeper beliefs and reasons for their responses.

Conclusion

In summary, these findings seem to indicate that learners are able to recognize and correct some of the errors they make. More precisely, they are able to deal with the errors within the scope of their explicit knowledge. A student's retrieval of a particular grammar rule and its application to a new situation consolidates his or her knowledge and enhances its automatization. In the study, the learners were able to correct the errors related to determination, which operates differently in the students' L1 languages and the ones in the past simple tense. The results of the study cannot be generalized, however. They appear to show that repeated speaking tasks with reflection and feedback combined with explicit grammar instruction facilitate learners' awareness of their language as well as appropriate structural forms. Moreover, it is the teacher's belief that such practices could be beneficial for individual language processing and consolidation of the learners' grammatical knowledge as well as reflective skills and metacognitive strategies. Furthermore, the students' examination of recorded speech provided a perfect opportunity for gaining insight into their own interlanguage. It also enabled them to get to know themselves as foreign language speakers. Their engagement in setting goals for improvement made them active participants in the learning process, and the experience they gained strengthened their ability for self-reflection, which is a significant component of key competencies necessary for life. It is believed that with appropriate training, students will be able to transfer the required skills and strategies to other areas of their lives, which might help them become engaged and active global citizens. Thus, reflective tasks will be implemented in grammar teaching practice by the researcher. Further research could cast more light on the area of learner accuracy development and the role of reflection in it, but it is beyond the scope of this paper.

Appendix 1

End-of-Term Questionnaire Practical Grammar Date:

Dear Student,
I would like to thank you for your participation in our seminars. Thank you for all your input and your presence. I am interested in your opinion about this course as well as your attitude towards the speaking tasks. Please answer the questions below, so that I can assess this course. This is an anonymous survey. Your feedback is highly appreciated.

1. Do you think this course helped you improve your grammar?
Yes. Explain why.
No. Explain why not.

2. What do you do to improve your grammar? Write your answers below:

3. Do you think grammar exercises can help you improve your grammar (accuracy)?
Yes. Explain why.
No. Explain why not.

4. What approach to grammar presentation do you prefer? Indicate your preference below:
1. Inductive approach (students discover (induce) the grammar rules themselves, based on the examples of new language);
2. Deductive approach (a teacher explains rules, and then we practise new language structures);
3. The combination of both approaches;
4. Other. Specify.

5. Would you like to suggest any changes for this course? Please write your ideas below:

6. During the course, you were asked to do three speaking tasks. Do you think speaking tasks can help you improve your grammar?
1. Yes. Explain why.
2. No. Explain why not.

7. To what extent do you think the speaking tasks were useful?
1. Not at all useful 2. Slightly useful 3. Somewhat useful 4. Useful 5. Very useful

8. Was it easy to listen to your spoken performance and evaluate it in terms of grammatical structures?
1. Yes.
2. No.

9. Did the reflection on your speaking performance help you become more aware of the grammar structures you use?
1. Yes.
2. No.

10. Did the reflection on your speaking performance help you become more aware of the grammar mistakes you tend to make?
1. Yes.
2. No.

11. To what extent do you think the reflection task was useful?
1. Not at all useful 2. Slightly useful 3. Somewhat useful 4. Useful 5. Very useful

12. To what extent do you think you improved your speaking performance in terms of grammar structures in your repeated task?
1. Not at all 2. Slightly 3. Moderately 4. Very 5. Extremely

13. Do you think that speaking and writing tasks are useful in developing your grammar?
1. Yes.
2. No.

14. To what extent are they useful?
1. Not at all useful 2. Slightly useful 3. Somewhat useful 4. Useful 5. Very useful

References

Benson, P. (2012). Learner-Centred Teaching. In A. Burns & J. C. Richards (Authors), *The Cambridge guide to pedagogy and practice in second language teaching* (pp. 30–37). Cambridge University Press.

Brown, D. (2007). Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy (3rd ed.). Longman.

Bygate, M. (1998). Task as context for the framing, reframing and unframing of language. *System, 27*(1), 33–48. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X(98)00048-7

Cambridge Assessment English. Cambridge English (29 March 2018). *Did I say that? Speaking at B2 level* [Video]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SnXRJzpa_aI

Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT). *Revised Bloom's Taxonomy*. CELT. Retrieved June 5, 2020 from https://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/effective-teaching-practices/revised-blooms-taxonomy

Corder, S. P. (1975). Error analysis, interlanguage and second language acquisition. *Language Teaching*, 8, 201–218. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444800002822

Desjarlais, M. & Smith, P. (n.d.). A comparative analysis of reflection and self-assessment, 3–15. https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/7ec1/4fa3d09e8906c12afeebb6d163c05ba42c9f.pdf

Ellis, R. (2006). Current issues in the teaching of grammar: An SLA perspective. *TESOL Quarterly, 40*(1), 83. http://www.personal.psu.edu/kej1/APLNG_493/old_site/ellis.pdf

Ellis, R. (2009). Implicit and explicit learning, knowledge and instruction. In *Implicit and explicit knowledge in second language learning, testing and teaching*. Multilingual Matters.

Ellis, R. (2004). Principles of instructed language learning. *System, 33*(2), 209–224.

Ellis, R., & Burkhuizen, G. (2005). *Analysing learner language*. Oxford University Press.

Foster, P., Tonkyn, A., & Wigglesworth, G. (2000). Measuring spoken language: A unit for all reasons. *Applied Linguistics, 21*(3), 354–375. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/21.3.354

Griffiths, C., & Oxford, R. L. (2013). The twenty-first century landscape of language learning strategies: Introduction to this special issue. *System, 43,* 1–10. doi:10.1016/j.system.2013.12.009

Kim, Y., & Tracy-Ventura, N. (2012). The role of task repetition in L2 performance development: What needs to be repeated during task-based interaction? *System, 41*(3), 829–840. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.08.005

Levelt, W. J. M (1995). The ability to speak: From intentions to spoken words. *European Review, 3*(1), 13–25. https://www.mpi.nl/world/materials/publications/leelt/Levelt_The_Ability_to_speak_1995.pdf

Ortega, L. (2015). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Routledge.

Oxford, R. L. (2017). *Teaching and researching language learning strategies: Self-regulation in context*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Oxford, R. L. (2011). Strategies for learning a second or foreign language. *Language Teaching, 44(*2), 167–180. doi:10.1017/s0261444810000492

Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & Svartvik, J. (1985). *A comprehensive grammar of the English language.* Longman: Longman Group Limited.

Thornbury, S. (2019). *Teaching grammar to adults. Part of the Cambridge Papers in ELT series.* Cambridge University Press.
https://www.cambridge.org/us/files/7815/8106/3284/CambridgePapersInELT_TeachGrammarAdults_2019_ONLINE.pdf
Thornbury, S. (2005). *Uncovering grammar.* (2nd ed.) Macmillan Education.
The United Nations. (1987). *Report of the world commission on environment and development: Our common future.* https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf
Truman, M. (2008). Self-correction Strategies in Distance Language Learning. In S. Hurd & T. Lewis (Eds.), *Language learning strategies in independent settings*. Multilingual Matters.
Straková, Z. (2013). *Introduction to teaching English as a Foreign Language*. Vydavateľstvo Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove.
Straková, Z., & Cimermanová, I. (2018). Critical thinking development—A necessary step in higher education transformation towards sustainability. *Sustainability, 10*(10), 3366. https://doi.org/10.3390/su10103366
United Nations. (n.d.) *Education: Sustainable development knowledge platform*. United Nations. Retrieved June 10, 2020 from https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/education
United Nations. 2015. *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.* United Nations. http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2017). *Education for sustainable development goals learning objectives.* https://www.iau-hesd.net/sites/default/files/documents/247444e.pdf

Zuzana Nováková

Lernende für das Grammatiklernen verantwortlich machen: Ein Bericht über eine lernerzentrierte Technik, die auf Fehlerfreiheit abzielt

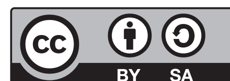
Zusammenfassung

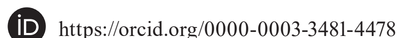
Lernerzentrierte Ansätze für das Lernen und Lehren im Rahmen der Bildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung (BNE) betonen die Rolle der Bildung von engagierten und aktiven Weltbürgern (UNESCO, 2017). Die Entwicklung von Reflexionsfähigkeiten und metakognitiven Strategien bei den Lernenden steht im Mittelpunkt der vorliegenden Studie, deren Ziel ist es, die Lernersprache einer Gruppe erwachsener Lernender der oberen Mittelstufe zu analysieren. Dabei soll untersucht werden, inwieweit die Lernenden in der Lage sind, ihre Fehler zu bemerken und zu korrigieren, nachdem sie über ihre Sprachproduktion reflektiert haben. Darüber hinaus wird versucht zu erforschen, wie die Lernenden ihre Selbstreflexion wahrnehmen und welche Einstellung sie zum Einsatz von Sprechaufgaben beim Grammatiklernen haben. Die vergleichende Fehleranalyse ergab, dass die Teilnehmer 34,6 % aller Fehler korrigieren konnten. Diese betrafen hauptsächlich Nominalphrasen (30 % aller Fehler in Aufgabe 1 und 31 % in Aufgabe 3) und Verbalphrasen (40 % aller Fehler in den beiden Aufgaben). Obwohl keine allgemeinen Schlussfolgerungen gezogen werden konnten, scheinen die Ergebnisse darauf hinzudeuten, dass die Studienteilnehmer nach einer kritischen, evidenzbasierten Reflexion imstande waren, einige Fehler zu bemerken und zu korrigieren, insbesondere hinsichtlich der Bestimmung und Verwendung von Simple Past. Die Ergebnisse der

Umfrageanalyse zeigen, dass alle Studienteilnehmer über ein verbessertes Bewusstsein für Mängel in ihrer Interimssprache berichteten sowie dass sie Sprechaufgaben für förderlich in Bezug auf die Grammatikentwicklung hielten. Aus der Studie geht hervor, dass sorgfältig geplante, wiederholte Sprechaufgaben für Sprachproduktion der Lernenden, Konsolidierung ihres grammatikalischen Wissens sowie für Verbesserung ihrer Reflexionsfähigkeiten und metakognitiven Strategien hilfreich sein können.

Schlüsselwörter: Grammatik, Fehleranalyse, wiederholte Sprechaufgaben, Lernerautonomie, metakognitive Strategien, lernerzentrierter Ansatz

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition
vol. 9 (1), 2023, pp. 1/20
https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.12006



Silvie Válková

https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3481-4478
Palacký University in Olomouc, The Czech Republic
Jana Kořínková

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1994-6387
Palacký University in Olomouc, The Czech Republic

Approaches to Teaching Agreement and Disagreement in Selected Coursebook Series

Abstract

The article focuses on the explicit teaching of language used to express agreement and disagreement in the popular English language coursebooks *English File* and *Navigate*. It reviews the current research on teaching various aspects of polite language and politeness-sensitive speech acts and analyses and compares the explicitly taught phrases of agreement and disagreement in the two selected coursebook series, as well as the methods of their presentation and the amount of background theoretical information provided to students and teachers to facilitate their proper usage. Differences were identified not in the inventories and language representation of the explicitly taught phrases, but mainly in the background support available for students and teachers on their usage.

Keywords: teaching politeness, politeness-sensitive speech acts, English language coursebooks, agreement, disagreement

Agreement and disagreement belong to the most common speech events and as such, they have been studied from different perspectives, for example, philosophy (Frances & Matheson, 2019), contract negotiations (Susskind, 2014), managing people (Brett & Goldberg, 2017), nonverbal audio-visual cues (Bousmalis, Mehu, & Pantic, 2009), in cross-cultural comparison (Johnson, 2006; Chang, 2009; Pattrawut, 2014; Farrokhi & Arghami, 2017) and also in foreign language teaching (Pearson, 1985; Bavarsad, Eslamirasekh, & Simin, 2015; Kurdghelashvili, 2015). The present article focuses on agreement and disagreement in foreign language teaching, specifically on how these essential speech acts are explicitly addressed in selected English language coursebook series which are popular in the Czech Republic.

Foreign language learners generally find it difficult to perform politeness-sensitive speech events (Leech, 2014, p. 186) in the language they learn; such speech events, however, belong to the competences students are supposed to master. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 108), politeness conventions and norms are an integral aspect of sociolinguistic competence. Teaching and learning sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences is challenging, especially in formal foreign language education contexts. It means being able to read situations and understand what is the right thing to say or do; it means knowing when to speak out and when to remain quiet, when to offer sympathy, when to give compliments, and also, of course, when and how to agree or disagree with others.

Since students in the Czech Republic learn English in a context where it is not spoken on an everyday basis, coursebooks remain an essential part of teaching and learning the language and their role in portraying relevant speech situations and speech events is very important. It seems to be a known fact that mistakes in grammar are generally accepted with more understanding on the part of the listener than mistakes in sociolinguistic or pragmatic competences. According to Broersma (2001), for instance, native speakers would most probably think that people making such mistakes are ill-mannered, dishonest, insincere or rude. While many polite expressions and phrases might be acquired through implicit learning by means of repeated exposure, items which are frequent and useful should be the focus of explicit teaching and learning (Kennedy, 2008).

Consequently, there is an unnegotiable need to include politeness language and strategies into any foreign language teaching and learning program. The theoretical background of politeness and the list of politeness-sensitive speech events have already been established by researchers. What has not been fully determined is the degree of correspondence between the theoretical findings and their practical application, which also includes the question to what extent commonly used coursebooks help learners develop and shape their understanding of politeness conventions in English.

Theoretical Background

Our analysis of the currently popular coursebook series has been inspired by Leech's monograph (2014). We decided to follow the set of politeness-sensitive speech events that he uses to exemplify the maxims of the General Strategy of Politeness. In Leech's view, these maxims (e.g., generosity, tact, approbation, modesty, obligation, agreement, opinion reticence, sympathy, feeling reticence)

are just variant manifestations of the same super strategy, that is, the General Strategy of Politeness.

In Leech's theory, the politeness-sensitive acts of agreement and disagreement (Leech, 2014, p. 201) represent the maxims of agreement and opinion reticence related to the General Strategy of Politeness. According to him, in responding to somebody's opinions or judgements, agreement is the preferred response; it shows consideration for the other person's opinion or judgement. This is also supported by Pearson's (1985, p. 102) research where, as a response to 1,170 occurrences of expressions of opinion, agreement was used in 137 cases while disagreement occurred in 49 cases. Disagreement is seen as a dispreferred reaction. In some cultures (e.g., in Japan or China) it may be even considered impolite to present a different opinion from that of one's superiors (e.g., lecturer–students). Thus, when people disagree, they tend to do it hesitantly, indirectly, or with mitigation (e.g., concessive agreement followed by disagreement *Yes, but…* or partial disagreement introduced by the deliberation signal *Well…*) (Pearson, 1985, p. 202). Disagreement or dispreference can be, according to Levinson (1983, p. 339), also expressed by a pause before replying or by a nonresponse.

Although the above-mentioned applies generally, there are situations when agreement would be a dispreferred reaction (e.g., *I'm getting fat*) or, on the other hand, when disagreement is accepted and highly valued (e.g., political parties' discussions or the discourse of academic debate).

Agreement and disagreement have already been studied in the context of various languages, language comparisons and also with respect to the degree to which the presentation of the two speech events in certain coursebooks matched that of native speaker use. The results of Pearson's (1985) analysis of native speaker data show that individual expressions of agreement or disagreement appear in six groups referring to different levels of politeness. There are three types of agreement (i.e., equal, upgraded or scaled-down). Agreement is equal if the assessment in reaction to an opinion is of the same or a similar level (e.g., *Yeah. Yeah, that's what I think*). If agreement makes the expressed opinion stronger by an intensifier or stronger evaluation, it is upgraded (e.g., *Yeah right. Well, of course. Isn't he cute. – Oh, he's adorable*). On the other hand, it is scaled-down if the degree of certainty is lower or evaluation is more moderate (e.g., *They're great. – Nice yeah*). Disagreement is also divided into three types according to the level of politeness (i.e., qualified, different or opposite). Qualified disagreement is the "*I agree but…*" type. The second part usually gives explanation by citing an exception to the previous opinion. Different disagreement assigns either different degree of certainty or different characteristics or quality (e.g., *He got this country back on its feet. – … before you go further, the thing that got this country back on its feet was WWII).* The least polite type is opposite disagreement which, surprisingly, was also

the most frequent type of disagreement in Pearson's data (e.g., *Chinese food is good. – I don't think so*).

The results drawn from Pearson's analysis of naturally occurring data show that agreement and disagreement occur only as optional responses and the preceding context plays an important role. The most typical syntactic form of expressing agreement and disagreement is the declarative sentence. In terms of politeness, agreement contains positive interactional qualities and as such, it is polite. Disagreement contains negative qualities and it occurs less frequently when the interlocutors highly value the relationship between them.

The comparison of native speaker data and the analyzed coursebooks showed that the expressions of agreement in textbooks were mainly idiomatic (e.g., *I'd go along with you. I take your point*), which, on the other hand, did not occur in the corpus of conversation among native speakers. The performative verb *disagree* did not occur in Pearson's data at all, the verb *agree* occurred more frequently in the coursebooks than in the data. The expressions of disagreement used in the coursebooks did not occur in the data or occurred with very low frequency. Pearson (1985) stated that the native speaker intuition of the writers of the coursebooks she analyzed "does not accurately reflect what native speakers actually say in expressing agreement/disagreement" (p. 142).

Research Related to Teaching Politeness Speech Acts from Textbooks in Formal Education

General coursebook evaluation is particularly important in order to examine possible deficient points in the existing materials and thus give teachers a possibility to enhance the quality of the teaching process by employing different strategies to compensate for the deficiencies. It may give teachers necessary information when selecting the appropriate coursebook as well as familiarize them with the strengths and weaknesses of the chosen material. The history of coursebook evaluation goes back to the 1980s and there exist numerous models, methods, and approaches to coursebook evaluation (e.g., Grant, 1987; Cunningsworth, 1995; Tanner & Green, 1998; Kayapinar, 2009; Abdelwahab, 2013; Demir & Ertas, 2014). While the criteria considered for evaluation are related to various perspectives—for example, contents, skills, layout, and various practical considerations (ranging from less than twenty to more than a hundred items), pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences have not been traditionally included as a separate aspect to assess. In cases where they are reflected, then it is most probably within the local and target culture criteria. Recently, however, intercultural and socio-cultural perspectives seem to be emerging both in general coursebook evaluation (Farzaneh, Kohandani, & Nejadansari, 2014;

Azarnoosh et al., 2018) and in research articles focused on coursebook evaluation of various speech acts (see below).

Research Related to Teaching Politeness-Sensitive Speech Acts in Formal Education

Research related to teaching and learning pragmatics, sociolinguistics or politeness-sensitive speech acts has been approached from various perspectives—for example, whether and to what extent it is in fact possible; which speech acts are covered and how, either in one coursebook or a coursebook series.

The effects of pragmatics instruction in foreign language teaching were explored by Rose (2005), who concluded that many areas of pragmatics seem to be teachable and that explicit instruction tends to render better or more permanent results. Similar conclusions were reached by Alcon Soler (2005), whose research into learners' knowledge and ability to use request strategies in English showed that groups of students taught explicitly and implicitly both outperformed the control group, with the former group being at some advantage.

The effects of teaching and learning pragmatics in classrooms were also researched by Vellenga (2004) who analyzed English as a second language and English as a foreign language textbooks with respect to the use of metalanguage, explicit treatment of speech acts and also metapragmatic information, with the aim to determine the amount and also quality of pragmatic information included. She concluded that "there is a dearth of metalinguistic and metapragmatic information related to ways of speaking in textbooks" (2004) and that learning pragmatics from textbooks is highly unlikely (p. 13).

Bardovi-Harlig and Griffin (2005) conducted a pragmatics awareness activity with the aim to determine whether foreign language students can identify pragmatic infelicities and whether they can remedy them. They conclude that intermediate students develop pragmatic awareness even without any specific instruction, that is, they know what to change, however, they have some difficulties with how to change it. "This seems to indicate dual foci for instruction: content and form" (Bardovi-Harlig & Griffin, 2005, p. 411). The first, according to them, is sociocultural, the second depends on the level of linguistic development and it is likely that learners can take advantage of instruction in form.

The range of speech acts and the way they are distributed in selected coursebooks were studied by Moradi, Karbalaei, and Afraz (2013). Their results show a difference between two series (1,100 different speech acts in one, 275 in the other one) indicating one of them more suitable for teaching pragmatics and communicative functions. Alemi and Irandoost (2012) focused on two speech act strategies (complaints and compliments) at different levels of the

same coursebook and concluded that although the books were rich in terms of the number of the two speech acts, the presentations strategies were rather limited. In contrast to their results, Delen and Tavil (2010) demonstrated that complaints, despite being important, were almost ignored in several series of intermediate coursebooks.

In the Czech context, the sociolinguistic dimension and polite language in selected A1–A2 and C1 popular English coursebooks were researched by Babická and Nevařil (2015, 2016). They found out that all levels of coursebooks present a number of polite phrases, but these mostly appear in tasks focused on raising awareness of polite communication with a limited space for their production and practice.

Based on the available research, pragmatics and politeness are mostly considered to be teachable, although the choice of method may influence the effect since the explicit approach seems to generate more favorable results. Concerning English language coursebooks, several researchers point out that not all speech acts are given due attention—strategies used to present them sometimes appear limited and not enough space is created for learners' practice and independent production. More information and an overview of recent research can be found in the publication *Issues in Coursebook Evaluation* (2018). The authors equip language teachers and researchers with fundamental concepts in book evaluation, including intercultural and socio-cultural perspectives in coursebooks and their evaluation, and also explain how to evaluate the authenticity of conversations in textbooks.

Research Questions and Procedure

For our analysis, we chose two currently popular coursebook series designed for young adult/adult learners of English for general purposes. These series, *English File 3rd Edition* and *Navigate*, have been used to teach students not majoring in English at the Institute of Foreign Languages at the Faculty of Education and at the Language Centre at the Faculty of Arts of Palacký University in Olomouc, Czech Republic. Our analysis aimed to answer the following questions:

1. How extensively are the speech acts of agreement and disagreement explicitly covered in the selected coursebooks? Is the presentation of these inductive or deductive?
2. How are agreement and disagreement linguistically represented?
3. What background information is made available for students and teachers on the culture-specific politeness norms of agreement and disagreement?

Both sets of coursebooks (13 books in total) were manually searched, first registering the speech act coverage in general, then focusing specifically on explicitly taught language used to express agreement and disagreement. All relevant expressions and phrases were recorded together with their method of presentation. Corresponding teacher's books (13 books in total) were consulted to identify their overall approach to teaching functional language as well as the amount of additional background information provided to teachers on culture-specific issues of expressing agreement and disagreement in English. The obtained data were then compared between the two series of coursebooks.

General Approach to Teaching Politeness in the Selected Coursebooks

The overall analysis revealed that the majority of politeness-sensitive speech acts, as defined by Leech (2014), were covered by both coursebook series, but not equally. Apart from agreeing and disagreeing, the most frequently represented speech acts were advising, apologizing, and requesting.

Politeness in *English File*

English File comprises a series of coursebooks designed for adults and young adults who want to learn English for general purposes. The series has been in print since 2012 as an updated version of the internationally popular *New English File* series. The main aim of the course series is to provide "the right mix of language, motivation and opportunity to get students talking" (Oxford University Press, 2020). It features seven coursebooks in total: Beginner (A1), Elementary (A1–A2), Pre-Intermediate (A2–B1), Intermediate (B1–B2), Intermediate Plus (B1–B2), Upper-Intermediate (B2), Advanced (C1).

At each level, the authors formulate the main needs of the respective target group of students, which range from being sufficiently motivated to communicate by interesting and varied tasks (A1–A2 levels), through avoiding the plateau and keeping track of progress (B1–B2 levels), to expanding lexis with focus on idiomatic language and appropriate levels of formality (C1 level). Acquiring polite language is not presented as an explicit teaching goal. Rather, students seem to be expected to pick up the norms of politeness through being exposed to various communicative situations and asked to notice and reproduce certain functional language phrases, paying attention mostly to their pronunciation.

Throughout the series, functional language is presented primarily in a special section called *Practical English* (*Colloquial English* in the Upper-Intermediate and Advanced coursebooks), which concludes every second unit of each book and is designed to teach students "to survive in English in travel and social situations" (Latham-Koenig, Oxenden, & Seligson, 2012, p. 28) and in the last two books of the series to expose them to "completely unscripted authentic spoken English" (Latham-Koenig & Oxenden, 2014, p. 5). All these special sections feature videos of various everyday situations as a framework for introducing useful functional expressions and phrases. The presentation strategy is almost exclusively inductive. Students are asked to watch the videos, answer open or true/false questions, notice key social English phrases and then focus on their form while completing 'fill in the missing words' tasks. Finally, they are asked to act out parts of the presented dialogues and assess their progress in functional language using a check box (in the case of the last two books of the series, they are asked to speak on the topic explored throughout the section).

In addition, some politeness-sensitive language is occasionally introduced as a part of speaking or grammar sections of the coursebooks. In such cases, the target expressions and phrases are mostly presented deductively—they are listed in a box marked with a magnifying glass and students are asked to go through them with the teacher and then use them in discussion.

In the relevant teacher's books of the series, the information provided for teachers is almost solely procedural. Additional support is primarily offered on how to make an activity more or less demanding or which extra activities can be done with students, while information on culture-specific aspects of the English language is very rare, mostly concerning the nature of a person's accent. Only a few comments on issues regarding politeness were registered (see below).

Politeness in *Navigate*

The *Navigate* series has been in print since 2015 and its authors state they take an innovative approach to language learning founded rigorously on academic principles including research into second language acquisition. The state-of-the-art syllabus is not only based on the latest research, but also on piloting and practical teacher feedback. The *Navigate* series has been based on the Oxford 3000 (i.e., a list of 3,000 core words that have been chosen based on their frequency in the Oxford English Corpus and relevance to learners of English). The whole course is divided into six books: Beginner (A1), Elementary (A2), Pre-Intermediate (B1), Intermediate (B1+), Upper-Intermediate (B2), Advanced (C1).

In terms of politeness, *Navigate* focuses explicitly and in detail on various aspects of speaking, such as appropriately polite language for a given situation

or tactics for holding the floor in a conversation. In lesson four of every unit, *Speaking and writing*, *Navigate* provides appropriate communication practice for work, study or social life with an emphasis on language production. The lesson also contains two language focus boxes: *Language for speaking* and *Language for writing.* The *Language for speaking* box lists useful phrases that students can use to complete a task about a particular topic.

Navigate teaches rules mainly inductively. First, learners are given a bank of examples of the rule and only then see a part of the rule and are guided to think about how to complete it. There is evidence that for appropriate rules this works as well, and perhaps better, than giving the rule first (Merifield et al., 2015, p. 24). Similarly, when teaching appropriately polite language, students are first introduced to various situations in which politeness-sensitive speech events are used and then they are guided to think about how and when particular phrases are used (e.g., they are asked to think about the level of formality of the situation, whether the agreement or disagreement is strong or weak, etc.). Afterwards, they can check their answers in the *Language for speaking* box and they are given various tasks to practice new phrases in a conversation.

Relevant teacher's books provide additional information about teaching politeness in *Smart communication boxes*. At lower levels, it is suggested that in many everyday situations people react automatically, using set expressions. This is why learners of English need to learn chunks of language including their sound patterns (stress and intonation). They should also be reminded that politeness in the UK and the USA is culturally very important. At higher levels, students learn more complex phrases with the focus on how polite (or impolite) the phrases are and what it is that makes them (im)polite. Teachers are advised to remind them that the way of uttering each phrase will have a significant impact on the message they convey (neutral or polite intonation is more effective in communication than using direct language and stronger intonation).

Results

In both coursebook series, language to express agreement and disagreement in spoken communication is explicitly taught from the lowest level and the complexity of phrases is developed from A1 to C1 levels. *Navigate*, unlike *English File*, also provides some explicit information on agreement and disagreement in written communication.

Explicit Teaching of Agreement and Disagreement in *English File*

At the A1–A2 levels (beginner and elementary coursebooks), agreement and disagreement are not treated as separate language functions. Simple ways of agreeing and disagreeing are introduced within the grammatical context (e.g., *Yes, I am/do/can/have*). Some common phrases (*Sure!*; *Great idea!*; *Me, too*; *OK.*; *No, sorry*; *No, thanks*) are included within the *Social English phrases* lists, together with other basic practical phrases to be used in situations like shopping, booking into a hotel, sightseeing, etc. Disagreement is represented by fewer phrases than agreement. No culture specific background information or explanation is provided apart from the fact that "nobody knows for sure what the origin is of the expression OK" (Latham-Koenig et al., 2015, p. 14).

At the B1–B2 levels (Pre-Intermediate to Intermediate Plus coursebooks), more phrases expressing agreement and disagreement are explicitly taught in the context of giving opinions (*I agree/don't agree*; *I'm not sure*), responding to plans and predictions (*I hope so/not*; *I think /don't think so*; *I doubt it*; *Maybe, etc.*), reacting to what people say (*You've got to be kidding me*; *I don't believe it! Oh, no!)*, accepting and rejection suggestions (*It's a great idea*; *It's not bad, but…*) or debating a topic (*I completely agree/partly agree/completely disagree with that*). Again, no additional information or explanation is provided on how to use these expressions, apart from the model situation they are introduced in. In learning the phrases, students are repeatedly encouraged to pay attention to appropriate intonation, although it is not explained why. Students are also asked to translate the phrases to their mother tongue, which can potentially lead to discovering some awareness of culture specific norms, but also depends on the quality of translation and the teacher's monitoring and input.

The Upper-Intermediate coursebook (B2) does not supply students with any new phraseology related to agreement or disagreement, but just reminds them briefly of the useful language they have learned at the previous levels (lists of phrases in the *Useful language box*) to support speaking activities. However, at one point the book provides brief information that it is important to use friendly intonation while responding to what someone says, so as not to sound unfriendly or uninterested (Latham-Koenig, 2014, p. 5).

In the Advanced coursebook (C1), students are presented an overview of expressions for agreeing and disagreeing in the *Speaking section* of the introductory lesson. Nine basic phrases are categorized in to three types: Agreeing (*I totally agree; That's just what I think, too; Absolutely!)*, half agreeing (*I see your point, but…*; *I see what you mean, but…*; *I agree up to a point, but…*) and disagreeing (*I'm not sure I agree with you*; *I'm afraid I don't really agree*; *I don't really think you're right*). At this point, it is explained to the students that British people avoid using strong expressions of disagreement, but rather try

to soften their disagreement by half-agreeing or by using softening expressions like *I'm afraid, I'm not sure*) (Latham-Koenig, Oxenden, & Lambert, 2020, p. 5). No further supportive information is provided in the teacher's book, students are only asked to drill the phrases with focus on the appropriate intonation and sentences stress, and then use them in a discussion over the given controversial topic. No more space is devoted in the book to the explicit teaching of agreement and disagreement.

Agreement and Disagreement in *Navigate*

The A1 level includes agreement phrases in everyday phrases (*Tea? Yes, please*) and also in response to a request (*Yes, thank you*; *Of course*; *Sure. No problem*). The reason for this is, as stated in the *Smart communication box* of the teacher's book, that disagreeing, that is, saying *no* politely is more complex. A simple *no* is considered very hard and direct (both in the UK and the USA), so teachers should rather suggest using *Sorry* to mean *No* (particularly if someone asks for your help). The A1 level also develops agreement and disagreement in connection with grammar—the usage of short answers in present and past tenses, *going to*, *would like*, etc. in spoken and written mode (e.g., when writing thank-you notes to react to invitations).

At the A2 level, agreement and disagreement are dealt with when teaching how to make suggestions, arrangements, requests, and when expressing opinions (*Yes, I'd love to*; *Yes, that's fine*; *No, I'm sorry but... I'm afraid not*). In the *Smart communication boxes* for teachers, it is again stressed that it is common to start with an apology when you give a negative reply, for example, to a request (*I'm afraid* in writing and *Sorry* in speaking). Polite intonation is emphasized too; students are advised to focus on how the intonation goes up to show they are being polite.

The B1 level teaches additional and more complex phrases with similar emphasis as at the previous level—that it is generally considered more polite to give a more detailed reason why you, for example, cannot accept something than to simply say *no.* Polite intonation is taught and practiced again. Agreement and disagreement are introduced as part of teaching how to invite, make arrangements and respond to opinions (*Sounds…!*; *Yeah, I agree*; *That's a good point*; *True, but what about…*; *I take your point but…*).

Levels B1+ and B2 focus on agreement and disagreement directly. Students are taught phrases of strong and weak agreement and disagreement. They are reminded to be polite even if they do not agree, and are informed how important intonation is. They are warned that saying *Rubbish!* is a very strong form of disagreement and that disagreeing politely in English is usually a question of being indirect (using softeners, e.g., *Actually,...*; *Well,...*, apologizing for

disagreeing, for example, *Sorry, but*..., or sounding less certain than you really are, for example, *I'm not sure about that*).

At the advanced level C1, teachers are again advised to focus on students' ability to agree and disagree politely and to lead a balanced discussion in order to reach some conclusion in formal negotiations. To manage conversations, students are given some typical phrases to agree (*I see what you mean*; *I suppose you're right*), to agree strongly (*I couldn't agree more*), to disagree (*I don't think I'm with you there*; *I don't see that at all*), and to disagree strongly (*I totally disagree with you*). While students practice the phrases, teachers are advised to comment on their effective usage. For informal negotiations, phrases like *I could go along with that*; *I'm happy with that* for agreeing and *Frankly, I'm not really happy with that* for disagreeing are introduced. Both in formal and informal negotiations, students are advised to sound tactful and supportive of their negotiating partners.

Language of Agreement and Disagreement Explicitly Introduced in *English File* and *Navigate*

Agreement

Thirty-one explicitly introduced phrases of agreement were recorded in the *English File* coursebooks and 41 in the *Navigate* coursebooks. Surprisingly, only a small proportion of these was presented in both series in an identical form. This common core of language explicitly taught to express agreement included the following phrases:
Absolutely/Absolutely!
I agree.
I completely agree.
I suppose so/I suppose...
Maybe.
No problem.
Of course/Of course!
Sure.
That's just what I thought.
That's right.
Yeah/Yeah, ...
Yes, I am/can/do/have.
Yes, of course.

The remaining 18 expressions presented in *English File* and 28 in *Navigate* were completely different or phrased partly differently. The modifications that we noticed varied in character: The *Navigate* coursebook introduces more phrases that are rather tentative (e.g., *I guess so*, *I suppose*...) and more frequently include modal verbs (e.g., *I think you could be right*; *That'd be great* as opposed to *I think you are right*; *That's great* in *English File*). The grammatical means to express more distant agreement were also used more commonly in *Navigate* (e.g., *That's just what I thought/was thinking* as opposed to *That's just what I think* in *English File*). In terms of the length of the phrases used to express agreement, *English File* teaches more shorter ones (e.g., *Yeah*; *OK.*), which, in comparison with those in *Navigate* (e.g., *Yes, please*; *Yes, thank you*; *That's fine with me*) may in some contexts sound less friendly or even curt.

In agreement with Pearson's (1985) findings, we can say that the phrases explicitly taught in the two coursebook series were mainly declarative sentences with some usage of exclamations (four in *Navigate*, six in *English File).* Although some idiomatic phrases were introduced in our coursebooks (*I could go along with that; I guess so, you've got a point there*), they were rather infrequent. This is in contrast with Pearson's data, which showed that idiomatic forms of agreement constituted the most common type in the analyzed coursebooks, where they appeared, in fact even more frequently than in conversations among native speakers.

We also decided to categorize the recorded phrases of agreement into the groups suggested by Pearson, that is, equal, upgraded, and scaled-down. The results show that both *Navigate* and *English File* make use of equal agreement (57.5% and 49% respectively) most frequently, which corresponds with Pearson, who finds this type of agreement crucial for English language learners. Our coursebooks differ, however, in the proportion of upgraded and scaled-down types. In *Navigate*, the upgraded type constituted 18% of all phrases and the scaled-down type 24.5%, while in *English File* upgraded agreement was more frequent (35%) than scaled-down (16%). These outcomes are in accordance with the already mentioned findings, that is, *Navigate* tends to teach phrases that are more tentative and distancing.

Disagreement

Thirty-one explicitly introduced phrases of disagreement were recorded in the *English File* series and 36 in the *Navigate* series. The common core of language explicitly taught to express disagreement included only the following six phrases:
I agree up to a point, but...
I don't/can't agree.

I don't think...
I totally disagree.
No, thanks.
You can't be serious!

In comparison with agreement, the difference between the number of phrases explicitly introduced in *English File* and *Navigate* is not so high. The number of common phrases, however, is lower than in the case of agreement (six common phrases for disagreement, 13 for agreement). What is surprising is the fact that the number of phrases taught to express disagreement in both coursebooks is not significantly lower than the number of phrases for agreement, despite the fact that disagreement is considered a dispreferred reaction.

Similarly to the expressions of agreement, *Navigate* introduces more tentative phrases for disagreement (*I'm afraid I can't...*) or partial disagreement phrases (*Yes, but...*; *I take your point, but...*). The phrases presented in *Navigate* also include more modal verbs (*I can't agree* vs. *I don't agree*) as well as softeners (like *actually* or *well*) to make the phrases sound less certain than the speaker really may be. The phrases presented to students in *English File* tend to be shorter and they usually do not include giving reasons for disagreement, which is, on the other hand, considered important in *Navigate*, where a simple *no* is understood as very hard and direct. This is also the reason why some phrases for disagreement taught by *Navigate* are preceded by an apology (*Sorry, but...*), while in *English File* we did not find such a formulation of disagreement.

As with the expressions of agreement, the phrases explicitly taught for disagreement were mainly declarative sentences with some examples of exclamations (two out of 36 in *Navigate*, six out of 31 in *English File*). Whereas Pearson (1985) reported zero occurrence of the performative verb *disagree* in the data of native speakers, in our corpus of phrases this verb appeared in five different phrases.

When trying to categorize the phrases for disagreement into the groups identified in Pearson's research, we found out that it was not as easy as with the phrases of agreement, which were distinguished by the type of modification (upgraded or scaled-down). The categories of disagreement are based on a larger context, that is, qualified disagreement (*Yes, but...* type) gives some explanation, usually by citing an exception; different disagreement assigns different degrees of certainty, characteristics or quality. Without a larger context, it was not possible to categorize the isolated phrases we recorded into the two aforementioned groups; therefore, we were only able to identify the phrases that clearly express the opposite type of disagreement, that is, such phrases that stand in opposition to the assessment made by the prior speaker. Although this is the least polite form of disagreement, in Pearson's data, it appeared to be the most frequent type in native speaker communication. In our corpus, this

type of phrase constituted 61% of disagreement phrases in *Navigate* and 65% in *English File*, which supports Pearson's findings.

Conclusions

Two language coursebooks, *English File* and *Navigate*, frequently used for teaching English to young adults and adults in the Czech Republic, were analyzed and compared with regard to the explicitly taught language of agreement and disagreement. It was found that the coursebooks take a partially different approach to teaching politeness, including agreement and disagreement, with a potential effect on the development of students' pragmatic competence. Differences were identified mainly in the areas of language representation and in the amount of background theoretical information provided for both teachers and students, so that the various agreement and disagreement phrases are able not only to be memorized, but also used appropriately in relevant situations.

Our first question inquired into the extent of expressive coverage of the speech acts of agreement and into the methods of their presentation. We found out that although both coursebook series explicitly presented a certain number of phrases used for these purposes at all levels, only *Navigate* at one point explicitly teaches agreement and disagreement in written communication. Most expressions and phrases of agreement and disagreement are presented in the context of more general language functions such as giving opinions, responding to plans and predictions, accepting and rejecting suggestions and invitations, or debating a topic. Agreement and disagreement as a separate topic is included in the coursebooks B1+ and B2 in the *Navigate* series and in the C1 coursebook in the *English File* series. As for the methods of presentation, *English File* introduces phrases expressing agreement and disagreement deductively in the form of language boxes, if part of the *Speaking* sections, and inductively as part of video sequences, if part of the *Practical/Colloquial English* sections. In the presentation, students are almost always reminded to notice and copy the appropriate intonation and to translate the phrases into their mother tongue, which is of questionable benefit, because the translations do not have to be pragmatically accurate. In *Navigate*, their presentation is predominantly inductive and tends to be accompanied by pragmatic information that includes not only reminders to use friendly intonation but also information about sociolinguistic appropriateness. Students see the usage of various phrases in different situations and they are expected to notice when and how those phrases are used. The *Language for speaking box* then provides them with answers before they practice the given phrases in a conversation. In the

Smart communication boxes, teachers can find additional information about the cultural importance of politeness, level of formality, etc.

Our second question concerned the variety of the explicitly taught language for agreement and disagreement. In agreement with previous research, this language was mostly represented primarily by simple declarative sentences and occasionally by exclamations. The common core of phrases introduced in exactly the same form in both coursebook series is relatively small (13 phrases for agreement and only six phrases for disagreement). *English File* introduces less variety of phrases, especially to express agreement. The phrases taught in *Navigate* are not only more numerous, but they also seem to be more varied—expressing subtler, less direct forms of response for agreement or disagreement.

The most striking difference between the two coursebook series was identified in the amount of background information provided for students and teachers on the culture-specific politeness norms of agreement and disagreement. In *English File*, such information was extremely rare, as if the authors of the series took it for granted that all teachers using the coursebooks were sufficiently able to explain the appropriate context of usage of the individual phrases. This is hardly the case, especially where the phrases are introduced deductively, without the context of a communicative situation. In contrast, *Navigate* provides teachers in *Smart communication boxes* with additional information about the cultural importance of politeness, level of formality and other relevant information from the very basic level A1, explaining, for example, the intricacies of disagreement right at the beginning of students' communication endeavors (saying *no* in English is more complex, it is usually accompanied by an apology or explanation). Polite intonation is not only mentioned but also fully explained at all levels, with the aim to teach students that sounding polite, tactful, and supportive is very important.

Out of the two analyzed coursebook series, *Navigate*, claiming an innovative approach to supporting English language learning in young adults and adults, clearly seems to be a better choice for acquiring appropriate politeness strategies (including those to express agreement and disagreement), which is perceived as an important goal of English language teaching. Of course, any coursebook is only a tool and the resulting pragmatic competence of students also depends on their teacher's personal input and on the nature/amount of practice and authentic language input both in and outside the English lessons. Further research should be concerned with identifying to what extent the usage of a particular coursebook is reflected in the actual student pragmatic competence.

References

Abdelwahab, M. M. (2013). Developing an English language textbook evaluative checklist. *IOSR Journal of Research and Method in Education, 1*(3), 55–70.

Alcon Soler, E. (2005). Does instruction work for learning pragmatics in the EFL context? *An International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics*, *33*(3), 417–435.

Alemi, M., & Irandoostm R. (2012). A textbook evaluation of speech acts: The case of English result series. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature, 1*(6), 199–209.

Azarnoosh, M., Zeraatpishe, M., Faravani, A., & Kargozari, H. R. (Eds.). (2018). *Issues in Coursebook Evaluation*. Brill Sense.

Babická, B., & Nevařil, J. (2016). Learning politeness in a foreign language—The case of speaking activities in English coursebooks at the advanced level. *Hradec Králové Journal of Anglophone Studies*, *3*(1), 92–102.

Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Griffin, R. (2005). L2 pragmatic awareness: Evidence from the ESL classroom. *System, 33*, 401–415.

Bavarsad, S. S., Eslamirasekh, A., & Simin, S. (2015). A cross-cultural study of disagreement strategies to suggestions between Persian EFL learners and American native English speakers. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning, 4*(4), 93–105.

Bousmalis, K., Mehu, M., & Pantic, M. (2009, September). *Spotting agreement and disagreement: A survey of nonverbal audiovisual cues and tools*. Paper presented at IEEE International Conference on Affective Computing and Intelligent Interaction. https//doi.org/10.1109/ACII.2009.5349477

Brett, J., & Goldberg, S. B. (2017). How to handle a disagreement on your team. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from https://hbr.org/2017/07/how-to-handle-a-disagreement-on-your-team

Broersma, D. (2001). "You're so white, so fat, and so hairy!": Developing sociolinguistic competence in a second language. In L. J. Dickerson (Ed.), *Helping Learners Develop Second Language Proficiency* (pp. 200–205). Mission Training International.

Chang, Y. F. (2009). How to say no: An analysis of cross-cultural difference and pragmatic transfer. *Language Sciences, 31*(4), 477–493.

Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebook*. Heinemann.

Delen, B., & Tavil, Z. M. (2010). Evaluation of four coursebooks in terms of three speech acts: Requests, refusals and complaints. *Procedia—Social and Behavioral Sciences, 9*, 692–697.

Demir, Y., & Ertaş, A. (2014). A suggested eclectic checklist for ELT coursebook evaluation. *The Reading Matrix, 14*(2), 243–252.

Farzaneh, N., Kohandani, M., & Nejadansari, D. (2014). A textbook evaluation of socio-cultural context in Top Notch series. *Procedia—Social and Behavioral Sciences, 98*, 472–481.

Farrokhi, F., & Arghami, M. (2017). A contrastive study of the use of politeness strategies in disagreement among characters with different power relations in English and Farsi novels. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 7*, 657–669.

Frances, B., & Jonathan, M. (2019). Disagreement. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Retrieved from https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2019/entries/disagreement

Grant, N. (1987). *Making the most of your textbook*. Heinemann.

Johnson, F. (2006) Agreement and disagreement: A cross-cultural comparison. *BISAL, 1*, 41–67.

Kennedy, G. (2008). Phraseology and language pedagogy associated with English verbs in the British National Corpus. In F. Meunier & S. Granger (Eds.), *Phraseology in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching*, (pp. 21–41). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Kurdghelashvili, T. (2015). Speech Acts and Politeness Strategies in an EFL Classroom in Georgia. *World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology, International Journal of Social, Behavioral, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering, 9*, 306–309.

Leech, G. (2014). *The pragmatics of politeness.* Oxford University Press.

Moradi, A., Karbalaei, A., & Afraz, S. (2013). A textbook evaluation of speech acts and language functions in high school English textbooks (I, II and III) and Interchange series, Books I, II, and III). *European Online Journal of Natural and Social Sciences, 2*(2), 323–335.

Nevařil, J., & Babická, B. (2015). The sociolinguistic dimension in ELT coursebooks. In C. Haase, N. Orlova, & J. C. Head (Eds.), *ELT: New Horizons in Theory and Application* (pp. 15–30). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Oxford University Press. (2020). *English File*, 3rd ed. Retrieved from https://elt.oup.com/catalogue/items/global/adult_courses/english_file_third_edition/?cc=cz&selLanguage=cs&mode=hub

Pattrawut, C. (2014). A cross-cultural pragmatic study: Politeness strategies and realizations of the strategies used to perform student-lecturer multiple disagreements by native speakers of Thai and English. *Journal of Educational and Social Research, 4*(1)*,* 147–158. https://doi.org/10.5901/jesr.2014.v4n1p147

Pearson, E. (1985). Agreement and disagreement: A study of speech acts in discourse and ESL/EFL materials. (M.A. thesis). University of Hawaii at Manoa. Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10125/38616

Rose, K. R. (2005). On the effects of instruction in Second Language Pragmatics. *System, 33*, 385–399.

Tanner, R., & Green, C. (1998). *Tasks for teacher education*. Longman.

Vellenga, H. E. (2004). Learning pragmatics from ESL & EFL textbooks: How likely? *TESL-EJ, 8*(2). Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1068091.pdf

Susskind, L. (2014). *Good for you, Great for me: Finding the trading zone and winning at win-win negotiation*. Public Affairs.

Coursebooks

Appleby, R., Adkins, J., Griggs, K., Tomlinson, J., & Wyatt, R. (2015). *Navigate B1+ Intermediate teacher's guide*. Oxford University Press.

Appleby, R., Walker, S., & Wyatt, R. (2016). *Navigate C1 Advanced teacher's guide.* Oxford University Press.

Bartram, M., & Pickering, K. (2016). *Navigate C1 Advanced coursebook*. Oxford University Press.

Dummet, P., & Hughes, J. (2016). *Navigate A1 Beginner coursebook*. Oxford University Press.

Dummet, P., Hughes, J., & Wood, K. (2015). *Navigate A2 Elementary coursebook*. Oxford University Press.

Krantz, C., Roberts, R., Griggs, K., & Lambrick, G. (2016). *Navigate B2 Upper-intermediate teacher's guide*. Oxford University Press.

Krantz, C., & Norton, J. (2015). *Navigate B1 Pre-Intermediate coursebook*. Oxford University Press.

Krantz, C., & Roberts, R. (2016). *Navigate B2 Upper-intermediate coursebook*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., & Oxenden, C. (2013). *English file: Intermediate: Student's book with DVD-ROM*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., & Oxenden, C. (2014). *English File: Upper-intermediate student's book*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., & Oxenden, C. (2015). *English File: Beginner student's book*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., & Oxenden, C. (2019). *English File: Pre-intermediate student's book*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., Oxenden, C., & Boyle, M. (2015). *English File: Intermediate plus student's book: With test and assessment CD-ROM*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., Oxenden, C., & Lambert, J. (2015). *English File: Advanced student's book*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., Oxenden, C., Lambert, J., Lowy, A., & García, B. M. (2015). *English File: Advanced teacher's book*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., Oxenden, C., Lambert, J., & García, B. M. (2015). *English File: Intermediate plus teacher's book*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., Oxenden, C., Lowy, A., García, B. M., & Boston, P. (2013). *English File: Intermediate teacher's book with test and assessment CD-ROM*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., Oxenden, C., Lowy, A., & García, B. M. (2014). *English File: Upper-Intermediate teacher's book*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., Oxenden, C., Lowy, A., & García, B. M. (2015). *English File: Beginner teacher's book*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., Oxenden, C., & Seligson, P. (2012). *English File: Elementary student's book. Third edition*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., Oxenden, C., & Seligson, P. (2012). *English File: Elementary teacher's book: With test and assessment CD-ROM*. Oxford University Press.

Latham-Koenig, C., Oxenden, C., Seligson, P., & Hudson, J. (2019). *English File: Pre-intermediate teacher's book*. Oxford University Press.

Meldrum, N., Aish, F., Lambrick, G., Smith, W. J., & Wyatt, R. (2015). *Navigate A2 Elementary Teacher's guide.* Oxford University Press.

Merifield, S., Homes, L., Walker, S., & Wyatt, R. (2015). *Navigate B1 Pre-intermediate teacher's guide*. Oxford University Press.

Merifield, S., & Rézmüves, Z. (2016). *Navigate A1 Beginner teacher's guide*. Oxford University Press.

Roberts, R., Buchanan, H., & Pathare, E. (2015). *Navigate B1+ Intermediate coursebook*. Oxford University Press.

Silvie Válková, Jana Kořínková

Ansätze zum Unterrichten von Zustimmung und Ablehnung in ausgewählten Kursbuchreihen

Zusammenfassung

Der Artikel konzentriert sich auf die explizite Vermittlung von Sprachformen zum Ausdruck der Zustimmung bzw. Ablehnung in den populären Englisch-Kursbuchreihen *English File* und *Navigate*. Dabei wird ein Überblick über die aktuelle Forschung zum Unterrichten verschiedener Aspekte der Höflichkeitskompetenz und höflichkeitssensibler Sprechakte geschaffen. Des Weiteren werden die explizit vermittelten Ausdrücke der Zustimmung und Ablehnung in den beiden gewählten Kursbuchreihen sowie die Methoden ihrer Präsentation und der Umfang der theoretischen Hintergrundinformationen, die Schülern und Lehrern zur Verfügung gestellt werden, um ihre richtige Verwendung zu erleichtern, analysiert und miteinander verglichen. Unterschiede wurden nicht in Bezug auf den Inhalt und die sprachliche Repräsentation der explizit vermittelten Ausdrücke festgestellt, sondern vor allem hinsichtlich der Hintergrundunterstützung, die Schülern und Lehrern zur Verfügung steht.

Schlüsselwörter: Unterrichten von Höflichkeitskompetenz, höflichkeitssensible Sprechakte, Englisch-Kursbücher, Zustimmung, Ablehnung

Reviews

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition
vol. 9 (1), 2023, pp. 1/5
https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.13742

Schmitt, N., & Rodgers, M. P. H. (Eds.) *An Introduction to Applied Linguistics* (3rd ed.) Routledge, Taylor & Francis. 2020. 404 pp.

Since the term applied linguistics was coined in the 1950s (Davies, 1999), various books published henceforth have concurred that applied linguistics can be regarded as the academic discipline that looks at the knowledge about language and how it is used to make decisions in a real-life context (Simpson et al., 2019). One of these books is by Schmitt and Rodgers, a multifarious work divided into 18 chapters that come in three key parts. The book sheds additional light on the various concepts and constructs regarding applied linguistics, considering the recent developments in the subject area.

The preface of the book is arguably the most noticeable component, written by Marianne Celce-Murcia and Norbert Schmitt, and discusses an overview of applied linguistics simplifying the definition of the subject. The preface traces the development of the subject area from the 1700s to the 20th century, and its subsequent application in cultural, social, and psycholinguistic fields. The previous recommends the reader to go through all the chapters of the book for a comprehensive understanding of applied linguistics since the concepts discussed in the chapters are interdependent. The previous also acknowledges that the various questions raised in the book regarding applied linguistics do not have conclusive answers as do those that are raised in psycholinguistics and this is attributed to the complexity that language and human communication present. This preface is therefore important to ground the reader before they can proceed deeper into the book.

Beyond the preface, the three distinct parts of the book demarcate the major contracts of applied linguistics. The first section covers the description of language and its use; the second section covers the major areas of inquiry regarding applied linguistics and the third section discusses the skills and assessment of language. Notably, the third edition of the book is more comprehensive as compared to the two previous editions. Apart from the three categories into

which the book has been divided, there is an introductory chapter and two new chapters that have been added that cover forensic linguistics and multilingualism. Besides, a review of chapters that cover subjects including psycholinguistics, language learning, reading, and assessment repeat that the third edition involves substantial revision by the contributors. The concepts and constructs have been developed and discussed broadly based on credible sources in the subject area. Additionally, the chapters come with practical tasks that the reader can adopt, to internalize the concepts and provide a reference list at the end of each chapter to encourage further leadership on each subject covered.

The first section of the book covers the description of language and its use. This section is divided into five distinct chapters: the first chapter, written by Diane Larsen-Freeman and Jeanette DeCarrico, examines the meaning of grammar and the description of grammatical rules. In the second chapter, the authors also discuss the modalities involved in the learning and teaching of grammar and salient differences between written and spoken grammar. This chapter also explores various limitations with regard to the grammatical description and also various pedagogical issues associated with teaching and learning grammar.

The third chapter is written by Paul Nation and Paul Meara and focuses on the subject of vocabulary. The chapter looks at the essence of vocabulary in language and examines the multi-dimensional features of vocabulary. They further delve into the vocabularies that people should learn as they learn a particular language and how they should go about it. They, therefore, provide strategies that could be used to achieve this which include intentional or deliberate vocabulary learning, lexical inferencing, dictionary use, and incidental vocabulary learning. Furthermore, the chapter also discusses the process of assessing vocabulary and the challenges involved in the assessment of the scope of vocabulary for various learners.

The fourth chapter written by Michael McCarthy, Diana Slade, and Christian Matthiessen tackles the subject of discourse analysis of language. They comprehensively define discourse analysis with all its concepts; they then examine the intertwined factors involved in the analysis of both written and spoken discourse. These issues include the continuum that ranges between written and spoken discourse. It also involves the disparities between informal and formal spoken discourses. The chapter essentially simplifies the understanding of discourse analysis for the reader and more particularly summarizes the pedagogical implications that arise from discourse analysis processes.

The fifth chapter by Vladimir Žegarac and Helen Spencer-Oatey covers the subject of pragmatics in language. The chapter, therefore, focuses on the methods and paradigms used in conducting language pragmatics research. The reading of this chapter explicitly clarifies the role of pragmatics in language teaching and learning, which is an area that has received limited attention in

linguistic studies. The chapter, therefore, provides seminal ideas that could be used in conducting language pragmatics studies.

The sixth chapter of the book focuses on corpus linguistics. This chapter was written by Randi Reppen and Rita Simpson-Vlach who provide a clear understanding of what corpus linguistics entails and the various types of corpora available to linguists. The authors explicitly differentiate between the perceived knowledge gaps regarding the functions and importance of corpus linguistics and more particularly with regard to teaching and learning language. The authors also suggest invaluable pedagogical insights on how corpus linguistics can be applied in the classroom context. These insights are both invaluable to language learners and language instructors.

The second section of this book looks at the major areas of enquiry related to applied linguistics. This section is made up of six chapters, covering a broad scope of subjects related to enquiry in applied linguistics. This includes a chapter by Spada and Lightbown on second language acquisition; and another by Mech, Tabori, Kroll, and de Bot on psycholinguistics. The next chapters are based on social linguistics by Llamas and Stockwell; discuss language learners' learning style, language learning strategy, and motivation by Cohen and Henry; forensic linguistics by Tkacukova; and multilingualism by Taylor. Notably, the chapter by Cohen and Henry is arguably one of the most elaborate in this section as it provides complete enthusiastic story narrations of learning styles. It also provides explicit motivations and strategies for this particular learning style. It is also worth noting that the last two chapters in this section are a new edition of the book. This is important considering that the chapter on forensic linguistics responds to the recent concerns and attention given to the subjects which are considered fast-growing sub-areas of applied linguistics. In particular, Tkacukova uses this chapter to define forensic linguistics and also discuss the breadth of its scope. She also discusses the pertinent issues associating forensic linguistics with applied linguistics such as courtroom discourses and legal communication. She thereafter concludes the chapter by examining the various pedagogical implications related to the teaching and learning of forensic linguistics.

The third and final section of the book focuses on language skills, which is expected of books that are published on this particular subject. The section is made up of four chapters that cover language skills subjects including listening written by Lynch and Mendelsohn; speaking by Burns and Seidlhofer; reading by Jiang, Grabe, and Carrell; and writing and assessment by Matsuda and Silva. One of the most intriguing chapters in this section is that on listening, which discusses the models and theories of listening such as the information processing theory, communication model, situated action model, and the social/contextual theory. The chapter provides insights on how listening as a language learning skill can be enhanced in the process of language acquisition

and further development of language competencies. In the chapter on speaking, Burns and Seidlhofer look at genres of speaking and the issues related to pronunciations. The chapter on reading by Jiang, Grabe, and Carrell discusses the various starting or rather entry points in the learning and teaching of both first and second language. The chapter is therefore instructive in helping understand ways of overcoming the difficulties involved in the earliest stages of teaching and learning both first and second language. Besides, the chapter on writing and assessment by Matsuda and Silva examines the various tasks and strategies that both learners and language instructors can use in learning and testing language competencies. The chapter demonstrates the significance of assessing language development, which is essential in identifying challenges that learners may be facing and helping them to overcome so that they can develop their language skills and competencies.

In conclusion, this book provides a comprehensive understanding of applied linguistics considering the breadth of the contributions that include insights from experienced and distinguished researchers in the subject area. The book is an invaluable resource for curriculum developers in applied linguistics and is a must-read for students, language instructors, practitioners, and researchers who are keen on broadening their knowledge base and skills with regard to the subject of applied linguistics. There is, however, room for improvement in subsequent editions which could cover subjects such as the heritage of language education, and language education assessment which is essential applied linguistic components that are absent in the current edition. The edition may also contain any other emergent topics that may be associated with technology use in the learning and teaching of language. It is also recommended for readers of the book to consider reading it along with the journal article paper written by Swan (2018), which also covers the subject of applied linguistics albeit from the perspective of consumers. Future editions of the book would be enriched with the inclusion of this particular paper, which would then make it a complete and authoritative reference material for the subject of applied linguistics

https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5538-8290

Muhammad Fahruddin Aziz
Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Hukum Biak-Papua

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9678-2902

Herlandri Eka Jayaputri
Akademi Perikanan Kamasan Biak-Papua

References

Davies, A. (1999). *An introduction to applied linguistics: From practice to theory*. Edinburgh University Press.

Simpson, J., Harvey, L., & Wright, C. (2019). Introduction – Diversity in applied linguistics: Opportunities, challenges and questions. In *Voices and practices in applied linguistics: Diversifying a discipline* (pp. 1–10). White Rose University Press.

Swan, M. (2018). Applied linguistics: A consumer's view. *Language Teaching*, *51*(2), 246–261. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444818000058

STYLE GUIDE FOR THE AUTHORS

Please note that we are changing from APA 6th edition to newer 7th edition. Authors are requested to submit manuscripts formatted in APA style (*American Psychological Association*, 7th ed.).

All manuscripts must include an abstract in English (maximum of 250 words). After the abstract please provide keywords.

Main text: 12 Times New Roman
Long citations (more than 40 words): 10 Times New Roman, indent by 1 tab either side, one empty line above and below, no quotation marks.

1.5 spacing

Format of headings

The following table demonstrates how to format headings in APA Style.

Level	Format
1	**Centered, Bold, Title Case Heading** Text begins as a new paragraph.
2	**Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading** Text begins as a new paragraph.
3	***Flush Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading*** Text begins as a new paragraph.
4	**Indented, Bold, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period.** Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.
5	***Indented, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period.*** Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

Note. In title case, most words are capitalized.

In-text citations (examples):

Author's name and date in brackets:
The experience of critical incidents and effective reflection upon them allows teachers to control their classroom actions more consciously and create critical events (CE's), which were described earlier as intended, planned and controlled (Woods, 1993).
Woods (1993) believes that critical events are structured and occur in well-defined staged of conceptualization . . .

Two authors:
(Ballantyne & Packer, 1995)
As Ballantyne and Packer (1995) demonstrate …

Three authors:
(Barker, Callahan, & Ferreira, 2009)

Subsequent use:
(Barker et al., 2009)

Six authors or more:
Lorenz et al. (1998) argued…
(Lorenz et al., 1998)

Authors whose last names are the same:
(D. Francis, 1985; H. Francis, 2004)

Online sources (unpaginated), provide paragraph or section title instead:
(Peterson & Clark, 1978, para. 4)
(Moss, Springer, & Dehr, 2008, Discussion section, para. 1)

No author, provide shortened title:
("Primary Teachers Talking," 2007)
(*Reflective Practice*, 2005, pp. 12–25)

Secondary citations:
Smith (as cited in Maxx & Meyer, 2000) noted that "there is . . . ."

Citation within citation:
As it has been noted that "there is no relevance . . . (Smith, 2005)" (Maxx & Meyer, 2000, p. 129).

& vs. and:
As Smithson and Stones (1999) demonstrated. . .
. . . as has been shown (Smithson & Stones, 1999) . . .

References

Selected examples (for more consult APA manual 7th ed.):

Book, one author:
Goldberg, A. (2006). *Constructions at work*. Oxford University Press.

Book, two authors and more:
Jarvis, S., & Pavlenko, A. (2008). *Crosslinguistic influence in language cognition.* Routledge.

Translated book:
Freud, S. (1960). *Jokes and their relation to the unconscious.* (J. Strachey, Trans.). Routledge & K. Paul. (Original work published 1905).

Edited book:
Flowerdew, J., Brock, M., & Hsia, S. (Eds.). (1992). *Second language teacher education.* City Polytechnic of Hong Kong.

Chapter in an edited book:
Goldberg, A., & Casenhiser, D. (2008). Construction learning and second language acquisition. In P. Robinson & N. C. Ellis (Eds.), *Handbook of cognitive linguistics and second language* acquisition (pp. 197–215). Routledge.

Article in a journal:
Hammarberg, B. (2010). The languages of the multilingual. Some conceptual and terminological issues. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, 48*, 91–104.

Article online:

Tully, K., & Bolshakov, V. Y. (2010). Emotional enhancement of memory: How norepinephrine enables synaptic plasticity. *Molecular Brain,* 13 May. Retrieved from: http://www.molecularbrain.com/content/

Bakker, A. B., Hakanen, J. J., Demerouti, E., & Xanthopoulou, D. (2007). Job resources boost work engagement, particularly when job demands are high. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *99*(2), 274–284. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.99.2.274

Magazines online:

Miller, G. (2014, September 4). Cinematic cuts exploit how your brain edits what you see. *Wired*. Retrieved from: http://wired.com/

Smith, A. (2007, June 12). Dying languages. *The Western Star*. Retrieved from: http://www.thewesternstar.com/

Blog:

Palmer, P. (2001). Now I become myself. *Yes Magazine,* blog post, 31 May. Retrieved from: http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/working-for-life/now-i-become-myself

E-books:

Bolande, V. U. (1981). *On the psychology of humor*. Retrieved from: http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/ufdc/UFDC.aspx?n=palmm&c=psa1&m=hd2J&i=45367

Conference proceedings:

Souleles, N., & Pillar, C. (Eds.). (2014). Proceedings from the *First International Conference on the Use of iPads in Higher Education*. Paphos: Cyprus University of Technology.

Doctoral dissertation:

Churchwell, J. (2005). *Becoming an academic: Factors that influence a graduate student's identity commitment* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

Reachel, L. H. (2001). *Native languages and toponyms: Origins, meaning, and use* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest dissertation and theses database. (Document ID 1964749161).

Cover photo: “big_blue” by Max Iter (Retrieved from www.flickr.com)

Copy editing: Gabriela Marszołek
Proofreading: Joanna Zwierzyńska
Typesetting: Tomasz Kiełkowski, Marek Zagniński
Cover preparation for printing: Paulina Dubiel

Electronic version is the original one.
The journal was previously published in printed form with the
ISSN 2450-5455

The journal is distributed free of charge
ISSN 2451-2125

Published by
Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego
ul. Bankowa 12B, 40-007 Katowice
www.wydawnictwo.us.edu.pl
e-mail: wydawnictwo@us.edu.pl

First impression. Printed sheets: 14.75. Publishing sheets: 17.5.

About this book

Free copy