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Consolidation of Science Education in Ethnically Divided Postwar Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Abstract

Because of war and civil war on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, education in ethnically divided country has become fragmented. Because of postwar divisions thirteen different ministries of education or similar bodies are responsible for education, resulting in inefficiency and low quality. To overcome differences, a committee of experts has prepared an outcome-based common core curriculum for science education from preschool to the upper secondary school level. Since the working group comprised representatives from all major entities, ethnic and religious groups, and school levels, as well as teachers from Biology, Chemistry, Geography and Physics, a positive outcome for the consolidation of science education can be expected.

Keywords: Consolidation; science education; Bosnia and Herzegovina

I.Introduction

The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is a Southeastern European country situated in the Balkan Peninsula. It is a multi-ethnic state, with three main ethnic groups: 48% consider themselves Bosniaks, 37.1% Serbs, and 14.3% Croats. Considering religion, 40% of the population declare themselves Muslim, 31% Orthodox Christian and 15% Roman Catholic^[1]. Between 1992 and 1995, there was a war on the territory of BiH between the neighboring countries of Serbia and Montenegro, the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, as well as civil war between the Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats. During the war almost 100 000 people died not only in combat but also in ethnic clearings (e. g. Srebrenica), and about 2 million were displaced. The war ended after NATO intervention and the Dayton agreement of 1995.

Before the war and the 1991 declaration of independence the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was one of the six republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1945 – 1991), and local self-government for the whole territory was provided at the municipal level. After the Dayton agreement, the once-united republic and independent member state of the UN from 1992 was divided into two entities: the more centralized Republika Srpska (49% of territory) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (51% of territory), divided into ten cantons and the independent district of Brčko. At the third level, whole territory was divided among a number of municipalities. This division, based mostly on ethnic grounds, is nowadays the source of many problems and of inefficiency, which renders Bosnia and Herzegovina a fragile country, governed by “those having a limited capacity and/or political will to provide basic services to the population”^[2].

II.Sources of Fragility in Education

In former Yugoslavia’s educational system, only the institutional framework was common across all republics, but the content and language of teaching were left to the individual republics, a situation which was guaranteed

by the constitution. The educational backbone comprised 8 years of elementary school at primary and lower secondary levels (ISCED 1 and 2) which was obligatory for 7 – 15-year old students. Completion of elementary school allowed entrance to a 4-year general Gimnazija programme (upper secondary school) or a number of 2 to 4-year professional and vocational programmes (ISCED 3A, 3B and 3c), and eventually to higher education afterwards. The outcome of such a system was that each republic created its own curriculum, published its own textbooks and had at least one institution to provide a supply of elementary and subject teachers for each school subject. Based on the constitution, the major languages of instruction were Macedonian, Serbo-Croatian and Slovenian. In some parts of Yugoslavia, the languages of the constitutional non-slavic minorities were also used (Albanian, Hungarian and Italian). For historical reasons, two different scripts were used: the Cyrillic alphabet in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia, the Latin alphabet (with some differences between a number of letters) in Slovenia and Croatia, and both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. In the early eighties, there was a centralistic attempt to establish a common core content in education for all of Yugoslavia, with the leading idea that educational content - especially in history, geography and literary history - should be aligned with the percentage of the republics' territories and the size of national populations. The idea was opposed by intellectuals in some republics (especially Slovenia) and never came into effect.

Following the war on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina great changes, took place in the educational system, mostly based on nationalistic grounds. As an example, Serbo-Croatian, once treated as one language, split into three distinct languages: Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian. In accordance of the Dayton agreement, the educational system was decentralized. The argument that every child has the right to receive instruction in its mother tongue was used as a political excuse to break up the school system. As a result, not only the two entities but each canton and in some cases even community had formed its own ministry or similar body of education responsible for study programmes, syllabi and subject content. In total this makes 13 Ministries of Education on the territory of BiH with about 3.9 millions of inhabitants: ten cantonal ministries; Ministry of Science and Education of the Federation Bosnia and Herzegovina; Ministry of Education of Republika Srpska; Ministry of Education of District Brčko. The ministries only support elementary schools, while support for secondary schools is left to municipalities. Education thus become opaque because each educational entity produces its own educational system, feeding mostly on small differences. In extreme cases, in some cantons with ethnically mixed populations, as a legacy of these divisions there are nowadays in some municipalities two schools under the same roof, separated at ethnicity, each providing education by different curricula, using different syllabi and textbooks for similar subjects, and even forbidding teachers of a different nationality to teach in the “wrong” classroom. In addition, each ethnicity establishes its own parallel system for teacher education at a number of local Universities and Faculties. As a side effect the quality of education has suffered, yet internationally recognized comparisons are unavailable. The only reliable data are from the TIMSS 2007 Study, where their 8th- and 9th- graders' in achievements in mathematics and science were well below the group average^[3].

III. Attempts at Bridging the Gap

At some point practical considerations brought a recognition that such diversity in education does not produce quality and that some common core in education had to be established^[4]. As a turning point, decision was made that elementary school should change from 8 to 9 years, and that 70% of the content should be a common core at the state level, while 30% was left to the school's discretion. While the transition to 9-year schooling is now finished, transition to this 70:30 scheme is only beginning. As an illustration, owing to poor coordination and the lack of will, the transition to 9-year schooling was not introduced simultaneously at the level of the state but followed different schedules, and was accompanied by occasionally irrational obstacles. The agreement at the state level that all elementary schools would change their curricula from 8 years to 9 years

was signed in 2003. The introduction of these changes to different parts of the state took almost 10 years. The first entity introduced 9-year schooling by the 2004/05 school year, and the last two cantons by the 2012/13 school year. The differences were not only in pace, but also in different models being used. One encouraging example, demonstrating the will to bring some order to education, is the establishment of the Agency for Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education (APOSOS)^[5] in 2009 (on the basis of the 2007 Act) as an independent administrative organization, with its seat in Mostar and two administration units, one in Sarajevo and one in Banja Luka. The agency's mission is defined as a) establishment of standards and standards of assessment in pre- school, elementary and secondary school education, and b) development of a common core for syllabi and programmes. Based on its mission, the Agency started by developing an outcome-based common core for science in 2013, following development of an outcome-based common core for languages and the planned development of a common core for social sciences, mathematics, informatics and technology education. The process of developing a common core is by no means simple because all Ministries must approve every major step, which means unnecessary delays in a process accompanied by lack of funding. After preparation of the initial document(s) by experts designated by each Ministry, they must pass public debate and be approved by the Ministries again to be passed on to local Boards of Education, which are responsible for transferring the common core into syllabi. Such an introduction can last for years, but the good news is, that common ground for debate has been established.

IV. Development of an Outcome-Based Common Core in Science

Preparation of the outcome-based common core in science started with an initial meeting (following the activities of APOSOS to assure funds) at the Agency in Mostar in September 2013. At this meeting, outlines for future work were prepared with cooperation among APOSOS, a number of elected representatives from different regions and institutions in BiH and a visiting expert from Slovenia. Work continued in the form of three-day seminars with a great deal of "homework" in between. The working group was diverse in several ways, and each participant was simultaneously representative of several different groups from the region. The working group included representatives from APOSOS, both entities and all the cantons, of the three major nationalities, all three major religions, from pre-school, basic, elementary, and secondary schools, and boards of education, and, last but not least, teachers of Biology, Chemistry, Geography, Physics and Science both at basic and elementary levels. Altogether, about 40 persons were involved in the work on preparation of standards.

V. Structure of the Outcome-Based Common Core for Science Education

The key idea was that the common core should be prepared outside the common subject divide to provide cross-curricular and inter- and intra-subject connectivity and consistency. The innovation in comparison with the old syllabi was that the common core was prepared as a list of outcomes, and not as goals and objectives, which is the case in the existing documents. Each outcome is followed by well-defined indicators for different age levels, with benchmarks set at the end of pre-school education (age-5-6); after the first 3 years (age 8-9); after 6 years (age 11-12), at the end of elementary school (age 14-15), and at the end of 4-year general secondary school (age 18-19). The four content domains were as follows: 1) Earth, place of life; 2) Structure and functional connections between living beings and the non-living environment; 3) Structure of matter and energy conversion; 4) Humans – biological and societal beings. Each domain is further organized into four components, each covering different aspects and cognitive levels of teaching. Within these components are embedded competences defined for the purpose of the document according to EU framework of lifelong learning [5] as "a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context". For scientific literacy, the OECD definition^[6] was used, as "the capacity to use scientific knowledge, to identify questions

and to draw evidence-based conclusions in order to understand and help make decisions about the natural world and the changes made to it through human activity". Skills are understood as "the ability to do something that comes from training, experience, or practice" ^[7]. Typical examples of such skills are critical thinking and problem solving. Each component is structured into three to five learning outcomes. Outcomes in the document are written as statements with three characteristics: the activities must be student-oriented, observable and open to assessment. The first component of each domain consists of outcomes in terms of factual, procedural and conceptual knowledge, following Bloom's revised taxonomy ^[8]. The second component consists of outcomes, best described as practical work and experimentation, with the intention of developing procedural knowledge and skills. The third component comprises outcomes that contribute to the development of environmental literacy and positive attitudes towards science and society. The fourth component comprises outcomes that aim to develop communication and language skills.

VI. Conclusion

At this point, the common core curriculum for science education has passed public debate among teachers in all entities and cantons (more than 300 participants) and is on the way to being approved by the ministries and translated into all three official languages to be available to teachers and regional Boards of Education for translation into syllabi. The bad news is that complicated approval process could make this into a long-term process. The good news is that a sense of cooperation and the will to find solutions for science education were clearly expressed by all the participants regardless of their varied origin and backgrounds and that there was no opposition to the proposed common core among teachers in region.

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Teaching Feminist Wellness and Health Education in the Critical Classroom: Understanding Embodiment Using the Work of Feminist Philosophers

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Abstract

This paper highlights the importance of focusing on feminist philosophers who embrace notions of corporeality and visceral experience when teaching in the fields of both Health Science and Women's Studies. Understanding that canonical feminism and critical theory view studies of personal health as problematic amidst current racialized, gendered, and ableist norms, a feminist health teacher must unpack philosophical paradigms before being able to deliver truly audience-centered health messaging. Elizabeth Grosz and Luce Irigaray are two useful feminist philosophers for such an endeavor; this article highlights their primary relevant points. The central truth of embodiment - that it is both individually and socially constructed and has served historically as a site for oppression, means that a feminist study of physicality will always be complicated. Rather than rejecting the body or "using the master's tools" to distance ourselves from the corporeal in order to establish intellectual credibility, a forward-thinking feminist must find holistic ways to look at embodiment, linking mind, body, and spirit equal in importance.

Keywords: Feminist wellness; Health education; Critical classroom; Embodiment

Do you remember the first time you ran onto the soccer field? Do you remember experiencing glorious chills after a hilly run on a cold day? What about the first time you fell down hard off your bicycle? I remember these physical experiences putting me in touch with my body and making me feel like I really knew myself, and was proud of that version of subjectivity. The feeling was visceral and childish – it was joy.

Physicality has become a dirty word among many feminist scholars and fitness is considered a problematic concept in the world of Women's Studies. The truth is that health promotion in contemporary society can often be accused of working in diametric opposition to visceral, celebratory expressions of physicality. In this world, the body is a construct, a site of oppression and mandated experiences, with aesthetic expression seen as obedience to patriarchy. It is into this quagmire that Elizabeth Grosz wades to disrupt feminist notions of the body. Her text is aptly titled, *Volatile Bodies*, because such pursuits in feminist circles have long been unpopular. "Feminists, like philosophers, have tended to ignore the body or to place it in the position of being somehow

subordinate to and dependent for all that is interesting about it” (Grosz, p. 96, 1994).

A focus on the body as a lesser component of the self owes its erroneous assumption set to Descartes and humanist notions of mind/body duality. In this philosophy, the mind and intellect are elevated above the corporeal form. Traditionally, women were most closely associated with the natural and the physical, bound to their bodies and the physical realm by pregnancy and their natural cycles. Men endeavored to disconnect themselves from the base physical and pursue lofty inquiries; reason was characterized as a male attribute. In this triumph of dualistic thinking, men are masters of mind, culture, and masculinity. It is they who can use reason to master their passions, bodies, and objects of knowledge; unfortunately this positions women as mistresses of passion and emotion (Ramazanoglu, 2009).

This binary manifests itself in multiple arenas, but perhaps nowhere more noticeably than in the natural sciences, particularly the discourses of biology and medicine (Grosz, 1994). In the humanist-influenced natural sciences, the body becomes a target for essentialist thought. Feminists remain wary of discussions of subjectivity that attempt to link the body to socially-constituted experiences. In the face of this philosophy, Grosz argues that the body exerts influence even as it is influenced, and that being a body is something that we must come to accommodate psychically (Grosz, 1994). Grosz seems to advocate for embodied knowledge, even as she acknowledges the systems that corrupt notions of embodiment.

Grosz prefaces her analysis with a sincere acknowledgement of feminist theory’s historical resistance to focus on the physical. “ Women have been objectified and alienated as social subjects partly through the denigration and containment of the female body...patriarchal conceptions of the body have served to establish an identity for women in essentialist, ahistorical, or universalist terms ” (Grosz, p. 121, 1994). Because of this historical reality, feminists often approach discussions of the body from a defensive standpoint.

Constantly feeling combative has held feminists back at times from embracing new critical theories or accepting feminism in all its forms. There is an acceptable, canonical type of feminist academic and there are unacceptable outsiders who refuse to stick to the script. In her chapter on feminist besiegement narratives in *Rethinking Women’s and Gender Studies*, Allison Piepmeyer cogently argues, “the besiegement mindset becomes a tool that not only differentiates between the discipline and the outside world but that is used within the discipline to police its boundaries and ultimately hold it back from certain kinds of academic change ” (2012). For embattled feminists, the acceptable model of a card-carrying critical theorist is cerebral and not stereotypically-sexual; physical self care and celebration of the body are hardly emphasized.

In fact, physical-focus is considered a throwback, a concession to patriarchal beauty norms, and the province of the failed feminist. Feminist scholarship to date has been critical of discussions of bodily subjectivity in that those discussions are often used as a way of disciplining the body and conforming to hetero-normative notions of attractiveness and slimness. According to Verbrugge, the female body is more than simply a body, but is actually a site where social codes and relationships of gender, race, sexuality, and class are rehearsed, enforced, and contested (2002). Acknowledging this, many feminists seek to demonstrate resistance

by disconnecting from that bodily site. Feminists have generally accepted the wisdom that dominant beauty ideals are destructive to women; in order to resist beauty myths, many feminists eschew self care through physical movement altogether, and call it political.

So often, a focus on the physical is linked to pursuit of an aesthetic, with no focus on empowerment and strength. The National Eating Disorder Association estimates that 10 million Americans suffer from some form of disordered eating. A typical feminist look at anorexia would label it as a pattern of dangerous, disordered behaviors due to internalized compliance desires with patriarchal slenderness standards. Grosz breaks from that pattern, and sees anorexia as a form of protest, a castigation of a social system that belittles female embodiment as buttresses to her argument. Lacan highlights the connection between mental comfort/harmony and physical distress, which Grosz takes a step farther, arguing that patriarchal social norms that disconnect women from their true physical selves are the source of mental disharmony, manifesting in physical distress like anorexic behaviors.

Grosz spends a great deal of time looking at phenomenological thinkers who engaged in a reassessment of the role of the physical in cognitive science and traditional psychoanalytic work. Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the body as a primary site of knowing the world, a corrective to the long philosophical tradition of placing consciousness as the source of knowledge, was of particular interest. His central claim was that the body (the actual flesh) and that which it perceived (cognition and intellect) could not be disentangled from one another. He broke from humanist thought and this articulation of the primacy of embodiment led him away from phenomenology towards what he was to call the ontology of the flesh of the world.

The work of Luce Irigaray is particularly relevant in furthering Merleau-Ponty's direct ontological position. Physicality for women is a primary focus for Luce Irigaray's work. She argues that the historic association of women with matter and nature has been meant to keep them in a subordinate position. Irigaray critiques male phenomenological thinkers who may make contributions to a re-centering of the body, but adhere to old notions of the male representing the whole (Irigaray, 1974).

By associating the feminine with nature, philosophy has devalued the female subject position and sought to shore up nonexistent differences between the sexes. The rejection and exclusion of a female imaginary places women in a conundrum on the issue of physicality. She is in the position of experiencing herself only fragmentarily, confined to the liminal spaces of dominant ideology (Irigaray, 1981). In a sense, Irigaray strives to reclaim the physical as valuable and as gender-neutral. Irigaray encourages women to ironically mock the notion that their physicality is errant or insubstantial on some level. By speaking logically about notions that women are illogical, or embracing physicality when it is demeaned or degraded by others, women combat harmful norms and create new spaces for all persons.

Tamsin Lorraine expands on Irigaray's work in her text, *Experiments in Visceral Philosophy*. She uses Irigaray's notion of the feminine other to construct a notion of embodied subjectivity (Lorraine, 1999). This embodied subject is a unified project, a socially significant, conceptual, corporeal self whose dynamic process is

always a result of the tension between soma and psyche (Lorraine, 1999). Lorraine joins the chorus of feminist challengers of the philosophical notion of a mind-body split, and reads Irigaray as calling for heightened awareness of this relationship.

The complex interaction between thought, emotion, and physicality has spawned a field of research known as psychoneuroimmunology, which works on empirically validating the interrelatedness of the human mind, body, and spirit. The power of emotion to affect the body's physiology is fascinating, and is no longer the sole province of esoteric Eastern medicine, as increased attention and emphasis is being placed on integrative medicine (Seaward, 2004). Grosz analyzes the work of neurologists who have delved into this arena, and applies their findings to larger notions of bodily understanding in the social and philosophical environment, citing the thoroughgoing community between psychical and organic processes (Grosz, 1994).

A person then, is keenly invested in the concept of their body as psychically and socially constructed, and this exerts physiological influence on that body. Cultivating awareness of social pressure and constructs is a key first step to expanding notions of embodiment. Grosz discusses the phenomenon of phantom limbs to highlight this point, which operate as a psychical attempt to reactivate a past body image in place of the present reality. She asks her readers to draw a corollary between patriarchal oppression and the body images held by women (Grosz, 1994).

The central truth of embodiment, that it is both individually and socially constructed, and has served historically as a site for oppression, means that a feminist study of physicality will always be complicated. Rather than rejecting the body or "using the master's tools" to distance ourselves from the corporeal in order to establish intellectual credibility, a forward-thinking feminist must find holistic ways to look at embodiment, linking mind, body, and spirit as of equal importance.

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Relationship between Facebook Practice and Academic Performance of University Students

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Abstract

Higher education institutions have great fear that student academic performance might affect adversely because students are paying more attention towards social networking sites. This study examined the relationship between facebook practice on academic performance of students. A cross- sectional survey was conducted from March 2012 to March 2013 in Jimma University and 490 postgraduate students were participated in this research. The data were collected using a pre-tested structured self administrated questionnaire. The result was analyzed in terms of descriptive statistics followed by inferential statistics. The results indicated that there is no significant relation between usage time and frequency of login facebook with student GPA. Even if there is not significant relation between their personal Laptop, Office Computers and Library Computers used to visit facebook and academic performance of students, there is negative, moderate and significant relation between using mobile phone to visit facebook and students academic performance.

Keywords: Facebook practice; University students; Academic performance

I.Introduction

Social media are a collection of internet websites, service and practices that help collaboration, community building, participation and sharing information (Junco,Heiberger and Loken, 2010). A major category of social media activity is called social networking (Junco,Heiberger and Loken, 2010; Junco and Mastrodicasa,2007). The use of social networking sites has been widespread through the world (Banquil et. al, 2009).

Currently, there are dozens of social networking websites available online, each with its own special something to offer its members (Hudson Horizons,2011), but Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and LinkedIn have become the most visited social networking sites in the world (Haridakis and Hanson,2009). Among these facebook is the most popular social networking site. In 2009, it has more than 350 million users (Kirschner and Karpinski, 2010).

In Ethiopia, among social networking sites, facebook has been the prime among highly visited social networking sites (Jibat,2012). Based on Internet World Status (Internet world status,2012) in Ethiopia , in December 2012 among 960,331 total internet users, 902,440 have facebook account and most user age between 25-34(Staffer,2012).

Social networking sites have become and integrals part of higher education students (Junco,2011). Mastrodicasa and Kopic (2005) study also showed that 85% of students who are learning in large research Universities in USA have facebook account. In recent years, higher educational institutions have great fear that students academic performance might affect adversely because students are paying more attention towards

social networking sites. In developed countries this area grasps researchers' attention but in developing countries like Ethiopia, it is unexplored area.

II.Objective

- 1.To examine the relationship between times spend on facebook and academic performance of students.
- 2.To examine the relationship between the devices used to login facebook and academic performance of students.

III. Method

A cross- sectional survey was conducted from March 2012 to March 2013 in Jimma University. The target population of this study was all postgraduate students who were attending their education in Jimma University during the study time. The reason why only post graduate students included in the study that most facebook users in Ethiopia are within age range between 24-34(Staffer,2011). Based on information obtained from University Registrar office most post graduate students are in this range rather undergraduate student. A list of 675 students obtained from the Registrar office of Jimma University. The sample size of the study was determined by a single population proportion formula assuming, 5% marginal error and confidence interval of 95%. The fifty percent proportion has been preferred due to lack of similar studies in Ethiopia and accordingly the sample size was calculated to be 384. The final sample size was calculated by using finite population number correction formula, a design effect of 2 was considered to have adequate and representative sample size and 10% was added for non- response rate. Thus, the final sample size calculated was 539. In order to select representative respondents, stratified random sampling technique was employed. First, 5 Colleges and 2 Institutes in the university namely: Jimma Institute of Technology, College of Social Sciences and Law, College of Public Health and Medical Sciences, College of Natural Sciences, College of Business and Economics, College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine and Institute of Education and Professional Development Studies considered as strata. After determining the total sample size of the study, by using Proportionate allocation strategy the number of samples from each collage was determined. Finally, respondents were selected randomly by using lottery method. The data were collected using a pre-tested structured self administrated questionnaire. Most ingredients of questionnaire were adapted and taken from the research report of Kirschner and Karpinski (2010), Junco(2011) Moon(2012) and Ahmed and Qazi(2011). Validity evidence for the instrument was provided by review the questioners on: clarity in wording, relevance of the items clarity of instruction, absence of biased words and phrases, use of Standard English and formatting (Flower, 2002). The questionnaire was reviewed by two Ph.D candidates in Information Technology and Psychology fields. To measure the reliability of the questionnaire, the questionnaire was pre-tested on 25, graduate students who attended their education in College of Business and Economics before the start of actual data collection and the cronbach alpha of the questionnaire was 0.75. The student who were participated in pilot study were excluded from the main study to avoid bias because of repeating the same questionnaire Appropriate modification of the questionnaire was done based on the experience of the pretest. The cronbach alpha of the post-test administration was 0.83. Values of 0.70 or greater are considered adequate for a scale that will be used to analyze associations (Garson, 2006).

This study used SPSS version 16.0 to perform the statistical analysis. Aside from basic descriptive analytic technique, the main analytic technique implemented was Person Product Moment Correlation to examine the relationship between Facebook practice with academic performance. The significance level used for the inferential statistics was 0.05.

IV.Results

A total of 490 questionnaires were returned from 539 questionnaires distributed to respondents. The response rate of the questionnaire was 91%. Four hundred seventy two (96%) of the respondents were male, the remain 18(4%) were female. Most of participant 485(99%) were master degree students, the remain 5(1%) were Ph.D students. Three hundred ninety Four (80%) respondents were facebook users while 96(20%) respondents were non - users. The majority of respondents visit facebook by their Mobile Phones 176(45%) and their Personal Laptops 172 (43%). A few students use their Office Computers 14(4%) and Library Computers ' 32(8%) to visit facebook respectively.

Table 1. Respondents' Personal Information and Facebook Usage (N=490)

Personal Information	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	472	96
Female	18	4
Admission Classification		
Master	485	99
Ph.D	5	1
College of attending their education		
Public health and Medical	222	45
Jimma Institute of technology	33	7
Agricultural and Veterinary Medicine	91	19
Social Science and Law	49	11
Natural Science	46	9
Business and Economic College	38	8
Institute of Education and professional development studies	11	2
Facebook Usage		
User	394	80
Non-User	96	20
A device used frequently to visit facebook		
Personal Laptop Computers	172	43
Mobile Phones	176	45
Office computers	32	8
Library computers	14	4

Table 2 shows that age range of the respondent was 20-49 old with mean age was 25. The mean of the student's GPA was 3.48 (SD=0.61). The mean time of students spend on facebook was 2.31(SD=0.43) hours per day. Furthermore, the mean amount of face book login frequency were 3(SD=0.51) times per day.

Table 2 descriptive statistics age, academic performance and face book activities (N=394)

Independent Variables	Students' Cumulative GPA
Time spend on Facebook	0.25
Frequency of login Facebook	0.31
Mobile Phone	-0.48**
Personal Laptop	0.41
Office Computers	0.38
Library computers	0.52

**P<0.05

V. Discussion

The result of the study indicated that most students use their personal Laptops and Mobile phone to visit Facebook. This finding also consistent with previous research done in the United State (Ahmed and Qazi,2011). The result also indicted that the students spent substantial amount of time on facebook (2.31hours per day). Even if the students are not facebook addicted but it is much higher than reported by Golub and Miloloza (2010), Kischner and Karpinski (2010), Pempeket. al (2009) and closer to averages reported by Junco(10). Literatures indicated that that a person who spends more than 171munites per day considered as internet addicted person (ChildInternational, 2006). A possible explanation for the higher average time spend on social networking sites due to most students have visited social networking sites by using their personal Laptops and mobile phones and these create the opportunity to use social networking site for a long hours. The result of the study also indicated that student's login facebook approximately a mean of 3 times per day. Compare to previous research report done by Junco (2010) mean of 6 times per day, the frequency of login in facebook per day were low.

The correlation result indicated that there is no significant relation between time spend on facebook with students' GPA. This finding is also in line with the findings of study conducted in Pakistan. In the study conducted in Pakistan, on 6 universities, on 1000 students. The result indicated that there is no significant relationship between time spend on social networking sites and students GPA (Ahmed and Qazi,2011).

On the other hand using mobile phone to login facebook has a negative, moderate and significant relationship with students GPA. Previous researches also indicated that mobile internet users are vulnerable to multitasking, using facebook in conjunction with studying (Gloub and Miloloza,2010) and multitasking activities are negatively associated with students' GPA (Ellis, Daniels and Jauregui,2010). Previous studies also indicated that Multitasking activities not only affect study times but also it reduce brain's ability to effectively retrieve information (Gloub and Miloloza,2010).

VI. Conclusion

Higher education institutions have blocked facebook because they fear that time spend on facebook might affect academic performance of students but the result of the study clearly show that there is no relationship between time spend on facebook and student academic performance. Based on this finding, blocking facebook is not solution because students can easily access facebook by their mobile phones and using mobile phone to access facebook might have created a problem on their academic performance by fostering students engaged in multitasking activates. The result of the study also indicated that there is a negative moderate and significant relationship between using mobile to visit facebook and student GPA. Therefore, it is highly recommendable that higher education institutes like: Universities, Colleges should foster students to use face book for educational purpose by providing proper arrangements and training rather blocking the site.

Finally, it is very important undertake further research in area of how mobile internet and multi-tasking activities affects students academic performance on large samples of students from different universities.

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A Survey of the Roles of Supervisors of Students' Research in Kogi State College of Education: Ankpa, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examined the “Roles of Supervisors of Students’ Research in Kogi State College of Education, Ankpa.” The study sought answers to three research questions as follows: What is the mean rating of students about the role of research supervisors? What is the difference between the mean rating of students about the male and female research supervisors? What differences exist between the mean ratings of male and female students about the role of research supervisors? In addition, the study tested one null hypothesis. Two hundred and thirty nine (239) final year students of the college were randomly sampled for the study, that is, those admitted into the college in 2011/2012 academic session. The instrument for data collection was an eighteen item questionnaire designed by the researcher and validated by three lecturers in the department of psychology in the college. The instrument was administered personally by the researcher and collected the very day of administration. This therefore, ensured 100 percent returned rate. The data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test statistical tools. The results of the study included that supervisors of students’ research in KSCOE, Ankpa, are knowledgeable about research, do not demand material gifts, money and sex from their supervisees but that they are harsh and not friendly with the supervisees and again that they do not direct supervisees to where they could locate materials that could help them for the work. These lapses therefore, provided the basis for the recommendations that were put forward.

Keywords: Roles; Supervisors; Students/supervisees; Research; College of Education

I.Introduction

Students in Colleges of Education (COE) in Nigeria are required among others, to earn at least 56 credits to qualify for graduation. This includes 36 credits in the General Education courses, 6 credits in Teaching Practice (TP) and 14 credits in General Studies Education (GSE) (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2002). The status of the education courses to be offered is basically two namely: compulsory and elective. The elective courses are optional and students have choices but the compulsory courses are not.

Research which is otherwise known as project is coded Education 323 and is one of the compulsory subjects or courses that all students in the college must have to offer to be able to graduate. This course is carried out mostly as field work and students are expected on completion to present formal reports oftentimes bounded and are made to defend this work before a Research Committee set up by the college.

The students are permitted to carry out this research either in education or in any of the students’ major teaching subject areas. Regardless of where the research is carried out, the score is to be recorded in education as part of the compulsory 36 credits a student is to earn in education (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2002). The students are expected to carry out this research under the close supervision of qualified academic staff of the department or those in education.

These supervisors are expected to guide their supervisees and moderate their topics and works. They are to provide instructions that will eliminate or reduce barriers to students' efforts in this regard as is with the learning of other subjects (Millis, undated). The relationships between the supervisor and the supervisee matter a great deal for the successful execution of the research or project. For instance, Lewis (undated) noted that social/emotional support within consistent long-term school relationships could significantly improve performance. Lewis therefore, expected that teachers (supervisors) should work to establish an environment that encourages respect for the individual student voice. But the presence of effective communication skills is not a reality in most schools (Bamburg, 1994). According to Bamburg, evidence abound that low teacher expectations for students can negatively affect student performance.

There are advantages enunciated by Echter (2002) in teachers having personal relationships with their students. To Echter, it makes the students feel accepted, and to also feel safe, safe to talk, safe to fail and also that they feel understood. Does this relationship that promote learning by recognizing and encouraging individual's worth actually exist between student researchers and their supervisors in Kogi State College of Education (KSCOE), Ankpa?

Close interactions with students as subject teachers and as their supervisors revealed that students fear Education 323 (research/project) more than they feared any other teaching subjects that they offer in the college (Omede & Odiba, 2003). This fear may not be far from the attitude of some supervisors that are bent on making the exercise bitter and uphill for the supervisees by unnecessarily delaying their works and sometimes use the opportunity to exploit them. This fear oftentimes had made many students to contract their projects to a more superior hands, or replicate verbatim projects previously carried out by other students in the college or other related sister colleges.

What this means is that these students have lost the skills and enthusiasm for research. But could this fear be theoretical or real? Does it stem from factors resident in the students or the supervisors or both? It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the role of project supervisors particularly those of Kogi State College of Education (KSCOE), Ankpa.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the roles of supervisors of students' research in KSCOE, Ankpa. Specifically, the study analyzed the:

1. Mean ratings of students about the roles of research supervisors in KSCOE, Ankpa
2. Differences between the mean ratings of students about the roles of male and female research supervisors
3. Differences between the mean ratings of male and female students about the roles of research supervisors

Research Question

The study was guided by three main questions thus:

1. What is the mean rating of students about the role of research supervisors?
2. What is the difference between the mean rating of students about the male and female research supervisors?
3. What differences exist between the mean ratings of male and female students about the role of research supervisors?

Research Hypothesis

One null hypothesis was formulated and tested at .05 level of significance

HO: The mean responses of both the male and female students will not differ significantly on a test that examines the roles of research supervisors

II. Method

This study was a survey intended to examine the roles of project supervisors. The subject for the study consisted of 1520 final year Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) students of KSCOE, Ankpa. These set of students were admitted into the college in 2011/2012 academic sessions. Out of this population, 239 were sampled for the study through stratified random sampling procedure.

The instrument that was used to collect data was designed by the researcher. The instrument was titled “Instrument Examining Supervisors’ Roles (IESR)”. IESR was a five-point likert questionnaire divided into two sections- A & B with a total of 18 question items on the roles and expectations of supervisors by their supervisees. The validation of the instrument was done by three academic staff members from the department of Educational Psychology of the college. The test of reliability was carried out using 80 NCE 3 students of a sister College of Education within the same town-Alkhima College of Education. The scores were correlated using split-half method and $r = 0.88$ was obtained for the instrument.

The administration of the instrument was done personally by the researcher. The sampled subjects were collected into a large hall and the instruments were administered on them. The return rate was 100% as the completed instruments were collected immediately.

Analyzes of the collected data was done using mean, standard deviations and t-test statistical tools. The mean and standard deviations analyzed the research questions while t-test was used for the null hypothesis raised. Since it was a five- point rating scale instrument of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, the acceptance score for each item was 3.0 and above. Any mean score below 3.0 was considered not quiet influential and so seen as negative.

III. Results

Data analyzes in this study were done in line with the research questions raised and the null hypothesis formulated.

Research question 1: What is the mean rating of students about the role of research supervisors?

The answer to this question is shown on table 1.

Table 1: Students’ mean ratings about research supervisors in KSCOE, Ankpa

S/N	Items	Total scores	Pop.	- X	SD
1	My supervisor corrects my errors harshly	717	239	3.00	1.03
2	Criticizes me without showing me the correct thing to do	656	239	2.74	0.95
3	Delays my work for a long time on his/her table	738	239	3.08	1.09
4	I may not finish the work before the end of 2 nd semester because of how he/she delays me	676	239	2.82	1.13
5	My supervisor is not friendly at all	657	239	2.74	1.05
6	I am afraid each time I approach him/her for my file	723	239	3.02	1.11
7	I visit other lecturers to explain some of his/her comments to me	696	239	2.91	1.06
8	Doesn’t assist me with relevant materials	743	239	3.10	1.21
9	My supervisor looks for gifts (money, material, sex) from me	682	239	2.85	1.10

10	He/she is deliberately frustrating me	660	239	2.75	1.08
11	I am lucky, my supervisor does the writing of the project for me at a price	626	239	2.61	0.98
12	My supervisor wants to type the finished work for me at a price	637	239	2.66	1.00
13	My supervisor is not knowledgeable in research	581	239	2.42	0.85
14	I did not learn any new thing in research from my supervisor	642	239	2.68	0.94
	Total	9434		39.38	14.58
	Grand Mean			2.81	1.04

Source: Survey, Q1-14, N=239

Table one is the ratings of respondents/supervisees on the activities of their supervisors in Research coded Education 323. The respondents' ratings on items 1, 3, 6, and 8 ranges between 3.00 and 3.10 and they are indictment on the supervisors. The respondents accepted that their supervisors do not correct them politely and that they delay their works for long in their offices. Items 6 and 8 equally reported that supervisees are afraid of their supervisors because they are not friendly and that they do not assist them with relevant materials for their works (research). Their reactions to the remaining ten items were negative with ratings that range between 2.42 and 2.96. The respondents rejected that their supervisors criticize them without showing them what they are to do ($X=2.74$), may not finish the work before the college dead line ($X=2.82$). The respondents also rejected that they visited other lecturers for explanations because of the uncompromising attitude of their supervisors ($X=2.85$) and that their supervisors do not look for gifts or sex from them ($X=2.85$).

The grand mean of 2.81 shows that the respondents have rejected most negative expressions about the practices or roles of lecturers that supervise students doing the research in Kogi State College of Education (KSCOE), Ankpa.

Research question2: What is the difference between the mean rating of students about the male and female research supervisors?

The answer to this question is on table 2

Table 2: Respondents' ratings about male and female supervisors

S/N	Items	Total	N	- X	SD
15	Male supervisors are more thorough than the female supervisors	709	239	2.96	1.23
16	Male supervisors demand gifts from their supervisees more than the female supervisors	694	239	2.90	1.22
17	Male supervisors are more approachable than the female supervisors	818	239	3.42	1.28
18	I prefer male project supervisors to female project supervisors	809	239	3.38	1.32
	Total	3030		12.66	5.05
	Grand mean			3.17	1.26

Source: Survey Q15-18, N=239

Table 2 shows that out of the four (4) items that sought information about the roles of male and female supervisors comparatively, two (2) items-16 and 17-with mean ratings of ($X=2.96$ and $X=2.90$) respectively were rejected. The remaining two (2) items-18 and 19-were rated positive and accepted. The respondents rejected that

male supervisors are more thorough than the female supervisors and also that male supervisors do not demand gifts from their supervisees more than the female supervisors. The respondents however accepted that the male supervisors are more approachable than the female supervisors and that they preferred male supervisors to female supervisors.

Research question 3: What differences exist between the mean ratings of male and female students about the role of project supervisors? The answer to this question is reflected on table 3.

Table 3: Mean ratings of male and female students about the roles of research supervisors

S/N	Items	Male Respondents			Female Respondents		
		- X	Pop	SD	- X	Pop	SD
1	My supervisor corrects my errors harshly	2.95	121	1.05	3.04	118	1.01
2	Criticizes me without showing me the correct thing to do	2.57	121	0.91	2.91	118	0.96
3	Delays my work for a long time on his/her table	3.09	121	1.10	3.08	118	1.08
4	I may not finish the work before the end of 2 nd semester because of how he/she delays me	2.76	121	1.12	2.89	118	1.14
5	My supervisor is not friendly at all	2.76	121	1.01	2.76	118	1.08
6	I am afraid each time I approach him/her for my file	2.95	121	1.10	3.09	118	1.11
7	I visit other lecturers to explain some of his/her comments to me	2.99	121	1.07	2.83	118	1.04
8	Doesn't assist me with relevant materials	3.10	121	1.22	3.11	118	1.19
9	My supervisor looks for gifts (money, material, sex) from me	2.78	121	1.13	2.93	118	1.06
10	He/she is deliberately frustrating me	2.66	121	1.00	2.85	118	1.15
11	I am lucky, my supervisor does the writing of the project for me at a price	2.54	121	0.93	2.69	118	1.02
12	My supervisor wants to type the finished work for me at a price	2.56	121	0.92	2.77	118	1.08
13	My supervisor is not knowledgeable in research	2.35	121	0.76	2.50	118	0.94
14	I did not learn any new thing in research from my supervisor	2.72	121	0.92	2.64	118	0.95
15	Male supervisors are more thorough than the female supervisors	3.07	121	1.28	2.85	118	1.18
16	Male supervisors demand gifts from their supervisees more than the female supervisors	2.89	121	1.25	2.91	118	1.19
17	Male supervisors are more approachable than the female supervisors	3.46	121	1.31	3.38	118	1.24

18	I prefer male project supervisors to female project supervisors	3.50	121	1.33	3.26	118	1.31
		51.70		19.41	52.49		19.73
		2.87		1.08	2.92		1.10

Source: Survey Q1-18, N=239

Table 3 reveals analyzes of male and female respondents. From the table, the male respondents had mean scores of 3.00 and above in five (5) items namely, 3, 8, 15, 17 and 18. For the female respondents' scores of 3.00 and above were in six (6) items, 1, 3, 6, 8, 17 and 18. Similarly, while the male respondents rated supervisors below 3.00 in thirteen (13) items, the female respondents' rated them on twelve (12) items. The items of common agreements between these two categories of respondents are Fifteen (15) out of eighteen (18). Items of differences were just three (3) 1, 6 and 15. Items one and six that were rejected by the male respondents were accepted by their female counterparts. Conversely, while the male respondents accepted item 15 ($X=3.07$) the female respondents rejected it ($X=2.85$).

HO: The mean responses of both the male and female students will not differ significantly on a test that examines the roles of research supervisors

The result of the test of significance is shown on table 4

Table 4: T-test analysis of gender on the roles of supervisors of Education 323 (student's project)

Source of variation	Pop	-	SD	DF	Cal. t	Critical-t
Male	121	2.87	1.08	237	-0.45	1.652
Female	118	2.92	1.10			

$P < 0.05$, Decision: Not Significant (NS)

IV. Discussions

This study reveals that supervisors do supervision of students' projects commendably. The responses of students rejecting twelve (12) items out of eighteen (18) that are negative expressions about the roles of supervisors lend support to this claim. Their responses show that lecturers of Kogi State College of Education, Ankpa assigned to supervise students' projects, correct them by showing them the correct things to do, do not look for gifts either money, material or sex from the students, allow students to execute the projects themselves and demonstrate to their supervisees that they are knowledgeable in research.

This finding particularly that supervisors do not demand gifts (material, money or sex) from their supervisees is contrary to popular opinion that supervisors make merchandize of the opportunity by exploiting their students/supervisees. The mean of 2.85 on table 1, even though negative does not mean that this practice is non-existent anyway. They exist but the operation is clandestine. Some students give gifts to some supervisors to buy their loyalties, some give as a mark of appreciation after the works are done while some lecturers disgracefully demand that supervisees remunerate them. In whatever form that these gifts exchange hands, they are illicit and don't have the support of the college authority.

In as much as the efforts of supervisors are commendable, the study however revealed that there are aspects that they are found wonton. They correct their supervisees impolitely ($X=3.00$), delays their files for long before assessment ($X=3.08$), supervisees are afraid of them ($X=3.02$) and they don't assist or direct their supervisees to where they could locate relevant materials for the works ($X=3.10$) (Source: Table 1, items 1, 3, 7 & 8). These findings are in conformity with the observation of Omede and Odiba (2003) that students fear writing of projects more than any other subject in the college. This fear may be due to the unfriendly attitude of some lecturers supervising these students. This fear as Omede and Odiba (2003) noted had driven students to contract out projects to more skillful hands, or adopted finished works of others in another institutions of learning or even the same institutions provided they are not caught. This unfriendly attitude is to be discontinued because according

to Mills (undated), teachers are to provide instructions that will eliminate or reduce barriers to students' efforts. Supervisees needed to be guided and directed to materials that could be of assistance to them for finishing the work in record time.

The relationship between supervisors and supervisees need to be enhanced to promote learning as noted by Echter (2002) and Lewis (undated). When there is a friendly relationship, students will then feel accepted, and to also feel safe, safe to talk, safe to fail and also that they feel understood (Echter, 2002).

The study further revealed that male supervisors are more preferable to female supervisors because they are more approachable (Source: Table 2, Q17 and 18). This, I think agrees with the popular opinion that most female administrators or workers are considered more thorough, more honest, and more difficult because they always insist that correct things be done. This insistence is always opposed by many people that want to cut corners and so would want to avoid them if they had the opportunity. However, the difference in rating of students about the male and female supervisors do not differ significantly (Table 4).

V. Conclusion

The ratings of supervisees of their supervisors in a course called Education 323 in Kogi State College of Education, Ankpa indicated that supervisors are knowledgeable, do not use the opportunity to exploit the students, and don't have the intention to deliberately frustrate the students. Most supervisees were sure that they would complete the research before the stipulated time by the college for oral defense. In as much as the efforts of supervisors are commended in these areas pointed out, there were proves of unfriendliness between them and their supervisees as they corrected their errors harshly, would not direct students to places where they could locate relevant materials and delayed supervisees' files on their tables for long. This unfriendly attitude of teachers/supervisors can hinder effective learning and performance of students and therefore, recommendations are that supervisors:

1. Should be friendlier with their supervisees. When they are harsh at students, it will scare them away and it will hinder them from learning effectively. No matter the pressure of works, teachers are to model behaviors that would encourage students to learn effectively. Any behavior from the teacher that keeps learners at bay could hinder effective learning and so should be guided against. In addition, female supervisors should make themselves more accessible to their supervisees by breaking down the erected imaginary barriers between them and their students/supervisees.

2. Should guide supervisees to where they could get appropriate materials and information that could ease and facilitate the completion of their works. If the supervisor has relevant materials, he/she should not hesitate to assist the supervisees. For fear that the materials could be lost, proper documentation should be made and the student strongly instructed to handle the materials cautiously.

3. Should make time to assess students' files with minimum delay. Students have time frame to commence and finish the work. If supervisors are mindful of this and ensure that the students finish in good time it will be good for the student researchers. A situation where supervisors get serious close to stipulated deadline will put their supervisees under intense pressure and this will not help the students.

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Spelling-Sound Discrepancy and its Effect on Memory of New Words in L2

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine whether type of grapheme–phoneme discrepancy (having a silent letter vs. having a wrong letter) had differential effects on memory of the phonological forms of new words and their processing rate in a L2 with a different script from the L1. To this purpose, 20 Persian speaking learners of English participated in a two phased experiment. First participants were divided into two groups and received 17 pseudowords including 5 with a silent letter, 6 with a wrong letter, and 6 with congruent graphemes and phonemes. They saw a picture showing the concept the item expressed and the written form underneath, and they listened to the phonological forms of the items. Then they received an auditory matching memory test in which they had to match the auditory name of the item with the correct picture. The pseudowords were presented through the Microsoft Power point software (2013) and the memory test was presented through the DMDX software (Forster & Forster, 2003). The paired samples t test was used to compare the performances on silent and wrong letter items. The results showed no effect of item type on accuracy and processing time. In other words, no difference was found for retrieving the correct meaning of the two different types of grapheme-phoneme discrepancies. The findings indicate that when learners learn a new language with a different script they may not pay a lot of attention to the written form, especially when the retrieval task requires the learners to focus on the meaning and not the spelling of the words. Therefore, presenting or depriving the learners from the writing form does not make a big difference for learners in the early stages of learning new words.

Keywords: Orthography; Phonology; L2 word learning; Accuracy; Processing time

1.Introduction

The relationship between the orthographic and phonological forms of words varies across languages. Languages like Serbo-Croatian (Katz & Feldman, 1981) allow transparent relationship between the two. It means that grapheme–phoneme relationship is consistent and invariant. Therefore, the pronunciation of a novel word can be predicted by a relatively small set of rules. In English, however, the correspondence between spelling and sound is not transparent and there is not a perfect relationship between phonemes and graphemes representing those sounds. A phoneme can be realized by many different graphemes (e.g., /aI/ in mine, pie, and my), and a grapheme can also be realized by many different phonemes (e.g., the letter a in fate, pat, and wash). Besides, some letters are not pronounced (e.g., knight, psychology) while others might have wrong pronunciations (e.g., pizza, Xerox).

Although identification of written or printed words begins with the visual processing of letter symbols, there is substantial evidence that the phonological information behind the orthographic representations plays a crucial role in the process. In early studies, it was revealed that recoding of orthography to phonology occurs during or even before readers' access to the lexical entries of visually presented words. (Bernet & Perfetti, 1995; Brysbaert, 2001; Drieghe & Brysbaert, 2002).

Orthographically presented words have been shown to activate phonological information, which is then used in identifying words and hence their meanings. In semantic categorization tasks where participants are asked to decide whether a particular word is a member of a semantic category (e.g., FLOWER), participants are more likely to commit false positive errors for homophone controls (e.g., ROWS) and pseudo-homophones (e.g., ROWZ) than for a spelling-matched control (e.g., ROBS, in Van Orden, Pennington, & Stone, 1990). This indicates that words that share phonological representations are confusable because identification of visually presented words depends on the phonological information readers access in orthographic words.

In Ota, Hartsuiker and Haywood (2009), three groups of participants including native speakers of English, Japanese, and Arabic were asked to do a semantic-relatedness judgment task on some English words. Native speakers of English were less accurate and slower in rejecting pairs that contained a word with a homophone related to the other member of the pair (e.g., MOON-SON) in comparison to spelling controls (e.g., MOON-SIN). This was also the case with the nonnative speakers of English, demonstrating that the phonology of L2 words is being processed in L2 visual word recognition too. The nonnative participants also exhibited homophone-like effects in judging pairs that contained a word differed phonologically from a related word by a segmental contrast missing in their L1. The results of this study show that not only phonological mediation can take place in bilingual visual word recognition but also that the phonology of L1, in addition to that of the L2, is active in the silent reading of L2 words.

It is worth and vital that orthographic knowledge modifies the nature of the mentally stored phonological information, and that the influence of orthography on spoken word processing arises indirectly from this phonological representation (e.g., Peereman et al., 2009; Perre et al., 2009). A description of how orthography might be included in the phonological system is given by Taft (2006b), who proposes an abstract phonological level of representation directly reflecting the pronunciation of the spelling of the word (i.e., an orthographically influenced phonological representation or "OIP"). For example, the word *corn* is represented at the OIP level with a post-vocalic r (i.e., /korn/) even for non-rhotic speakers of English who do not pronounce the postvocalic r [kɔ:n]. The evidence comes from the fact that non-rhotic English speakers find it hard to recognize the homophony of a pseudohomophone that conflicts with its base word in terms of a post-vocalic r (Taft, 2006). For example, many non-rhotic speakers do not realize *cawn* is homophonic with *corn* unless they read it aloud. This implies that the representation of *or* and *aw* do not match in the underlying phonological system, and only coincide at the surface phonetic level.

As mentioned before, most research studies show the mediation of phonological knowledge in orthographic knowledge in word recognition and meaning retrieval. However, when it comes to learning new words in L2, the nature of interaction between the two systems might be questioned. Do L2 learners pay attention to the orthographic representation and use it as a cue for learning new words and their meaning retrieval later, especially when there is no one to one relationship between the phonological and orthographic representation? The issue is worth studying as research shows the mediation of phonological knowledge in word recognition and meaning retrieval in many cases. In fact, the question would be if orthography can be an important factor in

learning new words in L2 and if the discrepancy between the phonological and orthographic knowledge can make a difference. In a nutshell, this study will provide grounds for investigating whether it is better to teach the spelling of new words along with the phonological representation when there is a discrepancy between the two. The following research questions are addressed in this study.

1. Do differences in grapheme-phoneme representation of pseudowords, having a silent letter, help learners to recall the meaning of pseudowords better and faster?

2. Do differences in grapheme-phoneme representation of pseudowords, having a wrong letter, help learners to recall the meaning of pseudowords better and faster?

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants

Twenty pre-IELTS male and female students who were studying English at Danesh Pajouhan institute in Esfahan, Iran, were selected to take part in the study. Then they were divided into two groups respectively called Incongruent Silent-letter and Incongruent Wrong-letter. They were native speakers of Persian and their knowledge of English was limited to the courses they studied in language institutes and universities. Furthermore, they never had exposure to English in natural settings.

2.2 Materials

This experiment contained two phases: 1- studying phase and 2- testing phase.

2.2.1 Studying Phase

A list of 17 pseudowords with a bisyllabic structure CVCV(C) containing phonemes that exist in English was selected. They were produced by Wuggy Generator Software. Each pseudoword was assigned a specific picture in order to make it meaningful. They were presented through the Power Point software (2013) such that each picture was displaying simultaneously with its written form and its pronunciation. Three kinds of items were used in the study phase (Table 1): (A) 6 congruent items with regular phoneme-grapheme correspondency (e.g. the spoken form [roudət], the written form <Rodat>, picture of panda), (B) 6 incongruent items with a silent-letter in written forms (e.g., the spoken word [b^ntIl], the written form <Butil>, picture of apple), and (C) 6 incongruent items carrying a wrong phoneme or letter in their written form (e.g. the spoken word [fəfəm], the written form <Fazam>, picture of cabbage). The pseudowords were presented in three different orders to counterbalance the order of presentation: WSC (Wrong letter, Silent letter, and Congruent letters), SWC and CSW.

Table 1 *Written Label Types for the Incongruent/congruent items*

<i>Written Label Type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Congruent (n=6)	Congruent with English spelling conventions	<ramper>, /ræmpər/;
Incongruent-Silent-Letter (n=5)	The written words contain a "silent" letter; the spelled sequence <nt> mapped to /t/ , <lt> mapped to /t/; <db> mapped to /b/, and <sk> mapped to /k/	<butil>, /b^ntIl/; <cobeet>, /c^dbi:t/; <pikil>, /pIskIl/

Incongruent-Wrong-Letter (n=6)	<p>The written forms contain a mismatch between a letter and</p> <p>phoneme; the letter <j> mapped to /z /, <v> mapped to /l/, <tj> mapped to /d/, and <j> mapped to /f/, <p> mapped to /n/, <t> mapped to /z/</p>	<p><fazam>, /fa:ʃəm/;</p> <p><pooler>, /pu:vər/;</p> <p><bafel>, /bæʃəl/</p>
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2.2.2 Testing Phase

Two different tests were used 1- criterion test and 2- meaning recall test which are briefly discussed below:

2.2.2.1. Criterion test

In order to see whether the participants learned 90% of the words they received during the study phase, they got the criterion test. If they were not able to achieve 90% accuracy, they needed to go through the study phase again. Each Picture in this test was presented two times: once with a matched name and once with a different name.

3.2.2.2. Meaning recall test

Meaning recall test was given to the participants to see if they were able to recall the meaning of words taught to them in the study phase. The test was an auditory word-picture matching test that was like the criterion test previously mentioned in which participants judged a spoken word on the basis of its correct label in each picture. Seventeen pairs were mismatched, six of which were congruent spelling items where congruent words were paired with wrong pictures. New auditory stimuli were prepared for the remaining 12 mismatched items: there were auditory words representing the incongruent spelled forms presented during training in study phase (e.g., auditory [b^ntil] and [fazəm], see Table 2). They were paired with their corresponding pictures (e.g., auditory [b^ntil] with a picture of an apple) to form six mismatched incongruent-silent-letter items and six mismatched incongruent-extra-letter items.

Table 2 Example of Mismatched and Mismatched Listening Test Items

Stimulus condition	Auditory word at test	Picture	Trained auditory word written form(s)
MATCHED between picture and auditory label			
Congruent	[roudət]	Panda	[roudət] Rodat
Incongruent-Silent-letter	[b^ntil]	Apple	[b^ntil] buntil/butil
Incongruent-wrong-letter	[fəʃəm]	Cabbage	[fəʃəm] fasham/fazam
MISMATCHED between picture and auditory label			
Congruent	[roudət]	Panda	[roudət] Rodat
Incongruent-Silent-letter	[b^til]	Apple	[b^ntil] buntil/butil
Incongruent-wrong-letter	[fazəm]	Cabbage	[fəʃəm] fasham/fazam

Incongruent-silent-letter pairs were predicted to be as difficult as the incongruent-wrong-letter pairs. As mentioned before, in both types of incongruent mismatched items, pictures were paired with labels that sounded similar to the written labels but different from the labels heard in the study phase.

2.3. Procedure

The participants received the study phase, criterion test and meaning recall test in the same order in a quiet room. The instructions appeared on the screen and participants heard the presented words through their headphones while the pictures indicating their meanings were being displayed on the computer screen. The Word Power point (2013) and the DMDX software were used for the presentation of materials in the study and testing phases respectively. In the testing phases, the participants were asked to determine if each picture matched the pseudoword they heard in the study phase by pressing the *Right Shift* button (if they totally matched) and the *Left Shift* button (if they did not match) on the computer keyboard.

3.Results

The following issues were considered in data analysis. RTs were measured from target offset in millisecond. Missing data ranged from 0 to 9 (20.15% of data for each item). One of the participants made more than 20% errors. Therefore she was replaced with another one. Regarding the items, learners made about 34.8% errors on item 128 and 47.8% errors on item 134. Therefore, these two items were discarded from further analysis. The discarded items were *pooler* and *moler* and it seems that the similarity of phonemes in their place of articulation and number of phonemes might have confused the participants when processing these items.

First, the results of data analysis regarding accuracy of responses and then those related to reaction times are presented. All analyses (accuracy and reaction times) were based on correct responses while incorrect responses were ignored. The paired samples *t* test was used to compare the performance of the participants on each item type. The following table (3) shows the descriptive statistics related to the items.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of Wrong-Letter and Silent-Letter

Paired Samples Statistics				
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 mismatched wrong letter	.7950	20	.18418	.04118
mismatched silent letter	.8200	20	.19358	.04329

As it is shown in table (3) Comparing the mean scores shows that participants were more accurate on silent letters. However, this difference is not statistically significant as the following table (4) shows.

Table 4 Paired Sample *t* Test Between Wrong-Letter and Silent-Letter Groups

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	mismatched wrong letter - mismatched silent letter	-.025	.24198	.05411	-.13825	.08825	-.46	19	.649

From the table (4), it can be concluded that the mean difference is not significant, $t(19) = .46, p > .649$. In the next table (5) RTs were compared.

Table 5 Statistics Difference in RTs Between Wrong-Letter and Silent-Letter

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	mismatched wrong letter	2552.6749	20	205.70483	45.99700
	mismatched silent letter	2542.2061	20	257.83000	57.65254

The table (5) shows that the mean scores are not very much different from each other. To see the means were statistically significant the paired sample t test was run as seen in table (6) below.

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	mismatched wrong letter - mismatched silent letter	10.46879	186.34233	41.66741	-76.74210	97.67969	.251	19	.804

The t test run on the mean scores shows no significant difference between the means, indicating that both item types were processed at the same speed, $t(19) = .251, p > .05$.

4. Discussion

The aim of this study was to determine whether different types of grapheme–phoneme correspondence mismatches (e.g., adding a “silent” letter, and having a wrong letter) influenced learners’ memory of the phonological forms of words and their processing rates. To this end, 20 Persian speaking learners of English were given 17 pseudowords to study and learn. For each item, the spoken form, the written form, and a picture showing its meaning were presented simultaneously. The items were of three types: one type based on regular English phoneme-grapheme correspondency, another type having a silent letter, and the third type having a wrong letter. The participants were later tested on their memory of the meaning of pseudowords in an auditory picture-matched test. Paired samples t tests were used to analyze the data. The results showed no significant difference between the performances on each type, neither for accuracy nor for processing time.

The results of the study are in contrast to Hayes-Harbs et al (2010), who found that orthographic representations can be part of the memory of the phonological forms of the words when the discrepancy involves a mismatch in a letter’s phonemic correspondent. This effect was observed only for wrong letter items and not silent letters. They attributed the lack of detrimental effect of silent letters to greater familiarity of native speakers with them. More research studies are required to shed light on this matter, as having a wrong letter is not unfamiliar to native speakers of English either. Hayes-Habs et al.’s study was conducted with native speakers of English, so the difference can be attributed to the participants. It seems that for Persian speakers learners of English both types are the same and neither can be different in any way from the other.

Attempting to show if the presentation of written form could affect the memory of the new words in L2 for speakers of Persian, a language with a different script from English, Masoumzadeh (2014) compared items with a silent letter and items with a wrong letter with congruent items separately. He found that performance on memory test for the phonological labels of pseudowords was slowed down but no change was observed in terms of accuracy. He used the findings to conclude that second language learners whose first language has a different script do not use the written form accompanying the auditory label when learning new words.

On the basis of the findings, it seems that L2 learners do not pay a lot of attention to the spelling form of new words. One reason might be the limited capacity of working memory and the issue that simultaneous attention to both spoken and written forms is more demanding for L2 learners. Another reason can be lesser importance they give to spelling and priority they give to auditory labels as a clue to the meaning of new words.

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Enhancing High School EFL Students' Ability to Make English Suggestions via Explicit Instruction

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Abstract

A gap has been widely noted between what high school EFL students learn in classroom of Vietnamese context and what they are able to use behind classroom. The present study made an attempt to investigate the enhancement of high school EFL students' ability to make suggestions in English via an explicit instruction treatment in comparison to that of the implicit approach. Explicit instruction group showed better results than those of the implicit group though both made improvement from the pre-test to the post-test. Additionally, the questionnaire revealed the explicit group's positive attitudes towards the 4-week treatment program. However, the results were not exceptionally significant and thus it calls for further pedagogical investments by EFL teachers and researchers in Vietnam and elsewhere.

Keywords: Explicit; Enhancement; Implicit; Instruction; Suggestion

1.Introduction

In Vietnam, like in many other countries around the world English has long served as a major foreign language subject compulsory in most secondary and high schools throughout the country' educational system. High school EFL Vietnamese students generally do fairly well in their English in-class exams. However, outside classroom it is really challenging for them to take part in interactions in the target language speaking environment. In reality, when Vietnamese EFL students interact with native English speakers, problems often arise because they lack the required knowledge and skills of the conversational norms involved in the production of appropriate speech acts, especially making suggestions (although they have learnt quite a great deal about these). Therefore, such cross-language/culture communication tends to break down in most cases and somehow cause negative impacts on participants involved. Recently, several researchers in second language acquisition have been concerned with the necessity and explicit instruction of different speech acts in classroom (Kasper & Rose, 2002; Farahian et al. 2012). However, the number of studies related to making suggestions in everyday communication and its teachability in second/foreign language acquisition, especially in Vietnamese classroom context, is certainly limited and still in great demands for innovative instruction at the present time. Thus, the present study made an attempt to deepen on the role of explicit instruction of making suggestions to high school EFL students in Vietnamese setting.

Research Aims and Questions

The aim of the present study was twofold: (i) To identify whether explicit instruction results in better enhancing high school EFL students' ability to make suggestions in comparison to that of implicit instruction; (ii) To investigate the target students' attitudes toward the explicit practice of making suggestions in English speaking classroom. Accordingly, answers were sought to two specific questions: (1) Does explicit instruction of making suggestions enhance high school EFL students' ability to make suggestions better than implicit instruction? (2) What are students' attitudes toward the explicit practice of making suggestions in English speaking classroom?

2. Literature Review

Speech Act

Speech act refers to an utterance and also the total situation in which the utterance is issued (Austin, 1962). When people use language, they tend to produce an isolated series of sentences and perform an action. Three different speech acts can occur simultaneously when one is performing a statement/utterance, i.e. locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. A locutionary act describes only the action of saying something meaningful in the language. An illocutionary act can be defined as the action intended by the speaker, or the uses to which language can be put in society, e.g. informing, ordering, warning, promising and undertaking. A speaker performs the illocutionary act to make the utterance significant within a conventional system of social interaction. A perlocutionary act is the speech act that a speaker carries out making an utterance as the act of causing a certain effect on the hearer and others as well.


Based on Austin's speech act theory, Searle (1969) develops 'linguistic theory' and proposes 'linguistic acts', emphasizing the conditions and rules which indicate how a listener responds to an utterance. Searle considers illocutionary acts containing the central linguistic units as a speech act rather than a sign. He classifies speech acts into five classes: directives (e.g. asking, advising, begging, ordering, requesting, forbidding, inviting); declarations (e.g. resigning, appointing, christening); commissives (e.g. promising, planning, offering, threatening, vowing); expressives (e.g. apologizing, celebrating, welcoming); assertives (e.g. boasting, claiming, swearing, concluding, putting forward).

Speech Act of Suggesting

Suggesting is a directive speech act to get the hearer to perform a certain action (Martinez-Flor, 2005). Haverkate (1984) distinguishes the difference between impositive directives (such as requesting and ordering, which benefits the speaker), and non-impositive directives of suggestions and instructions (which benefit the hearer). Although suggestions mostly benefit the hearer, this speech act is regarded as a face-threatening act because the speaker is in some way interfering into the hearer's presence by performing an act that concerns what the hearer should do (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The directive speech act might threaten not only the negative face of the hearer for the possibility of future action but also the positive face as it entails a negative evaluation of the hearer. Thus, polite suggestions could improve the relationship between the two parties, whereas disrespectful suggestions could generate frustration or be offensive to the receiver/hearer.

Types of Suggesting Strategies

Table 1. Types of Suggesting Strategies

Type	Strategies	Linguistic structures	Examples
	Direct	Performative verb	<i>I suggest that you...</i> <i>I advise you to ...</i>
		Nouns of suggestion	<i>My suggestion would be...</i>
		Imperative/negative	<i>Try using...</i>
		Imperative	<i>Don't try to...</i>
		Let's....	<i>Let's work together on the project.</i>
	Conventionalized	Specific formulae (interrogative forms)	<i>Why don't you...?</i> <i>How about...?</i> <i>What about...?</i>
		Modals & semi-modals	<i>You have/need to/should (shouldn't)</i> <i>/ought to/can/could</i>
		Conditional	<i>If I were you, I would ...</i>
	Indirect	Impersonal	<i>Here's one possibility: ...</i> <i>It would be helpful if you...</i> <i>A good idea would be ...</i> <i>It would be nice if...</i>
		Hints	<i>I've heard that...</i>

Suggesting strategies used in the present study includes three main types of *direct forms*, *conventionalized forms* and *indirect forms* (Martinez-Flor, 2005). **Direct strategies** referring to what the speaker clearly means are performed by using performative verbs, a noun of suggestion or "illocutionary force indicating device" (Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford 1996, p.180). **Conventionalised forms** (Banerjee & Carrell, 1988) permits the hearer to understand the interlocutor's meaning behind the suggestion since the illocutionary force indicator appears in the utterance. **Indirect forms** relate to those expressions in which the speaker's intentions are not clearly expressed, but just providing hints for the hearer to make inferences about it. EFL learners are supposed to not only get the basic knowledge in question, but use it appropriately in effect.

Explicit vs. Implicit Instruction

Explicit learning is considered a process of awareness in which learners concern the new knowledge they are receiving (Berry, 1994; Schmidt, 2001). Moreover, the forming and testing of hypotheses are involved in a search for the correct structure (Ellis, 1994). Differently, implicit learning is defined as a process of unconsciousness in which learners are not aware of what they are learning, since they only concern the surface features of a complex stimulus domain. More specifically, explicit instruction consists of all categories in which rules are overtly explained to learners, while rules or forms are not explained overtly in implicit teaching.

Table 2. Explicit and Implicit Instruction

Approach	Features	Aims
Explicit	A conscious process	Focus on target forms
		Rules or forms with the clear explanation
	An unconscious process	Not focus on meta-linguistic explanation
Implicit		Rules or forms without the clear explanation

Previous Studies Related

Banerjee and Carrell (1988) were one of the first to conduct a study on suggestions, comparing two groups of Chinese and Malay ESL students with 12 native speakers of American English. Results illustrated that non-native students made suggestions less frequently than the native group, and the type of suggestion used depended on the directness of the situation. Farahian et al. (2012) investigated the pragmatic use of refusals by 64 Iranian EFL college students via a treatment program. The findings confirmed the benefits of the explicit instructional approach to developing EFL learners' noticing and use of different types of refusals in English. Similarly, Langer's study (2013) on the explicit teaching of requests to L2 learners of Spanish revealed positive results. Other studies on EFL learners' suggesting strategies such as by Bu's (2011), and Pishghadam and Sharafadini (2011) generally marked the equal effects of explicit and implicit instruction.

However, most previous studies in point involved college EFL learners, either English major or non-English major, as participants. The present study was one of the first, especially in Vietnamese setting, to engage high school EFL students in the treatment program and reflective attitude display. Few would deny that EFL learning success at high school should highly result in greater motivations for the target language accomplishment continued and advanced use at college level and beyond.

3.Methodology

Participants

They were sixty-seven (29 males, 38 females) from Go Quao High School of Kien Giang Province, one of the southern-most areas of Vietnam. All of them were grade 12 students (senior high school; at the time of research they were finishing the final semester just prior to their high school graduation and college entrance). Their ages were between 17 and 18. Most of them started learning English when they were in grade 6, i.e. they took more than 6 years' English classes as a compulsory subject up to the time of research (4 years at secondary school and more than 2 years at high school). At the final semester (when the treatment was run), they learned English in class for 4 periods per week, 45 minutes each period. As widely seen in Vietnamese system, the students were placed randomly into two different classes by the school (often at the beginning of the school year). Thereby under the school authorities' permission, they were chosen randomly by the researchers as a control group (34 students of class 12A2, 16 males and 18 females) and the other as experimental one (33 students of class 12A6, 13 males and 20 females). Experimental group received the explicit instruction of suggestion speech act by one of the present researchers, while the control group was not involved in the treatment program, i.e. under the implicit instruction like other regular grade 12 classes at the school, which are based mainly on the scheduled textbook.

Instruments

A pretest and a questionnaire were used. The pretest measured the effects of the treatment program (to answer the research question 1), while the questionnaire elicited explicit instruction group' attitudes toward the practice of making suggestions in English speaking lessons (to seek the answer to the research question 2).

A multiple-choice discourse completion test (MDCT) was administered as a pretest one week before the treatment program, and also as a post-test one week after the treatment finished. MDCT (see Appendix 1) displayed 20 different situations that varied with mainly two levels of status and social distance of interlocutors involved. One level was equal status (student to student/friend), while the other was unequal (student to teacher/older sister/brother). MDCT was developed in formats found in previous studies (e.g. Farahian et al. 2012; Li, 2010). The test displayed twenty situations where a certain kind of suggestion speech act was expected. Since all participants were high school students and their English proficiency level were around pre-intermediate, all situations in the test (for the present study) were explicitly found at high school context. Each situation was made in a way that the students had to make only one suggestion (i.e. one correct answer, either option A, B, or C) in order to avoid different alternatives appropriate for the same situation, and thus convenient for measuring the variable in point. The pre-test and post test were in fact two versions of a single one in terms of content items and format, but dissimilar in option order only. Also, to ensure result reliability after the pre-test was collected, nothing related to the pre-test remained and no corrective feedback was given to the students until the end of the treatment program, i.e. after the post-test and questionnaire had been administered. The tests (30 minutes each) were done by the students in class with the researchers' administration and guidance (and also Vietnamese translation if necessary). One correct answer scored 0.5 point for each situation raised, i.e. 10 points was the maximum.

The questionnaire (see Appendix 3) had 18 items in total. Each item presented a statement about students' attitudes towards using suggestion speech acts on a five-point scale (completely disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and completely agree). The items were divided into three sections: (i) students' interests in learning suggestion speech act via explicit instruction (item 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12), (ii) their attitudes towards the feasibility

of explicit instruction in classroom (item 4, 5, 9, 13, 15, 18), and (iii) their attitudes towards benefits of explicit instruction on the target speech act (item 6, 7, 8, 14, 16, 17). Before officially used, the questionnaire was piloted with the involvement of 30 students of similar background and English proficiency as those in the main study. The reliability of the instrument was confirmed with Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .73$).

Treatment and Materials

The experimental group received explicit instruction of suggestion speech act (whereas control group was taught implicitly as usual or no special treatment involved) in English speaking classes. Each group regularly met two periods of 90 minutes every week during four weeks of the treatment program. The explicit class meeting regularly ran 3 major steps (see Appendix 2): Step 1, identify suggestions in interaction served as teacher-led activity in the classroom to make students aware that speech acts were co-built by two or more participants over multiple turns. Students watched chosen sequences from the selected materials and transcripts were provided to identify the beginning and end of suggestion sequences. They were asked to focus on the structure of the negotiation sequence by guiding questions, such as (1) Where do you think two speakers are? (2) What is the relationship between two speakers? (3) What is the status between them? (4) How many turns is the suggestion realized? (5) Pick up the structures of making suggestions. Step 2, explaining and noticing the speech act - was to provide pragmatic-linguistic and sociopragmatic information related to social status and the use of mitigation in the performance of suggesting. Explicit instruction on the speech act related to the power, social distance and degree of imposition was involved in the situation. Step 3, practicing and internalizing suggestion sequences - students performed suggestions from a discourse approach: (i) They were provided activities (e.g. role play) as essential tools to improve their ability of making suggestions; (ii) had opportunities to communicate in groups or pairs in order to practice making suggestions; (iii) participated in the given situations in relation to the power, social distance and degree of imposition. Additionally, they were encouraged to unload specific transcripts of the videos made available to them in a practical classroom and discover some more of the contents and linguistic points offered in steps 1 and 2 on their own.

The nationally required textbook "Tieng Anh 12" (English Grade 12) (Hoang, et al. 2008) was used to design lesson plans for both classes. However, other supplementary materials prepared by the researchers were included to aid the explicit group's realization and interpretation of patterns, tokens of making English suggestions, rules and strategies in point.

4.Results and Discussions

Pretest Result

Table 3. Pre-Test Mean Scores

	<i>Groups</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Pre-test	Experimental	33	4.306	1.4913			
	Control	34	4.212	1.5862			
	Exp. vs. Control				.519	65	p=.605>0.05

As seen in Table 3, the mean score of the experimental group (4.306 out of 10) and that of the control

(4.212 out of 10) were almost at the same level. And with $p=0.605>0.05$, there was no statistically significant difference between the two means. Thus, it shows that before the treatment concerned both student groups' ability to make suggestions in English was equally below average level although they did take more than 6 years' English classes as a compulsory subject at both secondary and high school.

Making suggestions is definitely one of the basic pragmatic skills for students to feel confident and safe enough in the English-speaking environment, but then after more than 6 years of successive learning, it seems that their knowledge in point was not as good as expected. And thus, it is worth conducting studies like the present one to improve the situation, to some extent at least.

Post-Test Result

Table 4. Post-Test Mean Scores

	<i>Groups</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Post -test	Experimental	33	6.353	1.5152			
	Control	34	4.970	1.7586			
	Exp. vs. Control				-3.452	63	$p=.001<0.05$

Table 4 saw a difference between the experimental group's mean score (6.353) and that of the control (4.970). The t-test was run with $p=.001<0.05$, indicating that the difference between the mean scores of the two groups was statistically significant. Accordingly, after the treatment the experimental group made more enhancements in their ability to make suggestions in English than the other group.

Although it confirms the significant enhancement of the explicit instruction from the pre-test to the post one, the experimental group's ability to make suggestions in English was not very strong, just above the average level (6.353 out of 10). In other words, what has been done in the present study was not ideally enough, and thus there is still room for further research in this area of second language acquisition. Otherwise, the story remains the same as before, i.e. secondary and high school EFL students learn the target language just for exam taking in classroom rather than for practical use.

Next are considerations within each group.

Table 5. Control Group's Pre-Post Test Mean Scores

<i>Control group</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Pre – test	34	4.212	1.5862			
Post – test	34	4.970	1.7586			
Pre- vs. post-test				-3.497	33	$p=0.001<0.05$

Although the post-test mean (4.970 out of 10) was still a little below the average, there was statistically a significant difference between the two mean scores ($p=0.001<0.05$). As a result, the control group did make an improvement from the pre-test to the post-test. Then, implicit instruction might not be removed altogether by the explicit because it still makes certain contribution. However, it should be restricted in the case of high school students as seen above the explicit appears to make greater enhancement.

Table 6. Experimental Group's Pre-Post Test Mean Scores

<i>Experimental group</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Pre – test	33	4.309	1.4303			
Post – test	33	6.353	1.5152			
Pre- vs. post-test				-7.250	33	p=.000<0.05

Table 6 marked a remarkable difference between the two mean scores (4.309 and 6.353 out of 10) and with $p < 0.05$ the difference was statistically significant. Thereby, like the control group the experimental improved from the pre-test to the post-test, but unlike the control's mean score (below average), that of the experimental was above the average. This is encouraging and proves that the explicit instruction appears to have greater enhancement than the implicit on the target learners' ability to make suggestions in English.

Questionnaire Result

Table 7. Overall Descriptive Statistics

Correlation	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Exp. Group	32	3.17	4.39	3.6597	.29

The sample t-test indicates that the overall mean score $M = 3.6597$ is higher than the accepted one ($M = 3.0$) and is statistically significant ($t = -6.674$, $df = 31$, $p = .000$). It can be concluded that the experimental group did have positive attitudes toward the explicit practice of making suggestions in English speaking classroom. But, like the post-test result, their evaluation was not very high (thus not statistically high). Again it calls for teachers' more attention and efforts to innovative instructions, not just stay where they are now.

Table 8. Questionnaire Result in Clusters

Clusters	Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
(A) Interest	1,2,3,10,11,12	3.14	4.50	3.6979	.2822
(B) Feasibility	4,5,9,13,15,18	2.67	4.67	3.6146	.4684
(C) Benefits	6,7,8,14,16,17	2.67	4.33	3.6667	.3641

It is quite clear that the three clusters (A), (B) and (C) scored almost the same, just above the average like the overall mean score in Table 7. The students' interest and their evaluation on the feasibility and benefits of the explicit practice were all positive, but not very high.

5. Conclusion

The present study made an attempt to enhance Vietnamese high school EFL students' ability to make English suggestions by means of explicit instruction during a 4-week treatment program (special one compared to regular classes of the school). The post-test confirmed that both explicit and implicit instruction made enhancement on the target students' ability to make suggestions in English. It also showed that the explicit generated stronger enhancement than the other approach. The finding is in line with previous studies that also focused on the instructional effects of speech acts (e.g. Farahian et. al, 2012; Langer, 2013). In addition, it more

or less confirms the teachability of speech act of suggesting in EFL classroom context. However, probably partly because the treatment program was not long enough (only 4 weeks) and partly because enhancing the target ability is not an easy job (where the outside-class practice environment for EFL students in Vietnam is very limited at the present time), the concerned enhancement and the students' questionnaire evaluation were not exceptionally significant. Thus, the pedagogical message from the present study should be that there is still room for EFL teachers of Vietnamese high schools in particular to make further effort and research in the field so as to ultimately turn students' learning and acquisition of English subject into a tool for practical use rather than for exam taking only.

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How do Productive Skills of Saudi Students Affect EFL Learning and Teaching

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Abstract

Language plays a crucial role in the development of human society. It is the main means of communication between individuals, groups and countries. Nowadays, more and more people are learning English as a foreign or second language, and their key objective is to get expertise in English. The abrupt changes in the broad field of economy, business, science, technology and education have triggered the youth and coming generation to improve their communication skills. Language acquisition involves four modules of teaching that includes Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing. The teachers have to be dynamic and updated to teach these language skills to the students. The researcher has interviewed the participants on various aspects involved in teaching-learning process to find out the root cause of the problems encountered by students studying at Jazan University to attain the speaking and the writing skills. The problems are further critically analysed, evaluated to derive at conclusions to suggest the most appropriate measures to be taken by the language teachers to overcome the problems of the students to enhance and expertise in their productive skills.

Keywords: Communication; Technology; Foreign language; Productive skills

1. Introduction

The teaching of English language was not given importance in the first half of the last century in the gulf countries but from the second half of twentieth century to till today, as Kachru and Nelson suggest that English has developed from the native language of a relatively small island nation to the most widely taught, read, and spoken language that the world has ever known (Kuo, 2006). The opening up of trade boundaries and the movement of people from other countries into Saudi Arabia created a need to acquire the knowledge of English as a foreign language (EFL). The Govt. of Higher Education has introduced English in the school level curriculum. But learning EFL has become a need of the hour and improving English proficiency gains a significant position in this language acquisition. There are four language skills i.e. listening, reading, writing and speaking, involved in the language learning process. The reading and listening skills are called receptive skills and speaking and writing skills are called productive skills.

It is a universal phenomenon that a child follows certain path to achieve these skills. He first listens to his mother tongue or first language, then speak, read and later on writing is the last skill of language acquisition process. The receptive skills are easy to attain than the productive skills as they need an enormous practice. However, in the case of EFL learning, this sequence does not always work the same way.

The researcher has interviewed Saudi students and found that a child usually start to learn a foreign language in the sixth standard now. Then he learns listening, reading EFL comfortably but has to struggle to learn speaking and writing. But through teacher's pragmatic approach, the students develop all the four skills simultaneously. We see in the language lab that listening to the target language usually helps to develop speaking skills and similarly reading does the same to writing skills.

The researcher makes a seminal attempt to find out the problems related to productive skills in language acquisition process, then analyzing and evaluating to extract some similarities and differences between spoken language and written language and suggest implementing the best practices to attain effective English language learning and teaching in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

2.Features and Significance of Productive Skills

Human beings are blessed with many languages and language is a tool of communication of human society. The language has many functions in real-life situations as Yule while discussing the origins of language mentions two functions of language:

“...All this noise-making and gesturing, seems to be characteristic of only one of the major functions of language use, which we may describe as the interactional function. It has to do with how humans use language to interact with each other, socially or emotionally; how they indicate friendliness, co-operate or hostility, or annoyance, pain, or pleasure... But there is another major function of language, the transactional function, whereby humans use their linguistic abilities to communicate knowledge, skills and information.. ” (1996, p. 6).

Language differentiates us from animals and the language originated from the critical need of the people to communicate clearly and effectively. As a resultant of this NEED the spoken language came into existence and developed, and consequently the written language, which catered for the need of recording and preserving for future references. The use of the language facilitates the people interactions and exchange of knowledge of their respective fields. The receptive skills usually prepare the foundation for the productive skills to produce output in the form of completion of task. The learners are required to attain all the four skills to accomplish their objective of language acquisition as attaining half would not serve the purpose. Communication is a two way process that consists of receiving information and responding in the form of giving information. The receiving information covers listening and reading skills whereas speaking and writing skills are productive skills. A person is considered to be a complete gainer of Language when he speaks fluently and write effectively.

First language acquisition is known as a natural process as speaking is learned unconsciously in daily life but writing skills are learned consciously in schools. But in the foreign language learning situation, both speaking and writing are hard nut to crack. There are many features and differences between these two productive skills.

The first language at Saudi Arabia is Arabic and people do all transactions in Arabic only. They become so fluent from their childhood because of conducive environment they get at home and outside but same is not the case with foreign language. Teaching and learning of English came later as a foreign language and this language is hardly used in routine affairs except few words like computer, studio, biscuit, salad, doctor, tyre, radar chocolate etc. and except on few occasions like business meetings, conferences, seminars etc. The English lecture at school level is only the time and place that English language learners get to learn and practice English.

It is forced, artificial and formal way of teaching and the learners don't feel free in this environment and hesitant to speak in English.

The students at this University do face grammatical problems while speaking English in class or peer group. A sound knowledge of grammar will help the students to understand the speech of others and respond correctly using right words, correct tense and correct sentences. Grammar helps the students by providing standard set of rules which not only help them to learn, understand and speak but enhance their confidence resulting speaking English fluently and effectively. Despite this, the mother tongue of various dialects influence the English pronunciation of learners as Brown rightly mentioned that:

“... There is, to begin with, no influential description of spoken English which has, say, the status of grammars of written English. Spoken English appears very variable, and is very different from one dialect area to another. Even between speakers who mostly speak ‘standard English’ there is different emphasis in their selection from forms in standard English. ...” (Brown, 1983, p. 3).

There are many speech sounds in different cultures, traditions, dialects, age groups and society in a country resulting in no set rules for spoken English to the learners. The native language may have certain rules in writing and speaking but Saudi students speak the same as written in English texts. Speaking in English is not to speak the written words but to learn beyond written words. The emphasis in Saudi Arabia is still on western accent but spoken language has become dynamic in nature globally and it has set a great challenge for the scholars and teachers to introspect and innovate new method and techniques for teaching spoken English to the English foreign learners.

3. Spoken English Vs Written English

The concepts of spoken and written English are not new to any language, cultures and countries because they carry out various activities in their societal and business life. The use of these two terms depends upon the requirements and the prevalent situations. The first form is oral and doesn't require much preparation and attention whereas written English needs careful selection of words, using in correct order and place as per grammar rules. We can observe in our routine affairs that people use different words when they write on a specific matter but use different words when they speak or interact on the same matter.

The speaking and writing skills are also called productive skills but written language doesn't contain words and language what have been spoken and spoken language is not just reading out loudly the written words and language. Bygate has rightly pointed out the difference in this read-aloud case example:

“Of course if you have actually tried to “speak like a book” yourself, you may agree that it can be hard work. It is hard work reading aloud from a book. This may be because it is not something we are used to; or because the sentences can be awkward to read aloud - too long, too complex, or too technical. It can be tricky to get the correct intonation, and you may find you often have to re-read bits to make them sound right. Reading aloud tends to require considerable attention.” (Bygate, 1991, p. 10)

The researcher has interviewed many Saudi students from various regions studying at Jazan University and asked about English teaching in schools. They are of the same opinion that the teacher used to ask the students to read paragraphs loudly to get them more familiar with English words, pronunciation and to enhance speaking skills. But this, of course, satisfies the teachers but the students' spoken skills remained far from attaining the desired standard and fluency. The teacher must understand the aims and objectives to master in spoken skills.

The productive skills are different from each other in many ways. The spoken language is often inconsistent and dynamic in nature except recorded, whereas the written language can be kept as a record for future references. Misunderstanding while speaking can be cleared up instantly 'on the spot', which is not possible in writing. The written language is thoughtful and conscious process that needs more time and is monotonous but spoken language serves to deal with feelings, emotions and different situations to clarify doubts, if any, to make communication constructive and effective. Written language often uses long and complex sentences comparing to that of spoken language where the sentences are shorter and easier to understand. Therefore, we should adhere to different ways to learn, attain and deal English language learning and teaching.

4.Effective Ways to Handle Spoken Language in English Language Learning and Teaching

The researcher further explored the syllabi and evaluation module of different classes to assess English language learning in the various schools in Saudi Arabia and found that the main focus of the teaching English is on reading and writing only and no attention is given to the listening and the speaking skills. The students are serious only in reading and writing to pass in English subject because they are evaluated only on these two aspects. The students speak Arabic all the time except few minutes of lecture in a day and don't get social environment to use and develop listening and speaking skills. The more or the less is the situation at university also. But the English Language Centre at this University has motivated its faculty to provide a wider exposure of these receiving and productive skills and is producing the desired results. There are some effective ways through which English language learning can be improved:

The Govt. of higher education has already set up language laboratories in the universities and trying to set up in schools also.

The Saudi students graduated in English are being employed in schools to teach the foreign language and teach spoken English.

Globalization, liberalization, setting up businesses and industries by foreign countries in Saudi Arabia in the recent years has paved the way to make a wide use of English. It further enhanced the job opportunities to Saudi students who are good in spoken English to carry out official work.

The Govt. of Higher Education and the Universities at Saudi Arabia (those not included) should introduce an evaluation and assessment system that includes all the four skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking to evaluate its students in final examination.

There is an independent department called Centre for Foreign languages that prepares the students and conduct TOFEL examination for the students who want to go abroad for their higher studies but it lacks in assessing spoken English. The learners have to strive hard to get good marks in this test.

The teacher should focus on controlled activities- vocal, individual listening, and repetition of the teacher's modal of pronunciation, guided activities- model dialogues, guided role-play and creative activities that includes free role-plays, group discussions, debates, simulations, communication games.

The University English Language center is dynamic and consistent in improvising its curriculum and has positive effects on English language learning and teaching in Jazan University. The members of faculty are trying their level best to encourage, support and motivate students to draw attention to practical usages of English language, especially the learning of spoken language. The students are taught the current trends, and

needs of the region, country and world to learn spoken language and get expertise in English pronunciation and intonation. There are differences in pronouncing vowel and consonants in English and few sounds don't exist in Arabic language. The students have to be very careful in pronouncing such words and have adequate knowledge of English letters sound that doesn't exist or match sounds in Arabic language. The researcher found few English consonants, namely, /ŋ/, /p/, /v/, /l/, /dʒ/, /ð/, and /r/ as problematic ones for Arabic speakers. The wrong pronunciation may bring adverse results in communication. The syllabi at this university has listening audio conversation and answering the questions from the audio in level 1 and 2, dialogue practice, greetings, welcome note, debate, group discussion, organizing various activities by the students, provide adequate practice to enhance the speaking skills.

The teacher has to update and make use of ICT (Information and communication Technology) to create students' interest in learning English language because speaking any language as a foreign language is a colossal task for the native speakers. The learners must have the knowledge of phonemes, syllable, phonetics, stress and intonation for correct pronunciation of English words. The maximum time is spent on oral communication and there is a critical need to come out from traditional teaching-learning approach to the innovative modern approach as Bygate while discussing how to learn spoken language has cited some traditional methods for learning spoken language, he says,

"Ten years later, during which time this approach to teaching oral skills had been widely adopted, David Wilkins pointed out there were some learning problems that exercises like these did not solve. An important one is that of ensuring a satisfactory transition from supervised learning in the classroom to real-life use of the skill. This transition is often called the "transfer of skills". (Bygate, 1991, p. 6).

Bygate (1991) has favoured learning in real-life situations where learners get an opportunity to use and exploit their learning of English language. The learners try to transfer their classroom learning into real-life environment. The teachers are asked to interact with students in English and create English language learning environment that doesn't exist outside the classroom or formal interactions. But we have planned various activities for students keep in regular touch with English. The teacher has planned various societies for the students i.e. English Society that provides a platform for the students to showcase their talent in activities like slogan writing, story writing, poetry writing, social networking etc. The students meet during club activities under mentorship to talk in English language. The students are supplied with the CDs and are given ample exercises on audio in the laboratory where they can learn independently and under scanner also. Yule (1996) has commented on the method of learning and teaching spoken English, he says:

"Audiolingual method, a very different approach, emphasizing the spoken language, became popular in the 1950s. This involved a systematic presentation of the structures of the L2, moving from the simple to the more complex, often in the form of drills which the students had to repeat. This approach, called the Audiolingual method, was strongly influenced by the belief that the fluent use of a language was essentially a set of 'habits' which could be developed with a lot of practice." (Yule, 1996, p. 193)

There is a universal proverb prevails in all the countries that 'Practice makes a man perfect' and through the audiolingual method the learner improves in learning of spoken language. While repeating the contents - simple to complex or same contents, the learner become habitual consequently make him/her to produce spoken language in foreign language from intentionally to somewhat automatically and speak the foreign language more naturally.

The learners encounter many real-life problems in the process of learning English language. The vast inflow of people of varied cultures, languages and countries made these skills indispensable for all students who are looking for their career opportunities. The peoples' perception and thinking is also getting a facelift and advancing towards a global culture and language to gain momentum and eminence to function effectively building a strong bonding and intra & interpersonal relationship in the society. It has created a space for all languages and cultures to move from rigidity to flexibility in communication as Bygate rightly said:

"...in a reciprocal exchange, a speaker will often have to adjust his or her vocabulary and message to take the listener into account. The speaker also has to participate actively in the interlocutor's message—asking questions, reacting and so on. This is something which requires an ability to be flexible in communication, and a learner may need to be prepared for it." (Bygate, 1991, p. 8)

The learners have to be very careful in their use of English language in exchanging their views with the people of other languages and nationalities. They need to acquire vocabulary that consists of synonyms, antonyms, idioms, phrases, words often confused, homonyms, homophones, semantics, tenses and other vital grammatical aspects. At times, the learners face problems choosing right word at right place at a right time to respond, express and influence constructively. We try to teach all the skills of language acquisition to the students at this university with adequate exposure in real-life situations. There is no standard English in the world but it differs in pronunciation, intonation, lexical and other aspects. The students are motivated, encouraged and facilitated with many audio-visual programs, live chat, debate on TV, English movies and other authentic material than their own text books. Besides emphasizing on pronunciation and intonation, we also focus on sociocultural aspects of people belonging to different languages, traditions and nationalities because any wrong selection of words in spoken English may jeopardize your purpose of communication and affect business relations.

The learners should acquaint and expertise themselves at all the skills of target foreign language and use them in real-life situations using English knowledge judiciously. The researcher belongs to India and observed many sociocultural and English pronunciation differences at Saudi Arabia but he came up and made equilibrium in both the situations and now performing well in teaching English language to Saudi students.

5. Effective Ways to Handle Written Language in English Language Learning and Teaching

It is well known fact that writing came after the speaking and later it developed to serve various functions. This is one of the toughest skills to learn which involves expressing oneself or the purpose clearly, using right words and language; creating, compiling and paraphrasing rational ideas to respond effectively. It involves structure of the contents, its style and the content on the matter. The researcher experienced in class that "the main problem in writing is attributed to spelling mistakes as it has been noted that many English language learners, including Arab students, have difficulties with English spelling" (Al-zuoud & Kabilan, 2013).

In many ways writing is the most neglected skill in the TEFL world 'teaching English as a foreign language', as many teachers don't attend 'office hours'. Writing, therefore, is often relegated to homework, which in turn is frequently not done so the skill is never developed. The students are prone to commit spelling mistakes because of the differences in the orthographic system between Arabic and English, and first language

(L1) interference. Consequently, these spelling difficulties cause many spelling errors which negatively affect the writing proficiency of Arab students (Saiegh-Haddad, 2004).

The researcher has tried to overcome this problem by preparing exercises on related topics for practice and motivating the students to write in the class room itself and it produced good results. The learners may speak English easily but they lack in writing. Yule rightly mentioned that:

“When we consider the development of writing, we should bear in mind that a very large number of the languages found in the world today are used only in the spoken form. They do not have a written form. For those languages which do have writing systems, the development of writing, as we know it, is a relatively recent phenomenon. ...” (Yule, 1996, p. 9).

Many countries have made it compulsory for the admissions to various programmes to assess this skill through different tests like TOEFL, IELTS which reflects the level of the learners in written language. The contents of the written language will show the standard and level of the learners in English language. The ELC of university has its vision to enhance this skill required for working professionals and for written communication too. The faculty emphasize on developing writing skills of the students through intensive teaching of grammar, conducting and penning down the activities, written exercises on real-life situations, writing e-mails, formal and informal letters and many more. Of course, it is a hard nut to crack but a sound knowledge of syntax, semantics, comprehensions and different writing styles and formats leads learners to write effectively and impress the readers. Tribble expresses the vitality and complexity of English writing as:

“An ability to speak well—fluently, persuasively, appropriately—is something that most of us would hope to achieve in our first language. It is also an objective for many learners of a foreign language, especially those who wish to do business internationally, or to study to travel in English speaking countries. An ability to write appropriately and effectively is, however, something which evades many of us, in our mother tongues or in any other languages we may wish to learn, and this in spite of the many years which are frequently devoted to the development of the skill.” (Tribble, 1997, p. 3)

It is worthy here to mention that correct and precise writing is difficult in all languages and needs practice to attain expertise and when a learners starts writing in the foreign language like here at Saudi Arabia, he faces lots of difficulties because of lack of the fundamental knowledge of English language. The concerted efforts should be made to teach, develop through practice and evaluate the writing skills from school level. Later on, the basic and in-depth knowledge along with knowledge of 7Cs would definitely make the learners more confident and competent in writing formal or informal contents.

6. Conclusion

This article presents various materials for productive skills- teaching that apply to an authentic productive skills strategies drawn from research findings so that teachers can be encouraged to put theories or insights into practice. One limitation of this suggestion lies in contradictions among research findings, for example, conflicting perspectives on the role of L1 equivalents in L2 English words pronunciation and vocabulary-learning. Moreover, the various speaking and writing skills- teaching strategies suggested in this study need to be variably applied to EFL students strictly as per their proficiency levels. Although the number of studies reviewed and employed here are limited, but they do yield implications for EFL productive skills that teachers may use as theoretical suggestions for preparing study materials.

The primary focus of this article is to study the effectiveness of productive skills of English language – speaking and writing but at the same time it is difficult to separate them from receptive skills– reading and listening because they are all mutually supportive learning activities. The function of language is to exchange ideas, thoughts, and opinion formally or informally in multiple contexts and situations with others to maintain certain interpersonal relationships. Both speaking and writing skills have similarities and differences and the teacher has to adopt different methods and strategies of teaching to the learners. Choosing a correct approach to enhance speaking and writing skills is a colossus and challenging task in Saudi Arabia. The English Language Centre at Jazan University suggests and experiments various new teaching pedagogies judiciously to empower the English language learners with better fluency in speaking and accuracy in writing respectively. Creative writing should be encouraged, as it engages the learners and the finished work usually provides them with the sense of pride, confidence and self- recognition. The implications of this study suggest that the teachers should be more creative in constructing learning experiences for their students and teach coping strategies as part of students’ repertoires of productive skills.

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EFL Learners' Use of Direct Strategies in Competitive and Cooperative Learning Contexts

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects of competitive and cooperative teaching techniques on Iranian adult EFL learners' use of direct strategies. To this end, a sample of 88 non-English major university students at Sohrevardi Nonprofit College in Qazvin were assigned to two groups, and each group received instruction under one of the treatment conditions including cooperative and competitive teaching techniques. To collect data, the Persian translation of a modified version of the subsection of Oxford's Strategy Inventory of Language Learning pertaining to direct strategy use was administered before and after the treatment. The obtained data were analyzed using an Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) procedure. The result of data analysis showed no significant difference between the effects of competitive and cooperative teaching techniques on direct strategy use of Iranian adult EFL learners. The findings of the present study may have implications for learners, teachers, and syllabus designers.

Keywords: Competitive teaching techniques; Cooperative teaching techniques; Direct strategy use

1.Introduction

The need to learn a foreign language is almost as old as human history itself (Wikipedia). Recently, this need has been felt more seriously due to increasing globalization as well as the need for using a common language in areas such as trade, international relations, technology, media, and science. As English is the international language, many researchers have focused on different methods of teaching to find optimal methods and techniques to implement in language classrooms. The history of language teaching methodology has experienced substantial changes from the period of grammar–translation method to the communicative language teaching, task-based approach, learning strategy training and cooperative learning (Brown, 2000). According to Johnson and Johnson (2009), experiential learning and student-centered learning introduced by philosopher Dewey, and social psychologists Piaget and Vygotsky is a base for collaborative learning.

Johnson and Johnson (2009) hold that researchers such as Sexton began to criticize competition in late 1960s, and social scientists (Hartup, 1976; Johnson, 1980; Johnson & Johnson, 1981; Ladd, 1999; Lewis & Rosenblum, 1975) pointed out the necessity of peer interaction. Then, cooperative learning became popular from 1980s, with the advent of communicative language teaching approach, which gave emphasis to the communicative aspects of language and the task-based approach, which created the context for cooperative learning. In this period, and by the work of O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and other researchers, the need for stylistic awareness and strategy development in ensuring mastery of foreign language became prominent.

Language learning strategies refer to any conscious actions and techniques which learners perform to improve their second language learning (Chamot, 2004; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Waden & Rubin, 1987).

Researchers have been studying language learning strategies since 1960s. Language learning strategies have been affected by the cognitive approach (Williams & Burden, 1997). Researchers believe that the shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered classes has drawn more attention to language learning strategies (Lessard-Clouston, 1997). Many researchers have tried to classify language learning strategies; Oxford's (1990) classification is the most comprehensive among them, based on which Oxford Strategy Use Inventory for Language Learning was created to measure the frequency and kinds of strategies learners use. She classifies strategies into: Direct strategies including memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies and indirect strategies including meta cognitive, affective, and social strategies.

Although many researchers have investigated the effects of different learner variables such as age, gender, proficiency level, motivation, autonomy, and learners' beliefs and purpose of using language learning strategies, few studies have been done on the effect of environmental factors such as interaction with peers. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effect of competitive and cooperative teaching techniques on language learning strategy use. With regard to what was mentioned above, by considering the important role of language learning strategies and the significance of creating learning contexts to develop communicative competence, this study aims to compare language learning strategy use in competitive and cooperative learning contexts. More specifically, this study aims to find answers for the following research question:

Is there any significant difference between the effects of competitive and cooperative teaching techniques on direct strategy use of Iranian adult EFL learners?

2.Literature review

Cooperative learning

Gokhale (1995) defines cooperative learning as grouping and pairing of students at various performance levels to work together in small groups to monitor themselves and evaluate their own and others to achieve an academic goal. Gokhale maintains that cooperative learning refers to an instructional method in which students work in groups towards a common academic goal. However, individual learning refers to an instructional method in which students work individually at their own rate towards an academic goal. Zhang (2010) implies that more participation will inevitably increase self-confidence and self-esteem. Therefore, learners in cooperative learning environments are more active participators and more autonomous learners.

Hung, Mehl and Holen (2013), in a study on the relationship between problem design and learning process in a problem-based environment, found that problem-based learning is a kind of cooperative technique which improves critical thinking and makes learners ready to undertake tasks in the real world. They concluded that the kind of problems in this environment affects learners' cognitive level and influences learners' perception psychologically.

Nassaji and Tian (2010), in their study on collaborative and individual output tasks and their effect on learning English phrasal verbs, investigated the effectiveness of two types of task (reconstruction cloze tasks and reconstruction editing tasks) on learning English phrasal verbs. They also aimed to find out whether doing the tasks collaboratively led to greater gains of target verbs than doing the tasks individually and to examine whether the type of tasks made any difference from pretest to post-test. They analyzed data using repeated

measures ANOVA. They concluded that in the accuracy of production of target items, there was a significant main effect for task type and also a significant main effect of condition, but there was no significant interaction between time and condition. The finding of this study about pair work was consistent with the results of a number of previous studies (Kuiken & Vedder, 2002; Stork, 1997; Stork, 2005) suggesting that although collaborative context may lead to better task performance, it may not necessarily lead to subsequent learning of target forms.

Believing that cooperative learning strategies affect English writing skills as well as speaking and reading, Mandal (2009) investigated the impact of cooperative learning on writing skills and concluded that the incorporation of cooperative learning activities fosters peer criticism and critical thinking, which aid learners to sharpen their knowledge about essay structure and grammatical rules, and by also increasing motivation and involvement, improves enhancement in writing skills.

Fatih-Ashtiyani, Salami, and Mohebbi (2007) compared the effects of cooperative learning and traditional learning on the academic achievement of 46 high-school students in two groups and concluded that the cooperative learning model had significant effect on academic achievement, and that the students in the cooperative learning class seemed to have better understanding, while the rates of forgetting decreased. Moreover, more students in the experimental group tended to maintain the cooperative learning style during their educational activities.

Gaith (2003) studied the impact of cooperative learning on reading improvement, academic self-esteem and decreasing the feeling of school alienation of 56 Lebanese high school ESL learners. Gaith found a statistically significant difference in favor of the experimental group in reading achievement. However, there was no statistically significant difference between the control group and the experimental group in variables including academic self-esteem and feeling of school alienation.

In another study, Sachs, Candlin and Rose (2003) studied the effect of cooperative learning on EFL/ESL secondary students' learning in Hong Kong. The results showed no significant differences in the oral performance of the experimental and control groups, but the authors concluded that the students engaged in discussions in cooperative learning environment felt more relaxed and more motivated.

In another study, Gaith (2002) examined the relationship between cooperative learning, perception of social support, feeling of alienation from school, and academic achievement of 135 Lebanese private university students. The results revealed a positive relationship between cooperative learning and the degree of teachers' academic support. Also, cooperative learning positively supported the perceived degree of academic and personal support provided by teachers and peers, whereas learners' feeling of school alienation was found to be negatively correlated with academic achievement.

According to Oxford and Crookall (1989), learning strategies are things that learners do to aid their understanding of the target language. O'Malley and Chamot (1990); Oxford (1990); and Waden and Rubin (1987) define learning strategies as approaches and techniques students use to understand the target language and improve their second or foreign language skills. Chamot (2004) adds a new characteristic to this definition and defines language learning strategies as "the conscious thoughts and actions that learners take in order to achieve a learning goal" (p.14). Ellis (2008, p.703) argues that the actions that learners take in order to learn a language have been variously labeled as behaviors, tactics, techniques, and strategies. With regard to these definitions, it is worth mentioning that language learning strategies are conscious and intentional techniques which facilitate language learning. Different researchers have classified learning

strategies in different ways. Most of these classifications include more or less the same categories of language learning strategies. According to Rubin(1981), language learning strategies are classified into: direct strategies, which include clarification, verification, monitoring, memorization, guessing, inductive reasoning, deductive reasoning, practice; and indirect strategies, which consist of creating practice opportunities and using production tricks such as communication strategies. Brown and Palinscar(1982) classify metacognitive strategies, and affective social strategies. O'Malley, et.al, (1985) offer the same classification. This study adopts Oxford's taxonomy consisting of two main classes and each class consisting of three groups: direct strategies consisting of memory, cognitive, compensation strategies and indirect strategies consisting of meta-cognitive, affective, and social strategies.

Language Learning Strategies

The choice of language learning strategies depends on different factors. These factors include learner variables such as sex, age, school years, proficiency, motivation, anxiety, autonomy, aptitude, learners' purpose of using strategies, and their beliefs and also environmental factors such as institution, interaction with peers and class together (Ames & Archer, 1988; Guilloteaux & Dornyei, 2008; Littlewood, 1999; Ortega, 2003; Towns, 1998; Vandergrift, 2005). In this study, based on the above mentioned factors such as the interactions of learners and teacher, two kinds of learning context are compared: competitive and cooperative contexts. More than three decades have passed since the beginning of studies in the area of language learning strategies. Rubin (1975) referred to techniques learners use to acquire knowledge as learning strategies. His research triggered a series of other studies such as Ellis (1985), Oxford (1990), O'Malley and Chamot (1990), and Cohen (2000). Most of these studies have shown a positive relationship between strategy use and second language achievement. It has also been shown that both the frequency of strategy use and the choice of strategies can tell the difference between the characteristics of successful and unsuccessful learners. Zhang and Li (2011) presented a classification for second language vocabulary learning strategies which enable learners to organize various strategies into meaningful categories. Their framework consists of a six-factor structure; four categories are related to cognitive processes of lexical acquisition and the two others are metacognitive and affective factors. The six-factor structure is quite similar to the three-component model proposed by O' Malley and Chamot (1990) with a major difference that the affective factor is combined with the social factor and social strategies become part of the cognitive factor.

Cubukcu (2008) investigated the effectiveness of systematic direct instruction of multiple metacognitive strategies in Turkish English learners. The author concluded that metacognitive strategy training has an important role in developing vocabulary and better in reading comprehension skills. Murphy (2008) investigated how distance language course materials support the development of critical reflection and autonomy. The author referred to critical reflection, metacognitive strategies, self-assessment, interaction and collaboration as the key criteria in automatization. She concluded that distance course materials make learners more autonomous. Qingquan, Chatupote, and Teo (2008) investigated the difference in the frequency of language learning strategy use by successful and unsuccessful first-year university students in China. They concluded that successful students used a wider range of learning strategies for EFL learning, and used them significantly more frequently than unsuccessful students. Successful students used different kinds of strategies such as deep-L2-based, active participation, positive-attitude, learning-process monitoring strategies, whereas unsuccessful students used surface-based, word-level, rote-memory, and gesture strategies. Dhanapala (2007) studied strategy use in different contexts by examining the learning strategy profiles of 101

Japanese and Sri Lankan advanced learners of English as foreign and second language. The findings of the study revealed significant differences between Japanese and Sri Lankan contexts with regard to overall strategy use. Language proficiency did not relate to learners' use of broad strategy categories as a whole, but there were certain individual strategy items which showed significant association with their proficiency measure. In addition, the learners' strategy choice and preference differed in the different cultural contexts. Tseng, Dornyei, and Schmitt (2006) introduced a new approach to assessing vocabulary learning strategy use by learners: Self-regulated Capacity. They referred to underlying problems with two language learning strategy inventory questionnaire: Motivational Strategies for Learning questionnaire and Oxford Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). They concluded that the validity and reliability of Self-Regulating Capacity in vocabulary learning was satisfactory, and that the construct of self-regulated capacity can successfully be transferred to the field of second language learning. Griffiths (2006) aimed to find the relationship between strategy development and language learning progression in 30 English language learners in New-Zeland over time. The results showed that most rapidly progressed students were those who reported greatest increase in the frequency of language learning strategy use over the period of the study. Okamura (2006) examined how some writers succeed in English mastering scientific discourse in non-English speaking contexts by considering the Japanese researchers' difficulties when writing academic research articles and their strategies to cope with them. The results showed that a majority of the researchers preferred to simply cope with their limited English (subject knowledge-oriented) because of time constraints. However, the efforts to use language-oriented strategies would appear to pay off in the long run. Based on what was mentioned above, it may be concluded that there are differences in competitive and cooperative learning contexts with regard to the teaching techniques, the kinds of feedback, and the learners' dependence on teachers and other classmates. The aim of this study is to see whether and to what extent these differences influence Iranian EFL learners' direct language learning strategy use.

3. Methodology

Participants

The participants of the present study were a sample of 88 adult, male and female, EFL learners studying English for general purposes in Sohrevardi Nonprofit College in Qazvin. 44 students were in the competitive learning group and 44 in the cooperative learning group.

Instruments

To answer the research questions of the study, the Persian translation of a modified version of the subsection of Oxford's Strategy Inventory of Language Learning pertaining to direct strategy use with 29 strategy items on a 5-point Likert scale from 'never' to 'always' was used. The questionnaire was taken from Zarei and Elekai (2012) and translated by the researcher. The reliability index of the questionnaire was checked using Cronbach's alpha, and it turned out to be 0.68. It consisted of six broad categories: memory strategies for storing and retrieving new information of target language; cognitive strategies for understanding and producing the target language; compensation strategies for overcoming limitations of knowledge in Target language; metacognitive strategies for coordinating the learning process; affective strategies for regulating emotions, motivation and attitudes; and social strategies for learning through interaction with others.

Procedure

To achieve the purpose of this study, the following procedure was followed: First, in order to encourage the participants to answer the questions honestly and without anxiety, the participants were informed of the purposes of the study. Then, the questionnaires were given to the participants in two stages. In the first stage, the autonomy and strategy questionnaires were given to all of the participants to capture their initial differences. In this stage, the participants had 45 minutes to answer the questions. If the participants had any questions, their questions were answered in Persian. Then the participants were assigned to two groups. In the cooperative group, the participants were divided into groups of four or five members. They were given instructions through cooperative techniques including discussion, reciprocal teaching techniques, graphic-organizer and problem-solving. The participants of the other group were engaged in traditional, competitive activities in which the teacher explained the grammar and presented the new words of the passage. Each student worked individually and answered the questions on the grammar section of the passage, and the teacher made corrections on their mistakes. At the end of the instructional period, the autonomy and strategy questionnaires were administered again to measure the gain of the learners after the use of the competitive and cooperative teaching techniques. In this stage, 30 minutes were allocated for the questionnaires, and the researchers answered possible questions in Persian. The obtained data were then summarized and submitted to statistical analysis.

Data analysis

To analyze the data and to answer the research questions about the effects of competitive and cooperative learning techniques on direct language learning strategy use, an Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) procedure was used.

4.Result

This study attempted to see the effects of competitive and cooperative techniques on direct strategy use of Iranian adult EFL learners. To examine this effect, the ANCOVA procedure was used. Table 1 contains the results of descriptive statistics, and Table 2 presents the ANCOVA results on direct strategies.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics on direct strategies

Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Competitive group	95.48	15.557	44
Cooperative group	94.20	9.936	44
Total	94.84	12.993	88

As Table 2, shows there is no significant difference between the effects of competitive and cooperative teaching techniques on direct strategy use of Iranian EFL learners ($F(1, 87) = .301, P > .05$).

Table 2. ANCOVA results on direct strategy use

Source	Type II Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power ^b
Corrected Model	3261.95 ^a	2	1630.97	12.13	.000	.222	.994
Intercept	13381.83	1	13381.83	99.55	.000	.539	1.000
Per-direct	3226.31	1	3226.31	24.00	.000	.220	.998
Group	40.42	1	40.42	.30	.585	.004	.084
Error	11425.81	85	134.42				
Total	806230.00	88					
Corrected Total	14687.77	87					

a. R Squared = .222 (Adjusted R Squared = .204)

b. Computed using alpha = .05

5. Discussion

The finding of the present study was that there was no significant difference between the effects of competitive and cooperative teaching techniques on direct strategy use of Iranian EFL learners. This finding is against that of Murphy (2008), who implies that learners in cooperative contexts use more strategies. Moreover, the finding of the present study is incompatible with that of Tinker Sachs, Candlin and Rose (2003), who reported that cooperative teaching techniques lead learners to use more strategies. Also, this finding is in conflict with the result obtained by Mandal (2009), who found that cooperative teaching techniques encourage learners to use more affective and social strategies, thus increasing strategy use.

The findings of the present study may have been affected by several variables including the following: As Dhanapla (2007) suggests, learners' strategy use and preference differs according to different teaching contexts. So, the findings of this study may have been affected by the teaching context. According to Radwan (2011), Rao (2006) and Sheory (1999), social and cultural factors affect learners' strategy use. So, these factors may also have influenced learners' strategy use. In addition, Radwan (2011) suggests that gender affects learners' strategy use. As this study did not consider gender as a variable, the findings may have been affected by the gender of the learners. Moreover, Qingquan, Chatupote and Teo (2008) and Griffiths (2003) report that proficiency level affects EFL learners' strategy use. In this study, proficiency level was not a variable; therefore, the findings may have been affected by the proficiency level of the learners. Furthermore, learners at different age levels prefer different types of strategies. This study did not consider age as a variable. Therefore, the findings of the study may have been affected by the age of the participants. Moreover, while there were differences between the participants' performance on the post test, there were also significant differences in their pretest results. This implies that one cannot safely claim that the differences in the posttests were necessarily because of the effect of the treatment. Due to the uncertainties about the obtained result more replication studies are needed to shed light on the issue addressed in this study.

6. Conclusion

The present study attempted to investigate the effects of competitive and cooperative teaching techniques on direct strategy use of Iranian adult EFL learners. The finding of the study indicated that there was no significance difference between competitive and cooperative teaching techniques on direct strategy use of Iranian EFL learners. Based on the finding, it may be concluded that teaching techniques do not have much to do with learners' strategy use. This means that if learners wish (or are expected) to use direct language learning strategies, they cannot do so simply by resorting to cooperative learning techniques. They may have to find alternative ways of improving their direct strategy use. Alternatively, if learners learn (or are taught) language in a competitive way on grounds that such a presentation technique will help boost learners' direct strategy use, this is no good excuse. Learners and teachers may freely opt for cooperative learning/teaching techniques without worrying about learners' strategy development. In short, the findings of this research may help teachers, learners and syllabus designers. The findings may help teachers to create rich and meaningful learning environments by providing students with cooperative activities that can benefit learners in multidimensional ways without fears of hindering their strategy development. Syllabus designers can also benefit from this study; if they come to learn about the nature of the relationship between competitive and cooperative techniques and learners' use of learning strategies, they will be able to make more informed decisions and better prepared to design course books which can encourage learners to tackle their job in more efficient, less laborious ways.

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Information Resources, Retrieval and Utilization for Effective Research in Tertiary and Research Institutions

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Abstract

Over the years, researchers have been confronted with inadequate information resources that will facilitate their Research and Development (R & D) activities in their various research interests. This paper presents a discourse on the concept of information resources, validity of information, cost and value of information, information storage and retrieval, characteristics of information, material resources, tangible/intangible resources, information utilization and web-based (Internet) Information. The paper concludes with the recommendation that acquaintance (on the part of librarians) and utilization (on the part researchers) of these invaluable resources would enhance effective research in tertiary institutions and research institutes.

Keywords: Information Resources; Information Retrieval; Utilization; Effective Research; Tertiary Institutions

I.Introduction

Information is the result of processing, manipulating and organizing data in a way that adds to the knowledge of the receiver. Information, which is a catalyst for change, has become as important as life itself. Information is substantially different from data in that data are raw unevaluated messages. Information is the increase in knowledge obtained by the recipient by matching proper data elements to the variables of a problem (Ochai, 2007). Information, being awareness on a given situation or phenomenon which propels one into action must be valid and usable. If valid but not usable it is (outdated or obsolete). If usable but not valid it is (gossip or grapevine).

With the current trend of globalization as one of the elements of ICT, there is a quantum of information available in libraries, resource centres and information systems. However, ability to identify and retrieve specific information needed for a particular situation requires an awareness of the source (availability) and the skill to retrieve it within a short time and at low cost (accessibility). Recall or retrieval of information is an operation which entails searching out and gaining access to specific data elements from the medium where it is stored. Retrieval is of two-stage process: first, a search of the appropriate address in the storage device; second recognition of the item when it is contacted. An item may not be contacted if the information search is at the wrong category, and also if the information is stored in such a disorganized and confused manner that time-cost of searching the retrieval system is prohibitive.

2.Validity of Information

Information validity is determined through a simple formula:

$$IV = \frac{ETC}{R}$$

R

Where:

IV= Information Validity

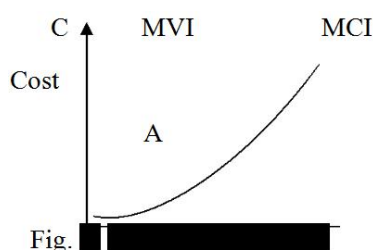
ETC= Energy, Time & Cost of searching

R= Relevance of Information

That is to say, information is valid if the energy lost, time spent and cost of retrieval equals to its appropriateness or the usability. On the contrary if the sourcing variables are greater than its usability the information is said to be invalid.

3. Cost and Value of Information

The objective of the information system is to attain an optimum point where the marginal value of information equals marginal cost of providing that information. The relationship is shown below in Fig.1.



It must be noted that an excess quantity of information with a relative high cost can result in negative marginal value. The optimal level of information processing is attained where the MCI equals MVI. That is, point "A". Concerning the level of output, we can state that:

1. if $MVI > MCI$, increase output
2. if $MVI < MCI$ reduce output
3. if $MVI = MCI$, output is optimum

4. Information resources

The term 'resource' means a source of supply, usually in large quantity. A person is said to be 'resourceful' when he or she is capable of handling difficult situations. Generally, resources are aids to the researcher. They are those materials, strategies, manipulations, apparatuses or consultations that help the researcher to enhance research and development. Information resources therefore include all forms of information carriers that can be used to promote and encourage effective research activities and developmental projects.

5. Information Storage and Retrieval

Information storage and retrieval are the operations performed by the hardware and software used in indexing and storing a file of machine-readable records whenever a user queries the system for information relevant to a specific topic. For records to be retrieved, the search statement must be expressed in syntax

executable by the computer. According to Reitz, (2004) information retrieval (IR) is the process, methods, and procedures used to selectively recall recorded information from a file of data. In libraries and archives, searches are typically for a known item or for information on a specific subject, and the file is usually a human-readable catalog or index, or a computer-based information storage and retrieval system, such as an online catalog or bibliographic database. In designing such systems, balance must be attained between speed, accuracy, cost, convenience, and effectiveness (Reitz, 2004).

6.Characteristics of Information

The value of information is based on ten attributes as identified by (Imeremba, 2003) which are listed as follows:

- 1.Accessibility – the ease and speed with which an information output can be obtained.
- 2.Comprehensiveness – the completeness of the information content.
- 3.Accuracy – the degree of freedom from error of the information output.
- 4.Appropriateness – how well the information output relates to the user’s request. The information content must be relevant to the matter on hand.
- 5.Timeliness – it is related to a shorter elapsed time of cycle: input, processing and reporting of output to the users. Normally, for information to be timely, the duration of this cycle must be reduced.
- 6.Clarity – the degree an information output is free from ambiguity. Ambiguous terms or equations should be avoided.
- 7.Flexibility – the adaptability of an information output not only to more than one decision, but to more than one decision maker.
- 8.Verifiability – the ability of several users examining an information output and arriving at the same conclusion.
- 9.Unbiasness – the absence of intent to alter or modify information in order to produce conceived conclusion. In other words, it must be free from bias.
- 10.Quantifiable – the nature of information produced from a formal information system.

7.Material Resources

Material resources are classified into tangible and intangible resources. Tangible resources are visual aids, aural aids and audiovisual aids. Dike (1999) gives examples:

Visual aids – research materials and devices that appeal to the sense of sight and touch such as books, journals, pamphlets, newsletters and reference sources that are in printed format. They also include projected aids, pictorial aids, three-dimensional aids, laboratory equipment, chemicals and apparatuses and non-projected aids.

Aural aids – research materials that appeal to the senses of hearing and touch too such as records and record players, tapes and tape recorders, language laboratories, radio, etc.

Audiovisual aids – resources that appeal to the senses of sight, hearing and touch such as sound film, filmstrip projector, television, video tape recorder and tapes, VCD, DVD, etc.

Intangible resources – consist of methods and technique of research. It includes methodologies, strategies or manipulations which the researcher uses in the laboratory or at field work to effect or facilitate

research and development (R&D); such as: questioning, explanation, experimentation, exemplifying, sampling, modeling, designing, construction, field trips, illustration, characterization, measurement, analysis of data, monitoring, installation, computation, systems optimization, metallization, fabrication, testing, blending, additive property studying, distillation, dissemination demonstration and exhibition.

Uhegbu (2007) asserts that “information utilization is the actual putting into appropriate use of acquired information. Utilization of information differs from person to person and from one corporate organization to the other according to their information needs and other socio-economic imperatives. It can be viewed within the context of need, accessibility and function performed. Alegbeleye (1987) posits that utilization of information by any clientele is influenced by the kind of job done, profession or function one performs.

Neelamegham (1981) has identified accessibility as one of the prerequisites of information utilization. Since there is growing concern in the need for equal access to information, he argues that information generation, collection, organization, recording and distribution, accessing and utilization operate imperfectly. Thus, the purpose, user characteristics, environment or situation involved, medium of communication, quality, infrastructural facility, cost and time of availability all condition the use of information.

Itoga (1992) identifies three basic categories of understanding in the context of information utilization of a person:

i. Perceptual understanding: In which provision and accessibility of information to a user is anchored on the seeker's demand within the purview of his behaviour, gesture, words and writing, etc.

ii. Normative or Objective understanding: In which provision and utilization of information is viewed within the context of a user's objectives and purpose of seeking it.

iii. Contextual or subjective understanding: in which utilization of information is a function of the subjective meaning given to it. Availability and accessibility of information in whatever medium and quality is meaningless if it does not meet the complex behaviour needs of the people be it economic, social, political, cultural and technological. Need satisfaction becomes more understandable by the fact that contemporary information users are becoming increasingly more complex and sophisticated in their demand for survival. The efficacy of the principle of information utilization therefore is anchored on its ability to satisfy the needs of seekers.

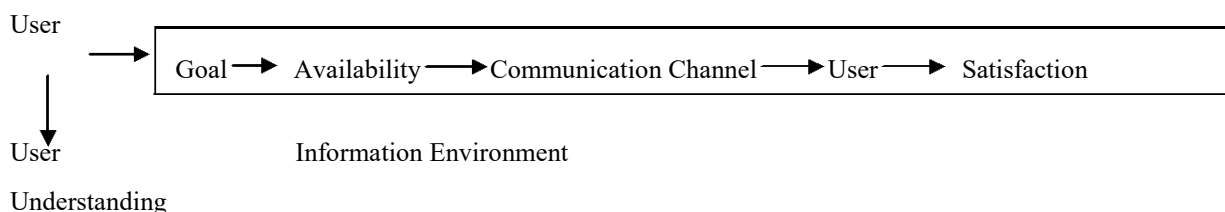
This principle of use based on four broad premises:

1. Goal – every use of data and information is goal-oriented. It must aim at solving a problem or enhancing a better understanding of an already known situation. The purpose of seeking information is central to its demand and use.

2. Availability – entails not only that information is provided but its accessibility. It must be accessible and devoid of socio-economic and environmental impediments.

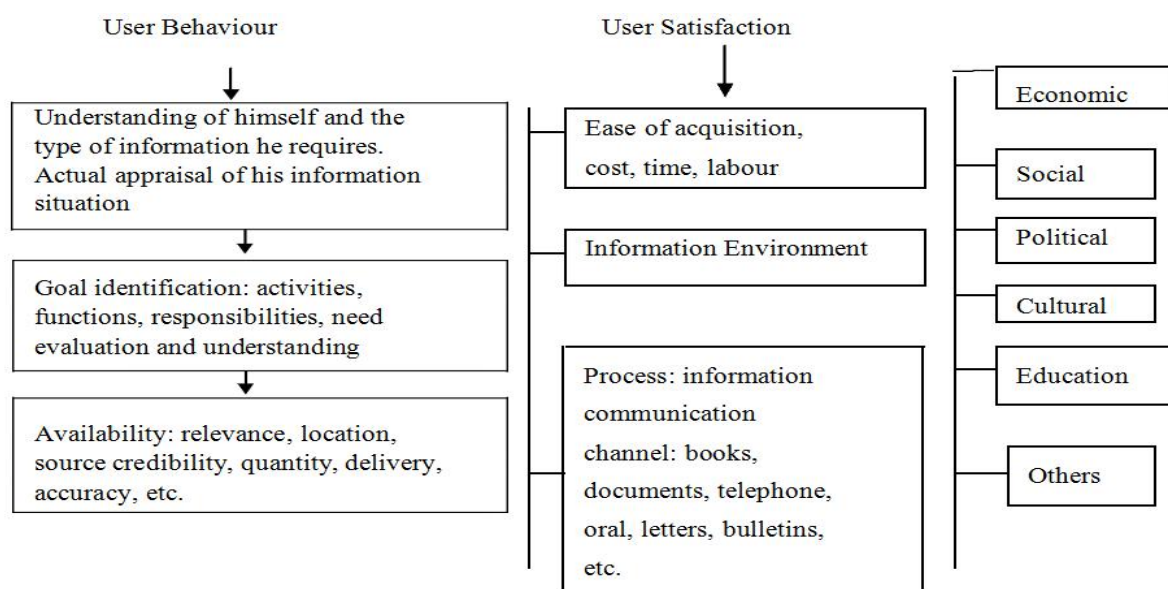
3. Process (channel of communication) – whatever medium is used, effective information utilization is possible if the processes of accessibility are cheap, unambiguous, relevant, nearer to people, and in line with their level of sophistication, literacy and understanding. User satisfaction – the ultimate purpose of utilizing information is to satisfy the seeker's need. Because user's needs are varied, their satisfaction amounts to a high level achievement for them.

The diagram below demonstrates these elements and their interaction to enhance utilization of information.



User satisfaction is influenced by the means of accessing information. Without good information communication channels, accessibility will be difficult and its utilization impaired. Therefore effective channel of communication is paramount in the utilization of information for user satisfaction. Below is a diagram showing the principles (conditions) that govern information utilization by any information user.

Process of Information flow and user satisfaction



8.Return on Investment

Always in the forefront of special librarianship is the term 'Return on Investment' (ROI). The concept provides a framework for establishing a value for the work, services, and expertise of information professionals. It examines the resources (money, time, personnel, etc.) committed to providing information services compared with the value of the ultimate outcomes achieved by users of the information, using support from those information services.

Information on the Internet

Information is available on the Internet; however, skills are required in order to be able to gather information on the web. Apart from going directly to the URL, there are four major ways to source for information on the web. There are search engines and meta-search engines, information gateways, subject directories, directory portals, and online databases (Aina, Mutula and Tihamiyu (2008).

Search engines are huge databases containing web page files that have been assembled automatically by machine. There are two types: individual and meta-search. Individual search engines compile their own searchable databases on the web. Examples are:

- (i) All the Web: <http://alltheweb.com>
- (ii) Alta Vista: www.altavista.com (iii) Google: www.google.com

Meta-searchers do not compile their own databases. Instead, they search the databases of multiple sets of individual engines simultaneously. This could result in a multiple lists or a single list. Multiple lists display search results in separate lists, as they are received from each engine. Duplicate entries may appear. Single lists displays multiple-engine search results in a single merged lists, from which duplicate entries have been removed. Examples are:

- (i) vivisimo: <http://vivisimo.com>
- (ii) surfWax: <http://surfwax.com>
- (iii) ixquick: <http://www.ixquick.com>

Search engines and meta-search engines are good for precise searches, using named people; or for organizations and for searching quickly; and widely topics that are difficult to classify. They are not good for browsing through a subject area.

Information Gateways

There are two kinds of gateways: Library gateways and Subject directory/Portals. Library gateways are collections of databases and informational sites, arranged by subject that have been assembled, reviewed and recommended by specialists, usually librarians. These gateway collections support researched and reference needs by identifying and pointing to recommended, academically-oriented pages on the Web. They include subject directories and virtual libraries gateways. Examples are:

- ELDIS the gateway to Development Information: <http://www.eldis.org>
- Development Gateway: <http://www.developmentgateways.org>
- WWW Virtual Library: <http://www.vlib.org>
- SOSIG (Social Science Information Gateway): <http://www.sosig.ac.uk>
- Ask ERIC (educational information): www.eduref.org
- SearchEdu (college & university sites): <http://www.searchedu.com>

Invisible Web

There is a large portion of the web that search engine spiders cannot, or may not, index. It has been dubbed the “Invisible Web” or the “Deep Web”, and includes, among other things, password protected sites, documents behind firewalls, archived material, the contents of certain databases, and information that is not static, but assembled dynamically in response to specific queries. Web profilers agree that the “Invisible Web”, which is made up of thousands of documents and databases, accounts for 60 to 80 percent of existing web material. This is information one probably assumes one could access by using standard search engines, but that is not always the case. According to the Invisible Web Catalogue, these resources may or may not be visible to search engine spiders, although today’s search engines are getting better and better at finding and indexing the contents of “Invisible Web” pages.

In order to access so-called “Invisible Web” sites, one needs to point one’s browser directly at them. That is what many library gateways and subject-specific databases do. They are good sources for direct links to database information stored on the “Invisible Web”. Examples are:

University of Botswana Library: Medupe <http://medupe.ub.bw>

University of Botswana online databases: <http://medupe.ub.bw/screens/databaselist.html>, e.g. EBSCO host.

Subject Directories/Portals

Subject directories, unlike search engines, are created and maintained by human editors, not electronic spiders or robots. The editors review and select sites for inclusion in their directories on the basis of previously determined selection criteria. The resources they list are usually annotated. Directories tend to be smaller than search engine databases, typically indexing only the home page or top level pages of a site. They may also have a search engine for searching their own directly (Chamberlain, 2006). Examples are:

(i)Excite: <http://www.excite.com>

(ii)Microsoft Network (MSN): <http://www.msn.com> (iii)Netscape: <http://www.netscape.com>

(iv)Yahoo! <http://www.yahoo.com>

Information gateways are good for topics that fall into a thematic area that has a subject directory for guided browsing in a subject area; they are not good for quickly finding information on widely varying themes.

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Towards Improved Funding of Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

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Abstract

Education defines the quality of life; it is the foundation on which the society is built. Higher learning takes the intellect to the next level of success and provides a deeper understanding of relevant subjects; it also provides the necessary foundation for economic growth. The success of any educational system hinges on proper planning, effective administration, and adequate funding. Funding is essential for the survival of any institution and tertiary institutions in Nigeria are not left out. It is due to these reasons that this paper examined how tertiary institutions can be better funded in Nigeria. The paper equally recommends alternative means of improving funding of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. It is the view of this paper that all the stakeholders in education which include parents, guardians, the general public, government, non-governmental agencies, international partners and the private sector should support and subsidize the funding of tertiary education in Nigeria.

Keywords: Funding; Subsidy; Tertiary institutions; Higher education; Economic growth; Resource Allocation

1. INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education can be defined as the level of education acquired after secondary education in higher institutions of learning such as Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of education and other institutions of higher learning offering correspondence courses, diplomas and certificates. Ahmed (2011) opined that the challenges confronting tertiary institutions in Nigeria include financing and funding, the growth of private tertiary institutions, management challenges and so on but the challenge dealing the worst deathblow is that of underfunding of tertiary institutions. Nwangwu (2005) stated that the foundation of education is frail when education is not well funded and the products of such foundation are weak intellectuals. When there were just few tertiary institutions, Government saddle the burden of funding the institutions solely but from the mid-1980's there was a massive increase in the number of tertiary institutions and in students' enrolment in Nigeria. This increase has gotten to the point where Government openly acknowledged that it can no longer saddle the responsibility of funding institutions alone.

The Federal Government of Nigeria is increasingly finding it difficult to meet the high cost of funding tertiary education in Nigeria and if tertiary institutions in the country are to survive, there is an urgent need to seek out means of improving their funding. It is instructive to note that education is a right and not a privilege and if this is to become a reality in the Nigerian context then education needs to be subsidised and better funded at the tertiary level. In the face of the declining financial resource allocation to the education sector, there is the need

for alternative channels of funding which will ensure qualitative education and graduates from Nigerian education system.

1.1 The Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

The history of higher education in Nigeria dated back to the period of colonial era with the establishment of Yaba Higher College in 1932 which marked the turning point of higher education in Nigeria. The Higher College was established to produce “assistants” who would relieve colonial administrators of menial tasks (Olujuwon, 2002). The establishment of higher educational institutions was in pursuit of meeting the global requirements of producing manpower that will serve in different capacities and contribute positively to the nation’s socio-economic and political development in Nigeria (Abdulkareem, Fasasi and Akinubi, 2011). The Federal Government of Nigeria promulgated enabling law to institute higher education towards producing high level relevant manpower training, self-reliance, national development through the establishment of both conventional and special universities, polytechnics, monotechnics and colleges of education in different parts of the country by the Federal, state governments, private organizations and individuals (Abdulkareem, Fasasi and Akinubi, 2011).

The Nigerian tertiary institutions comprise of Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, Institutes of Technology and other professional institutions operating under the umbrella of their parent ministries. The institutions can be further categorised into State Government Institutions and Federal Institutions. Tertiary institutions are also grouped into Public Institutions owned by the Federal and State Government and private Institutions owned by Individuals, Religious bodies and other private organisations. In 1948, there was only one University in Nigeria but now the Nigerian Tertiary Institution can boast of 129 Universities, 81 Polytechnics, 27 Monotechnics, more than 60 Colleges of Education, 36 Colleges of Agriculture, 50 Colleges of Health Technology, 132 Technical Colleges and 108 Innovative and Vocational Enterprise Institutions (IEIs & VEIs)

Table 1.1: Number of Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Institutions	Federal	States	Private	Total
Colleges of education	21	38	4	63
Colleges of health technologies and allied Institutions	9	40	1	50
Monotechnics/specialised Institutions	23	2	2	27
Colleges of Agriculture	17	19	0	36
Polytechnics	21	38	22	81
Universities	40	39	50	129
Total	131	176	79	386

Source: National Commission for Colleges of Education, 2011; National Board for Technical Education, National Universities Commission 2014

2.TREND OF FUNDING TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

In the last three decades, higher education in Nigeria has witnessed a significant growth in terms of population expansion through increase in enrolment and establishment of additional institutions. However, it is saddening to note that many of the indices that can guarantee qualitative higher education are not taken into

consideration in the country's quest to meet quantitative target. The demand for higher education is so high because education is not only an investment in human capital, but also a pre-requisite for economic development. According to Udoh (2008), Nigeria as a developing nation is currently witnessing increased enrolment of university students. This increase in enrolment demands corresponding increase in funding which is not the case in Nigeria. Fund allocation does not increase to meet the demand of funds occasioned by the enrolment increase.

Imhabekhai and Tonwe (2001) reported that government provide for over 80 per cent of all the funds needed for capital and recurrent expenditures in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria while the reverse is the case in most developed countries where payment of tuition fees is the most essential source of funds for tertiary institutions. Various propositions have been made on how to lessen the burden of funding being carried solely by the government in Nigeria by introducing tuition fee in the public universities, checking corruption and fraudulent practices, increasing commercial activities on the various campuses, seeking for funds from international development partners, carrying out researches, rendering consultancy services, offering long distance and part time programmes through the internet, making giant strides in scientific breakthroughs and becoming the forerunners in technological advancements and implementation etc (Arikewuyo 2001). Ezekwesili (2006) affirmed that underfunding of education especially at the tertiary level has become a persistent occurrence in Nigeria as funds released to the tertiary sector can no longer meet the increasing demands and growth of Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Funding of Nigerian higher education is imperative because of the costs involved in maintaining an institution. John and Parson (2004) observed that the continuing cost of governance is ascribed to increasing higher educational bills of many countries of the world especially the developing countries, coupled with growing overhead costs.

Investment in higher education revolved around capital and recurrent expenditure that are cogent to academic survival of higher institutions in the current period of global competition for attracting funding and best hands. However, Nigerian government has not been able to fund higher education adequately in order to achieve best result. Ajayi and Ekundayo (2006) argued that the Nigerian government over the years has not met the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recommendation of 26% of the total budget allocation to education sector despite the government's allocation towards education on yearly basis. (Tables 1.2 and 1.3 refer).

The underlying rationale for public funding of education is to equip people with the requisite knowledge, skills and capacity to enhance the quality of life, productivity and enable them to participate actively in the development process. Hinchiliffe (2002), highlighted that federal budgetary allocation to education in nominal terms rose from ₦6.2 million in 1970 to ₦1,051.2 million in 1976. Thereafter, it declined to ₦667.1 million in 1979, rose again to ₦1,238.5 million in 1980, declined in succeeding years before rising to ₦3,399.3 million in 1989. It dropped further to ₦1,553.3 million in 1991 before rising gradually to ₦9,434.7 million in 1994. Thereafter, the declining trend continued. Specifically, in 1996, the federal government funded its polytechnics at the rate of \$251 per student, its colleges of education at the rate \$394 per student and its universities at the rate of \$300 per student. However, in the year 2000, funding for tertiary institutions, did improve significantly.

TABLE 1.2: Federal Ministry of Education Recurrent Budgetary Appropriations and Releases, 1999-2005

	1999			2000			2001			2002			2003			2004			2005		
Sub-Sector	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release
NUC (Universities)	10,36	10,36		28,20	28,20		28,20	28,20		26,72	23,11		34,75	31,30		36,56	35,24		43,54	40,56	
	5	5		3	3		3	3		7	5		7	8		7	7		8	2	
NCCE (Colleges of Education)	2,443	2,443		5,411	5,411		5,411	5,411		4,207	3,920		4,785	4,785		6,471	6,326		10,334	9,450	
NBTE (Polytechnics)	4,700	4,700		8,133	8,133		8,133	8,133		7,879	7,227		8,832	8,848		10,483	10,280		15,509	13,969	
Total	23,70	23,70		49,12	49,12		52,54	52,54		50,00	42,68		62,81	58,30		70,10	68,30		90,16	87,61	
	1	1		6	6		8	8		2	3		8	9		7	7		6	9	
% of Recurrent Releases		100.00			100.00			100.00			85.36			92.82			97.43			97.18	

Source: FME (2007) Statistics of education in Nigeria, 1999-2005 P.175

TABLE 1.3: Federal Ministry of Education Capital Budgetary Appropriations and Releases, 1999- 2005

	1999			2000			2001			2002			2003			2004			2005		
Sub-Sector	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release	Appropriation (000,000)	Actual	Release
NUC (Universities)	5,143	3,646		5,502	2,020		5,168	4,651		7,491	-		7,220	2,114		12,283	12,283		11,483	9,003	
NCCE (Colleges of Education)	1,065	532.6		1,969	561.1		1,970	1,773		1,729	-		1,719	600.0		1,680	1,680		2,372	1,814	
NBTE (Polytechnics)	524.0	262.0		967.2	493.0		1,700	1,530		2,829	-		2,753	1,081		1,825	1,825		2,693	2,111	
Total	11,042	6,871		23,359	15,112		24,796	22,316		22,100	2,772		15,723	5,161		21,615	21,615		20,813	16,271	
% of Recurrent Releases					64.70			90.00			12.54			32.80			32.80			78.18	

Source: FME (2007) Statistics of education in Nigeria, 1999-2005 P.173

From tables 1.2 and 1.3 above, we can deduce that there is need to increase the amount allocated to education because qualitative education can only be attained through sufficient funding. It is imperative therefore for government to meet the UNESCO recommendation and increase the annual budgetary allowance to 26 per cent of the total federal budget. Capital expenditure should also be given top priority as there is need to build the needed physical infrastructure and other support structures to facilitate learning.

The Nigerian education as a proportion of federal funding is some 7.6 per cent (average from 2008 to

2010). It is roughly 50 per cent of total federal capital budget and 11 per cent of total recurrent budget. There is a decreasing trend over the years (see table 1.4).

Table 1.4: Capital versus Recurrent Education Budget, 2008-2010

Year	Educ. Budget(NB)	Recurrent	%Recurrent	Capital	%Capital
2008	218	167.5	76.8	50.5	23.2
2009	224.7	184.7	82.2	40	17.8
2010	271.2	196.3	72.4	75	27.6

Source: Report of the Presidential Task Team on Education, May 2011, P.37

The simulation exercise carried out by Chang (2007) revealed that funding gap exist in achieving the policy goals set for tertiary institutions, the funding gap is relatively high ranging from around 50 per cent to 90 per cent across 2010 to year 2020. This implies that the key players in tertiary education in Nigeria will have to search for alternative and improved means of filling the void created by underfunding by reviewing accountability, resource management, good leadership and administration, promotion of public-private partnership in providing education at all levels. The challenge of underfunding of Nigerian Tertiary institutions has a significant effect on the performance of staff and students who are at the receiving end. According to Udoh (2008), the government finds it increasingly difficult to match the growing enrolment of students with qualitative funding due to drastic reduction in revenue and economic despondency experienced in the country. Bamiro and Adedeji (2010) noted that the quality of lecturing and research work has significantly declined over the years leading to overcrowding and unconducive learning and teaching environment. Oyeneye (2006) affirmed that making qualitative education available to all citizens is a right but there can't be quality education without adequate funding. He further stated that in Nigeria, it is difficult to ascertain the pattern of fund allocation. Ekundayo (2008) posited that most of the capital projects being undertaken to meet the increasing number of students have been abandoned due to lack of funds. He also affirmed that the pressure on the inadequate resources has led to a decline on the staff welfare package and remuneration coupled with depreciation of working conditions and environment. The resultant effects are high brain-drain of professional staff, persistent strike action, rioting, high crime rate, and cultism, extortion of students, admission runs, embezzlement and all sorts of vices. According to Imhabekhai & Tonwe (2001), inadequate funding deters growth in the tertiary institutions.

The higher education system has been criticized for being inefficient and ineffective, major issues of higher education in Nigeria are similar to those in most countries around the world. Overcrowding in our higher institutions and inadequate funding resources are contributing factors to the decline in the quality of higher education. The system has far outgrown the resources available for it to continue offering high- level quality education. Inadequate funding has resulted in problems such as the breakdown and deterioration of facilities, shortages of new books and current journals in the libraries, supplies for the laboratories, and limited funding for research.

The Federal government is the major funder of higher education; however, the growth in expenditure by the government has been inconsistent over the years. The funding pattern has not reflected inflation rates and the growing enrolment figures in our higher institutions.

2.1 Ways of Improving the Funding of Higher Institutions in Nigeria

The financing of higher education can be improved from fees paid by parents, repayable loans to parents, local government taxes, general budgetary funds, gifts and remission of taxes. UNESCO (1968) remarked that in developed countries, education is entirely financed by taxation, but in developing countries other sources could be explored. Higher institutions should explore alternative sources of funding such as fee-paying students and improved relations with industry to supplement their income. There is an increasing demand and willingness to pay for chargeable programs offered on a part-time basis. Many Nigerian higher institutions are starting to rely on this mode of income generation as an alternative source of funding for other programs within their institutions. Satellite campuses in some instances have been set up to cut down on non-academic costs such as accommodation and other expenses. Short-term courses offered on part-time basis have become popular among people who are already employed and wish to study, and can also afford to pay the fees or have their employers pay for them.

Considering the foregoing, it is necessary to suggest other means of improving higher education funding in Nigeria. These include:

Education Tax: Public resources for education could be raised from taxation. Resources raised therefore are used for the general purposes of government and funds for education are shared from a general pool of public revenue. In 1994, the government of Nigeria set up the Education Trust Fund in which companies operating in Nigeria were made to pay 2 per cent of their annual profits as Education Tax. The resources garnered therefrom were distributed among all levels of education in the country. However the fund has since been transformed into tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND), meant specifically for the tertiary institutions. Since 2009 the Fund (TETFUND) has made several interventions to improve the quality of teaching and research in higher education.

External Support: This always comes in the form of technical assistance, grants, credits and loans. Due to paucity of funds for tertiary institutions the Nigerian government has often sourced for loans/grants from foreign and international development partners. These are largely in form of bi-lateral and multi-lateral loans. As regards foreign grants, it is nowadays largely confined to the offer of scholarships for specialised training particularly at the graduate level outside the country. Sometimes it takes the form of technical assistance.

Internal Generated Revenue: The individual tertiary institutions could supplement their funding stream through the establishment of revenue yielding ventures/project. Such projects/venture like bookshops, hotel and catering services, printing press, consultancy service, etc., are veritable means of raising funds needed to enhance their service delivery.

Contributions from Users of Education: The need for adequate funding of the tertiary institutions in the face of falling public resource allocation necessitated the recourse to the users of education-(students) to contribute towards the funding of their institutions. This could be in form of payment of school fees, development levy, caution fee (against the possibility of damage to school property), admission, and registration and examination fees.

2.2 Alternative Methods of Funding Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Funding of tertiary institutions in Nigeria is at present very dismal, No thanks to the current crisis in the nation's economy coupled with high rates of inflation and falling revenues. With the increasing evidence of financial constraints, solutions to the funding bottlenecks must involve a combination of short, medium and

long term interventions. According to Famade (2000), this will be in the area of cost recovery and redistribution of the financial burden of investing in education. He opined that the following steps should be taken as a way out of funding challenges.

As a first step, a cost-sharing and funding partnership arrangement between the government, parents, communities and the private sector should be explored on a remarkable scale. Parents and local communities should be more involved in the provision of books, equipment and materials to schools. This can be done through the Parents' Teachers Association. The communities could undertake to build schools and provide goods and services in kind (e.g. food or accommodation for teachers).

Secondly, the efficiency profile of the school system should be improved. A way of improving the internal efficiency of the education system is to reduce wastage, which is always in the form of high failure, drop out and repeater rate, as well as low teacher productivity.

Measures that could help reduce wastage within the school system include the improvement of teacher training so that empirical learning will replace memorization and rote learning: as well as strengthening pedagogical research as an instrument for improving educational efficiency. If this were done, the education system would achieve much more than it is achieving with the current level of funding.

Thirdly, appropriate designs and efficient contract management in all the tertiary institutions should be put in place to ensure substantial cut in costs.

Fourthly, a market-oriented approach should be adopted in delivering essential services. Proper deregulation of these services should be carried out. For instance, efficient or appropriate pricing of most services- boarding, feeding, tuition, and examination etc. will go a long way in the mobilization drive for scarce resources towards efficient financing.

3.CONCLUSION

The funding of higher education in Nigeria needs to be improved upon. This is as a result of the increasing need and demand for specialized services in different sectors within the academic institutions. There is also an increasing growth in student's enrolment and the available resources in the higher institutions are not sufficient to meet up with the funding requirements. Higher institutions need to explore alternative means of funding and become less dependent on Government allocations. Stakeholders in education which include parents, guardians, the general public, non-governmental agencies, international partners and the private sector should support and subsidize the funding of tertiary education in Nigeria.

The private and public sector assistance or contribution should be encouraged in order to boost the productivity of the tertiary institutions. External assistance in form of loans or grants for meaningful and profitable projects, personnel training for capacity building and technical know-how in the institutions should be sought. Also, the Federal Government could explore the re-introduction of loans to students, while the scholarship schemes could be revamped at the both the federal and state levels.

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Interculturality in the Translation of China's Publicity Texts During the Beijing Winter Olympics

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Abstract

Challenges were met by the translators in the translation of publicity texts during the Beijing Winter Olympics due to the huge cultural differences between China and Western countries. From the perspective of interculturality, this paper deals with the relationship between interculturality and intersubjectivity, interculturality and intertextuality, and the relationship between domestication and foreignization in interculturality, with the intention to provide inspiration for China's future publicity work to overseas audiences and promote the spread of Chinese culture. To achieve the balance in translation, the translators should consider the relationship between authors, translators and readers, and also historical and cultural contexts. The translator should deal with the relationship between domestication and foreignization in a correct way, and pursue the idea of "harmony but not uniformity" when facing cultural differences or conflicts.

Keywords: Interculturality; Intersubjectivity; Intertextuality

1. Introduction

The 24th Winter Olympic Games was held in Beijing in 2022. It is amazing for China to host the Winter Olympics during the epidemic period, but challenges were met by the translators in the translation of publicity texts to the foreigners due to the huge cultural differences between China and Western countries. Interculturality refers to the equal interaction between different cultures, with the characteristics of "mobility, temporality, spatiality and practicality" (Zhang, 2021, p.141). Some scholars have already done some researches on the theory of interculturality, but there are no researches related to the translation about the Beijing Winter Olympics. In this paper, the translation methods and strategies adopted by the translators about the publicity texts during the Beijing Winter Olympics will be analyzed from the perspective of interculturality by selecting some examples of English translations from Chinese mainstream news media and newspapers, with the purpose of providing inspiration for China's future publicity work to overseas audiences and thus promoting the spread of Chinese culture.

2. Interculturality in the Publicity Translation of the Beijing Winter Olympics

2.1 Interculturality and Intersubjectivity

Interculturality involves the relationship between different subjects in different cultures. Intersubjectivity is originally a concept in the field of philosophy, put forward by Husserl, and then applied to translation studies. “Intersubjectivity is the characteristics of the interaction among the authors, translators and readers in certain circumstances” (Hu, 2006, p.13) Intersubjectivity is characterized by “difference, equality, balance and integrity” (Luo, 2012, p.120). Under the guidance of intersubjectivity, with the help of the object text, the translator harmonizes and integrates the author’s thoughts and the readers’ expectations for the translation, and at the same time integrates his own understanding of the original text, so as to do the translation which is favored by the readers with both the author’s and translator’s characteristics.

The translation for “秉持绿色、共享、开放和廉洁的办奥理念” (Bingchi Lvse, Gongxiang, Kaifang he Lianjie de Banao Linian) is “committed to organizing a green, inclusive, open and clean games”. These words are concise and rich in meaning. After the translator fully understood the concept of the Winter Olympics in China, he translated the original text with words that English readers could understand, which promoted the cultural exchange and dialogue between China and the West. “Green” means hosting the Olympics in a way that protects the environment. “Inclusive” refers to the society from all walks of life who are involved in the Game and people who will be fond of winter sports. “Open” refers promoting the exchange of Chinese and foreign sports and strengthening the integration between Chinese and western civilization. “Clean” refers to eliminating corruption, eliminating doping and we should make the Olympic Winter Games as pure and clean as snow and ice. “Green” has the meaning of “concerned with the protection of the environment”, and “environmental” and “green” have similar connotation in both languages. Due to the inter-subjectivity of Chinese and English culture, The translator chose the word “green”, which is more suitable for “绿色” (Lvse), helping the readers better understand China’s ideas of hosting the Olympics.

The translation for “折柳寄情” (Zheliu Jiqing) is “Bidding Farewell with a Willow Twig”, which is a unique image in China and full of cultural charm. Translation is a medium of communication between two different cultures. Translation can make readers interact with each other, that is, the intersubjectivity between readers, which can promote the understanding and integration between different cultures. In the closing ceremony, the Chinese image of “willow” greatly aroused the interest of English readers. NBC News explained that willow is a homonym for “stay” and willow branches are a symbol of parting. One of the aims of translation for the Winter Olympics is to enhance the English readers’ understanding of Chinese culture. “Bidding Farewell with a Willow Twig” triggers the exchange between the Chinese and English culture and promotes mutual understanding between the different cultural subjects.

Intersubjectivity is committed to mutual understanding, mutual respect and mutual tolerance between translators, authors and readers, so that the translation can integrate the respective thoughts of the subjects, balance the translation among the subjects and promote the communication and interaction among the subjects.

2.2 Interculturality and Intertextuality

Intertextuality, which was introduced by the French scholar Julia Kristeva in 1966, refers to the relationship between texts. In Kristeva’s formulation, any text is an “intertext” (Kristeva, 1980, p.66) — it is not “an individual, isolated object but, rather, a compilation of cultural textuality” (Allen, 2000, p.47). “When we read or listen to texts, we rewrite them according to our new surroundings and our knowledge of other texts” (Alawi, 2010, p.2441). In a broader sense, one text is influenced by prior texts as well as the historical and

cultural contexts. Intertextuality is well represented in the publicity translation during the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games.

“一起向未来” (Yiqi xiang Weilai) (in English: “Together for a Shared Future”) is the official slogan of Beijing 2022. Instead of translating it literally as “Together to the Future”, the word “for” was chosen as the preposition, considering the overall environment in which the translator and the translation were situated. Against the backdrop of COVID-19, “Together for the Future” embodies the Olympic’s goal of world unity, peace and progress. “For” reflects the strong will of human beings in the face of adversity, and “for” indicates that our aim is clear and we are ready, while the word “Shared” indicates that everyone in the global village together forms a community of a shared future. Therefore, it can be seen that the social context plays a vital role in determining the choice of words in translation. In order to avoid misinterpreting the original text, the translator should pay attention to the cultural differences between the original language and the target language in the process of translation, achieving an adaptive transformation in cultural dimension.

In the speech at the welcome banquet of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, President Xi Jinping quoted the verse “爆竹声中一岁除，春风送暖入屠苏” (Baozhu Shengzhong Yisui chu, Chunfeng Songnuan ru Tusu), which was translated as “Out goes the old year with the sound of firecrackers; in comes the new with the warmth of wine and spring breeze”. The translation conveyed the main message of the original text and had a close intertextual relationship with it. The term “屠苏” (Tusu) refers to the wine drunk during the Spring Festival in ancient times, made from several herbs. Due to the different cultural backgrounds, the direct translation might lead to certain comprehension barriers for foreign audiences. In addition to “wine”, there was another translation of “屠苏” (Tusu), namely “Toso”. However, “Toso” refers to a kind of Japanese medicinal wine, which may mislead the readers of the target language. The use of “wine” here is more appropriate to their culture and makes it easier for them to understand the customs reflected in the verse. Although the meaning of this sentence was similar to that of the original, the structure of the sentence was adjusted by using inverted sentences, which conformed to the characteristics of the English expression and conveyed the beauty of the Chinese verse, forming a sound intertextual relationship with the original language.

2.3 The Relationship Between Domestication and Foreignization in Interculturality

As a wisdom for respecting cultural differences and a strategy to avoid cultural conflicts and find or create new significances, interculturality provides a theoretical basis for promoting exchanges and the construction of identity between different cultural subjects in the context of multiculturalism. Fei Xiaotong (2000, p.13) believes that it is necessary to respect the “Pluralistic Integration”, which refers to the implementation and establishment of “harmony but not uniformity”, a cultural relation on a global basis. Under the interaction between cultural identities, despite cultural conflicts, a new world culture with the spirit of “harmony but not uniformity” has been formed. To seek harmony but not uniformity is the main feature of the world’s successful civilization system and also the key to interculturality. In cross-cultural translation, domestication and foreignization are important means to achieve exchanges between two heterogeneous cultures. “With the rise of the deconstruction in translation, many binary oppositions in the study of translation theory have been broken, and a pluralistic symbiosis translation ecology is emerging.” (Zhang, 2005, p. 6) Therefore, instead of opposing each other, domestication and foreignization are tending to be unified in speaking and writing.

The high-tech venues of the Beijing Winter Olympics have been highly praised by visiting Olympians and officials. The athletes from all over the world have gone on and on renewing their personal records, breaking

and setting new Olympic records and world records. According to the report, “北京冬奥会高科技场馆让运动员‘如虎添翼’助其打破多项纪录” (“Beijing Dongaohui Gaokeji Changguan rang Yundongyuan ‘Ruhu Tianyi’ Zhuqi Dapo Duoxiang Jilu”), is translated as “Beijing’s high-tech Olympic venues add ‘wings’ to athletes”. “如虎添翼 (Ruhu Tianyi)” means that it is as if the tiger has grown wings as a metaphor for adding strength. The translation does not directly combine “wings” and “tiger”, but disassembles the metaphor so that the “wings” is combined with the “athletes”, simplifying the expression of the metaphor. The “wings” also has many meanings in English culture, such as “clip somebody’s wings”, which means “to limit a person’s freedom or power”. This symbolic meaning makes it easy to remind the reader of the meaning of “power and strength”. The translation not only uses foreignization to retain the metaphor hidden in the original Chinese text, faithfully expressing the meaning of the original idiom and maintaining the original style of the idiom, but also uses domestication to make the expression of the metaphor clear and closer to the target culture, shortening the cultural differences between the two languages and achieving the effect of an interesting communication.

The official names and nicknames of several newly built venues of the Beijing Winter Olympics have different English expressions. The iconic venue of the main division is the National Speed Skating Oval with the nickname “冰丝带” (Bing Sidai), where speed skating competitions are held. The athletes compete together and quickly cross the ice, smooth as a ribbon, so it is known as the “Ice Ribbon”. The translation directly combines “ice” and “ribbon” without destroying the image of the combination of hard ice and soft ribbon implied in the original text, reflecting the Chinese wisdom of “combining toughness with softness”. In English culture, “ribbon” has the meaning of “silk ribbon and bow”, which is exquisite, and deeply loved. This image labels a romantic touch to the high speed and passion of the competition. Secondly, the “ribbon” here also contains good wishes for the majority of athletes in the Winter Olympics to achieve their best performances. Because “ribbon” in English culture also means “a ribbon in special colors, or tied in a special way, that is given to somebody as a prize or as a military honor”. For example, “blue ribbon” means “the highest honor”, so “ribbon” here also symbolizes the accomplishments achieved by the athletes. The foreignization is used to reflect the balance hidden in the nature of Chinese culture. And the domestication is used to make it close to the target culture, so that a more concrete and beautiful picture appears in front of readers’ eyes, conveying the good wishes of the Chinese people to all athletes. The translation symbolizes the spirit of winter sports and the symbolization of Chinese culture into a general imagery language so that readers can recognize, understand and uphold the beauty of each civilization and the diversity of civilizations in the world.

The translation is not only a kind of cross-language exchange but also a cross-cultural exchange. On top of that, from the perspective of interculturality, the translation should objectively deal with local and foreign cultures to reach effective cultural communication, pursue the concept of “harmony but not uniformity”, and then realize the harmonious balance between the global cultural integration and the pluralism of national cultures.

3. Conclusion

From the above analysis, we can come to the conclusion that interculturality is inseparable from intersubjectivity and intertextuality in the translation of China’s publicity texts to foreigners during the Beijing Winter Olympics. There exist cultural differences and similarities, cultural conflicts, cultural infiltration and cultural integration in translation. To achieve the balance in translation, the translators should consider the

relationship between authors, translators and readers, and also historical and cultural contexts. The interaction among the authors, translators and readers should be built on the basis of mutual respect and tolerance. Moreover, the translator should deal with the relationship between domestication and foreignization in a correct way, and pursue the idea of “harmony but not uniformity” when facing cultural differences or conflicts. The successful translation of publicity texts helps to achieve sound cross-cultural communication and provide certain inspiration for the construction of China’s international discourse system and the development of China’s publicity work.

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Reasons for the British Choice of the Acholi as the Martial Race of Uganda

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Abstract

During Uganda's colonial period, the British encouraged political and economic development in the south of the country. In contrast, the Acholi and other northern ethnic groups supplied much of the national manual labor and came to comprise a majority of the military, creating what some have called a "military ethnocracy". This reached its height with the coup d'état of Acholi General Tito Okello in July 1985, and came to a crashing end with the defeat of Okello and the Acholi-dominated army by the National Resistance Army led by now-President Yoweri Museveni in January 1986. In this paper, I analyse the reasons for the British choice of the Acholi as the martial race of Uganda. The more accommodative pre-colonial political system of the Acholi coupled with the positive remarks by early European explorers and the harsh natural and economic situations made the Acholi dominate the colonial army in Uganda. When the Acholi economy was merged with the international capitalist system the Acholi youth was naturally forced to join the army, the only salaried employment left for him.

Keywords: Acholi; Military; Martial race; Valour; Labour

Introduction

The British divided their Uganda Protectorate into two, namely labour and production zones. The division was based on presumed natural qualities of the people of northern Uganda and those of the south. The people of the north were regarded to be strong, muscular and hard working while the southern peoples were perceived as weak, lazy but intellectually superior. The accuracy of those accolades is debatable. There existed sub-zones in each of the two zones. In Northern Uganda, the people from Acholi-land became warriors; West-Nile communities were plantation workers while those from Teso were deemed fit for the police force. This paper analyses reasons for the British choice of the Acholi as the martial race of Uganda.

Pre-colonial history of the Acholi

"On the whole", wrote Lloyd (1908), "one would call them a fine race physically, but not warlike. Probably if they had a leader, they would make a fighting tribe". By 1903 when Rev. A. B. Lloyd arrived in northern Uganda, the Acholi were living under separate, distinct and independent chiefdoms. Politically the Rwot (Chief) was the top- most figure. He was assisted by a group of chiefs called Jagi (Singular, Jago). The Rwot of the Acholi did not have as much powers as the Kabaka of Buganda, Omukama of Bunyoro or even the Asantehene of the Asante. Land, for example, was not owned by the Rwot but it belonged to everybody in the kingdom and

the king was never a despot. Although the concept of “Acholi-hood” existed prior to the arrival of European colonisers, it was limited...It was not a fully formed, self-identified ethnicity until early twentieth century, at the height of colonial and missionary power (Atkinson, 1994).

In military terms, the Acholi chiefdoms never had a strong army although by 1900, there were more than 20,000 guns among them. Traditionally, they used clubs, bows and arrows, spears etc to defend their land from the aggression of their neighbors such as the Madi, Karamojong, Langi, Alur, Topech and Didinga. But when they started trading with Abyssinians, Arabs and Karimojong, the Acholi acquired guns. All males were called upon to take up a military duty whenever there was a threat. The fighters were easily mobilized by sounding the royal drum of each chiefdom. The army of pre-colonial Acholi was both garrisoned as situational depending on the period in question. Before the Acholi began to face the wrath of slave trade and imperialistic forces from the north, there were no major foreign threats hence no need for a standing army.

However, from about 1850 onwards, when the “Khartoumers,” as Arab slave dealers from Cairo were called, began to venture into Acholi-land with dangerous consequences, there was an abrupt change. All the leading states developed standing armies including Padibe, Palabek, Payira, Lamogi and Koc. The standing army of Padibe kingdom was the most powerful all over Acholi-land, thanks to the diplomacy and political maneuvers of Rwot Ogwok: In preparation for war with the chiefdom of Payira, Rwot Ogwok joined hands with the Kuturia, who came to trade, and raised a standing army called the Buchura. This was what made Padibe so powerful in the later half of the nineteenth century. By the time the British colonised Acholi-land, these standing armies were already in place and disarming them became a nagging task for the British. The major cause of the Lamogi rebellion of 1911-1912 was this policy of disarmament (Personal communication with Picho Oywelo, The Rwot of Ariya).

The Acholi “have no sultans of any consequence” claimed the explorer Speke (1863), one of the first European visitors to Acholi-land. He was referring to the poly-cephalous nature of the people. Although there were chiefs scattered all over the land, none wielded authority over the entire people and there was no political or any other system that brought all Acholi people under one realm.

Socially, the Acholi chiefdoms were highly egalitarian, like all other Lwo societies. Father Crazzolaro who spent more than thirty years in Acholiland and who has so far made the most detailed anthropological research on the Lwos described a Lwo man as follows:

He is frank, candid and pleasant in dealing with bonafide individuals who approach him; he likes to talk, joke and laugh. He is hospitable and generous to guests and visitors without distinction. He treats all as equals for there is no class distinction among them (Crazzolaro, 1950).

The dry seasons were for sports, games, courtship and visits. The humility and hospitality of the Acholi allowed everybody including strangers to feel at home. One European visitor was impressed. He wrote;

I arrived here today (January 13th, 1876) five days after Fatiko(Patriko)...A vast undulating Prairie of Jungle grass and scrub trees...The Shuuli (Acholi) are a very polite people, always ready with greetings And inquiries after one's health (Baker, 1874).

It is amazing that about fifty years later, the Acholi who were “very polite and always ready with greetings,” became the warrior race of colonial Uganda.

The people now called Acholi had a rich variety of wild game roaming the land they occupied. This high population of wild animals is explained by the supportive savannah grassland type of vegetation coupled with favourable climatic conditions of high temperatures, clear sunshine, moderate humidity and high altitude. Sir Samuel Walker Baker once called this land, the paradise of Africa. “As we approached Patiko,” wrote Baker,

I gave orders that on the morrow all the troops were to appear in their best uniforms, as we were only six miles from Fatiko...On 6th February we started at 6:10 am. We were now in the country where I had been well known on my former exploration – in the paradise of Africa, at an elevation of 4,000 feet above the sea (Baker 1874).

Patiko or “Fatiko” as Samuel Baker called it is now a sub county in Gulu district. Baker himself benefited enormously from the rich wild life of the Acholi territory. The cheapest way to feed the two thousand people he travelled with was to hunt on a daily basis because the cattle population had been wiped out by slave raiders from Khartoum.

While hunting began primarily as a method of survival, in time, it became interlinked with other aspects of culture. Initiation ceremonies sometimes included a demonstration of hunting skills and prowess. Ceremonial hunting was also used to deepen a sense of collective identity. Until the rich game resources of the area were depleted in the last century, multi chiefdom hunts organised in the dry season were the largest scale undertakings engaged in pre-colonial Acholi. The rigours of these hunts prepared Acholi men for military services.

Later Samuel Walker Baker described the Acholi as people of “fine physique.” To him, “The men of Shooli (as the Acholi were called) are the best proportioned that I have ever seen; without the extreme height of the Shilluks or Dinkas, they are muscular and well knit, and generally their faces are handsome (Baker, 1874).”

The colonial Labour policy

“What I know the Colonial Government does think about West Nile” fumed the area MP, “is to keep it a human zoo, and get cheap labourers from it to work in places like Kakira, Kawolo (central Uganda) and where new industries will be started ” . He went on, “I do believe that government does think that if industries are started in west Nile, the flow of labour from that district to other districts will be stopped ” (Hansard 35, 3135-3136). Up to 1962, no industries, large plantations nor bituminized roads existed in northern Uganda.

The emigration of labour from Acholi-land to other parts of Uganda was not a surprise. The British had introduced taxes and monetized the economy: money was now the only medium of exchange. One was forced to work for a salary if they were to keep afloat the new economic system. Those like the Acholi who lacked investments in their regions were forced to migrate out of their regions. Their efforts developed the regions in which they worked more than where they hailed. As has been stated:

The uneven spread of colonial economic and infrastructure development between cash-crop and labour reserve regions ... introduced significant regional differentiation in access to cash crop production, trade, education, wage labour and state employment amongst different ethnic communities to produce sharper edges in the confrontation and competition of political tribalism (Kasfir, 1972).

Meanwhile the migrant labourers had to be closely monitored so that their tribal origins are never lost. Application forms for government employment included a question on the tribe of the prospective job seeker. Census forms requested similar information. The government intention was not only to encourage migrant

labour but also to ensure continuity of tribal systems. Thus, the protectorate Government laid the foundation for the controlled system of migrant labour by retribalising the unemployed ... It began to make the tribe rather than the individual the basic unit of social organization. Individual rights were subsumed under tribal obligations. In a very real sense, the tribe, in official parlance, at least, now owned the people (Kasfir, 1972).

In line with the above the colonial administration legalised a Vagrancy Ordinance in 1925, which restricted the migrant option to two: he could either work or he could return home to the "tribe". The migrant labour from Acholi-land was of low quality, mainly casual workers. They could only occupy low profile jobs because of the minimal education received or outright illiteracy. The first schools to open in Uganda were all in the southern half of the country especially Buganda. The Baganda became the most educated in Uganda and the most affluent since they occupied most of the senior non-military posts in both government and non-governmental enterprises. Considering that university degrees were the gateway to the most powerful positions and greatest economic opportunities, the fact that 40 percent of the 1698 persons who entered Makerere University before 1954 from all parts of east Africa were Baganda explains much of their predominance today.

Education continued to be dominated by the Baganda throughout the colonial period and up to today. Writing about the situation in the highest institution of learning in Uganda – Makerere University in the 1950s, Nelson Kasfir (1972) stated that while Baganda over representation has fallen, and continues to fall, they still provide over 50 percent of the Ugandan entrants as late as 1953. And that, of Uganda students abroad in the last quarter of 1960, 143 were sponsored by the then Kabaka's government, as compared to only 106 sponsored by all the rest of the districts and kingdoms of Uganda. This imbalance in education meant that the Acholi, and other communities of the north, were to continue working in the central regions but occupying low key posts for a very long time.

Even when cash crops were introduced among the Acholi like elsewhere in Uganda, the situation did not alter much. The natural conditions in Acholi-land especially East Acholi could only favour annual crops like cotton and tobacco. These two crops are labour intensive yet harvested only once a year. The north was left to grow an annual cash crop cotton whose returns were over a long period of time and at low prices. This marked the beginning of disparity between the north and the south as far as economic development is concerned, and prompted many Acholi men to enroll in the army.

The Acholi were still at a disadvantage compared to the southern communities who grew coffee, pyrethrum and tea among others. But the Acholi had no choice because unlike before they were now confronted with a capitalist system in which the economy was highly monetized. Therefore, the young Acholi had only two alternatives: to get a job elsewhere or to grow cotton. When cotton prices began to drop after world war two, the situation was even more precarious. The Acholi were left with one choice: to look for salaried employment which meant traveling to the south where they were despised and insulted. An area member of parliament noted that: Acholi District is poor, it has remained poor for a long time for various reasons; it is far away from the cattle trade and money circulation. There is lack of employment in the district. This has been illustrated in many ways. In the past, we did get a lot of people coming down here (Buganda) in search of work. Most of them go back worse than when they came ... Acholi District is one of those areas in Uganda which has lagged behind economically (Mamdani, 1984).

As noted above Acholi District lacked employment opportunities in industries, plantations and state enterprises. What was readily available was the army, to which young Acholi men went in large numbers.

According to Karugire (1980), The bulk of the Protectorates armed services were recruited from Northern Uganda, particularly Acholi, Lango and West Nile in that order of numerical representation. This became the established order throughout the colonial period. And it was not long before the colonial government invented a rationalization for building this ethnically unbalanced army: the people of northern Uganda were the ‘ martial tribes’ of the Protectorate, and since the African soldiers required in the colonial army were those of strong physique, stamina, speed of reaction and upright bearing, the answer was tailor made: recruit from northern Uganda.

“On recruiting safaris we went for the chaps who were tough and strong and ran quicker than anyone else. It was a terrible mistake ” . Those were words of Major Iain Grahame, a British officer serving with the 4th Battalion of the King’s African Rifles in Uganda as reported by

Hugh (1983). What the army officer is regretting here is that they preferred people of valor, courage and physical strength rather than level of education. Most Acholi recruits were men of physique and height relative to those of other regions (Personal communication with Ret. Major Anywar in Gulu).

Conclusion

The British did not wish to encourage any degree of unity among the different communities of Uganda. Keeping them at variance meant that there would be no nationalist movement for independence. Hence the British invested only in what they regarded as production zone. The labour zone was only to supply the production zone with man power. Until independence, the British established no single investment among the Acholi. The effect was that within a short time the demand for labour in Buganda caused wage inflation and stimulated a flow of migrant labour from Kitgum, Gulu and parts of West Nile, Northern Province. However, due to limited educational facilities, most Acholi could not get salaried jobs other than those of the armed forces. With time it became the job of the Acholi.

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Online Communication: An Outlet for Textisms

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Abstract

The Internet is the fourth revolution in human history coming after language, writing, and print. It paved the way to online communication. This form of communication provides EFL learners with more opportunities to practice the English language with each other or even with native speakers outside the boundaries of traditional classroom. Online communication modalities have developed rapidly to be easily used as long as there is an access to the Internet. Texting is the common feature of this use. However, the popularity of texting among young learners can affect their literacy; especially with the use of textisms (e.g., abbreviations, nonstandard spelling). Thus, there is a persistent need for empirical evidence to be with or against the use of online communication.

Keywords: Online communication; EFL learners; Texting; Textisms; WhatsApp

I.Introduction

Having Ph.D. degree in 1010, the researcher occupied herself practicing the English language. She wanted to 'live the language'. Using the Internet, she got acquainted with some sites of language exchange partners. She spent long time learning how to communicate effectively with people living in different parts of the globe using text, video and audio components of various Instant Messaging (IM) applications (e.g., Yahoo!, Hotmail, Skype, ... etc.). These applications helped her simulate real face-to-face (F2F) communications and interact with native speakers who live far away; experiences she never tried before.

Soon, she realized the potential pedagogical benefits of the various modalities of online communication for EFL learners in specific. These learners do not have the chance to practice the language after they come out of the classroom; more important, they can communicate with native speakers. Besides, instructors and learners can interact with each other for enhancing language learning outside the traditional contexts of the classroom. This encourages connectivity of instructors with their learners.

Moving from a university to another in Egypt and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (i.e., Mansoura University, Suez Canal University, Majmaah University & Qassim Private Colleges), the researcher found a minimal use of online communication in EFL learning; exclusively, using e-mail for sending courses materials and homeworks – if any. For about three years, the researcher committed herself to study the pedagogical implications of this type of communication for developing different skills of English.

II.History

The Internet is less a technological fact than a social fact. It has qualitatively transformed everyday communication in every realm: commercial, financial, professional, educational, recreational, and

interpersonal (Thorne, 2000). Its rapid growth; arguably, the fastest growth in history is bringing about the fourth revolution in the means of production of knowledge on a par with the three previous revolutions of human communication: language, writing, and print (Warschauer, 1997).

Language teachers have embraced the world of online communication the Internet has introduced. Many online communication tools – e-mail, discussion forum, chat – are familiar to many language teachers. Recent tools – blogs, wiki and RSS feeds – may be less familiar but offer powerful opportunities for online communication for both language teachers and learners. The underlying technology of these new tools is XML “extensible markup language” which enables machine processing of Internet documents. Some considered it as the signal of arrival of the second-generation Web (Godwin-Jones, 2003).

According to Kawase (2006), the term ‘computer-mediated-communication’ (CMC) – the ancestor of online communication – was first used by Hiltz and Turoff (1978) in their study of computer conferencing. Since the 1980s, people have started using computer conferencing in academic and business settings. Since that, interaction through computers has steadily gained popularity. The many ways in which learners can interact using computers can be divided into two broad categories:

1.Asynchronous computer-mediated-communication (ASCMC)

This mode of CMC does not necessitate that the interactants must be present at the same time. It includes first generation tools (e.g., e-mail, discussion forums, bulletin boards, ... etc.) which may give learners more chances to think and answer. Now that most e-mail programmes support formatted text and graphics, e-mail is more attractive and versatile than before where multimedia can be embedded directly in messages. However, many instructors have increasingly turned to discussion forums which facilitate group exchanges and maintain automatically a log of all messages in threaded, hierarchical structures. While dedicated software for creating discussion forums exists such as WWWBoard, many instructors have access to built-in forum creation in a learning management system (LMS) such as WebCT and Blackboard or voice-based forums such as Wimba (Godwin-Jones, 2003; AbuSeileek & Qatawneh, 2013).

2.Synchronous computer-mediated-communication (SCMC)

It is commonly referred to as chat (i.e., real-time discussions via online channels). The attractiveness of instant messaging for language learners resides particularly in the addition of voice and video options with online/offline status alerts in chat systems such as AOL Instant Messengers, (AIM), MSN Messenger, Yahoo Messenger, ...etc. which provide transcripts of chat sessions (Godwin-Jones, 2003). To send a message, it is first entered into a discrete text window, and then, when posted, it takes its final place in the shared window as an ‘e-turn’ – as Thorne (2000) calls it – as a distinct block of text tagged with the sender’s name in an ongoing two- or multi-party discussion. This representation of one’s message as a unified and emplaced utterance objectifies it in a way that is distinctive from the experience of producing it. The speed of exchanges forces short, spontaneous messages which more closely simulate spoken exchanges than in the case in, for example, discussion forums. However, SCMC – for Kawase (2006) – is different from F2F interaction in different ways:

a. Participants do not receive visual paralinguistic or nonverbal clues when interacting. Instead, they use abbreviations, exaggerated punctuation, and symbols to express emotions.

b. Greetings and closures are not always needed in SCMC, as the computer screen identifies who is talking.

Computers and smart phones connected to the Internet have become a necessity for daily life. In addition, educational uses of the Internet communication tools have grown in popularity exponentially over the past decade all over the world: The Internet mediation of language-based, online communication is a primary for First and Second World learners. Nevertheless, there is a limited use of it by Arab learners. The use of smart phones, for example, operated by Android system with different chat applications (e.g., WhatsApp, Tango, Viber, ChatON...etc.) is straightforward and practical to implement, especially in distance learning or hybridized courses where F2F contact is limited (Sykes, 2005). It has become a simple and inexpensive matter to create language-learning groups all over a country and around the world. Actually, this opened a new approach called Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL).

III. Advantages of Online Communication

Different scholars (e.g., Sotillo, 1997; Warschauer, 1997; Sykes, 2005; Kawase, 2006; Zeng and Takatsuka, 2009) used different modalities of online communication. They came with the following advantages compared to F2F interaction both inside and outside the classroom, as follows:

1. It is a hybrid form of communication that brings speech and writing together. That is, although online chatting clearly involves reading and writing, learners' output is considered to have combined characteristics of speaking and writing. It is similar to speaking in that the output takes place in real time, and the stress on particular words and phrases can be indicated using italicized or bold-faced text. At the same time, it is also similar to writing in that it produces a relatively permanent record of the discourse.

2. Participation increases in quieter learners because they tend to participate in a written discourse as much as participants who normally dominate the classroom. Mesh (2010) confirms that learners show less inhibition, less social anxiety and greater willingness to take risks. He refers to this phenomenon as "disinhibition." He quotes its definition from Adam Joinson (1998) as "any behavior that is characterized by an apparent reduction in concerns for self-presentation and the judgment of others" p. 44.

3. Chat tends to produce more complex language than traditional F2F communication. Learners can compose their utterance at their own pace and they can view each other's language as they produce it. The visual display of their utterances provides opportunities for conscious attention to and reflection on their language use as well as prompts for further interaction.

4. Online communication is time- and place-independent. Learners communicate with each other anywhere and anytime as long as there is an access to the Internet.

5. This type of communication enables quick feedback and real-time interaction. Accordingly, learners can develop a strong sense of being part of a learning community, thereby increasing their engagement and motivation.

6. Chatting leads to more balanced participation in the TL with less domination from the teacher. Besides, it encourages teacher/learners and learners/learners to construct and share knowledge. In this respect, Warschauer (1997) mentions that (a) the exchanges were viewed as real, not pedagogical; (b) learners developed free and spontaneous, though not flawless communication while using highly complex

structures and vocabulary; (c) learners expressed deep satisfaction at being able to manage themselves as leaders and contributors in the target language; and (d) learners benefited substantially from the increased opportunity to practice TL outside the classroom.

7. Online communication allows multimedia documents to be published and distributed via links among smart phones which can provide an access to up-to-date authentic information. For example, learners can work collaboratively to plan and carry out tasks or role-plays related to their own personal interests gathered from a variety of sites all over the world.

Thus, in online communication, learners have real-time conversational exchanges. It has beneficial features which make it a useful medium for creating an effective learning environment where learners can learn language, learn about language, and learn through language.

IV. Texting VS Textisms

Chat applications (apps) of Android smart phones are very popular among young learners. The most important common point of these apps is that they require 'texting'. Although they provide its users with video and audio options, they usually prefer texting. It is near-synchronous, and associated with distinctive styles of conversation and writing features such as 'textisms'. Lyddy, Farina, Hanney, Frrell and O'Neill (2014) define them as "language variants such as abbreviations and nonstandard forms of words and include features such as letter and number homophones (c for 'see', 2 for 'to'), contractions (txt for 'text') and nonconventional spellings (nite for night)" p.547. They use 'squeeze-text' to describe the principal features of textisms in the following ways:

1. Words may be shortened to the minimum syllable length, often by removing vowels.
2. Articles and conjunctions may be omitted.
3. Its use demonstrates an appreciation of the sounds of language; especially, numbers or letters may be substituted for graphemic units (e.g., gr8 for 'great,' 4 for 'for,' 2 for 'to,' c for 'see,' or sum1 for 'someone').
4. Common phrases may be represented by acronyms (e.g. LOL, 'laugh out loud').
5. Capital letters might be omitted or used for emphasis.
6. End-message punctuation may be absent.

With all these features, there is a concern over the impact of texting on learners' literacy. Messages using textisms are faster to write than those in standard English, but they took nearly twice as long to read, and may be associated with more reading errors. However, more empirical treatments are required to provide evidence for or against the effect of online communication.

Being an assistant professor at Humanities and Administration College, Qassim Private Colleges, Buraidah, KSA, the researcher observed that chat apps are very popular among learners. They use them as a means of general communication not for learning purposes. Consequently, she used the WhatsApp to attract them to practice the English Language after classroom time. Actually, the app was very effective. It is clear from the screenshots below in Figure 1 that they were highly-motivated to share what they have studied and to receive feedback from their peers and from the instructor, who was a member in chat groups.



Figure 1: Screenshots of students' use of WhatsApp in learning

V.Conclusion

It is important to consider that online communication, whether it is integrated into the language curriculum or used as a self-access system, is not to be taken as a panacea or even worse as a complete substitution of classroom instruction. It has to be a supplementary work of what is done in the classroom. Its benefits are noted; especially, it requires neither training nor funding. It has to be planned and structured carefully without disregarding the teacher's role. This has to lead to changes in terms of learner independence, and to provide that appealing and challenging characteristic in learners, we as teachers all desire: learning autonomy.

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A Review of Contextual Factors Influencing Performance Measurement System Adoption in the Construction Industry

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Abstract

Adopting the performance measurement system (PMS) is one of the most important initiatives introduced in different industries and sectors, such as the construction sector of many countries. However, in practice, it has been noted that despite the enormous possible advantages that the PMS could provide, some organizations are facing difficulties in its adoption, and failing to achieve the full potential of the system or, worse still, fail totally in adopting it. Through an extensive review of previous studies in the literature, this paper will discuss the contextual factors that affect the adoption of such a system in the construction industry. Several factors are determined as important enablers of PMS adoption among construction firms and are classified as external and internal factors. More specifically, this review paper addresses external factors such as environmental uncertainty, stakeholder involvement, and competition, besides, internal factors such as leadership, strategy, information system, and quality management practices.

Keywords: PMS; Adoption; Construction; Internal; External; Factors

1.Introduction

The construction industry has long been the target of criticism for underperforming. Numerous researchers have strongly emphasized the significance of adopting the PMS to enhance the present state of the construction industry (Yang, Yeung, Chan, Chiang, & Chan, 2010).

Although it is widely believed that the PMS can play a strategic role in the effective and efficient management of organizations, the challenge lies in the successful adoption and implementation which has become a critical issue still being debated publicly and in academic circles (Kennerley & Neely, 2002). Despite the great advantages that organizations gain from the performance measurement system, many organizations are facing obstacles in adopting this system, thus not enjoying the full benefits or none at all due to implementation failure (Taticchi, Balachandran, & Tonelli, 2012; de Waal & Kourtiti, 2013). Further, previous studies have maintained that a better understanding of the factors that lead to successful PMS adoption and implementation will increase the chances of higher adoption and implementation success rates (Keathley, 2016; Quesado, Aibar-Guzmán, & Rodrigues, 2016; Abubakar, Saidin & Ahmi, 2015). Similarly, several factors are said to influence a firm's adoption of the performance measurement system (Pedersen, & Sudzina, 2012).

In addition, there are many researchers who have studied the performance measurement system in different countries and different industries. They have attempted to investigate the factors, motivations, or obstacles facing the adoption and effective implementation of this system. For instance, Alharthi (2014), undertook research on government organisations in the UAE. In addition, Garengo and Sharma (2014) studied corporate

governance structure as a PMS contingency factor in Italian and Indian SMEs employing multiple case-study techniques. Furthermore, Rao and Vaidya (2016) studied the factors that influence the scope, implications and aims of the PMS in e-commerce and m-commerce companies in Hyderabad, India.

The fact is that similar to any other management control initiative, implementing PMS is normally linked to the existence of certain organizational environmental features, which render some companies more likely to adopt it than others. On the other hand, most empirical studies have emphasized the generic analysis of the implementation of some PMS tools, such as BSC, its features and the application outcomes (Hoque, 2014), while determining the factors that influence the adoption of PMS in organizations is an issue that has not received much attention.

Similarly, despite a significant contribution of construction organizations to the economies of develop and developing countries, the literature offers only a few studies with information regarding the adoption of PMS in construction organizations. Most existing literature has focused on manufacturing firms. To address this issue, the objective of this paper is to study the environmental factors that promote the adoption of PMS in the construction industry by presenting and discussing prior literature. Moreover, the research conceptualizes external and internal factors. The following section will discuss the external and internal environmental factors found in previous studies.

2. External Factors

This study divides the contextual factors of the organization into external and internal. This paper deals with the factors that are outside the control of the organization as external factors. Variables such as environmental uncertainty, stakeholder involvement, and competition have been addressed in previous research as external factors that affect the adoption of management systems in general and PMS in particular. Generally speaking, prior studies investigated that environmental forces affecting the adoption of novel ideas. Choe (2003); Ambler, Kokkinaki, and Puntni (2004); Al-shareem, Ernowati, & Kamal (2015) pointed out some factors such as the emergence of new technology, outsourcing, market competition, environmental uncertainty, and market readiness. The following sections explore the effect of environmental uncertainty, stakeholder involvement, and competition on the adoption of PMS.

3. Environment Uncertainty

Environmental uncertainty (EU) is defined as the inability of the organization to predict the stakeholder's concern accurately, interests and activities towards the products or services that the company offers and it is the failure of the corporation to forecast the environmental changes that the organization operates in (Naranjo-Gil, 2009). Hence, it is one of the significant obstacles that firms could face regarding the quality of decisions or the speed of the process of decision-making. Furthermore, the lack of information or ineffective management of the available information and data could be a reason for the ambiguity of the organization's future circumstances and the external environment.

In addition, the EU is one of the most influential factors that affect the strategic vision of the firm. Certainly, previous studies in different industries and various countries confirmed their influence in a number of areas. For instance, the EU is viewed as a significant factor in establishing public-private partnerships, especially in developing countries (Al-shareem, Ernowati, & Kamal, 2015). Similarly, Hoang, Dinh, Tran, &

Nguy (2018) claimed that perceived environmental uncertainty affected the implementation of the balanced scorecard (BSC) in Vietnam's enterprises.

4.Competition

Competition is one of the important factors that motivate the organization to adopt advanced managerial and industrial techniques. Prior studies have asserted that competition is fundamental for innovation adoption especially in the construction industry (Havenvid, 2015). In the domain of performance measurement, the results of the previous study suggested placing greater emphasis on a range of measures for performance measurement, which is related to businesses confronting stiff competition. Similarly, Lisi (2015) asserted that the expected competitive advantage influences the environmental performance measurement system positively. In addition, Ahmad and Mohamed Zabri (2015) claimed that the level of market competition affects the use of performance measurement positively in small and medium organizations in Malaysia.

5. Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder involvement was identified in previous literature in the performance measurement system as one of the essential drivers of use performance measurement information (Alexander Kroll, 2015). The author claimed that stakeholder involvement is one of the most significant elements that have been regularly shown to be a positive influence. To clarify, obtaining legitimacy is the main cause of strategic change in organizations rather than enhancing actual performance as claimed by the institutional theorists.

Therefore, Ashworth, Boyne, & Delbridge (2009) and Scott (1987) stated that the motivations of an organization to shift its characteristics are external reasons, such as legitimizing or political, but not technical or rational ones. Moreover, Lisi (2015) declared that perceived stakeholder concerns influence the use of environmental measurement systems for decision-making purposes. Additionally, external pressures promote a collection of performance measures in the United States local government (Krishnamurthy, Desouza, Dawson, & Ho, 2018).

6.Internal Factors

Internal variables are a set of controllable elements that influence the organization's performance and work environment positively or negatively. Qadri, Azhar and Imam (2013) believe that organizational determinants of a particular organization are those features that are considered a remarkable barrier in decision making related to strategic adoption and supposed to be under control. Accordingly, the authors concluded that organizational factors are believed to be a barrier to the balanced scorecard (BSC) adoption for performance measurement in Pakistan. Likewise, a practical study on the higher educational institutions of South East Asia found that organizational factors influence PMS (Mansor, Chakraborty, Yin, & Mahitapoglu, 2012). Moreover, several internal elements are distinguished in the literature that has an influence on PMS adoption and uses such as organizational culture, strategy, management style, technology and management systems (Pedersen, & Sudzina, 2012).

This study examines the effect of leadership, strategy, information system and quality management practices, as internal factors, on PMS adoption. More discussion about these factors is in the next sections that follow.

7. Leadership

Leadership is invariably key to the success of any activity involving collaboration among a group (or groups) of people. In the construction industry, leadership is even more crucial, and this has been confirmed in most previous studies (Ofori & Toor, 2012).

Effective leadership is crucial if a firm or business sector, including the construction sector, is to perform successfully (Liphadzi, Aigbavboa, & Thwala, 2015).

Leadership is defined as “the process of influencing others to attain a common goal” (Oyetunji, Adebisi, & Olatunde, 2019). Roger, (1983) stated that generally, the managers are significantly influential with regard to the acceptance of innovation in the organization and particularly in the adoption of contemporary management accounting practices (Trang & Huyen, 2017). Moreover, Al-mamary, Shamsuddin, & Aziati (2014) stated that “the support of top management is one of the factors that affect the success of accounting information systems adoption in organizations in order to improve organizational performance.” In addition, Nguyen' (2016) argued that the absence of leadership support has a negative influence on the successful use of activity-based costing methods in Vietnamese firms. Besides, Tran (2016) asserted that managers/owners' understanding of management accounting has an important effect on the management accounting practices in small and medium-sized firms in Vietnam.

To clarify, prior literature confirmed that leadership is a major contributor to the success of PMS adoption and implementation (Akbar, Pilcher & Perrin, 2012). Similarly, Garengo and Sharma, (2014) proved the central role of leadership, as an aspect of corporate governance, in the development of an advanced managerial approach in India. In addition, some scholars argued that there is a direct link between leadership and comprehensive performance measures (Tuan L. T., 2010).

It is obvious that leadership has a significant influence on a variety of organizational change and improvement initiatives (Keathley, 2016) and its role in promoting the organizational culture for the change acceptance is effective (Masri, 2013).

8. Strategy

Performance measurement is a fundamental aspect of the strategic management process. Measuring performance is the obvious way to assess to what extent strategy has been appropriately used in an organization (Gosselin, 2011). The Author clarified the function of strategy in the organization. The author described that organizations must set clearly defined goals and then allocate adequate resources to achieve these goals. Ideally, a PMS will be congruent with the organization's strategy, but the literature shows that a key issue with any PMS is the problem of aligning it with the strategy across the organization.

It is, therefore, essential that the organization clearly defines its global goals and communicates these effectively throughout the organization prior to the development of the PMS. The relevance of the performance measures and the justification for their use need to be understood by all parties to minimize the possibility of resistance. Kaplan and Norton (1996) suggest a strategic map be developed to align the organization's strategy. Other authors besides Kaplan and Norton have described how unclear strategy results in poorly defined „Critical Success Factors” (CSF) and „Key Performance Indicators” (KPI), which then affect the credibility of the system, possibly rendering it unreliable or even irrelevant. A good example can be found in Johnston and Pongatichat's 2008 case study on a local Thai police force. This showed how the misalignment of the PMS with

the organization's strategy created tension. To overcome this, coping strategies at the operational level had to be developed, consequently creating misalignment of strategy (Masry, 2013).

Empirical evidence derived from work carried out pertaining to this subject has indicated that the BSC is not associated with traditional systems of performance evaluation and control, taking into account the alignment between management indicators and the organization strategy, one of the keys to successful implementation (Hoque, 2014). (Quesado, Aibar-Guzmán, & Rodrigues, 2016)

Performance measurement and management researchers suggest that accounting performance measures should be planned in line with the firm's business strategy. While the significance of business strategy as a contingency variable has been studied for other management control systems, it has yet to be investigated with the uses of multiple performance measures. The PMS literature proposes that even though a PMS is essential in all companies, varying manufacturing environments require various measures for the assessment of a firm's effectiveness. The related literature advocates that organizations utilise those types of measures that fit with their strategy, their organizational structure, and the EU. The type of strategy used by a firm should affect the design of the PMS (Khan, Halabi, & Sartorius, 2011).

Similarly, according to the survey carried out by De Waal and Counet (2009), the significance of this deficiency is that, without the mission and vision is clearly understood throughout the organization, the developed KPI will not be relevant. At the same time, the study by Masri (2013) indicated that the main reasons for the failure of PMS adoption are deficiencies in the mission and vision of the organization and the communication of this throughout the organization. Also, the author indicated that the performance measures align with the organizational objectives. So, if only the financial aspects are reflected in the organizational goals, the performance measures will neglect non-financial aspects as well. Further, Fleming, Chow, & Chen (2009) supported this notion when they found that there is a positive relationship between the choice of strategy and PMS practice.

9.Information System

Information system (IS) has a central role in the management and communication of performance. IS was defined in prior literature as “a system that deals with the planning, development, management, and use of information technology tools to help people perform all tasks related to information processing and management.”

In terms of data collection, an organisational information system should be able to handle integrated data from various sources and systems (Nudurupati, Bititci, Kumar, & Chan, 2011).

Organizations, therefore, need to integrate this system with other management systems such as supply chain management, customer relationship, and so on. Besides, most firms adopt Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) for this purpose.

An information system should also be dynamic and responsive to changes in the environment so that data and information are accurate, presented to users in real-time, provide information to the right people besides making the required information easily accessible (Taylor & Taylor, 2013).

Previous studies have confirmed the relationship between the information system and PMS adoption and implementation. For instance, Garengo and Bititci (2007) found a positive relationship between MIS and the implementation and use of PMS.

Actually, investment in information systems is not enough to promote PMS adoption in the organization. Other contextual factors are vital to take advantage of the information system in managing performance measurement information. To clarify, some studies which examined the impact of the information system on the adoption of PMS, concluded that organizations need external support to benefit from such a system (; Masri, 2013).

Further, prior studies found that management practices and human behavior with respect to the information system significantly support PMS development (Garengo & Bititci, 2007; Taylor & Taylor, 2013)

10. Quality Management Practices

The Japanese presented a quality notion in the middle of the last century as a distinctive feature related to their products against volume and price that distinguished them from the American products. In fact, quality management in the construction industry differs from that of other industries, as the construction industry includes not only the products' quality but also the total management practices to meet the expectations of stakeholders (Rumane, 2011; Willar, 2017). The author stated that the construction industry in different countries is guided by several standards and policies that follow either international frameworks or local. Additionally, every country needs to develop proper PMS that meets its quality standards in the construction industry. Similarly, prior studies confirmed that quality goals could be achieved only if there are standards to measure them.

Various PMS models have been adopted in different countries. Some of them have been accepted worldwide, such as balanced scorecard (BSC), the European Foundation for Quality Management Excellence (EFQM) model, and the Construction Best Practice Program-Key Performance Indicators (CBPP-KPI) model. Some countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore develop their own performance assessment models (Willar, 2017).

Moreover, practical studies indicate that quality management practices such as TQM seem to promote the adoption of not only PMS but management control systems in general (Malmi, 2001). Furthermore, performance measures and PMS are process-oriented in a TQM environment (Luís Pimentel & Maria João Major, 2014). In addition, the results of Abdel-Kader and Luther (2008) indicated that TQM is one of the factors that influence the management accounting practices in UK food and beverage companies (Trang & Huyen, 2017). Further, the interaction between TQM and performance measures to enhance the performance was proven by the results of a survey of 39 organizational units according to Chenhall (1997). The author stated that organizational performance was improved compared to the adoption of TQM without such measures.

Quality management practices encourage a firm to apply different quality measurement tools. Sokovic, Pavletic, & Pipan (2010) and Neyestani and Juanzon (2016) claimed that the philosophy of the PDCA cycle that has been adopted in some quality management tools is to measure the organization's performance, whereas the third step involves assessment or checking the performance of the first and second steps (plan and do). Besides, Hoang, Dinh, Tran, and Nguy, 2018 reported that one of the crucial motives to promote the adoption of the BSC is the use of TQM.

Additionally, Taylor and Taylor, (2013) state that: “ the implementation of the quality practices will establish a culture of empowerment, customer focus, continuous improvement and a mindset of fact -based decision-making, all of which can be supportive of PMS implementation without the need for such a PMS to pre-exist.”

11.Conclusion

The ultimate goal of any organization in the construction industry is to attain superior performance and provide stakeholder's satisfaction. Adopting contemporary management control systems such as performance measurement systems helps to raise the competitive advantages of the company.

This paper provided a review of previous studies on the elements that affect PMS adoption and shed light on the importance of the factors that were discussed. Besides, it classified the contextual factors of organizations as external and internal. This method enriches the debate on the most important motivations (external or/and internal) that push organizations to change their characteristics to meet environmental changes. Besides, this classification helps the decision-makers to take these factors into account for promoting the adoption of a performance measurement system in the construction industry in a proper way.

This review introduced environmental uncertainty, stakeholder involvement and competition as an external driver to adopt PMS in the construction industry. Likewise, leadership, strategy, information system, and quality management practices were presented as internal factors that motivate organizations towards PMS adoption. According to prior studies, all these factors were investigated in different industries while there was a need for a more practical examination of the construction industry in the future. Gathering them all together in a single framework allows academicians and professionals to explore not only which group (internal or external) or factor has the strongest effect on the adoption of PMS but also can investigate the interplay between the variables.

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Factors Influencing the Process of Developing Quality Culture at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University-Ho Chi Minh City

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Abstract

The research paper identifies some key factors that influence the process of developing quality culture (QC) at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University-Ho Chi Minh City (USSH, VNU-HCM) from the result of the study carried out at this institution in 2012-2013. It firstly presents the process of developing QC at USSH, VNU-HCM, secondly analyzes some factors affecting this process positively and negatively, and finally makes some recommendations to the teaching and management staff, the university and its units in order to develop QC by taking advantage of the positive factors and trying to overcome the negative ones.

Keywords: Quality culture; Vietnamese higher education; Quality culture

1.Introduction

One of the goals of *Vietnam Higher Education Reform Agenda*¹ in accordance with the Decree No. 14 promulgated by the Government is to set up Quality Assurance (QA) mechanism in higher education. To enhance quality, there should be strong commitment from leaders at all levels together with the synergy of teaching and management staff as well as students in the whole higher education institution. In other words, everyone should be imbued with *QC*. One of the key factors for an effective Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system is successful QC. Therefore, it is necessary to study the factors influencing the process of building QC in order to make use of the positive factors and to overcome the obstacles in this process.

2.Quality Culture and Quality Culture in Higher Education

2.1 Quality culture

Among many definitions of QC, the following definition from European University Association² is quite complete and easy to understand: “Quality culture refers to an organisational culture that intends to enhance quality permanently and it is characterised by two distinct elements: on the one hand, a cultural/psychological element of shared values, beliefs, expectations and commitment towards quality and, on the other hand, a structural/managerial element with defined processes that enhance quality and aim at coordinating individual efforts.” (EUA 2006:10)

The first element is quite intangible, but for sustainable development, quality should be a well-defined value that everyone in the same organization believes, understands, shares and makes commitment for continuous improvement to obtain its quality aims on the basis of specific procedures. QC focuses on the quality value which is one of the values of an institution. If we define the quality of an organization as the fulfillment of its aims/objectives and we want to create the quality value, clear objectives need to be specified in all activities and then activities are carried out to reach the objectives; the efficiency or degree of this attainment must be assessed as well as improvements must be made and new objectives at higher level will be set up in a new PLAN-DO-CHECK-ACT cycle (Deming cycle).

2.2 Quality culture in higher education

QC at a higher education institution (HEI) can be shown at several levels: *desire* for quality or *awareness/belief* (cultural/psychological element) in the importance of quality, *understanding* of tools/processes to measure and enhance quality and performing *action* towards quality improvement to satisfy different stakeholders, including learners, employers and meet the demands of the society.

At the first level, QC represents everyone's *belief* in the continuous improvement and adjustment to meet the minimum and higher requirements/expectations of stakeholders, their good *awareness* of the importance of making contributions to the shared improvement objectives, and as a result the long-term benefits for each individual and the organization.

At the level of understanding, everyone *has a good understanding* of their duties/obligations, the objectives and requirements of their tasks and of how to apply the tools/procedures to fulfill their tasks effectively and meet increasingly higher requirements. That means, they understand their responsibilities towards the society and the accountability to satisfy the stakeholders as well as the common objectives of their HEIs.

The level of *operation/action* can be manifested in the case when everyone not only knows how to make and implement plans, but they also voluntarily and really *participate in the continuous improvement* in all daily tasks and activities (action with appropriate procedures/initiatives/skills). More specifically, they must be able to make *assessment* and get feedback from the stakeholders related to their current jobs to define the real situation and measure their success in their task, to learn from the best practices to make corrections.

At the higher level, everyone will be willing to *share* the results and benefits of improvements, can *learn* from each other's best practices, make contributions or give initiatives/recommendations/ suggestions to their colleagues or other units to make improvements together.

Therefore, we can find that the factors necessary for the development of QC include: (1) The *specification* of criteria, quality indicators and requirements for each task, other tools/procedures to fulfill the tasks including QA policies, guidelines, data system, quality handbook; (2) *Informing, giving instructions or training* to enhance everyone's understanding of these criteria, requirements and tools; (3) Creation of *mechanism* to develop the habit of monitoring, making self-assessment, peer review, getting feedback from external evaluation; (4) Creation of *mechanism and measures for rewarding, recognizing and encouraging* people to make improvements and share best practices; and (5) Regular *support/consultancy* from experts and adequate resources.

3.The Factors Influencing the Development of Quality Culture at USSH, VNU-HCM

The study was based on 642 respondents, including 437 students at 9 faculties and 111 faculty members at 15 faculties/departments as well as 94 management staff members at 11 typical administrative units (offices/departments/centers) at USSH, VNU-HCM.

3.1 General awareness of importance of quality culture

The respondents' awareness of QC can be represented through their desire to fulfil their duties successfully to get stakeholders' satisfaction. The result of the survey to get the staff and students' opinions on the importance of QC with 5 degrees of importance is shown in the table below:

Table 3.1. Awareness of the importance of QC

The importance of QC	Teaching staff (%)	Managing staff (%)	Students (%)
Very important	56.9	53.0	52.5
Important	41.1	38.6	37.9
Quite important	2.0	8.4	6.8
Not important	0	0	0.2
Totally unimportant	0	0	0.2
No opinions	0	0	2.4

The result from *Table 3.1* shows that, in general, all the respondents value highly the importance of QC in HEI, in which the teaching staff value its importance more highly than the other 2 groups, managing staff and students (98% faculty members find it *important* and *very important* compared with 91.6% in managing staff and 90.4% in students)

In reality, there may be various viewpoints about quality, but there should be certain common quality values that everyone shares. The result of the study into the attitude of working towards quality of the respondents in the survey is reflected through their opinion on the necessity/importance of the following values: *Continuous improvement* (98.2% by faculty, 97.7% by managing staff), *Creativity* (94.6% by faculty members, 94.0% by managing staff), *Discipline* (89.1% by faculty, 92.0% by managing staff), *Responsibility* (98.2% by faculty, 97.7% by managing staff), *Enthusiasm* (92.7% by faculty, 94.1% by managing staff), *Respect* (94.6% by faculty, 93.1% by managing staff), *Democracy* (91.8% by faculty, 90.7% by managing staff), *Cooperation* (93.5% by faculty, 90.7% by managing staff), *Transparency* (97.2% by faculty, 96.6% by managing staff), *Academic freedom* (92.6 by faculty, 74.2% by managing staff), *Sustainability* (89.1% by faculty, 86.9% by managing staff), *High quality* (91.6% by faculty, 86.1% by managing staff), *Excellence* (70.2% by faculty, 70.2% by managing staff),...

In general, both teaching and managing staff value highly the following values: *Improvement*, *Creativity*, *Responsibility*, *Enthusiasm*, *Cooperation* and *Transparency*; in which *Responsibility* and *Transparency* are the values which receive the highest level of evaluation by both groups. This is a good signal to show that the staff of USSH, VNU-HCM have quite a good sense of responsibility in their tasks/assignments and value the publicity, transparency of information.

3.2. Opinions on the importance of QA activities

The opinions of the staff members of USSH, VNU-HCM about the importance of the quality of all QA activities currently carried out at each unit of USSH, VNU-HCM or in the whole institution have been shown in the following table:

Table 3.2. Opinion on the importance of QA activities

The necessity/importance of the QA activities	Totally agree (%)		Agree (%)	
	Teaching staff	Managing staff	Teaching staff	Managing staff
Periodical surveys to get feedback from stakeholders	40.6	36.2	41.5	48.9
Periodical self-assessment at institutional level by MOET requirements/criteria	26.9	20.4	44.4	59.1
Periodical self-assessment at program level by AUN-QA criteria	24.1	19.6	50.0	56.5
Periodical review of the programs according to the faculty's plan or in compliance with the HEI's requirements	33.6	21.7	43.0	51.1
Periodical training for QA officers and regular meetings of QA units to share best practices.	25.0	24.5	47.2	54.3
Efficient running and updating QA data system	35.5	36.3	52.3	46.2
Formulation, review and adjustment of procedures for core activities	27.4	27.2	54.7	51.1
Periodical evaluation/preliminary review and making QA plans for each individual, each unit and the whole HEI	19.4	21.7	54.6	56.5
Developing recognition and reward system for QA activities	36.1	34.0	44.4	44.7
Organizing seminars, conferences about QA	23.1	16.3	53.7	57.6

The table 3.2 above shows that, in general, the teaching and managing staff recognize the importance of quality in all QA activities in their units and in the whole institution. The high degree of agreement of both groups (more than 80% choose the option from *agreement* and above) including: (1) *Periodical surveys to get feedback from stakeholders*, (2) *Efficient running and updating QA data system* and especially (3) *Developing recognition and reward system for QA activities*. These activities should be maintained and developed further as they are positive factors influencing QC in the whole institution at the level of understanding and operation.

However, some activities which are not highly appreciated by both groups include: *Periodical evaluation/preliminary review, making specific QA plans for individuals, units and the whole HEI* (only 19.4% faculty and 21.7% non-academic/managing staff find it *very necessary*); *Organizing training courses, seminars, conferences about QA, accreditation* (only 23.1% faculty and 16.3% non-academic staff find this activity *very necessary*). These are new activities at the HEI which have not been popular and they are not in the habit of carrying out these activities.

The students are well aware of their *active participation in personal development, making contributions by giving feedback on the courses and teaching activities, giving feedback during the survey or program review* (80% students choose the option of *importance* or *great importance*). The lowest level of importance can be found in *Participation in the self-assessment at institutional and program level* (only 12.3% and 13.5% students find it *very necessary*). These activities have not been communicated widely to students; therefore, they have not seen the benefits from these activities.

3.3. Staff's understanding of quality requirements

3.3.1 Teaching staff's understanding of quality requirements

Good understanding of quality indicators/requirements or competence in complying with the requirements is very important in developing QC at a HEI. The result of the survey on the teaching staff's understanding of quality requirements for each activity is shown in the following table:

Table 3.3.1. Teachers' understanding of the task requirements

Teaching staff's understanding of quality requirements	Very good understanding	Good understanding	Fairly good understanding	No understanding
Curricula	24.1%	58.3%	15.7%	1.9%
Course syllabi	39.8%	50.9%	8.3%	0.9%
Teaching activities	35.2%	53.7%	10.2%	0.9%
Learning assessment	29.6%	54.6%	15.7%	0.1%
Scientific research	28.0%	55.1%	15.0%	1.9%
Academic advising	17.9%	56.6%	21.7%	3.8%

Table 3.3.1 shows that, the teaching staff admit that they have the best knowledge of the quality requirements for the course syllabi (more than 90% faculty choose the level from good understanding and higher) and the lowest level of understanding is found in *Academic advising*, only about 70% faculty members choose the options of good and very good understanding, in which the level of *very good understanding* account for only 17.9%. *Academic advising* should be taken into more serious consideration especially in the credit-based system. Due to the lack of good understanding of the specific quality requirements for the activities mentioned above, the teaching staff cannot know what their real weaknesses are and what should be done to overcome the weaknesses or how, not mentioning that their self-evaluation without considering feedback from stakeholders is usually subjective since they have no basis for comparison with the requirements/criteria in the set of requirements.

3.3.2 Managing staff's and students' understanding of the quality requirements

The following table shows the understanding of the quality requirements by the managing staff for their tasks:

Table 3.3.2. Managing staff's knowledge of QA requirements

Managing staff's understanding of the quality requirements	Very good knowledge	Good knowledge	Fairly good knowledge	No knowledge
Supporting students	16.1%	50.5%	31.2%	2.2%
Supporting colleagues	14.3%	50.5%	30.8%	4.4%
Professional knowledge	23.3%	50.0%	25.6%	1.1%
Coordination with other units in the HEI	9.0%	51.7%	37.1%	2.2%

Table 3.3.2 shows that the non-academic staff themselves consider their understanding of the quality requirements for their tasks *not quite high* in all the activities of *Supporting students, colleagues; Professional knowledge* and *Coordination with other units in the HEI*. About 50% of these non-academic staff choose the

level of good understanding; very few respondents choose the level of very good understanding. Especially the *Coordination with other units in the HEI* get the lowest level of understanding, only about 60% of the staff know about it (only 9% staff know very well). The institution has not set the specific requirements of coordination among the units and faculties/departments and they do not get into the habit of getting feedback from stakeholders, listening to colleagues for efficient coordination.

As for the students, the result shows that they are in the need of getting information related to *student support/services* as well as the *information/feedback from alumni/employers on the job requirements and training quality, strategic plans of the institution on the solutions for quality improvement* (in average, about 80% of students find these pieces of information of great importance to them). Many students do not understand well the learning outcomes and the requirements for their study (nearly 30%).

3.4. Participation of staff in QA activities

Not only the strong commitment but also the real active participation in QA activities will lead to the success of developing QC in the HEI, especially in the improvement activities, continuous quality enhancement, which is the highest and most specific level of QC. The result of the survey on the participation of all staff in QA activities is as follows:

In short, the level of participation of all staff in QA activities is not quite high, only at average level (about 50% of the respondents admit that they *sometimes* take part in these activities or even at lower frequency). Except for the compulsory activities required by the HEI at the end of each academic year for the final evaluation and for rewarding (such as *Periodical review of the QA activities in the unit; Updating adequate individual QA data...*), other voluntary QA activities receive very low level of participation of the staff (only *sometimes* or *rarely*), especially lower by the non-academic staff. For instance, only 50.3% faculty staff often and very often *formulate the objectives, development plans and quality improvements for their individual tasks* compared with 43.5% non-academic staff; 45.8% faculty staff *make contributions/give suggestions to QA objectives and improvement plans at their units* (compared with 39.1% non-academic staff); 24.5 % faculty staff *make contributions to QA objectives and improvement plans at the institution level* (compared with 19.6% non-academic staff); 42% *make contributions or give initiatives to curricula/training programs, training activities, student and colleague support* (compared with 28.1% non-academic staff)...

Especially, only 25% faculty members regularly *consider their students' feedback on their teaching courses to improve their teaching content and activities*; only 3.6% non-academic staff regularly *consider the senior students' and alumni's feedback on all the training activities of HEI* to make improvements for their units or give suggestions of improvement to their units.

3.5. Advantages and disadvantages in QA activities

The staff of both groups focus on the following advantages in developing QC at the HEI: (1) *The determination and concern for QA of the Party Committee and the managing board of the HEI*, (2) *The determination and concern for QA of the managing board of the faculties/departments*, (3) *Love for career, good sense of responsibility of the whole staff at USSH, VNU-HCM...* (nearly 80% of all the staff agree with these factors as positive factors). *The establishment and activities of QA teams at all units at the institution*,

which is another positive factor, is agreed on by nearly 80% of the staff of both groups). The lower level of agreement by the staff of both groups is found in: (1) *Chances for learning best practices from other HEIs*, (2) *The concern and support from VNU-HCM*, (3) *History, culture/tradition and national reputation of USSH, VNU-HCM*, (4) *Support, instructions, guidance from the Office of Educational Testing & QA* (over 70% choose *agree* and *totally agree*).

The difficulties, obstacles or factors negatively influencing the development the QC or QA activities are shown in the following (both through questionnaires and interview) result (around between 70% and 80% of the staff in the survey agree): (1) *Constraints in financial support and facilities/infrastructure for QA activities while salaries are too low* (2) *Shortage in human resources for QA*, (3) *Time limit due to holding 2 or more positions concurrently or various obligations, part-time jobs,...* (4) *Limit in the knowledge and experience of QA and quality assessment, indicators for measurement* and (5) *Limits in consultants and experts who support QA activities*. There are sometimes differences in the opinions of the 2 groups in: *Lack of habit in sharing and coordinating between the units in the HEI* (71.3% faculty staff see it as a kind of difficulty compared with 64.2% non-academic staff). The faculty staff also express higher expectation on *the policies for recognition and rewarding for QA achievements* than non-academic staff (71.3% faculty staff, 59.4% non-academic *agree* and *totally agree*).

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusion on the development of QC and influencing factors

QC has initially been formed at the USSH-HCM, VNU-HCM in recent years, which is relatively well-developed at the level of awareness/belief. In spite of some good chances and favorable conditions for its further development, the process of building and developing QC is still quite slow and faced with many difficulties, not only due to a variety of conceptions about the quality of education and methods of performing QA activities, but also due to limited understanding related to quality requirements/indicators, tools for measurement/revision and other factors. There are advantages and disadvantages reflecting various main positive and negative factors influencing the process of building and improving QC at the University. External factors include the objective factors (such as the competitive context/environment, regional integration, culture/traditions, autonomy, working pressure, life-necessity...) and the subjective ones (such as senior authority, human resources, material resources, financial resources, policies, guidelines, working /coordination methods of units...). The internal factors of intrinsic motivation of the individuals include the subjective and objective factors such as the working habits, sense of responsibility, knowledge of QA, awareness of the long-term benefits, perspectives/viewpoints, the eagerness to learn, enthusiasm, determination, concern... A good understanding of these factors as well as their roots/causes will lead to the solutions for overcoming the disadvantages and making use of the positive factors in order to develop QC effectively.

4.2 Recommendations

The HEI needs to promote rewarding and recognition/encouragement measures to attract more contributions/participation of all the staff and students in quality improvement, pay due attention to the incomes

and life circumstances of the staff and try to give them appropriate support, create a friendly environment for sharing quality value, organizational values in the institution such as *improvement, responsibility* and *creativity*, making stronger commitment in QA together with real actions. The QA unit of the institution needs to play a better role in consulting, coordinating and monitoring the development of QC, creating the habit of periodical review/evaluation, developing a good information or database system, guidelines with clear quality indicators.

The faculties/departments need to improve their knowledge in curriculum development, syllabus design and development, active and modern teaching activities/strategies, accreditation/evaluation criteria of the training programs..., voluntarily and regularly enhance the teaching quality, getting feedback from stakeholders, formulating the quality objectives, strategies for quality improvement and enhancement at their faculties/departments. Deans and department heads should have leadership and change management competence in addition to their QA knowledge. The administrative offices need to improve their attitude, enthusiasm in supporting students, colleagues, contribute initiatives, teamwork habit and skills...

Students nowadays play an increasingly important role in the improvement of training quality in the HEI with their constructive feedback on different channels. They need to be well aware of their responsibility and benefits in giving feedback in the survey at their faculties or in the HEI.

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