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Foreword

Welcome to the second volume of JESAF– Issue 1, in which you will find eight articles published on a rolling basis from March through June 2023. These articles, written by sixteen authors affiliated with nine universities in seven countries—Lebanon, Tunisia, India, Palestine, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and the USA, cover a diversity of research paradigms: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method approaches. With this, we are proud that our journal, in its second year of publication, has gained wide recognition as far east as Indonesia and The Philippines and as far west as the United States. This distribution of authorship and readership instantiates the growing attention to our journal.

This issue commences with an article by Alasbahy and Shamsi, highlighting salient medical terminology translation challenges. In the second article, Marina Debuire analyzed exile at times of war in a way that promotes a taste for language in a literary work. The third article, by Mouna Ayadi from the University of Sfax, highlights the predictors of writing quality in terms of lexical richness and syntactic complexity, providing important implications for improving academic writing. The fourth article, by Adil Bentahar, is an account of preparing English learners for a multicultural world, promoting multicultural education in language classrooms.

The remaining three articles coincided with a boom in using artificial intelligence in language learning and teaching, which inspires researchers to advance technology-driven research. In this light, five authors (Ali et al.) co-worked on how ChatGPT impacts learners' motivation to learn English. The sixth article readdressed the impact of the total physical response method (TPR) on vocabulary learning in Palestinian schools, providing some implications for EFL teachers and supervisors to consider TPR across the different levels of study. The seventh article reports a corpus-based qualitative survey by Ghada Haji, showing that the self-promotion strategy employed by the Anglo-American and French applicants enhances graduate students' position and strengthens their identity through their statements. The issue closes with a theoretical account of foreign language assessment in light of the newly introduced ChatGPT, which brought about new ways of learning, teaching, and concerns.

These eight articles vary in topic, methodology, and context, covering important research areas within the scope of our journal. This issue is the outcome of the joint efforts of authors, reviewers, and the editorial staff. The dedicated authors thoughtfully worked and reworked their manuscripts and improved them into the form they are in this issue. Other submissions are still



in the hands of our potential reviewers and editors. Once they are peer-reviewed successfully, they will be available online. We adopt a policy of publishing submissions on a rolling basis to reduce the time spent waiting for an issue to be released.

We are grateful to the authors, reviewers, and editorial team who put their minds to the submitted manuscripts and give them all their attention. They generously donate their time, ideas, and insights. This genuinely tireless work deserves corresponding cooperation from submitters who should adhere to the journal's submission guidelines to make our editorial and peer review processes easier.

We hope the issue is informative and stimulating to our readers, and we welcome feedback and suggestions to promote the quality of the research we disseminate. Thank you for your interest and support.

Prof. S. Imtiaz Hasnain
Editor-in-Chief




Translating Medical Terminologies: Difficulties and Suggestions

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Abstract

This study identified some difficulties of translating medical terms and discussed how experienced translators go about such difficulties. Data consisted of 24 English medical terms and their Arabic equivalences. Different types of medical terms were considered, excluding pharmacy-related terms (as most pharmacy terms are formulas, trade names and drug names, most of which cannot be translated into Arabic). Findings showed that translation of medical terms pose difficulties and challenges for medical students and researchers. These difficulties were tabulated and discussed to provide corresponding suggestions to lessen such problematic issues when working with medical terms. Most importantly, approaches to medical translation into Arabic should comply with the Arabic language structure if the terminological inconsistency in medical Arabic is to be overcome.

Keywords: Equivalence, Medical terms, Translation, Taiz University

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Introduction

Translation is basically a project that invests great intellectual efforts to convey messages from one language into another. In all its forms it has always been manifested in different fields of knowledge and contexts. For example, the medical translation, whether for specialized or non-specialized types of audience, is a prominent area of investigation (AL-Jarf, 2018; Gonzales, 2007; Haddad, 1997; Montalt, 2011; Shamsan & A-Ouheit, 2022). Different types of pharmaceutical and scientific translation fall within the field of medical translation dealing with medical topics (Gonzales, 2007). Medical translation, one of the growing areas, includes several genres ranging from less specialized forms of health information brochures and drug package inserts (DPIs) to the more specialized forms of medical books and articles in medical journals. It deals with what is conventionally known as medical language. It differs from everyday language in the specificity of its terminology (AL-Jarf, 2018; Shahrour, 1997). Due to the enormous achievements and the vast developments the world is witnessing in the scientific fields and the medical branches, hundreds of new words are being coined in this field.

Consequently, transferring such achievements into other languages is rather urgent. Moreover, since the English-speaking countries are taking the lead in the medical fields, the major part of the medical jargon is of English origins, or, for the most part, of Greco-Latin origins that have been adopted by and become overtime an inherent part of English language. Consequently, medical English has been translated internationally into different languages, among which Arabic rises as a good and challenging example. Although Arabic was once the language of medicine, it now struggles to keep up with the frontier of medical sciences through translation. Different institutions have been established throughout the Arab world, most notably the Arab Academies. However, despite the immense efforts exerted by the Arab Academies in this field, medical Arabic still suffers from inconsistency. In some instances, contradictions appear in translating medical terms. Most doctors and specialists in the Arab world, including Arabs, use English when writing medical texts or reports, even for prescriptions (Argeg, 2015; Nadia, 2016; Shahrour, 1997).

There are a number of leading studies upon which the present study can build its basis. For instance, Sieny (1985) discussed the process of terminology production, coordination and dissemination and outlined the problems facing the process of arabizing scientific terminology in general. He explained that there are many official and unofficial agencies involved in producing Arabic scientific terminology, the matter that leads to the common problem of multiplicity of terms. Likewise, Haddad (1997) studied translation of medical terms into Arabic and examined the low acceptability of arabized terms among medical students in Jordan. The writer further explained that most of the translated medical terms are unfamiliar as translators depend on Arabic dictionaries which also include many alternatives for a single term while transliterated terms seem more adequate. However, she concluded that due to the unfamiliarity of translated terms and the unnatural use of transliteration, descriptive translation should be put in use. Halloush (2000) outlined the extent to which Arabized medical terms in the field of general surgery were acceptable and used as a means of medical communication among doctors in Jordan. The author elaborated on term planning through which terms are created for any language. She stated that there was a poor acceptability of Arabized terms among Arab doctors regardless of their degree of specialty, gender, and center of work.

Nassar (2002) investigated the problem of lexical and non-lexical meaning loss in medical translation between English and Arabic. He explained through individual illustrative examples collected from drug leaflets and one medical journal that the loss in lexical meaning results from problems of mis-lexicalization, lack of standardization, and even lexical over standardization. Non-lexical loss in meaning, on the other hand, emanated from grammatical loss in meaning represented in the random placement of

syntactic entities in sentences and structural ambiguity and from textual loss resulted, for example, from differences in punctuation and paragraphing.

Khashīm (2006) argued that Arab doctors in most Arab countries such as XXX, Egypt, Iraq, Sudan and all Arab Gulf countries use English when they write reports and prescriptions because they have been educated in English. So, it is important for Arabic translators to be an effective link between doctors and readers and patients.

In this regard, this study emphasizes the importance of the knowledge of the subject matter of the texts. Translation translators alike have been suffering from the problems that are faced the process of Arabizing scientific terminology in general and when translating medical texts.

Since foreign inventions need to be named in Arabic to be read and understood by Arabic speakers, Arab terminologists try to produce and provide names for each foreign medical term. Moreover, Arabic translators are involved in finding suitable Arabic terms equivalent to the terms created by Arab terminologists for each given foreign term to be understood by Arabic readers. The need to translate medical terminology into Arabic stems from the fact that English dominates the medical field in Arabic countries. The language used in the study of medicine is either English or French.

Objectives

This study aims to examine problems related to specific medical terms translations. It mainly investigates the problems that Arabic translators face in rendering English medical terms into Arabic. It aims to obtain answers for the following question: How do current translators translate complex medical terms?

Method

Based on the author's experience in the field, the descriptive analysis describes two translation and medical terminology. In contrast, the comparative analysis aims to compare the SL and the TL and to analyze the translation procedures adopted while translating medical terms. Thus, medical diagnoses, progress reports, prescriptions, etc., are all written in English rather than Arabic. Attempts have been made to make medical texts originally coined in a foreign language appear in Arabic. Arab terminologists and lexicographers are or have been worried that Arabic might be badly left behind. The following are five methods used by Arabic translators to translate English medical terms into Arabic.

Data Collection

In order to measure the terminological inconsistency in medical Arabic, translations of the most problematic and inconsistent term were extracted from three medical books. These books are:

1. The Unified Medical Dictionary (UMD), published by the WHO, and published by the Arabic Language Academy in Cairo, Egypt.
2. Anatomy and Physiology: A Self-Instructional Course by Cambridge Communication Limited.
3. Reviews of pharmacology.

The investigation undertakes the translation procedures employed in both dictionaries when translating English medical terms into Arabic. The data under examination consisted of English medical terms and their Arabic translation equivalence (transliteration, literal translation, borrowing, calque, and paraphrasing) as outlined in the following section.

Results

The goal of this study is to highlight the translation procedures adopted by professional medical translators during the process of translating English Medical Terminology into

Arabic. Five translation procedures were adopted: a) borrowing, b) literal Translation, c) calque, d) transliteration, and e) paraphrasing.

Table 1. List of the Collected Terms from the UMD and Glossary of Medical Terms

No.	Medical Terminology	Unified Medical Dictionary (UMD)	Method	glossary of medical	Method
1	Dextromethorphan	ديكستروميثوفان (دواء مضاد للسعال)	borrowing	Blank	
2	Diphenhydramine	دايفينهيدرامين	borrowing	Blank	
3	Adrenaline	الادرينالين	transliteration	هرمون الادرينالين	transliteration
4	Bwamba fever virus	فيروس حمى بومبا	calque	Blank	
5	Carisoprodol	كريزوبرادول	borrowing	Blank	
6	HCG (human chorionic gonadotropin)	مختصر موجهة غدد التناسلية المشيمية البشرية	paraphrase	Blank	
7	insulin	الأنسولين	borrowing	هرمون الأنسولين	borrowing
8	Kerandel'ssign	علامة كيراندل في دواء	calque	Blank	
9	lactulose	لاكتوز	borrowing	Blank	
10	rabies vaccine	لقاح داء الكلب	literal translation	Blank	
11	rabies virus	فيروس داء الكلب	literal translation	Blank	
12	soma	جسد او اجساد	literal translation	Blank	
13	trazodone	ترازودون	Borrowing	Blank	
14	yellow fever vaccine	لقاح الحمى الصفراء	Literal Translation	Blank	
15	ENT(Ear, Nose, Throat)	مختصر الاذن و الانف و الحنجرة	Literal Translation	الأذن و الأنف و الحنجرة	Literal Translation
16	erc (erythrocyte)	مختصر كرية حمراء	Literal Translation	كرية حمراء	Literal Translation
17	HI (=hearing loss)	مختصر فقدان السمع	Literal Translation	فقدان السمع (الصمم)	Literal Translation
18	ICD (international classification)	مختصر التصنيف الدولي للأمراض	Literal Translation	Blank	
19	LD (lethal dose)	مختصر الجرعة المميتة	Literal Translation	Blank	
20	MI (myocardialinfarction)	مختصر احتشاء عضلة القلب	Paraphrase	Blank	
21	Adrenoleukodystrophy	حتل الكظر و بيضاء الدماغ	Paraphrase	Blank	
22	Asthma	ربو	Literal Translation	الربو	Literal Translation
23	Ataxia	ذاتوية	Paraphrase	Blank	
24	Atrioventricular	اذيني بطيني	Paraphrase	الأذينية البطينية	Paraphrase

Common problems as indicated in Table 2 and Figure 1 can be encapsulated below. Each of the five translation procedures were analysed and discussed separately according to their own statistical results and these will be presented in the form of Table 2.

In terms of percentage, 4 % of the terms from the UMD and 14% in glossary of medical terms were translated by using the mechanism of transliteration, which means, writing English medical terms (SL) in the characters of Arabic language (TL). The Transliteration is mainly used to translate proper names (name of people, places, and institutions); in medical terms, the translators use this method to translate eponyms.

From Table 2 and figure 1, the results show that literal translation were the most dominant mechanism applied in the UMD (42 %) and (58 %) in glossary of medical terms.

Table 2. *Percentage Results of the Translations of Medical Terms into Arabic*

Translation Mechanisms	Unified Medical Dictionary (UMD)		glossary of medical terms	
	Frequency	Percentage %	Frequency	Percentage %
Borrowing	6	25	1	14
Literal Translation	10	42	4	58
Calque	2	8	0	0
Transliteration	1	4	1	14
Paraphrase	5	21	1	14
Total	24	100	7	100

The findings in the Table 2 and Figure 1 indicate that the percentages of the borrowed medical terms in the UMD are 10.71% while in glossary of medical terms are 14 %. Calque is another issue which refers to a term or an expression introduced into another language by 'literally' transition; translating it from the original language, with no grammatical or semantic adjustments. In the table 2 and figure 1, we can see that the translators in the UMD are 8 %, while in glossary of medical terms the percentage is none (0 %). The reason behind using Calque as the best method to translate the above medical terms is that most of those medical terms, which includes word parts, could not find a single term equivalent in the Arabic language.

Paraphrase is another productive way of extending vocabulary in Arabic language. When a term developer is comforted with new concepts, which they are unable to express with other term formation strategies. The research results show that paraphrasing is the most dominant mechanism applied in the UMD (21 %) and (14 %) in. glossary of medical terms.

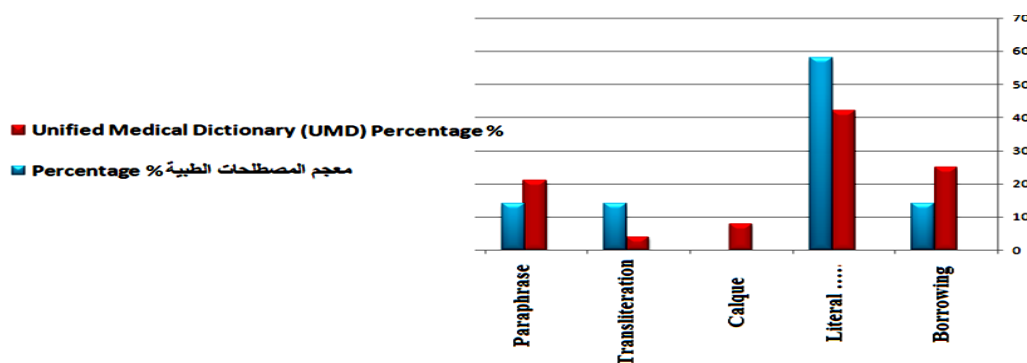


Figure 1. Comparative Results of Medical Term Translations into Arabic

Discussion

This study has been concerned with identifying the problem of terminological inconsistency in medical translation from English into Arabic. The study focused on the nature of potential challenges that the translation of medical terms presents for translators. It has attempted to discover the most successful type of equivalence in specialized and non-specialized contexts of medical dictionaries and DPLs. Five types of terminological inconsistency in relation to types of equivalence have been found: a) Borrowing, b) Literal Translation, c) Claque, d) Transliteration, and e) Paraphrase.

The technical translator plays an important role in this process of transferring and communicating through translating new technology, scientific discoveries and updated medical information from and into different languages worldwide. Translators of medical tests are required to have a good command of both the SL and the TL, a good knowledge of the subject matter, an up-to-date knowledge of their specialized field and a broad understanding of medical terms and abbreviations. As the translator of medical texts (such as medical authors, doctors, specialists, etc.) deals with a subject related to human life, he/she should be careful in choosing the exact and accurate Arabic equivalent for each English medical term.

Moreover, a translator must look for the medical lexis in an English-Arabic medical dictionary. Translators should be able to translate words into the target language accurately, maintaining the tone, intent, and style and completely (without omitting any part of the original text or adding anything to the target text). In translation, we do not translate a word, sound, style or grammar but meaning. Meaning can be defined as a knotty arrangement or a product of different linguistic elements such as vocabulary, grammar, style, phonology and usage. Usually, anything irrelevant to meaning is not considered a translation, but sometimes, we may have some exceptions where sounds are more important than meanings, such as poetry. Meaning can be made out from a single word or a group of words so that something can be understood independently. Hence, a word is the smallest, and a sentence is the largest unit of meaning. Translation needs to be viewed as an act of communication governed by consideration of comprehensibility and readability rather than a prescription informed by dogmatic and obsolete views about correctness. So, translation is the exchange of the meaning of a source-language text through an equivalent target-language text.

Furthermore, translators of medical texts should consistently use specific terms and stylistic elements of the language-specific norms in all parts of the target documents. In order to enhance the quality of the translated documents, the medical translators have to use a lot of tools for translation, such as Monolingual dictionaries in English /English like Oxford and Merriam Webster and Bilingual dictionaries in English/Arabic in order to select the appropriate medical terms in the Arabic language. As an example of a bilingual dictionary - Mounir Baalbaki Dictionary.

A translator's knowledge of the subject matter behind the text is critical. Translators are required to have a good understanding of the source language (SL) and proficient use of the target language (TL). The more knowledge a translator possesses about the subject that he/she translates, the more accurate a translation he/she produces.

Translators usually rely on technical dictionaries, computer-aided translation tools (CAT, translation memories, term bases, terminology management systems, cloud-based and server-based translation systems) and websites besides their own knowledge. However, these resources often do not help Arabic translators as many new technical terms cannot be found in English-Arabic dictionaries or technological translation supports. On the other hand, because of the co-ordinational problems between Arab countries, some technical terms have more than one equivalent in Arabic (inconsistencies), which can confuse translators and the TL reader.

In light of the analysis, translating medical terms from English into Arabic is the main problem in medical texts. The present study attempted to determine how translators can overcome and tackle such translation difficulties. Understanding the meaning of affixes used with medical terms will help a translator tackle the problem of translating medical terms which include affixes. Neologism, non-equivalence, polysemy and terminological inconsistency pose serious translation problems; therefore, the study aims to draw up some strategies to help a translator to deal with these problems. The need for updated English-Arabic medical dictionaries negatively influences the work of Arabic translators in the medical field, as most consult such dictionaries to look for the meanings of medical terms.

Based on the present study's findings, translators need to be trained to work in the medical field before starting their job. The following recommendations are also helpful:

- Medical specialists and Arab expert translators could produce an English-Arabic dictionary that includes medical compounds and abbreviations, which would be a valuable reference for Arabic translators.
- Using medical dictionaries and other resources to find the definition of a term is an integral part of mastering the correct use of medical terms.
- Medical translation is a sensitive area, and a translator should make sure that he/she chooses an equivalent for the English term in Arabic.
- Solving the problem should continue beyond the dictionary rather than exceed the written word to lectures, conferences, and even the medical media.
- Medical terminology is not static; it always has new terms that may not have direct equivalents in Arabic.
- Arab expert translators and linguists could set up a special committee. This committee could meet regularly to discuss and create an Arabic equivalent for each new medical term.
- Further study is needed to investigate how medical terminology in Arabic and English works. Hopefully, this study will provide a good resource for Arabic translators who work in the medical field.

Medical specialists and Arab expert translators could produce an English-Arabic dictionary that includes medical compounds, terms, and abbreviations which would be a valuable reference for Arabic translators.

The discussion of the data analysis of this work shows that the study tries to translate some medical terms as it was likely that they could not find them in medical dictionaries, and CAT tools could have been more helpful. This study has highlighted the translation of medical terms as a problem that causes translation challenges. The study focuses on the translation of medical terms in general. Therefore, the researcher suggests some recommendations for future research on medical translation.

- As this study only attempted to cover the problem of translating medical terms in general, further research is needed to focus on the problem of translating medical compounds and abbreviations in particular.
- This study talked about neologisms and the problem of non-equivalence as one of the challenges of translation. A deeper study is needed to investigate these problems in particular.
- Further comparative research is needed to show the importance of experience and training for translators to work in the medical field. The study could involve more inexperienced and experienced professional translators working in the medical field.
- Further study is needed to investigate how medical terminology in Arabic and English works. Hopefully, this study will provide a good resource for Arabic translators who work in the medical field.
- This study presents some information on terminology inconsistency in Arabic medical terms. A deeper study on terminology inconsistency and standardization would be helpful.

Conclusion

This research paper investigated the mechanisms for translating English medical terms into Arabic, medical terms and their elements, and highlighted some problems of translating those terms into the target language. Moreover, we attempt to ascertain the procedures employed to translate those terms. The practical part of this research helps us understand the mechanisms used by professional medical translators to render English medical terms into Arabic. The results of this study indicated that most medical translators use paraphrasing as the main mechanism to find the accurate equivalence of English medical terms into TL to make communication between doctors and patients more understandable. Also, the results show that there is usually more than one equivalence for the same English medical terms due to the non-standardization of Arabic medical terms. On the other hand, the need for an update in medical terminology creates difficult problems for doctors and translators. Eventually, the efforts and contributions of the Arab Academy to revive Arabic Medical terms and to unify them in all Arabic countries are undeniable. The Unified Medical Dictionary is considered one example of these efforts. This dictionary helps translators to find the accurate and appropriate equivalent of the medical terms in both the SL and the TL. It also helps to enhance the quality of translation products, which is one of the purposes of scientific translation.

Disclosure Statement:

We (the authors of this paper) hereby declare that research ethics and citing principles have been considered in all the stages of the investigation. We take full responsibility for the content of the paper in case of dispute.

Conflict of interest:

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Representation of Inner Exile in *The Patience Stone*: Exposing the Inner Self and Fight Between Reality and Imagination

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Abstract

Atiq Rahimi's novel *The Patience Stone* (*Syngé sabour*) is a good example of how one tries to overcome the marginalization inflicted by being a woman in an Afghan war-ridden society. The protagonist takes us into her fragmented mind and her journey towards self-realization in the face of many ordeals; he gives the woman a voice to an otherwise disempowered one. However, there is a psychological effect to this type of exile; one is related to the inward/outward movement of thought and the fight happening within – the woman in this case, but can take on several portrayals of characters in other novels – that takes on the resemblance of the outside: a war. Rahimi portrays this in his work, a fight between many facets of the woman, one that the reader chances on along as she talks and holds herself back several times before acknowledging her true power. In this paper, I claim that exile is a multi-faceted concept and experience that makes the person more liable to external and internal influences. Rahimi gives us glimpses, through very vivid images, about the dire situation in Afghanistan but is relentless with the woman's monologue as she uncovers truth after truth to her 'there' but 'not there' husband. Though she dies in the end by being brutally beaten to death by her husband's hands, she achieves a certain clarity and a peaceful bliss as the truth is finally out and she is set free.

Keywords: Exile, Identity, Imaginary, Inner-Self, Marginalization

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Introduction

Successive waves of conflict and instability in Afghanistan have resulted in a diaspora of refugees and exiles all over the world. David Kettler writes in his book, *The Liquidation of Exile: Studies in the Intellectual Emigration of the 1930s*, that at a time “in which identities are inwardly and outwardly contested, the concept of native land is too restrictive to capture the bounded domains in which individuals operate and which they may be constrained to leave” (2). To save their identity, people in war-torn countries tend to flee to salvage what little they have left of themselves to provide a better future for their offspring, and Afghans were not the first to go through that ordeal. Unfortunately, they will not be the last, as ruling powers tread over the weak to gain more advantage over the other countries.

Atiq Rahimi, an Afghan writer who went through the Soviet war, sought and was given refuge in 1984 to France; he is one of the greatest voices for Afghans through his novels of which *Syngé Sabour: The Patience Stone* (*Pierre de Patience* in French), won the Goncourt prize in 2008. This novel talks about the plight of a woman, the protagonist, who is caring for her bedridden husband and two daughters in Afghanistan. The fight that she goes through is similar to what so many women in Afghanistan and third world countries go through, as their identity is only hinged on the male in the family, and when found alone, are confronted with the misogyny of the ruling class, namely the Mujahideen and the Taliban. The journey into her identity and the inner and outer conflicts she has with herself and the other characters in the novel shows the reader how she, as a woman, goes from being marginalized and internally exiled in her society and comes out unvanquished and stronger for it.

Exile is a theme in most of Rahimi's books, and what I found intriguing is the resonance of it in his book *Syngé Sabour: The Patience Stone* in particular, where the search for identity is prominent as Rahimi takes the reader on a quest to find out the difference between reality and the imagination; a fear that controls and sometimes paralyzes the protagonist into submission, only to later come out, through death, more knowledgeable and bereft of all demons. Through this article, inner exile will be discussed, and the reader will get to know how the effect of exile on the mind and body as a person, in general, and a woman in particular, changes as it is taken from reality and submerged into imagination as she chances to find freedom. Edward Said, Julia Kristeva and many other prominent writers are mentioned for their important production on exile and how identity becomes conflicted and lost in an ordeal as big as an exile. The importance of this research is to get to know, on a personal level, the effect of this ordeal through realistic fiction, hence Rahimi's novel. Through studies on abjection and psychological realism, one would get a deeper meaning of how a person can change under this type of stress. Kettler asks when and “how does one become an exile, how does one sustain the condition, and when does one stop being an exile in any important sense?” (2) Moreover, how does identity change in exile? Whether it's an exile exerted by the self, upon the self, or by an exile exerted by an outside force, namely society. How does one conquer the imaginary, if possible, and find the real in such a traumatic ordeal as great as exile? How does fear play a role in the disillusionment of the exiled and his/her family, and how is that feeling of helplessness conquered when faced with a new reality?

Method

The method used in this paper is based on research articles and books on the themes of exile, psychological realism, the difference between inner and outer exile, and the critical theory that revolves around the effects of exile as an ordeal on the subject undergoing it. All this is later put into comparison or as backup to Rahimi's novel, as is shown in the below article. Rahimi portrays all the above themes in his story, as well as the power of the woman in a patriarchal country. As many women worldwide are protesting to get their voices heard now, Rahimi has been giving his female characters a voice of

their own to fight oppression. The procedure started with a comprehensive reading of books, articles and research about the topics mentioned above, and then a detailed reading of the novel and the notes taken on the articles and how each corresponded to the ideas presented in the book. All the ideas were gathered in a coherent way that followed the flow of the narrative, and the theories were used to emphasize the importance of this book on inner exile and identity crises. The instruments used were actual literary theory books, like Lois Tyson and Julia Kristeva, as well as scholarly articles from JSTOR. At first the articles were read and notes were taken, then the quotes which adhered to the topic and gave some value to the research were inserted into the body of the discussion.

Discussion

This research paper shows that exile and the search for identity are complex issues. The conclusion is that it becomes easier to befit the new society when one accepts the truth of the ordeal. The woman in Rahimi's book refuses to accept her fate sealed by being a female and undergoes a journey of discovery and truth leading to eternal freedom by death. Though not all exiles face this end up as women, their fight never stops, even when they succumb to their new environment.

Exile: A Living Death in a Captive Mind

What is exile? Edward Said, one of the most prominent exiled laureates of the 20th century, talks about exile in his book *Orientalism*. What is more interesting, though, is that although his book is widely discussed and used as a base for exile studies, his 2003 preface shows another purpose for the book. Said writes that there is "a profound difference between the will to understand for purposes of co-existence and humanistic enlargement of horizons, and that will to dominate for the purpose of control and external dominion" (xii). The Taliban's rule in Afghanistan is one point of domination over the people and women in particular, especially in recent years after they took back control. Instead of moving forward with globalization, they have retreated behind their own borders, transforming the history of a once advancing country into one with "various silences and elisions, always with shapes imposed and disfigurements tolerated" (Said, xii). Their control and dominion, though does not stretch far outside the borders that much, is still perceived as imposed rather than proposed over those with no power in the country.

The different facets mentioned can be related to an identity crisis that results from the different feelings of abandonment, fear, and force used on the person; whether this force comes from an outside source or from within – a form of inner exile, a torment from inside the person – makes it harder to deal with the change of place. Exiles, though, do not have this luxury to move onward from their ordeal. It takes over their mind and body, and as Said describes, the person in exile "can neither be reduced to a formulation nor be brushed aside as irrelevant" (xviii). Human life is important, but war, displacement, migration and exile have become so normative that all of the above have become part of our daily lives. The news talks about migrants who perish in the sea searching for a better life or Ukrainians fleeing their own country as the Russians invade it. The perception of all this plight, through the lens of the media, explodes and rapidly fizzles away as the routine of everyday life takes over.

Though the perils of war are still happening, it becomes disregarded by the general public as they move on to the next exciting thing. Volkova specifies a difference between physical exile and inner exile, saying that the physical part of it "implies a veritable loss: of country, birthplace, language, support, and belonging, and in all cases an absence of an engaged and responsive community and thus most importantly a loss of meaning and communication" (14). Whereas, the person undergoing inner exile, "lives in a void, an exile from identity, time and space, orphaned from a world they never knew"

(15). The void the exile deals with is the lack of familiarity one obtains after years of being in one place: the closeness one feels in a net created by safety and numbers with others in the same situation, something that people have done for centuries.

Inner and outer exile are shown in Rahimi's story *Syngé Sbour: The Patience Stone* through the woman's life as she is shown to be still residing in a war-torn Afghanistan. She goes through a series of tragedies, starting with the abandonment by her family that leads to a loss of identity, which transforms into a type of inner exile or marginalization, where she is cast aside and forgotten. Volkova mentions that gender marginalization "is thus another invisible form of exile, greatly affecting women" (40). Throughout the book, Rahimi gives glimpses of this exile in the narrative; the exile of the woman from her family, physically cast aside in a small house with a room he describes as stifling that signifying the imprisonment the woman might be feeling even though she is in a room with clear colored walls:

The room is small. Rectangular. Stifling, despite the paleness of the turquoise walls and the two curtains patterned with migrating birds frozen mid-flight against a yellow and blue sky. (Rahimi, p. 5).

The frozen birds on the curtains set an image of flight, and being free, whereas the situation in the room is the complete opposite; the image, it is frozen, is similar to the situation the woman is in; stuck in her life with a bed-ridden man, she is as stuck as the birds are. Rahimi's way of describing the different events happening in captivity is in the sense that the reader feels imprisoned as the woman cannot move or change her fate, stuck beside a man lying on a mattress, on the floor, breathing. The woman's family becomes estranged in a community that relies on the power of the husband, a patriarchal power, to overcome difficulties. However, her power becomes as sheathed as the *khanjar* hanging on the wall with no actual use. The man in his state in the novel is exiled into his immobile body at the woman's mercy, and the woman is exiled from society, marginalized, and forgotten because of her gender. Rahimi shows the exasperation of the woman in her situation through the different words and formulations she utters to her husband, saying:

But that stupid Mullah has no idea what it's like to be alone with a man who...' She can't find the right word, or doesn't dare say it, and just grumbles softly'... to be all alone with two little girls! (R., 13).

The aloneness she feels is because her man is not there to support her, a state of vagueness takes over as her exasperation is shown when Rahimi writes:

She looks around slowly. The room. Her man. This body in the emptiness. This empty body. (R., 15)

She feels emptiness because she is left to face her ordeal alone. Once relying on a support system, she finds herself dealing with everything on her own after an accident. There is no reaction from the patriarchal figure in this story as the man takes a backhand seat, and the woman and her voice take the lead. Though she is tired, she keeps on coming back to him, hoping, praying, constantly pleading for him to wake up and take his rightful place:

She punches herself in the belly. Once. Twice. As if to beat out the heavy word that has buried itself in her guts [...] After looking at the man awhile, she moves closer, bends over his face and whispers, 'Forgive me', as she strokes his arm. 'I'm tired. At breaking point. Don't abandon me, you're all I have left.' She raises her voice: 'Without you I have nothing. [...]' (R., 18-19)

The torment the woman feels is understandable in a situation like hers. Rahimi shows this in the form of a monologue as the woman endures expulsion and no communication when she says:

'My aunt...she has left the house... she's gone!' With her back to the wall she slips to the ground. 'She's gone...but where? No one knows... I have no one left... no one!' (R.,17)

The woman continues on her rant, exposing the unfairness she has gone through:

'You men, you're all cowards!' She comes back. Stares darkly at the man. Where are your brothers who were so proud to see you fight their enemies?' Two breaths and her silence fills with rage. 'Cowards!' She spits. 'They should be looking after your children, and me – honoring you, and themselves – isn't that right? Where is your mother, who always used to say she would sacrifice herself for a single hair on your head? [...] You might as well know: they've abandoned you. They've deserted us,' she cries. 'Us, me!' (R.,19-20)

The physical desertion that the woman undergoes, first from her husband, who is in a vegetative state, then her husband's family, who, at first sight of the injury of the supposed *hero*, leave with no notice. Her aunt also follows suit as the reader discovers she had left without leaving a word—all of these make the woman feel desperate and alone. Fear takes over her mind, and her identity starts to fragment. On the one hand, she wants to fight for justice but cannot do so because she is a woman; on the other hand, she tries to fight to keep herself and her family alive but is limited because she does not have the means to. The woman is desperate for a connection, like so many exiles who search for company or companionship; someone to ease their plight of being forgotten and unable to do anything about it. She screams:

Come back, I beg you, before I Lose my mind. Come back, for the sake of your children... She looks up. Gazes through her tears in the same uncertain direction as the man. 'Bring him back to life, God!' [...] you've no right to leave us like this, without a man!" (R.,21)

The abandonment in her words, in the above quote, shows the fight with her mind commencing. The woman is in search of meaning to what she is going through. Nevertheless, to no avail, the answer she awaits is beyond her reach. Julia Kristeva, in her book *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, writes that even from its "place of banishment, the abject does not cease challenging its master. Without a sign [...], it beseeches a discharge, a convulsion, a crying out" (2). This convulsion of feelings manifesting through words of hate and anger from the woman only makes the reader more attached to her plight.

The woman's life transforms into a living death; captive in her ordeal, she can no longer sustain herself or her kids since she cannot work, and the hostile environment of the war makes her fear even greater. There are similarities to what Sabine Grebe describes in her article, *Why did Ovid Associate his Exile with Living Death?*, to the life of the woman in Rahimi's book, where the life she has inside that blue room has a "crucial liminal distinction between the knowable world, considered the inside, representing an enclosed area of a safe community (life), and the outside, which was characterized by a hostile and chaotic physical and social environment and was believed to be an unknowable world, not unlike death itself" (429). The inside, in this case, becomes the mind of the woman, her identity broken by the fear and chaos on the outside. The latter, however, becomes the outside and is the body and its physical existence in a life that has no respect for it anymore; but this "exteriority [becomes] a void as terrifying as the nether world" (Grebe, 2010, p. 501). The woman's identity suffers a loss, and her mind becomes fragmented with inner turmoil; her emotions become erratic, as do her physical actions. The woman's journey is reflected in the narrative as she moves from inner exile into a sort of self-discovery accompanied by fear, always pushing her into the reality outside.

The grim reality beneath the seams of the woman's life burst when her husband is shot. At first, she is told that he was going to come out of it, but then she is blamed for her lack of faith and not praying enough for him to be saved. The woman

laughs. A sad laugh. 'And when I reach the seventy-second cycle, that cretinous Mullah will come to visit you and, as always, will reproach me because, according to him, I can't have taken good care of you, can't have followed his instructions, must have neglected the prayers... Otherwise you'd be getting better!' (R., 12)

Through the agony of being alone and blamed for not being a good praying Muslim, her mind becomes a deeper captive. She is secluded into her home with her two daughters, but it improves when she finds her aunt again. Identity is an important factor for an exile, a way out of the monotony, a journey into self-discovery that makes the ordeal easier to handle. The woman goes through a sort of abjection, a repulsion of her outside self as her inner self seeps through the facets that repression had forced upon her body and soul since her birth. Kristeva says that the abject "simultaneously beseeches and pulverizes the subject, one can understand that it is experienced at the peak of its strength when the subject, weary of fruitless attempts to identify with something on the outside, finds the impossible within; when it finds that the impossible constitutes its very *being*, that it *is* none other than abject" (5). In this case, the woman's inner self pulverizes the layers covering the truth that lies beneath. Through her belief that the patience stone will be destroyed after the truth comes out, the woman defies the restrictions in a society so bent on controlling her. However, she loses both her inner and outer self (body) as she becomes the master of her fate. Thus, the destruction of the outside is seen through her fateful death, but she gains an immense breakthrough for her identity, where she becomes freed from the torment that has been eating at her since the beginning.

Journey of the Self in Reality and Imagination through Fear

What is the identity of an exile? How does the self-evolve when it loses touch with reality? The fragmentation happens after a sudden shock comes into play. Coerced outside of the homeland, whether by choice to save one's family or by an outside force, renders the identity and self-weakness. Dostoyevsky, the father of psychological realism, influenced Rahimi's writings as his books generally take the reader through the thought process and dream of Rahimi's characters as they find their way out of the maze they had constructed or had been thrown in as is seen in *The Patience Stone*. The journey undergone by the reader into the inner exile in *Syngé Sabour: The Patience Stone* alongside the woman through her memories, dreams, and thoughts transform the voyage into one of discovery as the woman treads alone through the valley of darkness on a path ridden with hurt and outrage; which eventually ends in liberation. The loss of the familiar would no longer pose a problem for the woman, for she would have escaped the borders of her entrapment. In her article *Corporeal Borders and Inhabited Bodies as Exilic space in the Theatre of Wajdi Mouawad and Marie Ndiaye*, Angela Ritter writes that being "exiled from our bodies " or exiles living in other bodies is the ultimate displacement" (p. 85). She continues to specify that women "especially fall into this fate of spirits exiled from their bodies. Perhaps the body is exiled from the spirit for the character continues to have effect over others while the body ceases to exist" (p. 91). Rahimi gives the woman a voice in his novel. Yet, her body and self-endure a disruption of everything she came to get accustomed to, so her identity separates into a self that needs to break out of this disruption and another that remains meek and docile. At the same time, the man lies immobile on his mattress. Rahimi shows this conflict in his narrative:

Overcome by her memories, she stands up heavily. 'I never wanted anyone to know that. Never! Not even my sisters!' She leaves the room, upset. Her fears echo down the passage. 'He's driving me mad. Sapping my strength. Forcing me to speak. (R., 65) [...]

'What's the matter with me now? What am I saying? Why? Why? It's not normal, not normal at all...' She comes back in. 'This isn't me. No it isn't me talking... it's someone else, talking through me... with my tongue. Someone has entered my body... I am possessed. I really do have a demon inside me. It's she who is speaking. (R., 117)

The woman's conflicted journey back and forth into self-discovery, though happens at a time of war, since she is imprisoned in her own war, her clarity comes at slower intervals. Delving inside her own memories and speaking about them reveals to both the man and the reader a distinct fight between what the real and the imaginary. By her inward journey into her past, one filled with segregation and horror, a darkness takes over as she recalls her father punishing her by putting her in a cellar:

It was dark. I had to spend two days in there. He left a cat with me – another stray who must have been roaming around – and told me gleefully that if the animal got hungry it would eat me (R., 65).

The darkness becomes a symbol of oppression, one that the father thought could control in order to subdue his daughter. However, she ends up finding refuge in it, and befriends a cat, her fear no longer becomes one of the insides – the self – but fear of the other; in this case her father, later on, her husband, and after the police that break into her house. Rahimi describes instances of the woman whose fear transcends into physicality saying

"[s]he is shaking. With cold. Or fear" (R., 67).

The fear of the other translates into one stitched into reality, her reality, married to an image of a man which presently still hangs in the blue room as he lays there unknowing of the happenings around him; alert, yet distant as she says:

I very quickly became used to you, your clumsy body, your empty presence which at that point I didn't know how to interpret... and gradually I started to worry when you went away. To keep watch for your return. I used to get in a terrible state when you went away, even for a little while... I felt as if something was missing. Not in the house, but inside of me...I felt empty (R., 69-70).

The woman's shackles of repression come not only from her inability to change her fate, but from a society that thinks of her as a commodity to sell and exchange for payment of debt, she recalls:

[...] I were some tawdry reward for your triumph! I was looking at you, but you were staring into thin air (R., 61).

The women found in a society that sees them as products for bartering, try to develop a sense of self to protect themselves from abusers. The woman in this novel protects herself from within, as she tries to find the strength to keep up although she wants to give up, she doesn't.

Rahimi uses the notion of psychological realism, more prominently in the second part of the book, in order to drag the reader into the most private thoughts of the woman. Bowers in her book *Dostoyevsky at 200: The Novel in Modernity*, writes that lives in a state of "extreme excitation, which propels [her] thought to operate with increased intensity, and that, in turn stimulates [her] imagination" (109). This makes the reader question, alongside the woman, the value of reality, and whether the situations surrounding the woman's ordeal are actually a figment of her imagination or not. Ritter has similar notions to Dostoyevsky as she writes that the body "is a threshold – a place of entry and departure, sometimes for multiple identities. Also, it can willingly, or unwillingly, become inhabited by others" (93). The woman does show the emergence of multiple identities. In one instance, she is portrayed to be always in conflict with herself. The woman would utter a sentence, then ask herself why did she bring herself to say something like that. In other instances, she would go back to praying, thinking that the resolution will come from

a higher power, and not from within herself. However, her plight ends when she no longer fights against the outside and accepts that what's on the inside will emerge outwards.

Through the above citations from the novel, one can note that the woman's voyage into her past, the darkness and light that emerge from these memories – shown through suffering and fear – take the reader on a route of separate identities fighting to emerge. But a self whose experiences are solely physical gets lost in the whole array, or disarray, of society and its demands on the body as well as the soul. The woman's experiences in the novel, from her young age, witnessing the cruelty and unfairness of how girls are manipulated, alienated and used as material gain, gives her an edge for when she gets married to be able to keep her husband, so that she might have a decent life. The woman says:

'But everything I did was for you... in order to keep you' [...] 'Or actually, to tell you the truth, so that you would keep me. So that you wouldn't leave me! Yes, that's why I...' She stops herself. Draws in her knees and curls up on her side, next to the man. 'I did everything I could to make you stay with me. Not just because I loved you, but so that you wouldn't abandon me. Without you, I didn't have anyone. They would all have sent me packing' (R., 68).

The woman becomes engulfed in her own delirium of being the man's savior. The truth that she avoids saying from the beginning of the novel finally surfaces in a sequence of confessions from the woman to the body of the quiescent man on his mattress. Paul Allen Miller, in his article *Placing the Self in the field of Truth: Irony and Self-Fashioning in Ancient and Postmodern Rhetorical Theory* writes that the speaker "only exists as speaker to the extent that her innermost thoughts are disseminated across a broad temporal, spatial, and social field that makes the locus of identity inherently plural" (323). This plurality, given by Rahimi to the woman, in order to overcome her oppression becomes clearer towards the end of the novel where she says:

'So, I feel relieved, set free – in spite of the terrible things that keep on happening to us – it is thanks to my secrets, and to you. I am not a demon!' She lets go of his shoulders, and strokes his beard. 'Because now your body is mine, and my secrets are yours. You are here for me. I don't know whether you can see or not, but one thing I am absolutely sure of is that you can hear me, that you can understand what I'm saying. And that is why you're still alive. Yes, you're alive for my sake, for the sake of my secrets.' (R., 73-74)

Her imagination takes over in these moments of turmoil as she starts seeing apparitions of her father who comes to push her onwards in her journey to self-discovery.

I felt a presence behind me. I didn't dare look. I felt a hand stroking me. I couldn't move. I heard my father's voice. I gathered every ounce of strength, and turned around. He was there. With his white beard. His little eyes blinking in the darkness. The worn-out shape of him. In his hands he was carrying the quail I had given to the cat. He claimed that everything I told you yesterday had brought his quail back to life! Then he embraced me. I stood up. He wasn't there. Gone, taken by the wind. The rain. Was it a dream? No ... it was so real [...] I was thrilled by his visit, lit up. (R., 74-75)

Talking to someone, even the ghost of a person from her past leaves the exile, in this case, the woman, a little less agitated about the changes happening around her. Talking to her probably dead father made the woman feel a little less left out because there was someone, who when she was a child had been so hard on her, becomes this endearing person that causes her dreams to become a little less dark. She continues on this journey of memories and goes to one from her father-in-law who was the only man in the woman's life who did not marginalize her.

I didn't even know how lonely I was. At night I slept with your mother, in the daytime I talked to your father. Thank God he was there. What a man! He was all I had. And your mother hated that [...] Your father read me poems, and told me stories. He encouraged me to read, and write, and think. He loved me. Because he loved you. He was proud of you, when you were fighting for freedom. He told me so. (R., 59)

The woman finds through her father-in-law, though a male figure, a haven where she can flourish and become someone better. He saw her for her potential and not her bodily gain; she becomes an asset for him as he for her. The woman's memories of him a tool to soothe her suffering.

The woman's dreams in the second half of the book materialize as she starts sensing and seeing her father. This for her becomes a sign that she is going to be saved, taken out from the misery she's living with her immobile husband. Lois Tyson in his book *Critical Theory Today* explains that dreams can manifest into "symbols of any kind, if we keep in mind that there is no one-to-one correspondence between a given symbol and its meaning" (19). As well as the images of her dead father surface as she approaches her salvation, the memories of her father in law's stories give her peace as well. One in particular becomes the most intriguing about a stone given to Abraham by God. *The Syngé Sabour*. What is interesting is that the word *sabour* comes from the Arabic base word *sabr* which means patience. The woman's patience in the story is seen dwindling at times but never faltering so much as to run away or leave her past. She is perseverant and believes that the stone, her father-in-law told her about, is one that will save her from torment if she reveals all her secrets to it. The woman recalls:

The day before he died, your father called for me, he wanted to see me alone. He was dying. He whispered to me, [...] I know now where this stone is to be found. It is in the Ka'bah, in Mecca! In the house of God! [...] It is a stone for all the world's unfortunates. Go there! Tell it your secrets until it bursts... until you are set free from your torments. (R., 75-76)

Her torments here are emotional, seeing the people she relies on the most leave, die or become immobile petrify her in fear. The fear resounding in the narrative does not stop after the woman makes the discovery that her husband is now kept alive just so that she can vent herself to him, but it pushes her further into self-discovery. The woman assumes her living arrangements when two assailants invade her space: a couple of jihadists that are fighting for the freedom of Afghanistan, supposedly. Though one was meeker than the other, his look upon her endearing rather than threatening, he is still seen as a man who has power, the one who has power, and she with no power.

Surprised by the woman's presence, he crouches down next to his companion, who asks him, 'So? 'The second man's eyes are fixed on the woman as he replies, 'it's ok-ok-okay, th-there's a c-c-ceasefire!' stammering, his voice a teenager's in the process of breaking. (R., 83)

Her tenacity in facing strange men who come into her home; for a woman alone in Afghanistan, is very dangerous, but she saves herself from being raped by one of them by answering the questions asked:

Have you any children.
Yes. Two... two girls
Where are they?
With my aunt.

And you – why are you here?
To work. I need to earn my living, so I can feed my two kids.
And what do you do for work?

The woman looks him straight in the eye, and says: 'I earn my living by the sweat of my body.' (R., 84-85)

The soldier's disgust as she speaks these words to him, and his eventual departure is pleasurable to the woman because she felt powerful in being able to protect herself against someone who saw her as a conquest.

A triumphant smile flickers across her dry lips. After a long gaze at the green curtain, she unfolds her body and moves over to her man. 'Forgive me!' she whispers. 'I had to tell him that- otherwise, he would have raped me.' She is shaken by a sarcastic laugh. (R., 86)

The achievement is from her side now. The woman feels powerful because she is able to push the man away with just words. Though it doesn't last, she still keeps this pleasurable feeling that she is able to fight against the oppressors in her own way. The story later unfolds as the other soldier comes back, and forces himself on her. However, his demeanor was more of a man searching for power, and ends up giving her the power over him. When the soldier comes back asking to be pleased, the woman at first refused, and is met with violence; she "is halted by the barrel of a gun against her belly" (R., 105). She cedes to his demand:

Abruptly, he throws himself on top of her. The woman, struggling to breathe, gasps, 'Gently!'

Overexcited, the boy awkwardly grabs hold of her legs. She is frozen, numb beneath the wild flapping of this clumsy young body as it tries vainly, head buried in her hair, to pull down her pants. (R., 105-106)

The woman, after the deed, feels miserable but doesn't move to pull away from the boy that had wounded her pride. Her maternal instincts take over and she caresses the boy as though he was the one wounded by the whole act.

It's the woman's hand that is moving. Gently stroking the boy.

He does not protest. She continues stroking. Tender and maternal. 'It doesn't matter,' she reassures him. No reaction at all from the boy. She perseveres: 'It can happen to anyone.' She is cautious. 'Is... is this the first time?' After a long silence, lasting three breaths, he nods his head – still sunk deep in the woman's hair – in shy, desperate assent. (R., 106-107)

Though the woman's achievement in keeping control over her own body is threatened when the soldier boy comes back asking for being pleased, the fact that he was callow takes away the violence her body experiences, and his inexperience becomes something that the woman is able to control later on in the narrative. The woman does feel disgusted after this first encounter, though and her "eyes fill with tears. Her body huddles up. She wraps her arms around her knees, tucks in her head and wails. A single, heartbreaking wail." (R., 108) The feeling does not stay long after, as pity settles in instead of anger and disgust, and her conversation with her husband resumes.

Rahimi shows the reader the control the woman musters over the soldier where his inexperience plays a role in her managing him, forming him into a man, somewhat softer than the other men she had in her life; one that may come to realize how much power women can yield with their body alone. The man's visits increase and the woman starts developing feelings for him:

An ephemeral happiness flits across her sad face. 'I should have rushed. I hope he comes back.' As she changes the man's sheet: 'He will come back [...] I hope you don't hate me for talking to you about him and entertaining him in the house. I don't know what's going on, but he's very – how can I say? – very present for me. It's almost the same feeling I used to have about you, at the beginning of our marriage. (R., 130-131)

The happiness the woman feels by a parcel left by the door, a few seeds of corn and a fruit, shows how human contact while in exile helps see light when there is none. Even if the boy she entertains is a man, an oppressor, she feels saved by his presence and touch. She hopes to steer him from becoming a monster like her husband was. But the idea flickers away as she says: "I know that he too could become awful, like you. I'm sure of it. The moment you possess a woman, you become monsters." (R., 131). This possession is what the woman has been fighting against from the beginning of the story, though her *patience stone* belongs to her, her immobile man is a possession for her to keep, she can't really keep living in a life where she is alone. The woman feels guided by a higher power, one from inside, an identity that is linked with the truth that keeps coming out, seeping through her thoughts and dreams.

Rahimi mentions that the voice is related to women, for the voice of a woman is rarely heard when it is screaming but is paid close attention to when it is quiet. And through the woman in the story, her voice becomes a beacon through the dark times that women in her situation have been facing for a long time. Her whispers in darkness, the pleading with herself and God, the aggravated, angry feelings that erupt only to calm down again are all emotions that she had gone through but takes control over them as she discovers that it is she who has the power over her fate. Her identity – as she has been reliving the past and making peace with it, starts to heal. Hasti Abbasi, in his article *The Ideology of Exile in an Imaginary Life*, writes that the "correspondence between things and a reconnection with the past can heal the emotional and physical sense of dislocation" (24). The dislocation Abbasi talks about is one that exiles feel more often because of their trauma. their disconnection from reality, one that acts on their psyche, making them feel more alienated from a society that is supposed to be their support.

Women have always been marginalized in societies with laws that swerve away from the importance of women, making their existence void in face of patriarchy. Larry Goodson and Larry Johnson, in their article *The Fragmentation of culture in Afghanistan*, wrote that the Taliban have made "the issue of women's roles and status a cornerstone of their Islamization program. Their policies have largely eliminated women from the public space, by preventing their participation in virtually all occupational categories of the workforce, their schooling, and the freedom of movement (especially by requiring the adoption of the head-to-toe form of the veil known as the *burqa*)" (281). The women thus become exiled in their own society, in their own bodies, locked away behind a veil, cast aside and ignored because of their inferiority compared to the superiority of the male.

Conclusion

Exile at times of war is a greatly discussed topic. Wars have not made the transition from one country to another simple, either. The Afghan war, specifically from 1978 to 1998 is one of the many wars that have produced a generation of uprooted people who have come of age in diaspora, whether in refugee camps or scattered in the west, destroying and disrupting the social structure (Goodson & Johnson, 1998, p. 269). Not only had this uprooting caused detrimental effects on family life and daily activities, but it had also caused severe damage to identity and finding the self in such an ordeal.

The disruption is a result of exile and a cause of severe identity troubles, where the uprooted people were never actually accepted in their adoptive society. Ritter writes that the feeling of foreignness and identity both bring attention to the commonality of the "experiences [that exiles face] and focus on exile as a shared, human experience: we are all exiles in that we are exiled from ourselves and from each other" (p.84). Nowadays, people tend to feel more excluded from the group if they are not under a certain label. The need to be in a group or another, accepted by certain cliques, plays a role in the self and the identity of the person undergoing this judgment, whether acceptance or rejection. As seen in the above piece, Rahimi gives the reader a good image of how the woman is both rejected and looked down upon as a woman, living alone, residing to

selling her body for safety and money. This way of survival is one that many women underwent in Afghanistan to get through the war when their husbands passed away, and they did not have anyone to take care of them anymore. Though in the story, the woman does get raped by another soldier – one who wanted to gain an experience, not a bid to conquer the female body – she was the one who triumphed because she could control the soldier. The woman in the story had gained this control through her body and because of her mind and did not succede to the norms where a woman is a docile domestic object that resides only at home.

The path that the woman took us on as we (the reader) jumped from one point of torment to another makes the end all the more satisfying as her voice, and the one buried deep under layers of oppression, breaks through the shell that had been forming for centuries and escapes. Her truth is set free in the open, and her voice is no longer pushed down and held in exile: she has achieved freedom. Though exile is a topic that has been discussed repeatedly, Rahimi's portrayal of it through his novel gives a new insight into the inner feelings and afflictions one might face in this ordeal.

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I hereby declare that research ethics and citing principles have been considered in all the stages of this paper. I take full responsibility for the content of the paper in case of dispute.

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Lexical Richness and Syntactic Complexity as Predictors of Academic Writing Performance

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Abstract

Language researchers have long looked for ways to investigate the connection between textual language use and the development of both L1 and L2 writing. The purpose of this research study is to examine the predictors of writing quality in terms of lexical richness and syntactic complexity in academic writing. The study was based on a hypothesis that the lexical sophistication and the mean length T-unit (MLTU) are the indicators of writing quality. A corpus of 50 article abstracts written by Tunisian scholars was analyzed and scored using a holistic scoring rubric that indicates writing quality (test of written English), and then regressed against the chosen measures of lexical richness and syntactic complexity. The findings revealed that lexical sophistication (GSL-1 1000 words) is the indicator of writing quality. For syntactic complexity, findings showed that the mean length T-unit (MLTU) is not a good predictor of academic writing. However, the clause per T-unit (C/TU) indicated a strong correlation with writing quality. Furthermore, the ability to use sophisticated vocabulary rather than grammatical knowledge was an effective predictor of academic writing. The results of this research can help EFL scholars improve the quality of their writing so they can employ it in academic writing.

Keywords: academic writing, lexical Richness, syntactic complexity, writing quality

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Introduction

Second Language (L2) research has covered writing skills and associated factors because academic writing is one of the areas of focus in academia and daily practice. Rosmawati (2019) noted a growth in research on L2 academic writing, particularly in English as a second language. It has flourished and is likely to do so in the future, given the growing trend of international education and the increasing dominance of English as the language of science dissemination. Many studies have called for new methods of measuring and assessing students' performance and the quality of the texts they compose (Bin Hadi et al., 2020). Writing quality refers to the fit of a particular text to its context, including factors such as purpose, discourse medium, and the audience's interest in the subject—factors which are the cornerstones of discourse theory and, *mutatis mutandis*, should be the cornerstones of research in written composition" (Witte & Faigley, 1981, p.199). Writing quality has been regarded as a key predictor of academic success (McNamara, Crossley & McCarthy, 2010). Documenting the linguistic traits of excellent writing is one way to comprehend factors that predict proficient writing.

Several studies have looked at connections between writing quality and linguistic elements present in texts, particularly elements related to lexical richness and syntactic complexity. For example, Stevenson et al. (2006) studied the relationship between various revision behaviors and text quality. Lower-level revisions (word-level changes) and text content quality were predicted to have a negative relationship in L2 writing because L2 writers are likely to devote more attention to lower-level writing processes, leaving less attention for higher-level cognitive operations, including revisions. This prediction, however, was not met because it was difficult to find a link between revision type and text quality. Miller et al. (2008) also sought to determine if writing behaviours can be used to predict text quality. In addition to revision behaviors, the authors investigated pausing and fluency. Throughout the research, the level of revision (insertions or deletions) was examined. The text's quality was assessed using weighted subscores for content, grammatical and lexical range, accuracy, and fluency. However, the pausing or revision indices could only account for significant variations in text quality. Instead, two fluency measures were identified as strong predictors of text quality: burst and fluency during burst. Another relevant study is Crossley and McNamara (2010) that examined how the number of cohesive devices increased over a semester. According to their study, the number of cohesive devices used in writing indicates text structure and overall essay quality. However, they found that overlapping pronouns and coordinating conjunctions were poor predictors of writing quality. The findings of their study show that the use of cohesive devices in writing is not a reliable predictor of writing quality.

A plethora of L2 and L1 studies suggested that syntactic complexity can be used to assess writing quality, looking into the relationship between syntactic complexity and writing quality. Writing quality is typically indicated by holistic or analytical essay evaluations. Prior research on syntactic complexity has concentrated on the production length, with clausal subordination as a crucial sign of syntactic growth. Despite being a multidimensional construct, syntactic complexity has been typically studied only at the T-unit level, ignoring the complexity at the phrase level (Bulté & Housen, 2014). Crowhurst (1983) reviewed studies on the relationship between the quality and syntactic complexity of written composition as determined by T-unit and clause length. The idea that the two are positively related appears to be supported by several lines of research.

Syntactic Complexity

Second language development research delineates the reliability and validity of syntactic complexity indices in assessing the progress or proficiency of L2 learners. However, according to Lu (2010), this was not feasible due to a shortage of a credible computational tool for calculating syntactic complexity (p.475). Several metrics have been proposed as the

best ways to assess syntactic complexity in L2 writing. The majority of the research points to a variety of L2 complexity measures. In a sample of 40 empirical L2 studies published between 2005 and 2008, Bulté and Housen (2012) identified 40 different complexity measures (cited in Bulté & Housen, 2014, p.44). According to Lu (2011), research in the field focused on one or more measures, such as the length of the production unit, the degree of subordination and coordination, the variety of syntactic structures, and the sophistication of specific syntactic structures (p.36).

Only some syntactic complexity elements have been investigated regarding L2 writing quality. Overall length measures, such as mean length of sentence, mean length of T-unit and mean length of clause, have been used in such studies. Clausal subordination (finite) has also piqued the interest of researchers, who typically measure it in terms of clauses per T-unit. The researcher follows Crowhurst (1983), Lu (2011) and Yang et al. (2015) studies and chooses to use the mean length of T-unit, the mean length of clause, and the clause per T-unit to examine the link between writing quality and syntactic complexity. The reason for selecting these three measures is that most studies in the literature show that they are positively correlated with writing quality.

Lexical Richness

Another measure of L2 proficiency and writing quality is lexical richness. Nation (2002) argues that it is essential for L2 students committed to developing effective written control over academic vocabulary. Laufer and Sim (1985) advocate the same viewpoint, claiming that vocabulary knowledge is the best predictor of whether a text is understood (as cited in Webb & Nation, 2008, p.1). Lexical richness refers to the sophistication and scope of the students' acquired productive vocabulary. It has been acknowledged as a crucial element in L2 education due to its close connection to the learner's capacity for effective oral and written communication (Lu, 2012; p.190). The majority of the literature provides various lexical richness measures. Lexical richness measurements attempt to quantify a writer's usage of a diversified and vast vocabulary. Researchers have been drawn to such metrics based on some grounds: they are used to separate elements that determine the quality of a piece of writing and can be used to examine the connection between vocabulary and word choice (Laufer & Nation, 1995, p. 308).

Some multiple metrics have been used depending on the specified context; no single measure can account for all facets of vocabulary knowledge. In academic writing, lexical indicators frequently involve correctly using words from the instructional content domain (Olinghouse & Leaird, 2009). The Type Token Ratio (TTR), a counter of word frequency in a text, is commonly used to assess lexical richness. It comprises the total word count (tokens) and the ratio of all other words (types).

According to Laufer and Nation (1995), the best lexical richness metrics are lexical originality, density, sophistication and variation. The lexical originality index evaluates students' performance compared to their peers'. The lexical originality of a specific composition is unpredictable because it is defined by both the group factor and the composition itself (Laufer & Nation, 1995). Lexical density is the ratio of lexical terms to total words in a text (Ure, 1971, as cited in Lu, 2012, p.191). However, significant correlation coefficients between this ratio and the holistic assessment of L2 writing is not evident (Linnarud, 1986, Engber, 1995, as cited in Lu, 2012). Lexical sophistication is "the proportion of relatively unusual or advanced words in the learner's text" (Read, 2000, p.203).

According to Lu (2012), there is a significant amount of variation in the definitions of sophisticated words according to the various measures proposed to quantify lexical sophistication" (p. 192). Lexical variation describes the words and expressions that describe the same things or ideas. The number of distinct words is a lexical variation indicator that is simple to understand and has shown promise as a possible indicator of a child's language development. However, since the length of the text affects this measurement, some

standardizations may be preferable when contrasting samples with different lengths (Lu, 2012, p.193).

Problem Statement

Several existing studies acted as a catalyst for this research. For example, Karami and Salahshoor (2014) examined the reader's predictors of their academic reading performance and deduced that "lexical richness is a much stronger indicator than syntactic complexity" (p.24) suggesting examining the predictors in other academic skills. A substantial amount of research verifies that lexical richness metrics are useful quality indicators in English. Vocabulary variables like measurements of lexical diversity, sophistication and density have the potential to be extremely useful in describing essential features of lexical richness and writing quality. However, neither of these studies examined the measures of syntactic complexity and lexical richness, which best indicate the quality of academic writing. Hence, the current study determines whether lexical richness or syntactic complexity is a potent predictor of academic writing performance.

Research questions and Hypotheses:

The overarching questions that frame the investigation are the following:

1. To what extent does lexical richness predict academic writing performance?
2. To what extent does syntactic complexity predict academic writing performance?
3. Which of these two variables potentially predict academic writing performance?

It has been assumed that lexical sophistication indicates a higher academic writing quality in terms of lexical richness. Also, the mean length of the clause (MLC), mean length T-unit (MLTU) and the clause per T-unit (C/TU) were assumed to be potent indicators of writing quality in terms of syntactic complexity. Likewise, lexical richness was assumed to be the most important competence for academic needs.

Method

The inquiry aims to glean quantitative research insights into which lexical richness and syntactic complexity measures are more potent indicators of academic writing quality in the abstract section of research articles. The focus is on the predictive power of the different metrics, highlighting the indicators of academic writing quality.

Tools of Data collection

The data employed in this research consist of 50 article abstracts written by Tunisian research scholars and downloaded from a Tunisian journal dedicated to young researchers (TAYR). The materials were saved in plain text to be uploaded to the computational tool. This study employs three text analysis tools, L2SCA, RANGE, and Coh-Metrix to assess the abstracts.

Test of Written English (TWE)

Holistic scoring is a method of evaluating the overall quality of written performance. The fundamental goal of holistic scoring is to grade tests based on predetermined criteria. According to Reid (1993), holistic scoring does not identify writing difficulties but evaluates the quality of the written product. TWE, a section of the TOEFL test, is considered the best example of holistic scoring. The TWE comprises six scales, each of which is divided into four or five subscales. The 0-5 rating scale identifies dimensions and characteristics of syntactic and rhetorical skills. The Educational Testing Service (2004) claims that the TWE is a criterion-referenced scale and holistically graded to give information about a candidate's capacity to produce and arrange ideas on paper, to back up those ideas with proof or examples, and to apply standard written English norms (p.5). The TWE test allows students to demonstrate

their ability to write about a certain topic. The test gives students 30 minutes to complete their essays, which will be graded holistically. The candidate's ability to organize his response effectively, to sight instances to defend or clarify his/her position and to compose an effective conclusion will determine his/her score.

Syntactic Complexity Analyzer

To make it easier to compute the corpus, the researcher employed a computational tool that automates syntactic complexity analysis - The L2 Syntactic Complexity Analyzer (L2SCA) created by Lu (2010) at Pennsylvania State University. According to Youssef (2019), this software analyses the data using Stanford Parser and Treegex, yielding results for 14 syntactic indicators, such as the length and density of different syntactic structures and the level of coordination and subordination. The researcher chose to use the L2SCA for it is free, simple and capable of analyzing texts in batches. The system has a comprehensive set of syntactic complexity measurements and is highly reliable.

Coh-Metrix

This instrument is a text-processing software proposed by Graesser et al. (2004). This web programme allows researchers to obtain information about cohesion, language and readability. McNamara et al. (2006) state that Coh-Metrix "analyses texts on three major categories of cohesion: coreference, conceptual (LSA), and connectivity (including causal cohesion)" (p.573). Furthermore, they claim that this tool adds computational markers of text cohesion to traditional readability formulas (McNamara et al., 2006; p.573). The computational markers included in the Coh-Metrix are over 200 metrics of cohesion, language, and readability and markers used in computational linguistics. The researcher opts for using the Coh-Metrix for the following reasons. First, several studies have used this software to measure lexical diversity and density. It enables researchers to get much information about their corpus with minimal effort. Second, the program is available, free and easy to use. Graesser et al. (2004) state that "Coh-Metrix is very easy to use. After accessing the Web site and reading the description of the tool, the facility is ready for the user to enter the text." (p.194). The tool is open to the public and represents an opportunity to facilitate the task for researchers to get rigorous information about texts. It was used in this study to obtain information about lexical diversity and density in the article abstracts.

RANGE

This software developed by Nation (2002) determines the frequency of each word type or family in the provided text and the range of each family across texts. It is mainly used to examine the vocabulary richness in a given corpus. According to Webb and Nation (2008; p.1), This program enables the user to decide the vocabulary knowledge required to understand the text, to generate word lists based on the frequency of usage and variety of use in various kinds of discourse, to figure out the number of occurrences with words in the text, and finally to assess the vocabulary load of a text for learning and to teach a language. The Academic Word List and the 14 British National Corpus (BNC) 1000-word lists were also heavily reliant on this software. The corpus is compared to the GSL-1 1000 most frequent words in English and the GSL-2 1000 most frequent words in this study.

Data Analysis

The data analysis involved two phases. The first phase assessed the research abstracts using a holistic scoring rubric. Two researchers participated in the evaluation of the abstracts. The second phase involves quantitatively analyzing the various syntactic complexity and lexical richness statistics. To explore and describe the phenomenon under scrutiny, descriptive statistics were computed using SPSS. Pearson correlation analysis was also used to

determine how lexical richness and syntactic complexity relate to writing quality. Multiple regression analyses were performed to determine how these elements influence writing quality. According to the standards, the corpus was evaluated on a scale from 0 to 5. Then, the researcher independently evaluated 10 randomly selected abstracts to check the degree of reliability. A correlation was calculated to test the agreement among the raters, yielding an inter-rater reliability index ($r = .745$).

Results

This section outlines the findings in correspondence to the research questions that directly related to the predictors of academic writing quality regarding lexical richness and syntactic complexity. After computing the syntactic complexity and lexical richness measures, correlation and standard multiple regression analyses were applied to statistically evaluate the data. A multiple regression analysis was performed by picking elements with shared relationships to determine the predictors of writing quality.

Research Question 1:

Regarding the first research question, it is critical to demonstrate causality between several independent variables and one predictor variables results. Multiple regression analysis was employed to discover the precise lexical richness measure that predicts overall writing proficiency. In this study, lexical richness was measured by using lexical sophistication, density and diversity. Table 1 shows a significant regression equation is ($F(4, 45) = 6.142, p = .000$), with an R^2 of .353. In other words, using diversity, density, and sophistication can illustrate 35.3% of the variance in writing quality, which is statistically significant. The F value is 6.142, the effective regression degree of freedom is 4, the effective residual degree of freedom is 45, and the corresponding p-value is 0.000. Thus, the significant level at the 95% confidence interval level is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the regression model is significant ($p = .000 < .05$). Furthermore, Durbin Watson's d is 1.924, implying a positive autocorrelation because the value is less than 2 points.

Table 1. Lexical Richness measures as Criterion Variable

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F change	
1	,594 ^a	,353	,296	,53618	,353	6,142	4	45	,000	1,924

The unstandardized coefficients in Table 2 show that one lexical richness measure positively correlate to writing quality. The coefficient column shows that lexical sophistication GSL-1 1000 words ($B = .006$) is the measure that strongly correlates with writing quality. Furthermore, the standardized regression coefficients emphasize the results showing that lexical sophistication ($.010 < .05$) appears to be more strongly connected to writing quality than lexical diversity and density. In addition, although lexical sophistication is statistically significant, the table indicates that lexical diversity and density are not statistically significant. Regarding the collinearity statistics, the table shows that all the VIF values are less than 10.

As a result, there is no multicollinearity. Consequently, there are no difficulties in finding a relationship between the lexical richness predictors and the dependent variable. The standardized coefficient beta value in Table 2 is highly suggested. The final model is as follows: Writing quality = $2.870 + (.007 * \text{density}) + (.006 * \text{sophistication - GSL 1}) + (.037 * \text{sophistication - GSL 2}) + (.002 * \text{diversity})$.

Table 2. Lexical Richness Predictive measures of Writing Quality

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Writing quality	2,870	1,245		2,305	,026		
Lexical density	,007	,022	,044	,305	,762	,682	1,466
Lexical sophistication-GSL1	,006	,002	,401	2,690	,010	,646	1,547
Lexical sophistication-GSL2	,037	,020	,282	1,790	,080	,579	1,727
Lexical diversity	,002	,004	,067	,510	,613	,833	1,201

Research Question2:

In order to answer the second question, the same procedures were used to determine the syntactic complexity predictor of writing quality. Table 3 shows that a non-significant linear regression was discovered ($F(3,46) = 2,108, p = .112$), with an R^2 of .064. In other words, using syntactic complexity measures can describe 6.4% of the variance in writing quality. The F value is 2,108, the effective regression degree of freedom is 3, the effective residual degree of freedom is 46, and the p-value is at the .112 level. Thus, the significance value at the 95% confidence interval level is 0.112, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that the regression model is not significant ($p = .112 > .05$). Furthermore, Durbin Watson's d is 1.954, implying a positive autocorrelation because the value is less than 2 points.

Table 3. Syntactic Complexity measures as Criterion Variable

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	,348 ^a	,121	,064	,61824	,121	2,108	3	46	,112	1,954

A regression model was used to quantify the function that each syntactic complexity measure plays in academic writing quality. The regression procedure shows that Clause per T-unit (C/TU) could determine academic writing quality since the significance is .027, which is less than 0.05 ($p = .027 < .05$). The unstandardized coefficients in table 4 indicate that two of the metrics are not positively correlated with writing quality (mean length of T-unit and mean length of clause). The standardized regression coefficients show that Clause per T-unit (C/TU) appears to be more strongly correlated to writing quality than MLTU and MLC. In addition, the table indicates that the two measures are not statistically significant. Regarding collinearity statistics, the table indicates that all the VIF values are less than 10. Therefore, there is no multicollinearity, and there are no difficulties finding a relationship between the syntactic complexity measures and the dependent variable. Table 4 suggests that the standardized coefficient beta value be included. The final model is as follows: Writing quality = $4,851 + (-,009 * MLC) + (-,034 * MLTU) + (,642 * C/TU)$.

Table 4. Syntactic Complexity Predictive measures of Writing Quality

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	4,851	,478		10,153	,000		
	MLC	-,009	,030	-,047	-,304	,762	,790	1,266
	MLTU	-,034	,022	-,259	-1,535	,132	,672	1,487
	C/TU	,642	,280	,348	2,289	,027	,825	1,211

Research Question3:

In relation to the third question, the regression analysis revealed that lexical richness (through lexical sophistication GSL-1 1000 words) is the potent predictor of academic writing. The following table shows that lexical sophistication GSL-1 1000 words strongly correlates with writing quality ($B=.007$) and it is statistically significant ($.000 < 0.05$). The predictive model is - Writing quality = $3,446 + (.195 * C/TU) + (.007 * \text{Lexical sophistication GSL-1000})$

Table 5. The Predictive measure of Writing Quality

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF	
1	(Constant)	3,446	,242		14,260	,000		
	C/TU	,195	,234	,106	,833	,409	,936	1,068
	Lexical sophistication GSL-1000	,007	,002	,501	3,940	,000	,936	1,068

Discussion

Examining the lexical richness and syntactic complexity metrics in 50 article abstracts written by Tunisian scholars determined the best predictor of academic writing quality. The analysis focused on three major questions. Regarding the lexical richness measures, multiple regression analysis shows that the results met the hypothesis that lexical sophistication is the best predictor of vocabulary load in academic writing. The findings indicate that Tunisian research scholars tend to use the first 1000 most frequent words (GSL-1) in their abstracts. They reflect sophistication in their performances because it indicates a higher quality of academic writing. In this vein, Crossley (2020) states that more sophisticated words depict higher-quality texts, and writers evolve over time to generate more sophisticated vocabulary items.

These findings are in accordance with Crossley (2020), Read (2000) and Ha (2019), suggesting that lexical sophistication is one of the richest metrics of text quality. According to Crossley (2020), more complex words in written outputs imply higher vocabulary knowledge and writing skills. The findings in Ha's (2019) study concluded that lexical sophistication was the best indicator of EFL learners' writing performance among the metrics that demonstrated lexical richness. Similar to the results found in Gregori-Signes & Clavel-Arroitia (2015), she argues that sophistication is a valid and reliable indicator of lexical richness in writing (Ha, 2019, p.21) Moreover, the results also indicate that lexical density is the least predictor of writing quality. The findings in Engber's (1995) study validate the results of this study.

Evaluating the four measures of lexical richness, she claims that lexical density has little if any, relation to the quality of academic writing (Engber, 1995, p.148)

However, other studies conducted on automated lexical metrics exhibited contrastive results. Crossley, Salsbury and McNamara (2011) examined different lexical richness indices and concluded that imageability of the word property index is the best indicator of writing quality (p.255). Olinghouse and Wilson (2013) argue that the predictive metrics of vocabulary knowledge differ depending on the genre. They state that "the vocabulary constructs related to writing quality differed by genre. For story text, vocabulary diversity was a unique predictor, while for persuasive text, content words and register were unique predictors." (Olinghouse & Wilson, 2013, p.45). Additionally, these authors conclude that lexical diversity was the main lexical factor affecting writing quality (Olinghouse & Wilson, 2013, p.45).

Regarding syntactic complexity, the results prove that the clause per T-unit (C/TU) indicates general writing quality. The results contradict Nolan's (2021) study that concluded that lexical and syntactic complexity can both be effective predictors of writing quality, with lexical complexity measures showing more predictive power than syntactic measures (Nolan, 2021, p.11). Similarly, Homburg's (1984) study showed significant positive correlations between writing proficiency and metrics like mean length T-unit (MLTU). This supports the view that indicators of syntactic complexity, such as clause mean lengths, predict writing quality and performance (Biber et al., 2016). This study's results are also inconsistent with Taguchi et al. (2013), who revealed that noun phrase modification enhanced essay quality.

To summarize, the overall objective of this research was to determine the role of syntactic measures in academic writing as compared to lexical richness. Previous research theories and findings hypothesized that syntactic complexity could be a powerful indicator of academic writing as lexical richness. However, this study proved the opposite. The results showed that lexical richness, through lexical sophistication GSL-1 1000 words, is the potent predictor of academic writing. The results indicated that lexical sophistication is a far better indicator of academic writing than the Clause per T-unit (C/TU). Furthermore, it can be argued that syntactic complexity is no longer the sole source of challenges in academic writing.

Conclusion

Prior studies have shown distinct and coherent correlations between linguistic characteristics and writing quality. Higher-rated essays have more complex vocabulary items, more complex grammatical features, and greater cohesion. Students also exhibit trends toward using more complex syntactic structures and sophisticated vocabulary. This study showed significant correlations between the lexical sophistication of GSL-1 1000 words and the clause per T-unit (C/TU) and writing quality. However, this research proved that lexical sophistication is a powerful indicator of writing quality. The pedagogical opportunity represented by these results regarding lexical development is worth noting. The results are significant from a pedagogical standpoint, indicating the importance of considering lexical quality when developing writing lesson plans. It is crucial to analyze the lexical richness traits found in students' writing because doing this can assist teachers in identifying the vocabulary abilities and flaws of their students. Some limitations bound the study's capacity to be generalized. The sample size was relatively small, and the sampling strategy was not random. Another limitation is focusing on syntactic complexity measures without investigating lexical complexity measures. A third research limitation can be seen in the corpus analyzed. The study focused on abstracts written by linguistics scholars without analyzing abstracts from other disciplines. Future studies could be conducted to examine writing quality predictors in other research disciplines and genres or examine the effects of syntactic complexity and lexical richness measures on other academic skills. L2 researchers could examine non-length metrics of syntactic complexity in academic writing.

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Preparing English Learners for a Multicultural World: Implications for Language Teachers

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Abstract

Amid the existing challenges facing minority groups, multicultural citizenship can be a solution to their full integration into a diverse world. Multicultural citizenship is an approach that recognizes community members' native cultures by educating all students (especially minorities) about the knowledge, skills, and values needed for them to assimilate into their current or new cultures. Some of these minority groups include English learners (ELs), who might have difficulties fitting into the dominant culture due to their limited English proficiency or cultural background. In this article, the author highlights the key role of schools and language teachers in helping ELs develop as multicultural citizens in a diverse world. Within a multicultural citizenship framework, it becomes incumbent upon teachers at all levels to instill in students a balance of cultural, national, and global identifications. Multicultural citizenship helps students become literate citizens who reflect and act morally in an interconnected, diverse, and global world. The study pinpoints that citizenship education help students to develop thoughtful and clarified identifications with their cultural and global communities. The paper concludes with practical suggestions for promoting multicultural education in the language classroom.

Keywords: English learners, language teaching and learning, Middle East, multicultural education, North Africa,

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Background

Today's western classrooms are becoming more diverse and, as a result, scholars are investigating the role of diversity and civic education as factors contributing to citizens' experiences in multicultural societies (MCSs). Much discussion has centered on the positive attributes of multicultural education and the opportunities accessible to these groups. The present paper focuses on possible social justice and citizenship-related issues impeding the full integration of minority groups into MCSs and suggests ideas for promoting multicultural education in the language classroom.

Opportunities for citizenship education only sometimes reach all social strata because many citizens of color seem to endure incomplete citizenship (Banks, 2017). A situation of this sort likely prevents minority groups from functioning properly because of the perceived injustices and stigmas around them. The United States is an example of a multicultural society where social justice matters are most debated. A better understanding of the difficulties facing minority groups in MCSs may necessitate a closer look at the injustices that directly affect citizens of color in MCSs.

Securing a full integration into MCSs: One solution

Notwithstanding existing programs and initiatives supporting multicultural education, the full integration of minority groups into society has been a challenge. In the United States, for example, immigrants have for decades undergone a "citizenship dilemma" (Banks, 2020). This dilemma is especially manifested in the way educational programs navigate school contexts with little consideration of inherent values such as equality, justice, and human rights. Within a multicultural education context, this citizenship dilemma arose from the continuing systematic gender, class, and racial discrimination prevalent in society (Banks, 2020). Discussions concerning the decline in citizenship education in MCSs, such as in the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and the United States, generally target mainstream or dominant ethnic groups. They tend, however, to overlook other categories of citizens in these countries, where the status of minorities can be perceived as less important.

Researchers (e.g., Kohli et al., 2017) have found that rather than address social injustices, many schools reproduce societal inequality, whether intentionally or not. To examine the extent to which minority students perceived the impacts of social injustice on their lives, Kahne and Middaugh (2008) surveyed 2,366 high school seniors in California, who had completed a twelfth-grade U.S. government course. Their findings with respect to civic education and social justice revealed new trends. Students reported unequal access to opportunities because of their ethnicities. For instance, African-American students had less opportunity for a voice in the classroom or the school; many Latino students felt they had few opportunities for service learning in schools. Predictably, students identified as white were overrepresented in all activities geared toward building well-informed, multicultural citizens in schools (Kahne & Middaugh, 2008).

The barriers to full participation have long hindered ethnic minorities' access to important public services. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (2016) reiterated the ongoing factors and challenges facing citizens of color, including social invisibility, socio-economic deprivation, the poor internal organization of the ethnic groups, unmet distinctive service needs, stereotyping, and cultural stigma. These missed opportunities also seem to deprive English learners (ELs) of acquiring language and cultural skills for a smooth transition.

Many of these barriers are based on racial classification that ELs ultimately have a difficult time overcoming. Of the many prevalent forms of racism impacting students' educational experiences epistemological racism looms large; it uses content and pedagogies that exclude, or willfully conceal, knowledge about and from people of color (Lachaud, 2020). Under this paradigm, ethnic minorities and ELs may lack essential knowledge and therefore risk being ranked and sorted in ways that work in concert to limit the opportunities and civil rights of these ethnic

groups (Pohlhaus, 2017). Nieto and Bode (2012) approached the concept of equality as it applies to educational settings. Most teachers would agree that educational opportunities should be equitable for students. Bartlett and Brayboy (2005) presented theoretical background information on race and education. For them, civic education ideally represents and reflects the needs and concerns of the people enduring hardship due to racial, gender, and social injustices in MCSs and worldwide. As a result, culture and civics should function in tandem with each other if better integration of minorities is to occur [starting from schools].

Because of the challenges certain citizens might be experiencing in multicultural societies, Banks (2020) proposed multicultural citizenship as a new approach to integrating community members. Cultural integration in this context begins by recognizing community members' native cultures and helping them assimilate into their new communities. Multicultural citizenship is an approach to educating all students about the knowledge, skills, and values needed to function effectively within their communities. Multicultural citizenship can also be an alternative to certain failed policies because, as a new concept, it seeks to maintain and improve the quality of the opportunities available to citizens living in MCSs (Banks, 2020), including ELs. Although multicultural citizenship might successfully apply to other settings, this paper focuses more on schools.

Multicultural citizenship for more inclusive schools

Researchers have demonstrated quite effectively that civic (or citizenship) education positively impacts students to become effective, responsible citizens (Bentahar & O'Brien, 2019), yet civic education may be insufficient to cater to the needs of all categories of people, including minorities and people of color. Campbell (2007) stressed the responsibility of schools in creating a coherent sense of identity and aiding with cultural assimilation. Schools play an even larger role than in the past thanks to the increased diversity of today's students. This is why, unsurprisingly, several liberal countries such as England and France feel the obligation to accommodate the cultural traditions of various subgroups by supporting their full integration into these western societies (Ford, 2012; Murray, 2017). Twenty-first-century requirements necessitate framing a new conceptualization of citizenship education, one that equips students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for them to participate actively and responsibly in their communities and democratic processes (Bentahar & O'Brien, 2019). Much multicultural education-oriented learning entails, *inter alia*, opportunities for students to engage in conversations clarifying their civic rights in a diverse world, and the classroom is a starting point.

Helping young students develop cultural knowledge and skills is the responsibility of many stakeholders, such as governments, civil society, and educators. In addition to initiatives supported by federal and local governments (e.g., the United States Department of Education, state departments of education, as well as local school districts), schools have a paramount and unique role as the places where ELs first learn to acquire English as well as academic content. It is, therefore, no surprise that advocating for a multicultural world comes with high expectations for teachers in general and language teachers as supporters of ELs' success in schools. In other words, while not neglecting the importance of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, language teachers should seek opportunities to help ELs to function efficaciously and appropriately in a new society. Boosting language skills with culture and civics-oriented content is not an option anymore, given the key role of citizenship education in supporting marginalized groups (Banks, 2017) and promoting key cultural and language foundations (Bentahar, 2018).

Within a multicultural citizenship framework, it becomes incumbent upon teachers at all levels to instill in students a balance of cultural, national, and global identifications. Multicultural citizenship is key to a better understanding of the connection between civics and diversity and forges a delicate balance between unity and diversity (Banks, 2020). It also helps students become literate citizens who reflect and act morally in an interconnected, diverse, and global world.

Citizenship education should help students to develop thoughtful and clarified identifications with their cultural and global communities.

Multicultural citizenship provides students with additional avenues to understand how civic knowledge is constructed in society (Bentahar & O'Brien, 2019). This approach potentially helps prepare all students to act as informed citizens with the necessary cultural knowledge, skills, and values in a diverse world. Citizenship education of this type can also instill in students an appreciation for the other cultures represented in their schools. Developing civic knowledge (e.g., understanding both how and why governments work); civic skills (e.g., discourse and debate); and civic values or dispositions (e.g., civility and patriotism) is not enough for students to function in MCSs. Students also need explicit instruction and strategically planned classroom activities to help them understand their cultures as they relate to the dominant culture and the world, known as intercultural awareness. Intercultural awareness paves the way for assimilating into and tolerating differences typical of MCSs. But as a new concept, how good is intercultural awareness?

Developing intercultural awareness

As the foundation of communication, intercultural awareness (ICA) encompasses two major qualities (Zhu, 2011). The first refers to "the awareness of one's own culture; the other is the awareness of another culture" (p. 116). For one to properly manifest ICA, one should be able to stand back from their points of view and recognize the cultural perceptions, values, and beliefs typical of both their and other cultures. More specifically, for them to develop ICA, students need to experience three levels [or components]. At the first level, basic cultural awareness, students need to be aware of the shared values, behaviors, and beliefs forming culture; they should also be cognizant of the role of culture and context in the interpretation of meaning. One element of this level relates to the student's awareness of other peoples' cultures (behavior, beliefs, and values) and the student's ability to compare these cultures to theirs (Baker, 2012).

The second level targets learners' awareness of the relative nature of cultural practices and norms, the different voices within a culture, and the common ground between specific cultures and the awareness of possible mismatches and miscommunication among specific cultures (Shahini et al., 2020). The third level of ICA presents elements through which language learners should ably function on a much higher level, that of intercultural awareness. Within the context of schools, students should be aware of the existing interaction in intercultural communication, possibly resulting from the existing generalizations and cultural stereotypes within and among cultures. At this level, however, students should also be able to move beyond expectations by negotiating and mediating different sociocultural modes and frames (Baker, 2012).

The three levels of intercultural awareness delineate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that might culturally empower students in general and users of English in particular. Schools should therefore enact innovative initiatives for students to develop as multicultural citizens. In fact, helping learners develop their intercultural awareness often leads to a greater acceptance of the diversity of human experience.

Fostering multicultural schools: Mission still incomplete

Schools play a pivotal role in helping English learners integrate into their new communities or cultures. The educational philosophies endorsed by school stakeholders and implemented by school leaders (including teachers) will help reduce failed policies by promoting and recognizing the contributions and participation of minority groups in their schools and beyond (Banks, 2017). The overarching goal is for teachers to contribute confidently and efficaciously to society's educational reforms and democratization processes, starting from their own classrooms.

Through the power invested in teachers, schools can successfully promote positive change to the existing educational status quo by improving the content and quality of student experiences. In so doing, multicultural education would contribute to improving the experiences

of minority groups and prepare students in non-multicultural societies to appreciate diversity and recognize cultural differences. To capitalize on the wealth of literature and resources at their disposal, language teachers could first begin by familiarizing themselves with key concepts in multicultural education. This way, they will gain the confidence and preparedness needed to help their learners become effective citizens of an interconnected, diverse, and global world.

Facing a diverse world: Are language teachers prepared?

Rather than questioning the preparedness of teachers, one might wonder whether language teachers have the means to effectively implement multicultural citizenship education on top of their onerous responsibility of teaching language and content simultaneously. The last part of this paper highlights possible resources for language teachers (pre-service and in-service) to inculcate in students a culture of diversity and appreciation for difference. In so doing, teachers would be contributing to diversifying classrooms and positively impacting the minds of their students. With the Middle East, North Africa (MENA) language teachers in mind, a few suggested ideas and resources follow.

Teachers' familiarity with content related to multicultural education is usually taken for granted, amidst their other priorities. Language teachers, for instance, appear to spend too much time ensuring the learning revolves around the four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Bentahar, 2018). Another concern (legitimate though) teachers of English have is the completion of the curriculum. What follows summarizes a few suggestions based on the author's academic roles as both a former English language teacher and a junior scholar interested in researching the education of multilingual and English learners.

Regardless of background, teachers can help foster cultural and intercultural competence in the language classroom. One starting step or goal is to help students understand how and why societies are becoming more diverse and why this is important. More specifically, teachers could start with simple lessons based on other cultures. In the context of English language teaching (ELT) in the MENA region, for example, the target country or culture does not have to be always the United States or the United Kingdom. Content on multicultural education encompasses learning about peoples of diverse beliefs, religions, and values in non-English speaking parts of the world, as well.

Most multicultural education-based content is often associated with western cultures (Bentahar, 2018). Language teachers could include content on cultures sharing much, e.g., with Morocco or Saudi Arabia but have their own particularities that are probably uncommon in these countries. MENA and Southeast Asia regions are perfect examples.

In addition, language teachers could usefully supplement their curricula by considering culture-related topics that they can easily find online. Examples include ESL discussions, ESL conversation, and tens of culture-related websites and blogs where teachers can find ready-to-print handout, not to mention TEDEd lessons. These engaging online resources create avenues for language learners to not only practice the skill of speaking but also put into practice the knowledge they have developed in the forms of authentic conversations and debates (Bentahar, 2018).

Another proposition is to teach movies addressing controversial topics, which might prompt students to question and compare their and other peoples' cultures. It might work for teachers to start with general pre-viewing questions before delving further into the topic. The students could subsequently have the chance to further practice their productive skills through discussion boards (e.g., asynchronous recorded audios or written responses), this time using arguments from the movie and the in-class discussion.

A few teachers mistakenly think that a speaker on multicultural education is, and should be, fluent in English. In fact, the speakers could, but do not have to, be native speakers of English. An Italian volunteer or a tourist with satisfactory language proficiency might be able to help EFL/ESL students learn more about Italian and European cultures. In this situation, the focus is

not necessarily on pronunciation, but rather on background knowledge and cultural content. The lesson here is that embracing multicultural education inculcates an appreciation for *all* languages and cultures in teachers and, later, students.

Finally, whether the goal is to secure a guest speaker or examine funding opportunities, language teachers could always consider the local community resources and organizations interested in promoting intercultural awareness in schools. Examples of potential agencies or organizations include Fulbright scholars, Peace Corps volunteers, Moroccan-American Commission for Cultural and Educational Exchange (MACECE), Dar America [in Casablanca], the U.S. embassy, Regional English Language Office (RELO), the British Council, America-Mideast Educational, and Training Services Inc. (AMIDEAST), and Non-governmental organizations that occasionally host international volunteers (e.g., Moroccan Center for Civic Education, MCCE).

Conclusion

The present paper highlighted multicultural citizenship and its potential in raising community members' awareness to be informed, active citizens. One of the goals of multicultural citizenship is an appreciation for diversity. While multicultural education is usually depicted and presented favorably, the author addressed common challenges impeding the full integration of citizens in MCSs. The second half of the paper explained the important role of schools and teachers in helping students grow as multicultural citizens in a diverse world. A few suggestions were elucidated for language teachers in general, and language teachers in the MENA region in particular.

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Impact of ChatGPT on Learning Motivation: Teachers and Students' Voices

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Abstract

Motivation drives most human activities, including foreign language learning, and it is affected by several intrinsic and extrinsic factors. This study investigated how ChatGPT impacts learning English. A quantitative research design was used to collect data from 80 teachers and students who had access to the ChatGPT in its very beginning phase in early 2023. The sample, selected in a non-probability sampling technique, responded to an online questionnaire. Findings showed that ChatGPT generally motivates learners to develop reading and writing skills. The respondents had neutral attitudes towards the effect of ChatGPT on developing listening and speaking skills. The findings suggest that ChatGPT-based teaching is motivational. ChatGPT should be used as a learning tool instead of fearing its negative impacts, which require further detailed investigations. Further research is required to explore more advantages of ChatGPT for other aspects of the language and illuminate its negative effects to help educators reduce them in English programs.

Keywords: artificial intelligence (AI), autonomous learning, ChatGPT, motivation

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Introduction

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has grown incredibly, giving new forms and transformations in many facets of today's life (Gocen & Aydemir, 2021; Jain & Jain, 2019; Jillian et al., 2023). ChatGPT is one of its recent innovations that influence English language teaching and learning. It resulted from a long history of research on AI that technology-based language education drew on throughout the past decades. Early technology integration studies focused on learning strategies, motivation, attitudes, and integration into EFL and ESL programs (Ali, 2022; Al-Kadi, 2018; Ali & Bin-Hady, 2019; Zhao et al., 2002). The emergence of ChatGPT, which is "a giant autocomplete machine" (Jillian et al., 2023, p. 1), has given new areas of research on technology integration in second and foreign language education, including English (Aljanabi et al., 2023).

Despite attempts to adopt AI in language programs as a healer of existing problems, some voices contend that AI-language bots as "incapable of ... generating insights or deep analysis" (Buriak et al., 2023, p. 1). A team of 44 authors, starting with Jillian Buriak, argued that "the output of the AI model cannot be taken at face value. They advised that all AI-based outputs must be critically reviewed to prevent errors, missing key information, or making unrelated claims. ChatGPT, one of the recent AI inventions, might generate incorrect information if the available data needs to be completed or updated" (Buriak et al., 2023, p. 2). Such statements would perhaps allow authors to re-think before going too much to the extent that some acknowledge ChatGPT as a co-author (Bin-Hady et al., 2023). Research is needed to resolve relevant controversial issues that co-exist with AI. In the case of ChatGPT, there is a need to set apart its pros and cons and uncover its effects on learning English as a second and foreign language.

Before ChatGPT, which has ascended from a long history of research on AI, technology is used in language learning and teaching situations for many purposes (Al-Kadi, 2018; Zhao et al., 2002). One of the earliest studies on technology integration in English programs was Wang and Guthrie (2004), who investigated language school students' access to authentic means of communication. Students benefit significantly from computers and other modern devices. The study showed students could be more engaged, motivated, and involved in language learning with technology. This was strengthened in Al-Kadi's (2018) book on technological practices, research, and limitations, which weighed the advantages and disadvantages of technology integration.

Artificial intelligence and ELT

Over the last three years, research on technology in language teaching and learning in light of AI has increased remarkably. AI in education faces other issues, such as output bias, human monitoring, and misuse. However, if managed properly, these problems provide insights and opportunities in education to familiarise students with possible social preferences, criticalities, and risks of AI applications. They provide solutions to these issues and ethically employ such models in teaching (Kasneci et al., 2023).

Göçen and Aydemir (2020) looked into possibilities that AI could open up in education and the future of schools. The study used the qualitative research method of phenomenology, which looked at the views of participants from different sectors. They found that when AI is used in education, new advantages will be available for schools and teachers, drawbacks, and good points. The results give some suggestions for how to use AI and how to deal with possible problems. Even though most participants seem to like AI, some are concerned about the future of education, especially teachers and academics.

Emergence of ChatGPT

On November 30, 2022, Open AI launched ChatGPT, a general-purpose conversation chatbot expected to impact all aspects of our society significantly. However, possible educational implications of this natural language processing technique are

uncertain. Zhai (2022) argued that the potential of ChatGPT may significantly influence educational learning objectives, assessment evaluation processes, learning activities, and evaluation processes. Before the booming emergence of ChatGPT, Jain and Jain (2019) examined AI in higher education teaching and learning, showing how AI makes higher education services accessible outside the classroom at an unprecedented pace. The study discussed how AI may become a significant part of universities and its immediate and long-term effects on numerous higher education sectors.

Likewise, Aydin and Karaarslan (2022) examined the feasibility of summarizing literature review papers using AI. According to the authors, AI can change academic publishing by reducing the work that humans must do and freeing up academics to concentrate on their research. Additionally, they utilized ChatGPT to write an academic paper and employed plagiarism detection tools to ensure that ChatGPT's material was unique. In the same year, Zhai (2022) conducted a study using ChatGPT and the results indicated that ChatGPT benefit researchers in writing logical, accurate, systematic, and informative papers. The study proposed revising learning objectives, including allowing students to utilize AI tools to carry out subject-domain activities and highlighting creativity and critical thinking rather than general skill development. With ChatGPT, students may outsource assessment assignments. The study suggested that new evaluation forms are required to focus on creativity and critical thinking, which AI cannot replace. In a relevant study, Bin-Hady et al. (2023) approached ChatGPT in English learning from a global standpoint. Findings showed that it is highly anticipated that ChatGPT will be an addition to the field in terms of enhancing learners' language skills, scaffolding the learning process and providing timely feedback on the learning outcomes and language use. The study suggested a model based on AI of five dimensions to assisted language learning (AIALL).

Relevant studies on ChatGPT-based motivation were reviewed to slot the present investigation within the network of previous findings. Dörnyei (2020) suggested that the idea of motivation is directly connected to the notion of engagement, and it is essential to ensure motivation to establish student involvement. He suggests that any instructional design's goal, whether for conventional or online learning, should be to maintain students' interest in the subject matter.

With these studies, it is important to go from general to specific, from global to local. Drawing on Jillian et al. (2023) who illuminated the strengths and weaknesses of ChatGPT, this study explores its impact on students' motivation from the teachers' and students' perceptions and examines significant differences, if any, between their perceptions.

Research questions

The questions to be examined in this paper are twofold:

1. What is the impact of ChatGPT on English students' motivation from teachers' and students' perceptions?
2. Are there any significant differences between students' and teachers' perceptions on using ChatGPT in language learning?

Method

An obvious starting point is exploring the impacts of ChatGPT on learners of English and then exploring if differences exist between the perceptions of learners and teachers. This situates the study in the quantitative research paradigm that, in Creswell's (2013) words, "represents a legitimate mode of social and human science exploration" (p. 6). Although motivation lies somewhere on a continuum between quantitative and qualitative research, using quantitative measures enables statistical analysis to find out about general perceptions and a diversity of opinions about the effects of ChatGPT on learners' motivation for learning English.

Participants

The participants of this study were all students and instructors of the English language, whose total number was 80. The instructor participants are those who are currently teaching or have taught before. Fourteen of the participants, representing 17.5%, have high teaching experience (more than five years); twenty-eight, representing 35%, have low teaching experience (less than five years); and the others, thirty-eight (47.5%), are all students with no teaching experience. The sample also included male and female participants corresponding to 75% and 25%, respectively. The questionnaire was sent to participants who already had a clear idea of the recently launched natural language processing (NLP) chatbot, Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer (ChatGPT).

Instrument

The instrument adopted to collect data from the participants in the study was a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. It was developed based on previous studies (e.g., Williams & Deci, 1996; Ryan & Deci, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2019; Ali & Bin-Hady, 2019; Ali, 2022). It was divided into two sections: the first section is based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The questionnaire included six statements about the participants' views on whether ChatGPT motivates students to learn micro language skills (vocabulary and grammar) and macro language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). The other section consisted of six statements that also sought to determine whether ChatGPT increases students' interest in learning English, independent learning, self-confidence, ambition to get a job, interaction with other people, and fun and enjoyment while learning English. The questionnaire was sent to expert referees in applied linguistics to be reviewed and based on their comments and suggestions, and the questionnaire was modified.

Data Collection & Analysis

The study was conducted about two months after ChatGPT was launched in early 2023. Because the participants were not available in the same geographic area, i.e., they were geographically dispersed, they were asked to respond to an online questionnaire via email and WhatsApp. Data were analysed quantitatively. The SPSS (version 23) was used to operate descriptive and inferential statistical tests, including the validity and reliability of the questionnaire and the collected data.

Results and Discussion

Guided by the objectives of the study, the findings are arranged in two sequential parts. The first is about the impacts of ChatGPT on learners' motivation and the other is about statistical differences in the participants' responses. Both parts are based primarily on statistics. The former, using descriptive data, outlined mean scores and standard deviations and the latter used ANOVA for comparative analysis. As per determination theory pertains to the motivation behind people's choices in the absence of external influences and distractions. This paper inspects the attitudes of the practitioners and ELT experts towards the effect of using ChatGPT by English language learners on the way they learn English. In general, the results showed positive expectations at the motivational aspect to learn more and create greater interest, as shown in Figure 1.

The questionnaire included four questions about the effect of using GPT from the ELT practitioners' perspective on motivation to learn and develop the language skills of EFL students. Table 1 displays the mean and standard deviations of the participants' attitudes concerning ChatGPT-based activities to improve their language skills. Most of the participants thought that using ChatGPT could motivate EFL learners to develop their reading and writing skills with a (Mean 4.02, SD 1.28 and mean 3.92, SD 1.016) respectively. On the other hand, most participants showed a neutral attitude towards the effect of ChatGPT on developing listening and speaking skills with a mean and standard deviation of (M. 3.32, SD 1.28 and M. 3.25, SD 1.28) respectively.

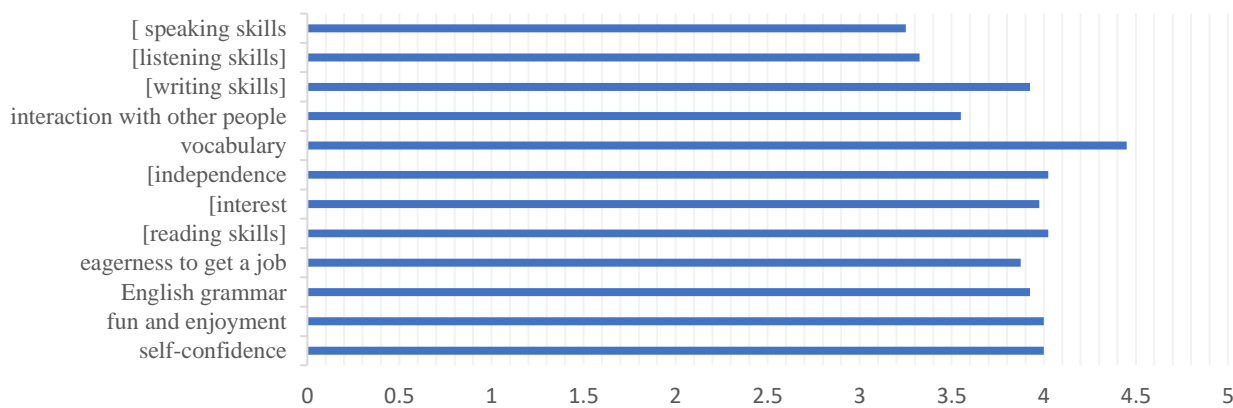


Figure 1. The mean of individual items of the questionnaire

Concerning the micro skills, the participants thought that grammar and vocabulary could be expanded and enhanced when the EFL learners use ChatGPT. Table 1 shows a Mean of 3.9 and SD. 0.9648 in favour of motivation to learn grammar and a Mean of 4.45 and SD 0.6731 to learn vocabulary. In addition, this paper sought to inspect the attitudes of the ELT experts towards the expected effect of using ChatGPT on motivating learners autonomously, intrinsically and extrinsically. Clearly, the analysis of the attitude questionnaire showed that most of the educators and ELT practitioners agreed on the positive effect of ChatGPT on motivating learners.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of the main language skills and micro skills

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Main language skills	Listening	80	3.32	1.2806
	Speaking	80	3.25	1.2877
	Reading	80	4.02	1.0905
	Writing	80	3.92	1.01601
Micro- language skills	Grammar	80	3.92	0.9648
	Vocabulary	80	4.45	0.6731

Table 2 displays the means and the standard deviations of the views of participants towards the triggering of the various types of motivation, namely: to manage their learning independently (M 4.025, SD 0.8263), gain self-confidence (M 3.97, SD 0.8263), get fun and enjoyment (M 4, SD 0.9546), create interest (M 3.55, SD 0.9328), interactive with speakers of the language (M 3.8, SD 0.9328) and eagerness to get a job in future (M 4, SD 0.8714).

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of the different types of motivation

Motivation types	Items of the questionnaire	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Autonomy	Independent	80	4.025	0.826385
	Self-confidence	80	3.975	0.826385
Intrinsic	Fun and enjoyment	80	4	0.954669
	Interest in learning English	80	3.55	1.123962
Extrinsic	Interaction with other people	80	3.875	0.932874
	Eagerness to get a job	80	4	0.871489
Total		80		

Finally, ANOVA was used to answer the question about significant differences among the different types of experiences in their attitudes towards the effect of ChatGPT on increasing motivation to learn and enhance EFLs' language skills and other different types of motivation. Table 3 shows that there are significant differences among the three levels of teaching experience (high experience, low experience and students) regarding their attitudes toward the effect of ChatGPT on motivating learners to develop their listening and creating interest in learning English.

Table 3. (ANOVA) The difference in the attitudes of the different types of experiences

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Listening	Between Groups	13.76805	2	6.884023	4.57817	*0.0132231
	Within Groups	115.782	77	1.503662		
	Total	129.55	79			
interest in learning	Between Groups	9.32594	2	4.66297	8.04608	*0.00067103
	Within Groups	44.62406	77	0.579533		
	Total	53.95	79			

As shown in Table 4, the Post hoc multiple comparisons test "Tukey" was used to assign where the differences in the attitude among the three levels of experience lay. It revealed that the attitude of high experience significantly differed from low experience but no difference between high and students. The high experience participants believed that listening skills might be developed by using ChatGPT while both low and students were unaware of the presumed effect. On the other hand, though all participants agreed on the positive effect of ChatGPT on creating interest within learners, there were significant differences between high and low experience from one side and high and students from another.

Table 4. Multiple comparisons of Tukey HSD post hoc test for the three levels of experience

Dependent Variable	(I) teaching experience	(J) teaching experience	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Upper Bound	Lower Bound
Listening skills	High experience	low experience	1.21429(*)	0.40138	0.009	0.255	2.1735
		Students	0.82707	0.38337	0.085	-0.0891	1.7433
	experienced	high experience	-1.21429(*)	0.40138	0.009	-2.1735	-0.255
		Students	-0.38722	0.30541	0.418	-1.1171	0.3427
	Students	high experience	-0.82707	0.38337	0.085	-1.7433	0.0891
		low experience	0.38722	0.30541	0.418	-0.3427	1.1171
interest	high experience	experienced	.92857(*)	0.24918	0.001	0.3331	1.5241
		Students	.87218(*)	0.238	0.001	0.3034	1.441
	experienced	high experience	-.92857(*)	0.24918	0.001	-1.5241	-0.3331
		Students	-0.05639	0.1896	0.952	-0.5095	0.3967
	Students	high experience	-.87218(*)	0.238	0.001	-1.441	-0.3034
		low experience	0.05639	0.1896	0.952	-0.3967	0.5095

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

With these positive attitudinal findings on ChatGPT, it is worthwhile to note that such a chatbot cannot be held accountable for the ethical breach. It should not hinder learners' creativity and critical thinking (Jillian et al., 2023). Drawing on Jillian et al.'s (2023) strengths and weaknesses of ChatGPT, the output of ChatGPT should always be filtered and revised. It should not be taken for granted because it is not complete and final and may contain incorrect output that always requires human intervention.

Apart from ChatGPT, motivation is generally affected by the surroundings. According to Yunus et al. (2011), when students are subjected to positive influences from their families, schools, and communities, they are more inclined to adopt an optimistic attitude and be highly motivated to acquire a second language. The teachers have the obligation, as one of the factors, to guarantee that their learners have a positive attitude towards the target language and are motivated to learn it. The study discussed that ChatGPT enabled motivation for learning English. It assessed the extent the new language bot (ChatGPT) impacted learners' motivation to learn English from the point stand of teachers and students.

The findings do not counter the expectations that ChatGPT's impacts students' learning. The participants collectively showed positive views that this bot impacts students' language macro and micro skills. It motivates students to read and write more than other skills. It increases their intrinsic, extrinsic and autonomous motivation. This indicates that English students positively perceive ChatGPT as a motivational tool for learning English.

Conclusion

Although the paper offers little in the way of a long research journey on ChatGPT regarding its impacts on learning English in general, the findings are essential for the growth of research on these newly introduced technological advances in L2 pedagogy. Based on the findings, ChatGPT is recommended to be integrated into English language programs to promote learners; motivation to learn autonomously and under teachers' supervision. Teachers are suggested to show students how to benefit positively from ChatGPT instead of fearing its negative impacts. A limitation that should be stated is the lack of supportive qualitative data that would have enriched the investigation. More about ChatGPT and how it shapes new learning styles and strategies need to be explored quantitatively and qualitatively that other research projects may take as a point of departure in their further research.

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We (the authors of this paper) hereby declare that research ethics and citing principles have been considered in all the stages of this paper. We take full responsibility for the content of the paper in case of a dispute.

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Impact of Total Physical Response Method (TPR) on Vocabulary Learning in the Palestinian School Context

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the impact of Total Physical Response (TPR) method on English vocabulary learning. Using a quasi-experimental research design, a sample of 66 school children at the 5th grade were assigned to a control group (n=33) and an experimental group (n=33). The teaching material included 15 words selected from Units 16 and 17 in English for Palestine for 5th graders. At the end of the intervention, both groups sat for a post-test to ascertain statistically significant differences between the mean scores of both groups that attribute to the TPR method which was used in teaching the experimental group. The results revealed no statistically significant differences at $\alpha = 0.05$ in the scores of the experimental group which could result from TPR method indicating that the TPR had no positive impact on learners' vocabulary learning. Based on this, the study provided some important implications for EFL teachers and supervisors to hold specialized training workshops on different teaching methods including TPR method to meet students' learning styles across their levels of study.

Keywords: English for Palestine, fifth graders, Total Physical Response, vocabulary learning

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Introduction

It has been widely accepted that learning other languages promotes the individual's ability to interact and communicate with other people in different cultures (Sandofal, 2005). It is claimed that the development of a child's memory and brain is enhanced by learning a language as early as possible (Faqihatuddinitah, 2016). Learning foreign languages in childhood is particularly recommended because young children are expected to learn a second language more effectively than adults due to the nature of their brains that are still empowered to use the mechanisms related to first language acquisition. In teaching English to children, the teachers have challenging tasks of creating an interesting teaching environment to attract and motivate students to learn. Scott and Ytreberg (1990) maintained that during the preschool years, young children learn about the physical world through their hands, eyes, and ears. However, learning at an early age is not always easy.

In the EFL context in Palestine, school children face challenges in learning English vocabulary. The number of words students have to learn and memorize by heart and recite orally or in written is exceedingly large. Most teachers opt for using the so-called Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) when teaching new vocabulary. Students mostly feel bored and unmotivated during the class because of such a traditional method of teaching vocabulary. It seems to be less effective and monotonous because memorizing vocabulary in such a way may make them be easily forgotten which, in turn, affect the students' learning outcomes negatively (Al-Kadi, 2020; Richards & Renandya, 2002). It has also been noticed that some learners find it difficult to differentiate between spoken and written vocabulary, to classify the different inflections of a word (the different grammatical forms of a word) and to identify the intended meaning of a certain word based on the context. Therefore, creating an interesting learning environment and employing creative motivating methods, in this case, TPR is hoped to play a significant role in improving students' vocabulary learning as well as bringing out the best of them because it engages learners' senses.

Objectives

The current study basically sought to examine the impact of TPR method on enhancing students' vocabulary learning at the 5th grade because it is a crucial stage in learners' education. The study aimed to answer the following two questions:

1. What is the impact of using TPR method on enhancing students' vocabulary learning?
2. Are there statistically significant differences at $\alpha=0.05$ between the mean scores of students in the control group and the mean scores of students in the experimental group attributable to TPR method?

Literature Review

Theoretical background

Language, as a phenomenon, dates back to the early history of human beings. It has several definitions which indicate its functions, nature and components. Merriam Webster (2021) offers several definitions of the word "language" which all in all reflect the nature and the functions of language. One of these definitions maintains that an individual tends to use certain signs, sounds, gestures, or marks to express ideas or feelings with intended meanings. A second definition considers language to include the words and expressions used and understood by a large group of people. Thus, language is considered the most significant tool for all human beings to have meaningful and interactive communication as well as expressing their feelings and ideas to the others.

English language, as Battle and Lewis (2002) maintained, is the official and the most dominant language all over the world. It is considered as a world language people use to communicate with each other even in the countries where English is not the mother tongue. According to Crystal (2012), the number of people learning English around the world is highly growing. Due to this widespread of English all over the world, many countries,

including the Arab ones, have been trying to adopt English in their educational systems as a second language to help the students speak English almost as their parent language (Warschauer & Zohry, 2002). Therefore, students tend to learn English from the elementary school until university and schools, in general, focus on mastering four skills in teaching English starting from listening, speaking, reading to writing.

In addition to the main four skills mentioned above, there are other subskills used in teaching and learning English to enhance students' linguistic knowledge including grammar, pronunciation, spelling and vocabulary. Thus, mastering a new language cannot be separated from vocabulary. Vocabulary, as a result, has been considered a core component of language proficiency since learning the vocabulary of a certain language plays a significant role in enabling learners to speak, listen, read and write (Richards & Renandya, 2002). For other educators, vocabulary refers to a list or a set of words related to a particular language or the list or the set of words that speakers of that language use (Hatch & Brown, 1995). According to Antonacci and O'Callaghan (2011), the term 'vocabulary' involves different types such as sight-word vocabulary which means the students' immediate recognition of words in print or meaning vocabulary which is based on students understanding of a certain set of vocabulary, listening vocabulary which indicates the students' understanding of words they hear around them, and academic vocabulary that refers to content-specific words. Within the current research, the term 'vocabulary' focuses on students' understanding of oral and print words.

Learning vocabulary plays a crucial role in enhancing one's achievement of the four basic skills. Read (2000) argued that as far as language teaching is concerned, vocabulary can be viewed as a priority domain. Moreover, it is observed that when students face challenges in learning vocabulary, they would find it difficult to master the main skills (Lacie, 2008). In addition, vocabulary learning has the potential to sharpen one's ability to think, to express spoken or written thoughts and ideas as well as exchanging information. In the same vein, Thornbury (2002) clarified that short messages could be spoken without resorting to correct grammar. A lack of vocabulary, however, would make it difficult for them to convey messages effectively.

Furthermore, because English is remarkably different from Arabic language in many various aspects, many different obstacles have long been and still encountered during teaching and learning English vocabulary at schools. For example, the large number of words needed by student to learn and memorize, the difference between spoken and written vocabulary, the different inflections used in English to from words, and impact of context on identifying the meaning of some given words. Such difficulties, in particular, are common among elementary students or those who are novice in learning English. In addition to the obstacles mentioned above, students also feel bored and unmotivated during the class because of the traditional method used to teach them in which the teacher often tends to ask the students to memorize certain sets of vocabulary by heart and recite them orally or in written (Rohmatillah, 2014). However, such a method seems to be less effective and monotonous. In addition, memorizing vocabulary in such a way may make them be easily forgotten. In other words, students learn vocabulary step by step and it takes long time to build their vocabulary knowledge which indicates that a single usage of a word is not enough to learn it (Miller & Rilling, 2020). Hence, creating an interesting learning environment tends to be one important component for teaching English (Al-Kadi, 2020).

Total Physical Response (TPR)

In 1965, the American psychologist James Asher developed the TPR method that enables using physical movements and maintains some interaction between speech and action, to teach language and vocabulary which can be used among all students, especially at the elementary stages. This teaching method has the potential to reduce students' stress when learning a foreign language and thereby encourage them to build some kind of proficiency (Freeman, 2000). Upon the foundation of the TPR method, there has been a large number of studies which aimed at investigating the influence of using TPR on teaching

English vocabulary. The method is deemed interesting and motivating for effective learning. It is hence important to investigate its impact on the 5th graders vocabulary learning.

Previous Studies

A great deal of research has been conducted around the globe to investigate the merits and advantages of using TPR as a method of teaching languages. To name a few, in the Thai EFL context, Magnussen (2021) sought to find out whether songs and total physical response (TPR) could enhance preschoolers' vocabulary acquisition. The sample comprised seventy-two preschoolers aged between four to five. The study employed the mixed – method approach using two tools: vocabulary knowledge tests and video recordings using hidden cameras to capture the participants interactions during the intervention. Three classrooms for six weeks used TPR, songs, and a mixture of both to teach 12 target words. The findings revealed that using songs and TPR at the same time rather than one single tool improved vocabulary acquisition significantly.

Lubis (2020) conducted a study on the seventh-grade students to examine their vocabulary mastery using TPR method. Classroom Action Research design was applied on 25 students of VII-1 and the English teacher of MTs Hidayatussalam was the observer. A cycle of four phases including planning, acting, observing, and reflecting was followed for each cycle. To collect the required data, qualitative interviews, observation, diary notes, and documentation were used. In addition, quantitative pre and post vocabulary tests were administered. The results revealed that students' vocabulary outcomes significantly improved using TPR method.

Miskiyah and Amalia (2020) explored the impact of using TPR method as well as exploring students and teachers' perspectives towards this method. A descriptive qualitative design, using an interview and an observation, was followed. A total of 22 fourth-grade students from MI Robayan participated in the research study. The TPR method was employed in addition to picture cards and songs. Results indicated that TPR helped the 4th grade students to practice English vocabulary verbally and physically which enhanced their understanding and memorization. Furthermore, TPR Method made them feel more comfortable, active and motivated. In addition, the findings indicated that students and teachers had positive perceptions towards the usage of using TPR in their classes.

Coşar and Orhan (2019) demonstrated the effectiveness of TPR method as a pedagogical tool to learn the target vocabulary to kindergarten students in Physical Education and Play as well as developing foreign language communication skills through physical movements and mostly imperative moods. The study was carried out among 32 kindergarten children in Bursa Private Tan Schools. A pretest, conducted in the 1st week, and a posttest, administered in the 8th week, were applied on both the control and the experimental groups. Certain English words selected from the kindergarten curriculum were taught to the control group using a traditional method. On the other hand, the same list of words was taught to the experimental group using the TPR method. Findings showed that TPR was superior to the traditional method in terms of effectiveness, fun, and motivation when acquiring English vocabulary.

In a different context, Mariyam and Musfiroh (2019) investigated how TPR can improve EFL vocabulary learning of 5-6 - year- old children. Fifteen Kindergarten children from TK An-Nisa, Indonesia participated in the research. The English words used were ones that kids regularly hear and use in their daily lives. These words included nouns, verbs and adjectives. The findings showed that employing the TPR method, all youngsters shown a noteworthy excitement for learning. In terms of the children's proficiency with English vocabulary, they did better in nouns category, followed by the verbs and adjectives.

In Fahrurrozi's (2017) action research study, forty third -grade students at the Indonesian elementary school of Guntur comprised a random sample used to examine the impact of using TPR on their vocabulary learning. To achieve this objective, the Kemmis and Taggart cycle model of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting was utilized. In addition to

pre- and post-tests, field notes and action-based monitoring tools were used. Results revealed that the TPR method had a positive impact on pupils' vocabulary mastery.

Safitri, Setiyadi, and Huzairin (2017) explored how many words students used appropriately when using the TPR approach, as well as whether there was a statistically significant difference in the students' vocabulary mastery after the adoption of the method. A mixed-research design, using vocabulary tests and a qualitative observation sheet, was conducted among 15 fifth grade students of SDN 3 Mulya Asri. Based on the observation and the tests results, it was found that the students made progress in vocabulary mastery and they could learn vocabulary more easily using TPR.

Rahmi (2017) examined the influence of TPR method on enhancing the sixth-grade EFL students' vocabulary skill as well as identifying the benefits of this method in teaching vocabulary. An action research design utilizing pre-post vocabulary tests, classroom observation and diary notes were used. Three male students were chosen from the sixth grade of Negeri, Binjai. Regarding the results, the students' outcomes in the post test (67.7%) was higher than their outcomes in the pretest (13.3%) which meant that their English vocabulary learning was enhanced. In other words, TPR helped students remember the English words easier using physical movements.

Susanti (2017) applied a quasi-experimental study at SDN Sariwangi, aiming to check out the influence of TPR method on students' vocabulary mastery. This study was conducted among 62 third grade students using quantitative pre and post vocabulary tests. The study involved experimental and control groups with thirty- one students in each group. The researcher compared between the scores of the pre-test, conducted before implementing TPR method, and the scores of the post-test, conducted after implementing it. The findings demonstrated that the vocabulary mastery of most students improved after the TPR method had been applied.

Bahtiar (2017) employed a collaborative action research consisting of four steps including planning an action, implementing the action, observing, and finally reflecting, at MI DARUL ULUM Widang, Tuban. The study basically aimed to solve the problems students face in English vocabulary learning. Observation checklists and field notes were used to collect the required data from 18 fourth-year students. Based on the results, the pupils' language achievement before and after the treatment showed a substantial change. The TPR method was therefore successful in helping students develop their vocabulary skills and also helped them in acquiring the new terminology quickly and effortlessly.

To examine the role of TPR method in enhancing the first-graders' vocabulary mastery in one Islamic elementary school in Bandung, Sariyati's (2013) employed a quasi-experimental design using pre and post-tests. The experimental group was taught utilizing TPR whereas the control group received instruction using the traditional method. By comparing the control group's pre- and post-test results, it was demonstrated that there is no significant difference between them. However, there was a substantial difference in the experimental group's pre- and post-test results. In other words, the TPR method significantly aided the students' acquisition of vocabulary.

Suryaningsih and Budiarti (2012) carried out action research to identify the challenges third grade students face in mastering vocabulary using the traditional methods. To achieve this objective, the TPR method was applied. Data were collected using tests, a questionnaire, and observation checklists. The findings showed that TPR helped students to memorize the new vocabulary effectively which, in turn, enhanced their learning.

Likewise, Munoz and Forero (2011) sought to show the effects of TPR on teaching English vocabulary to third graders at the "Gamma" school in Pereira, Colombia. To this end, field notes and observations were used to compile the necessary data for a descriptive and interpretive case study. The class consisted of thirty-two students with low language proficiency, however, the study focused on six students. The participants were instructed utilizing traditional language teaching techniques, where the teacher is the focal point of the class. The children were then enrolled in a TPR-based English vocabulary learning program. The findings demonstrated that teaching English vocabulary to kids via TPR made their

learning faster and simpler. The stress-free setting made kids more attentive and motivated to learn the target language.

Fadillah (2011) investigated the efficiency of TPR method in teaching vocabulary to seventh grade students at a junior high School in Kebajikan. The study utilized documentation and tests to collect the required data from 30 seventh- grade students. The findings revealed that the TPR method was effective since it helped the students to be more interested and engaged. Besides, the method helped students to learn English vocabulary more easily and actively than the traditional method.

The aforementioned studies investigated the impact of TPR method on learning English vocabulary using quantitative research design (Coşar & Orhan, 2019; Mariyam & Musfiroh, 2019; Susanti, 2017; Sariyati, 2013) as well as qualitative research design (Miskiyah & Amalia, 2020; Bahtiar, 2017). Also, some studies employed mixed-method research design (Magnussen, 2021; Lubis, 2020; Fahrurrozi, 2017; Safitri et al., 2017; Rahmi, 2017; Suryaningsih & Budiarti, 2012; Munoz & Forero, 2011; Fadillah, 2011). Furthermore, four studies targeted kindergarten students (Coşar and Orhan, 2019; Mariyam & Musfiroh, 2019; Magnussen, 2021) while the rest targeted students from third to seventh grades. None of the aforementioned studies was conducted in Palestine or even in the Arab world. It is worth mentioning that all these studies reported positive impact of TPR vocabulary learning. To the researchers' best knowledge, the current study might be the first in Palestine that aimed to examine the impact of TPR. The researcher benefited from the previous studies to conduct the current study in the Palestinian EFL school context.

Method

This quasi-experimental study investigated the impact of TPR method on enhancing 5th graders' vocabulary learning at boys School in Palestine. The participants were divided into two groups: control and experimental. The control group was taught through the traditional method while the experimental group learned the same material through the TPR method. The means and standard deviations of the students in both groups were adopted instead of the pre-test. After the treatment, a post-test was administered on the two groups.

Participants

The sample of the study comprised 66 fifth graders who were divided into two groups: a control ($n=33$) and an experimental ($n=33$) group. Based on the nature of this action research, sampling was purposively done because one of the researchers works as a teacher at the target school and that facilitated getting an approval to conduct the study.

Instruments

A post-test was constructed by the teacher, who is also a co-author of this paper, with the help of her supervisor. The test generally focused on comparing the vocabulary achievement of the students in the control group with the achievement of students in the experimental group. The English vocabulary post-test was presented to five EFL experts including, two teachers who usually teach this learner cohort, the EFL supervisor and two university instructors. Their comments and suggestions were taken into consideration to produce the modified version of the test. To ensure the reliability of the post-test, the researchers administered the same test on a third section of the fifth graders before the treatment. The results of the two tests were processed using Cronbach's Alpha and the reliability was 0.763 which is acceptable to conduct the study.

Procedures

At the beginning of the study, the researchers agreed on choosing the 5th grade students in the public schools to be the population. Then, as one of the researchers teach at the target school, the decision was to apply the study there. Hence, the sample included 66

students who were divided into two groups: the control and the experimental. The teaching material was determined to include 15 words selected from Units 16 and 17 in English for Palestine curricula for 5th graders. After that, means and standard deviations of the students in both control and experimental groups were used instead of the pre-test due to the fact that the one of the researchers is the teacher who conducted the study and she knows well the levels of the students. While the students in the experimental group were taught using the TPR method, the students in the control group were instructed using the conventional approach. At the end of the intervention, both the control and experimental groups sat for the post-test and the vocabulary achievement of the control group and the experimental group were compared. Finally, to answer the study questions, means, standard deviations, and independent sample t-test were used utilizing SPSS.

Results and Discussion

The current study addressed two questions: (a) "What is the impact of using TPR method on enhancing students' vocabulary learning?" and (b) "Are there statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) between the mean scores of students in the control group and the mean scores of students in the experimental group due to using TPR method?" To answer these questions, the independent sample T-test was used and the results are outlined in Table 1. As the table shows, there are no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) level in the scores of students in the experimental group due to using the TPR method. The significant level is (0.298) which is more than (0.05). However, the mean scores of the experimental group (9.47) are less than the mean scores of the control group (10.07). Hence, these results revealed that using the TPR method had no positive impact on learners' vocabulary learning.

Table 1. Results of Independent Sample T-test using the TPR Method

	Group	No.	Mean	S. D.	t	Sig.*
Total	Control	33	10.07	4.168	0.534	0.298
	Experimental	33	9.47	4.531		

The data in Table 1 illustrates that using the TPR method within an experimental framework has no positive impact on learners' vocabulary learning, which might be attributed to several reasons: the limited duration of the application, students' reluctance to participate, the different learning styles of the participants, and the emergence of some kind of disciplinary problems. Some students felt embarrassed and reluctant to participate while others could not find equal participation opportunities. Moreover, the TPR method did not meet the learning styles of the whole class since most students were accustomed to memorizing the meaning of words in Arabic in lists. For example, the method was not the best for visual learners interested in observing things. It was also suitable for auditory learners who prefer listening rather than acting. In addition, applying the TPR method led to distraction among students. Furthermore, the span of the application was insufficient to help the students get used to this new method.

Taking these factors into consideration, the results are not in agreement with Lubis (2020) who found that learners' vocabulary was improved due to using the TPR method and Miskiyah and Amalia (2020) who pointed out that the TPR method made the learning of English vocabulary easier as students practiced them verbally and physically. The results also contradicted Coşar and Orhan's results (2019) who found that TPR was more effective, enjoyable, and motivating for kindergarten students in learning English vocabulary. This contradiction implies that using TPR with younger pupils yield better outcomes.

Conclusion

The main objective of the current study was to examine the impact of the TPR method on enhancing 5th graders' vocabulary learning. Based on the findings, it suggests some tips

for teachers, learners, parents and curriculum designers to help students overcome the obstacles encountered during vocabulary learning. Parents are also expected to apply TPR while teaching their children. The main idea is to create a cheerful and joyful atmosphere, especially in teaching vocabulary, which, in turn, would attract their attention to learn better, facilitate their observation of vocabulary and hence their outcomes. The findings and the literature review add some insights to teaching vocabulary not only in the Palestinian context but also in some other similar learning situations. The study may enlighten the departments of curricula and supervision to hold specialized workshops for teachers, equipping them with different teaching methods reflecting on the post-method pedagogy that combines techniques to meet all students' learning styles and address the local learning needs. The curriculum designers could include appropriate and various activities and exercises in the EFL textbooks designed on the TPR and some other teaching principles. The study also provides implications for further researchers who may want to investigate the impact of TPR on other groups with different levels and skills or compare the impact of TPR on males and females in public and private schools.

Disclosure Statement:

We (the authors of this paper) hereby declare that research ethics and citing principles have been considered in all the stages of this paper. Thus, we take full responsibility for the content of the paper in case of dispute.

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Self-Promotion and Identity Construction in Graduate Personal Statements

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Abstract

This qualitative corpus-based study investigates the first-person singular pronouns and their possessive determiners in graduate personal statements (PSs) that applicants use to create a self-promotional tenor in their statements. Data consisted on a corpus of 120 English and French PSs collected from four academic disciplines: Linguistics, Sociology, Engineering and Biology. The analysis has shown that the self-promotion strategy employed by the Anglo-American and French applicants shed light on the graduate students' position and strengthen their identity in their statements. Further, the linguistic investigation revealed remarkable variations in using the self-mention signals across moves, disciplines and languages. With these findings, the study offered valuable theoretical and pedagogical implications regarding the linguistic features of the genre of PSs across various cultures, disciplines and institutional contexts. In addition, they underpin pedagogic self-promotional academic writings and shed light on using this genre as a potential pedagogical tool in classroom activities, particularly in ESL and EFL contexts.

Keywords: academic identity, disciplines, personal statements, self-promotion

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Introduction

Throughout the past few years, genre analysis has been predominantly applied by linguists to investigate the rhetorical structure and the linguistic features and strategies in the texts used by community members to achieve specific communicative purposes in their discourse communities. Many genre analysts have examined texts in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) such as research article abstracts, MA theses or PhD dissertations, book reviews etc. (Al-Khasawneh, 2017; Lopez, 2015; Samraj, 2008). Researchers have sufficiently addressed these genres because they are accessible for analysis. Contrarily, university application letters or the PSs have been known as 'occluded', 'typically hidden', 'out of sight' or "occluded from the public gaze by a veil of confidentiality" (Swales, 1990, p. 46). Such documents are generally accessible for public view and scrutiny. It is difficult to find samples of them online, with few exceptions of guiding instructions for novice writers on composing these genres that some commercial websites make available on the internet. However, in most cases, Swales and Feak (2011) argued, these guidelines relate to a particular context and a specific discourse community. For these reasons, they would generally be inappropriate and vague.

It is worth mentioning that a university application letter is a significant common genre that plays a considerable role in determining candidates' selection for admission to university (Brown, 2004). Its main purpose is to highlight the applicants' qualifications and achievements that the school grades and recommendation letters do not usually disclose. Producing a successful personal statement tends to be a challenging task, especially for novice students, as they should be aware of which achievements and qualities they should emphasize. The graduate personal statement is, according to Bekins et al. (2004), a rhetorical task which requires the students' awareness of institutional conventions on the one hand and the appropriate choice of information and details to include on the other, taking into account the rhetorical and disciplinary specificities of this genre.

The personal statement reveals an applicant's interest in a particular program. It also demonstrates how the students' interests meet the target program's requirements and expectations. Such documents help admission committee members to assess the applicants' writing skills, competences and persuasion abilities (Hsaio, 2004). Indeed, university application letters play a central role in the students' application procedure for a particular course or university since presenting a well-written and organized letter will decide whether a candidate is accepted or rejected by the selection committees. It aims to persuade the admissions committee to accept the writer's candidature (Callaghan, 2004).

Although previous genre studies on PSs investigated this genre's rhetorical style and linguistic aspect across different contexts and disciplines (Brown, 2004; Ding, 2007; Samraj & Monk, 2008), various aspects of the PSs genre have remained implicit and hidden, therefore require further investigation. Most of the reviewed studies were based on a limited number of data which ranged from 20 to 35 PSs in the same research project. Such inadequacy of data may inevitably affect the generalizability and reliability of the obtained results. Also, the majority of the authors focused mainly on the rhetorical and discursive features of the genre of university application letters, whereas the investigation of the linguistic features and lexical items across cultures and disciplines has been largely neglected.

The linguistic strategies, such as the self-promotion and self-mention strategies, employed by the students in their application essays to promote themselves and to enhance their chances of getting admitted to the target discipline or university need to be sufficiently explored. Comparative investigations of students' presence and authority in their application essays remain rare, nor have results been based on a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary analysis. This genre still needs more examination as it significantly reflects the discourse community's epistemological and social assumptions, and such promotional genres are considered a

significant source of interactional linguistic features that mirror how individuals attempt to present themselves as potential members of a certain discourse community (Bekins et al., 2004).

Building on this theoretical and empirical background, this study intends to expand this area of genre analytic research by exploring the major linguistic strategies employed by English and French graduate students applying for the four programs to promote their candidature and gain admittance to the target university. As such, this study aims to contribute to the ongoing investigation of graduate PSs via exploratory corpus-driven research on the genre's potential linguistic, cross-cultural and disciplinary variations. More specifically, this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- What are the main linguistic strategies used by the English and French applicants in their university application letters?
- What are the major cultural and disciplinary variations observed in the students' use of the self-promotion strategy?

Method

This study employed a descriptive-qualitative approach, based on the techniques of the case study design. This framework offers a thorough and comprehensive description of graduate students' PSs. Since this paper intends primarily to describe, analyze, interpret and evaluate the students' use of self-promotion and identity construction strategies present in their graduate application essays, a qualitative-descriptive approach was deemed appropriate (Creswell, 2003). The selection of this approach was also encouraged by Hyland (2004b) who argued that "information about genre practices is best approached using small-scale research and qualitative methods" (p.125).

Data Collection

The data were samples of graduate university PSs produced by Anglo-American and French students applying for masters in western universities. The corpus consisted of 120 graduate PSs (40 British, 40 American and 40 French) selected from four disciplines: linguistics, sociology, engineering and biology (see Table 1). All the application essays were collected upon contact with students who were already admitted and enrolled in their universities. Hence, the selected sample was authentic and original, written by native British, American and French students. To avoid the influence of exterior factors such as time constraints, uneasiness etc., the researcher found it more appropriate to contact students who wrote and submitted their letters. Hence, the corpus was "naturally occurring data" (Bry-man, 2001).

Table 1. *Description of the Corpus Across Disciplines*

	Linguistics	Sociology	Biology	Engineering	
British Corpus	Total PSs	10	10	10	
	Total words	6.846	6.263	5.401	6.276
	Average of length	684	626	540	627
	Range	344-1067	473-1117	336-668	372- 828
American Corpus	Total PSs	10	10	10	10
	Total words	9.014	6.883	7.671	7.227
	Average of length	901	688	767	722
	Range	490-1658	494- 1266	103-1816	362 -1262
Total PSs	10	10	10	10	

French Corpus	Total words	2.830	3.322	3.037	3.759
	Average of length	283	332	303	375
	Range	185- 417	174-555	155-369	138 – 969

Procedures

The researcher could not get the data directly from the universities' student admission services as planned due to its confidential nature. Consequently, a personal contact was established with the participants by searching on 'Facebook groups, where the graduate students were enrolled in the required universities and disciplines. Private messages and emails were sent to the graduate university applicants, certainly after contacting the admins and asking their permission to kindly invite them to submit the PSs for research purposes, if adhered to the data criteria needed (that is they are required to be authentic PSs written by English native speakers from the four mentioned disciplines). To ensure the students' privacy and confidentiality, candidates were asked to omit the personal information (name, address, age etc.) unwilling to share. As it was argued by Warren (2003) and Creswell (2008), "it is commonly acknowledged that ethical issues must be considered if the research involves human participants' (Ritchie, 2003, p. 34).

Data Analysis

The computer-driven corpus provides a detailed statistical analysis of the digitized corpora. A much more interesting and comprehensive linguistic analysis can be undertaken that may strengthen and reinforce the overall analysis. Indeed, it builds for each text precise frequency lists of words and even the punctuation marks; however, the analysis focused on using the first-person singular pronoun "I" and its possessive adjective "my". With the help of the University Franche comté, France, laboratory engineer, the TXML program was installed on the researcher's laptop to facilitate the data processing. Then, the PSs, which were saved in "Word" and "Pdf" files, were transformed into TXT files. After that, they were converted from TXT files to XML files using the "Fine Reader" software to be processed and analyzed by the TXML program. Finally, the files were classified according to each country and discipline and were analyzed automatically with the TXML version 0.9 software, as illustrated in figures 1 and 2. This analytical procedure, despite time-consumption, was very advanced and efficient and ended by providing satisfactory results.

Despite a wide variety of software programs used for the linguistic investigation of the present research, the TXML program was chosen because it is considered one of the most advanced, most reliable and widely employed text analysis tools in corpus-based research studies. It also provides various options which help identify the prominent linguistic features found in the analyzed corpus, as illustrated in the figures below. In addition, it is very efficient and accurate in terms of statistical analysis.

word	Fréquence
to	33
and	29
.	23
a	23
I	18
in	18
of	17
my	15
the	15
English	11
(10
)	10
as	10
which	10
an	8
language	8
me	7
their	7
-	6
,	6
have	6
University	6
with	6

Figure 1. Sample of the TXML Linguistic Statistics of the Data

Description du corpus LETTRES1

- XML
- Niveau
- 2018-10-02

Statistiques Générales

- Nombre de mots 91985
- Nombre de propriétés de mot 4
- Nombre d'unités de structure 4

Propriétés des unités lexicales (max 20 valeurs)

- flemma : What, is, life, ? How, genes, and, proteins, function, regulate, in, an, organism, are, the, un
- npos : NAM, VER-fun, NOM, SENT, VER-subj, ADJ, VER-pres, ...
- n : 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, ...
- word : What, is, life, ? How, genes, and, proteins, function, regulate, in, an, organism, are, the, under

Propriétés des structures (max 20 valeurs)

- body
 - n (1) = 0.
- p
 - n (185) = 0, 1, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.
- text
 - discipline (4) = BIO, ENGINEE, LING, SOCIO.
 - id (125) = BIO_FR_1, BIO_FR_2, BIO_FR_3, BIO_FR_4, BIO_FR_5, BIO_FR_6, BIO_FR_7, SOCIO_AM_5, SOCIO_AM_7, SOCIO_AM_8, SOCIO_AM_9, SOCIO_FR_10.
 - langue (3) = AM, FR, UK.
 - sexe (1) = "".

Figure 2. TXML Program Screenshot Illustrating Description of the Data

After processing the corpus through this program, the lexical features “*I*” and “*my*” were identified, calculated and analyzed in relation to the discipline and the three groups of applicants. By comparatively analyzing the statistics, the use of the self-mention strategy by the three groups of candidates was explored, as it was affirmed by Hyland (2002b) “we can learn a lot more about authorial identity by exploring the rhetorical functions the first-person singular is used to perform”, Thus, the main linguistic, cultural and disciplinary variations and similarities were inferred in the investigated corpus. Further, a deeper analysis was made at the move level, where the researcher identified the moves where these linguistic features are most frequent.

Results and Discussion

The starting level of the linguistic investigation focuses mainly on the identification of the first personal pronoun “*I*” in the collected British, American and French PSs in the four disciplines, followed by the examination of the distribution of this linguistic feature through the different moves of the application letters and the consideration of the role of disciplinary variations in the use of this item. As well, the frequency of using the possessive determiner “*my*” was tagged, calculated and analyzed as the frequency of occurrence is a key element in discerning the relative relevance of the self-promotion elements in academic genres. The linguistic features were analyzed and counted using the TXM software version 0.9. 2.3.TXM Software This software is currently used in research projects in various humanities fields such as history, geography, sociology and linguistics. It employs various and efficient techniques for analyzing a large scale of data and any digitized textual corpora.

The linguistic analysis was initiated by exploring the first person singular “*I*”, in line with its possessive adjective “*my*” and their significance in reinforcing the applicant’s authorial presence in the statements. Considering the use of first personal pronouns and their possessive adjectives, the most frequent lexical items and key features were identified using the software TXM version 0.8. The use of this program has pointed out the top frequently recurrent linguistic features in the English corpus under investigation namely the first personal pronoun “*I*” and its possessive adjective “*My*” and the French corpus the first personal pronoun “*Je/ J’*” as well as its possessive forms “*mon*”, “*ma*” and “*mes*”. These linguistic elements were used by both English and French applicants for the self-promotion strategy.

Table 2. Frequencies of the Personal Pronouns and their Possessive Adjectives in the Anglo-American and French PSs

		Linguistics	Sociology	Biology	Engineering
British PSs	I	260	238	179	257
	My	142	128	118	112
American PSs	I	304	321	257	270
	My	167	181	172	150
	Je/ J’	84	83	47	101
French PSs	Mon, Ma, Mes	78	50	54	71

Both linguistic elements “*I*” and “*My*” proved to be among the highly ranked linguistic elements found in the British and American graduate application letters. Hyland (2005) argued that “the degree of explicit authorial presence in the text is measured by the frequency of first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives” (p. 53). They were present in all the PSs and in all the disciplines but with variant frequencies. Indeed, Table 2 indicates that the first personal pronoun “*I*” appears to be more recurrent than the possessive determiner “*my*” within both British and American application letters. Besides, the average of frequency of “*I*” in each

application essay was roughly 23 in the British corpus and 28 in the American one, whereas the average of occurrence of “*my*” was only 12 in the British PSs and 16 in the American PSs. With regards to the French corpus, the average of frequency was lower compared to the English corpus. In fact, the personal pronoun “*Je*” occurred in all the letters and in the four disciplines with average of 7 occurrences per letter and its possessive forms “*mon*”, “*ma*” and “*mes*” appeared with average of six times per letter. Thus, it seems clear that the frequencies of the linguistic items used for the self-promotion strategy found in the French application letters are clearly less than those found in the English letters, which is totally normal as the French PSs appeared to be shorter and more concise than the English ones.

Use of the first pronoun “I”/ “Je”, “J”

As it was shown in Table 2, the first singular personal pronoun was deployed in the three corpora with different frequencies in the four disciplines, which could be expected as the PSs are mainly based on the self-appraisal and self-glorification that is emphasizing the “*I*”. In this issue, Hsaio (2004) averred that in the genre of application letters the subject is the writer himself, therefore promoting the applicant’s relevant self is the purpose of this genre. Regarding the British PSs, the frequency of the use of “*I*” ranged from five in Biology (PS 7) to 41 occurrences in Sociology (PS 3). In addition, the linguistic analysis revealed noticeable statistical differences as far as the disciplines are concerned, as the frequency of “*I*” ranged from 171 occurrences in British Biology to 244 in British Engineering. Another remarkable variation appeared at the level of moves. In fact, the linguistic investigation of these features across the moves of the PSs indicated that the element “*I*” was most frequent in Move 2 *Background* in the four disciplines.

This may be explained by the rhetorical paradigm of the promotional genres, namely the genre of PSs. Indeed, Move 2 *Background*, with its five steps, represents the backbone of the students’ statements as it is the space where the applicants tend to praise and glorify their achievements by emphasizing the “*I*”. Interestingly, despite the dissimilarities observed in the corpus at the rhetorical and disciplinary levels, the linguistic function of “*I*” did not differ in any of them, as it served mainly to present the graduate students as suitable, qualified as well as well determined potential applicants. This can be illustrated in the following samples.

Extract 1

I am very hardworking, with a methodical, synthetic and rigorous approach to my work and studies...I also have a strong experience in second language acquisition and a good working knowledge of the mechanics of learning... I am extremely motivated... [PS9, British Sociology]

Moving to the American data, the obtained findings proved certain statistical variations regarding the frequency of “*I*” in the U.S PSs. In fact, it reported higher occurrence in the graduate application essays except in the Engineering discipline. Nonetheless, similarly to the U.K graduate essays, the pronoun “*I*” in the American graduate application letters was centering mainly in Move 2 *Background* except the Sociology discipline. Indeed, Sociology students opted to emphasize the “*I*” in the second and third moves of the PS, namely the *Background* move and the *Reasons for applying move*, with approximately the same rate. Concerning the other moves, Moves four and five, they did not feature high frequency of the personal pronoun “*I*” as these moves themselves were not very frequent in the American corpus like Move 4 which was present only once in Sociology (PS 2) and twice in Biology. Thus, the frequency of “*I*” would not be as frequent as in the other obligatory moves.

Extract 2

I believe I have the commitment and base knowledge to complete this degree to

a high standard...The high quality of education I have received from Heriot-Watt has inspired me to continue my research through these masters. [PS1, American Biology]

With respect to the French corpus, the linguistic analysis revealed approximately the same results. The first personal pronoun “*Je*” appeared mostly in *Move 2 Background* where the French students try to talk mainly about their academic career, experiences related to the field of study to portray a distinguished identity and show “an explicit authorial presence in the text” (Hyland, 2005, p. 51) to get admitted in the target field.

Extract 3

Je voudrai poursuivre mes connaissances dans le monde éducatif...J’ai eu l’opportunité d’avoir des cours liées à l’enseignement...J’ai découvert que la formation que vous offrez m’aidera à acquérir toutes les compétences. [PS1,

French Linguistics]-

At the level of disciplines, there is a clear disparity in the use of the first personal pronoun. Indeed, this item seems to be more present in the soft disciplines (Linguistics and Sociology) more than the hard disciplines (Biology and Engineering). Chen and Nassagi (2015) found in his article entitled “Self-mention and Identity Construction in Statement of Purpose” that the use of the first personal pronoun is discipline specific, that is the humanities had the highest frequency. Although the three groups of graduate students differed in their use of the personal pronoun “*I*” at both levels, moves and disciplines, they united in using this linguistic element to present an authorial identity with a strong determination to continually gain knowledge.

Use of the possessive adjectives “My” and “Mon”/“Ma” “Mes”

The possessive determiner “*my*” was predominately employed by Anglo-American students for praising and promoting themselves. It serves to demonstrate the student’s valuable qualifications, related, most relevant experiences and motivating reasons to study the target program. Table 2 proves that this item was present in all the English corpus with some variations at the move level, but with lower average when compared to the first-person singular pronoun “*I*”. Its occurrence ranged from 5 (PS 8 Sociology) to 27 (PS 5) Sociology in the British corpus and from 10 (PS 2 Linguistics) to 31 (PS 1 Biology) in the American corpus.

Both tables indicate that although the determiner “*my*” was more occurring in the American data, in both corpora it was intensively concentrated in *Move 2 Background* and with lesser degree in *Move 1* and *Move 3*. Indeed, in the four disciplines, the linguistic item “*I*” was mainly frequent in *Move 2* to not only enumerate the student’s skills and achievements but also to convey a strong sense of commitment to the purposed discipline.

With regards to the French corpus, Table 2 revealed certain statistical variations. Indeed, the linguistic analysis proved that the possessive adjectives “*Mon*”, “*Ma*” and “*Mes*” appeared to be less used by the French students than the English groups. Further, concerning the distribution of this element all through the disciplines, the table indicates that, contrary to the English corpus where the possessive adjective was concentrated mainly in *Move 2 Background*, in the French corpus the possessive adjectives were highly present in both *Moves 2* and *3* especially in the hard disciplines. Indeed, the French students applying for masters in Biology and Engineering tend to give approximately an equal significance to both moves as far as the self-promotion strategy is concerned. Additionally, the analysis revealed that this element was totally absent in some moves in the French corpus such as *Moves 4* and *5* in Biology and *Move 5* in Engineering.

Based on these results, the linguistic exploration of the processed data reported a high proportion of appearance self-promotion features employed by both English and French writers to present a positive image of themselves by portraying an authorial self firmly established in the norms of the discipline and an appropriate degree of confidence and self-determination (Hyland, 2002). Arguably, the presence of self-promotional strategies is evident in persuasive rhetoric in general. It is a central pragmatic feature of authorial identity that promotes both writers and their achievements (Hyland, 2002). Indeed, as it was argued by Hyland (2005), "the degree of explicit authorial presence in the text is measured by the frequency of first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives" (p. 53).

The linguistic analysis revealed an intensive use of the self-promotional element "I", whose main function is to enhance the applicants' stance and support their academic and research activities. Hyland (2005) refers to the word "stance" whereby writers present their voice or personality and convey their judgments, opinions and commitments. In other words, it concerns how the candidates' position and project themselves in their application essays. In this respect, Gosden (1993) pointed out that first-person references could be considered to form a progressive cline of writer visibility, i.e., a means by which writers seek to present themselves and their viewpoints in the research community, with both very obvious and very subtle means of realization" (p. 62). Indeed, as suggested by growing data of research on voice and stance in academic genres (e.g., Hyland, 2002; Invanic & Camps, 2001; Mastuda & Tardy, 2007; Zareva, 2013), the use of the personal pronoun is on the one hand discipline-specific (with higher frequency in some disciplines than the others) and, on the other hand, a valuable linguistic strategy that can help text producers construct and text receivers decode the presented identity.

The writers' identity in academic texts, and especially in the university application letters, is realized by and revealed through the use of different linguistic choices, chief among them is the use of the possessive adjective "my". Hyland (2001) assumed that this item, considered a self-promotional device, is a salient feature of the stance that is strongly recommended to be used when presenting one's authorial identity, especially when dealing with persuasive writing in the case of the genre under study.

Implications

From a linguistic perspective, this study offers significant theoretical implications for corpus-assisted genre analysis in various cultural and institutional contexts. Additionally, the findings of this study offered valuable insights regarding the linguistic strategies that could be employed in a successful PS. In fact, prospective graduate applicants will consciously consider the importance of using personal pronouns to strengthen their authorial presence in the letters. Being aware of the use of the major linguistic strategies in the genre of PSs, which is a less studied genre, potential graduates will be able to produce effective letters that can appropriately meet the standard and the requirements of their target discourse community. Besides, this research helps prospective applicants from all over the world to adapt themselves to the norms and expectations of the target cultures, and thus, they become more proficient in achieving the communicative purpose in a graduate application letter for western universities. On the other hand, the current research demonstrated the writing style specificities of each culture and language. It provided further empirical evidence for the argument that genre is dynamic and a PS is socially and culturally dependent (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995). In other words, this work offered significant insights into the production of texts in their socio-cultural context.

From a pedagogical perspective, the study findings provide teachers/ instructors with valuable instructions on including the genre-based studies of such academic and self-promotional genres and contrastive research as a potential pedagogical tool in classroom activities, particularly in ESL and EFL contexts. As argued by Nassaji (2015), promotional writing has become a vital

component in today's competitive academia and throughout one's academic career. Hence, people, in general, and students in particular, need to learn how to deal with academic and self-promotional genres such as a university or job application letters, grant proposals, application letters for promotion etc. Accordingly, the present work invites specialists to pay more attention to these genres and why they incorporate them in the secondary and university courses for native and non-native English and French speakers. Indeed, including this type of writing activities in different pedagogical contexts may help to enhance the learner's "rhetorical and genre consciousness" (Swales, 1993, cited in Bhatia, 2002) to be more efficient in their writing. As such, this will help graduate and undergraduate students applying to western universities and universities to understand the audiences' expectations and master the complex but often implicit rhetorical, linguistic and disciplinary aspects of the genre of PSs. Thus, this would enhance admission to the target institution.

Conclusion

The self-promotion strategy employed by British, American and French applicants consisted mainly in the intensive use of the first person singular "I"/"Je" and its possessive adjective "my" or "mon", "ma", "mes" in the French corpus. The key lexical features were calculated using the TXM software version 0.8. The linguistic investigation of the English PSs revealed that both "I" and "my" proved to be among the most highly ranked lexical features in the collected PSs as they were frequently occurring in all the statements and in both the soft and hard disciplines but with variant rates, especially at the level of moves. This is highly expected as the genre under investigation is a self-promotional genre based essentially on self-appraisal and self-glorification, emphasizing the "I". However, concerning the French data, the frequency of the linguistic items used for the self-promotion strategy seems less frequent than those identified in the English application essays. This could be expected as the French letters appeared more straightforward than the English ones.

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I hereby declare that research ethics and citing rules have been considered in all the sections of this paper. I assume full responsibility in case of disagreement.

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Foreign Language Learning Assessment in the Age of ChatGPT: A Theoretical Account

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Abstract

In the Artificial Intelligence (AI) age now, foreign language learners can get unlimited support on their learning tasks from advanced AI chatbots, primarily the ChatGPT. At the same time, such a language chatbot intensifies the importance of rethinking learning outcome assessment. Traditional assessments that draw on a teach-and-test- approach are of little use and no longer valid for a comprehensive understanding of students' knowledge and skills that they, by and large, obtain in informal learning settings and contribute to their overall performance. Hence, alternative assessments can reflect more on learners' actual performance that likely involves AI chatbots and yet goes unnoticed by traditional assessment. This paper discusses alternative assessments regarding their nature, forms, characteristics, advantages, and integration into L2 programs. It establishes a foundational theoretical account for future research that would take place when ChatGPT becomes commonplace in the worldwide L2 contexts. It charts new research territories and passes the torch to second and foreign-language learning assessors to reflect on their teaching situations and reimagine L2 programs in light of the affordances of the ChatGPT, which has made a significant breakthrough in learning and teaching languages.

Keywords: Alternative assessment, Performance-based assessment, Self-assessment, ChatGPT

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Introduction

Teaching and learning are complex processes, taking place in various settings and different forms. These processes, which are rarely assessment-free, have been largely affected by technological inventions (Bravo et al., 2015). The most recent and vibrant technology is ChatGPT, which resulted from many attempts within the remarkable rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI), whose impact on education has become food for thought in academia (Ali et al., 2023; Fitria, 2023; Tuomi, 2018). According to Tuomi (2018), learning and teaching over the upcoming years are bound to change under the inevitable influence of AI. It enables new learning and teaching practices beyond the current teaching techniques, methods and approaches (Fitria, 2023; Hong, 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023; Tuomi, 2018; UNESCO, 2023). This inevitably requires teachers to engineer their teaching accordingly. The changes include AI-based teaching strategies and instructional materials that accommodate students' interests, styles, and needs (Tuomi, 2018), along with measurements of learning outcomes—learning that occur with or without teacher intervention or formal teaching.

ChatGPT, the most recent version of a natural-language system (Fitria, 2023), has quickly gained popularity owing to its ability to provide meaningful answers and detailed responses in various subject areas (Rudolph et al., 2023). Such an AI chatbot is shaping up as the hottest issue on the agenda of 2023. It can simulate human-like conversations (Fitria, 2023), and this increases the chances of its likeliness to be a valuable language-learning tool that provides personal tutoring, authentic conversations and interaction. It is viewed as a generator of language learning materials and models (Hong, 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023; UNESCO, 2023) with the potential to revolutionize the profession of L2 teaching (Kasneci et al., 2023). It can be beneficial for designing or updating curricula, lesson planning, and assessment (UNESCO, 2023; Weller, 2023). It can reduce the burden of manual exam design if invested wisely (Kasneci et al., 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023).

All that said, the effectiveness of AI applications (ChatGPT, a case in point) has raised concerns about language teaching and assessment, especially in contexts where students are typically assessed based on their learning product, chiefly through written assignments and exams. It raises concerns about authenticity, honesty, and plagiarism (Fei, 2022; Hong, 2023; Kasneci et al., 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023) because this chatbot can generate responses to questions and generate essays, etc. (Ali et al., 2023), which facilitates cheating (Volante et al., 2023). In this light, a reform of traditional assessments (Stobart, 2023) is necessary. It is important to pore over some alternative assessments (AAs) that could be invested in English language programs. This paper is a deep dive into AAs to provide insightful ideas for the refinement of learning assessment in the age of ChatGPT, which has already begun to shake traditional teaching and assessment to their foundations. It aims to put forward a theoretical account for future research that would take place when the new invention (ChatGPT) is well-recognized and appropriated in L2 contexts.

Alternative Assessments

In the age of diversity of learning modes and models, evaluating L2 skills through traditional tests is hardly valid (Stobart, 2023). For this reason, teachers may want more valid and reliable tasks to identify what students can do in the target language. Given the recent technological advances—mainly the ChatGPT, teachers of foreign languages are now required to develop assessment tools that involve observable learning performance: making presentations or creating digital materials such as webpages, videos, and animations (Fei, 2022; Rudolph et al., 2023). The assessment should measure students' skills and knowledge in realistic, motivating, and authentic situations (Rudolph et al., 2023). Volante et al. (2023) suggested authentic assessments, including performance-based elements and observing students' learning across multiple contexts. For Hong (2023), L2 teachers can use tasks such as writing daily

journal entries. Such assessment forms are generally called alternative assessments (abbreviated in this paper as AA). It is an elastic term and thus should be decomposed for clarification (see Figure 1).

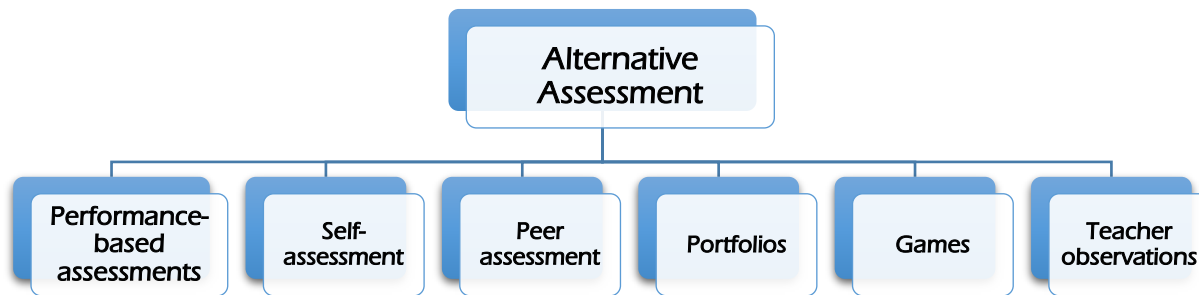


Figure 1. Forms of Alternative Assessment

Performance-based assessments (PBA)

A common form of assessing learner outcomes is PBAs. A PBA is “an assessment activity that requires students to construct a response, create a product, or perform a demonstration” (McTighe & Ferrara, 1998, p. 34). It requires (a) a task to be performed or a product to be created and (b) some criteria for rating performances and products (Opp-Beckman & Klinghammer, 2006). The criteria should be well-articulated and shared with students through rubrics or scoring guides to enable teachers and students to monitor and profile students’ language learning (Gottlieb, 2006). To Griffith and Lim (2012), sharing rubrics with students and communicating assessment standards increase their confidence and make them more engaged in learning.

PBA, integral to classroom teaching and learning, can allow students to express their learning directly and reflect real-life situations (Gottlieb, 2006). It creates opportunities for L2 students to produce authentic language, indicating what they know and can do in the target language (McTighe & Ferrara, 1998). To ensure the effectiveness of this type of assessment in L2 classrooms, teachers should use authentic tasks or activities directed with specific objectives and set some criteria for tasking students and evaluating their performance. Teachers should also consider students’ interests and differences to ensure fair assessment and select appropriate tasks for students’ levels and age. PBAs have several forms outlined in Figure 2: projects, role-playing, presentations, demonstrations, interviews, discussions/debates, writing samples, reports, the story of text retelling, cloze tests, and open-ended questions.

To begin with, a project is “an activity which focuses on completing an extended task or tasks on a specific topic” (Spratt et al., 2011, p. 33). Using projects as an assessment tool can enhance students learning as they accommodate various learning styles. A single student, a pair of students, a group, or an entire class may conduct projects. Using purposeful projects, teachers can meaningfully integrate the four language skills. Projects as assessment tools are used with young learners (e.g., designing posters or preparing pop-up books) and adult learners (e.g., making newspapers, bulletin boards, sketches, and news broadcasts). Using projects as an assessment tool enable teachers to identify what students can do with the target language. To be systematic, teachers have to use some assessment criteria with descriptions (e.g., appearance, quality, organization, the richness of ideas, etc.) and give them to students as a guide on how to progress in their projects and how their projects will be evaluated.

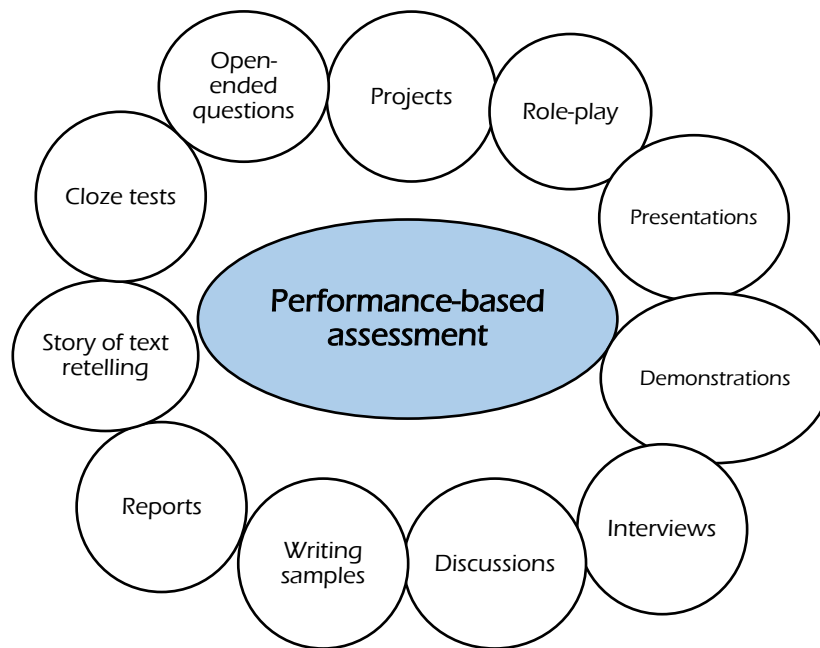


Figure 2. Forms of Performance-based Assessment

Role-play and simulations are another form of PBA. Role-play is a classroom activity in which students are given roles to act out in a particular situation, either in pairs or groups (Spratt et al., 2011). In contrast, with simulations, students act out real-life situations. These active learning activities can create interaction between students, allowing them to practice the target language in real-life situations (Encalada, 2018), which can help students develop their communicative skills. Role-play/simulation provides learners with opportunities to practice the knowledge and skills acquired and to be assessed on the knowledge and skills acquired before applying them in real-life settings. Although role-play or simulations are used mainly to evaluate speaking skills in L2, such assessment tools can be used by teachers to evaluate students' vocabulary, grammar, fluency, pronunciation, confidence, and motivation in L2 classes (Encalada, 2018; Phongsirikul, 2018). Using these activities as assessment tools, teachers need to develop meaningful assessment criteria or rubrics to maintain consistency and to help students understand the objectives of the simulation or the role-play. According to Encalada (2018), rubrics enable teachers to identify precisely the aspects that need to be improved for participating in conversations. To use role-play/simulation activities as assessment tools, teachers also have to develop activities involving learners to interact naturally in real-life situations (Encalada, 2018).

Presentations and demonstrations are another form of assessment based on performance. A presentation is an activity where a student gives a talk to their class (Spratt et al., 2011). Presentations can be of three types: controlled, guided, and free (Al-Issa & Al-Qubtan, 2010), depending on the level of students and purpose of the presentation. The common purpose of presentations in L2 classrooms is to create opportunities for students to practice speaking, help teachers integrate language skills, and promote learner-centeredness (Al-Issa & Al-Qubtan, 2010). Whether teachers evaluate students' presentations themselves (which is not always possible due to the long time required) or use peer assessment, the teachers may want to give students a clear idea about the assessment criteria. To better understand the requirements, a teacher may provide students with a copy of the rubric prepared in light of the assessment criteria and students' level (Moqbel, 2016; Phongsirikul, 2018). Demonstrations are additional

assessment forms with relevance to learners' performance. Demonstrations of learning in L2 classrooms can take the forms of writing (such as writing letters) or speaking (such as presentations). Such opportunities involving the target language demonstrate L2 learners' abilities to use particular words in contexts or specific grammatical structures in writing or speaking.

As interviews, discussions, and debates involve features of conversational interaction, they can be used to evaluate learners' ability to interact in authentic communicative situations (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). Using interviews as assessment tools, teachers may invest in oral interviews to assess students' language proficiency and conversational communicative competence. For valid and reliable interviews, both structured and unstructured interviews should be directed by guidelines regarding topics and general questioning focus (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). Interviews are an opportunity for elaboration, interruption, and abrupt change of topic (Hughes, 2003). ChatGPT creates opportunities to engage L2 students in virtual language conversations and interviews (Kasneji et al., 2023).

Discussions and debates are also fundamental PBA devices. While a discussion can be defined as a spoken interaction between three or four speakers who are then given a particular topic to discuss in the target language (Sybing, 2016), a debate is a formal method of interactive argument that often involves a moderator, audience, and the debate participants. Teachers can use discussions and debates to enhance students' speaking ability in L2. Teachers in L2 classrooms can also use these techniques to evaluate their students' verbal ability (fluency, pronunciation and vocabulary) and interactions. Concerning discussions as an assessment technique, a two-student discussion allows the teacher to assess students' performance more precisely. Discussions are usually centered on particular topics (Sybing, 2016). Yet, students may go beyond the topic as a natural discussion development. To ensure the validity and reliability of discussions/debates as an assessment technique, teachers should create appropriate scales for scoring that reflect the assessment criteria (Hughes, 2003). Teachers can use ChatGPT to create discussion prompts based on particular topics or events to engage their L2 students in meaningful discussions with ChatGPT (Kasneji et al., 2023).

Writing samples are also relevant to the assessment. Any piece of writing (creative writing, essays, reports, writing in response to prompts, a letter to an editor, etc.) that L2 learners produce can be used by their teachers to assess students' learning progress. The writing samples can include various topics, registers, and genres. According to their purposes, samples of writing can be scored either holistically; i.e., giving a single score based on an overall impression of the whole piece of writing or analytically, i.e., giving a separate score for each aspect or dimension of a task, such as grammar, vocabulary, etc. (McTighe & Ferrara, 1998). ChatGPT, producing written texts similar to human creation (Fitria, 2023), encourages students to depend on ChatGPT to do their writing tasks, which signals a cautionary note to teachers and educators. Teachers ask students to perform in-class pen-and-paper writing tasks to prevent learners' blind dependence on ChatGPT. However, it would be better if teachers could develop authentic writing tasks that encourage students to let their voices come out and make writing tasks more relevant to the students.

Ancillary to writing samples, reports can be of great significance when assessing L2 learners' performance. Reports, oral or written, are PBA activities which can be invested in assessing proficiency in L2. This is particularly useful for assessing students' speaking skills (Marzuki, 2017) as well as reading skills. For example, teachers can encourage students to read books and write simple book reports. Students may be tasked to report on particular events and present their reports orally in front of the whole class. The report writing technique can also be used to assess writing skills. Besides, the reporting technique helps assess the content knowledge. Whatever the purpose, teachers should develop a scale to assess students' oral or written performance. A checklist can also be used to evaluate how students report the topic (Marzuki, 2017).

Story-of-text retelling is an old and significant assessment tool. A story of text retelling is a post-reading/listening recalls in which readers/listeners tell what they remember orally/in writing (Morrow, 1989). Reading stories and then retelling them orally or in writing involves students reconstructing the text and making possible interaction among them, as Morrow (1989) stated. According to Praneetponkrang and Phaiboonnugulkij (2014), this technique is usually used in L2 classes for various purposes: oral retelling improves learners' comprehension and speaking skills and builds up their vocabulary while retelling in writing boosts learners' comprehension and writing skills and develop their vocabulary. The authors pointed out that the techniques used to involve students in story retelling include brainstorming, role play, and using pictures. Teachers can use this technique as an assessment tool in L2 classrooms to assess their students speaking and writing skills, reading and listening comprehension, and vocabulary.

What is more, a cloze test, as Fulcher and Davidson (2007) claimed, is a valid measurement of general language proficiency. It is a task type in which students read a text with missing words and try to replace the original words. The missing words are removed from the text at regular intervals, e.g., every seventh word (Hughes, 2003; Spratt et al., 2011). To complete the gaps correctly, cloze test takers are required to complete the gaps by replacing the original words, taking into account meaning and structure to find the answer. In predicting the missing words, cloze test takers must use the abilities that underlay all their language performance (Hughes, 2003).

Relevant to cloze tests, open-ended questions are a common PBA tool. An open-ended question is "a task or question that does not have a right or wrong answer but allows learners to offer their own opinions and ideas or to respond creatively" (Spratt et al., 2011, p. 29). Because open-ended questions launch conversations that allow students to hear and use language meaningfully, Wasik and Hindman (2013) called open-ended questions open-ended prompts. In L2 classrooms, the importance of using open-ended questions emerges from their active role in creating opportunities for students to use the target language meaningfully (Wasik & Hindman, 2013). To Wasik and Hindman, focused open-ended questions encourage students to use the vocabulary and ideas in a lesson. Besides, teachers can develop students' grammatical competence by encouraging students to use complete sentences; responses to open-ended questions require students to use more than one language skill and aspect. Hence, teachers can use such questions to assess different aspects, including speaking and reading comprehension, writing skills, vocabulary, grammatical competence, and knowledge.

Self-assessment (SA)

With the emerging trends of learner-centeredness, learners can promote a sense of self-assessment— a process in which students actively evaluate themselves. This is believed to help learners better understand their learning outcomes and reflect on their performance, learning abilities and progress. Advantages of SA in L2 programs include improving language skills: writing (Meihami & Varmaghani, 2013), listening and speaking (Shahrakipour, 2014), and reading. It also encourages students' active participation in their learning and evaluation. Phongsirikul, 2018; Shahrakipour (2014) contend that self-driven assessment increases learners' motivation for learning and promotes their autonomy, independence, and lifelong learning skills. Students can be engaged in SA of their language skills through a variety of ways and techniques: checklists, rubrics, reflection pieces (learning logs, journals, and dairies), conferences and interviews, self-correction (Wragg, 2004), progress cards, and computer-assisted assessment (Oscarson, 1989) (see Figure 2).

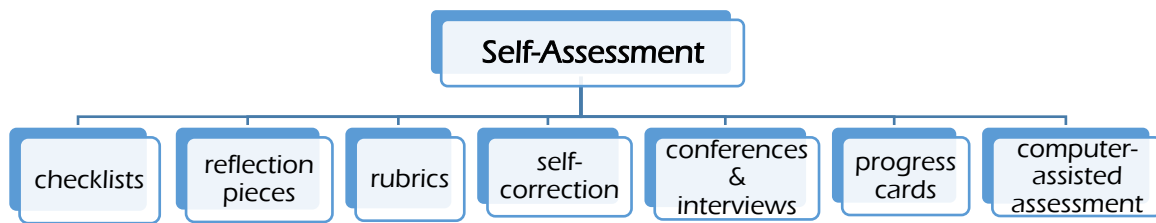


Figure 3. Techniques of Self-Assessment

To begin with, checklists are an example of SA tools. A checklist is “a list of dimensions, characteristics, or behaviours essentially scored as ‘yes-no’ ratings.” It indicates that either a particular characteristic or behaviour is present or absent. Checklists often contain more dimensions to score than rating scales (Herman et al., 1992, p. 64). They can be “generic and applied to a skill or tailored to specific assignments” (NCDPI, 1999, p. 103). The problem with checklists is that no information is provided on the quality of student performance. The student ticks the level of performance that he thinks is appropriate according to his estimate (Oscarson, 1989). According to Wragg (2004), checklists primarily stimulate students’ active learning through thinking about their answers and work, which may help them learn more effectively.

Reflection pieces are one more example of SA. They are “written entries in which students reflect on what they have learned and how they have learned it.” They are valuable tools for students of all levels to monitor their learning and progress (NCDPI, 1999, p. 104). Reflection pieces like learning logs, journals, and diaries can take different forms. A learning log is a written account in which a learner can track his activities and progress through the term (Opp-Beckman & Klinghammer, 2006). In learning logs, students can reflect on what they have learnt, what they still have questions about, what was easy or difficult for them, what they must do to improve themselves, etc. Such reflection can be at the level of a particular concept or a unit of study. Journals are “daily or weekly writing entries by learners in which they reflect on their own learning experiences and progress” (Opp-Beckman & Klinghammer, 2006, p. 104). They “involve some reflection but are not as personal as a diary” (Falchikov, 2005, p. 11). Journals are usually written in narrative form. Using them as assessment tools can allow students to reflect on their learning, document their learning experiences, and express their feelings about it (Falchikov, 2005). A diary is a tool for reflection and analysis. It usually involves a written record (Falchikov, 2005) where students can reflect on their learning. According to Falchikov (2005), diaries are appropriate forms of assessment where the focus is on the learning process rather than the outcome. Diaries promote autonomous learning, encouraging students to take responsibility for their learning. Students can articulate their problems with course content through diaries.

Rubrics are tools including some criteria for the desired learning outcomes. They describe the performance standards linked to scales for grading students’ performance. Typically, a rubric contains some assessment criteria and descriptors describing the proficiency or knowledge levels required for each criterion (Griffith & Lim, 2012). There are two main kinds of rubrics: holistic rubrics and analytic rubrics. The holistic rubric “evaluates the overall performance qualitatively.” It can provide one rating for a project or a performance and validate it with various criteria. Scores on such a scale give an overall impression of student ability or performance using a 3-, 4-, or 5-point scale (Griffith & Lim, 2012, p. 6). The problem with holistic scoring is that it gives students little feedback to help them achieve better (NCDPI, 1999). The analytic rubric breaks down the performance into different levels or components and scores them individually (Griffith & Lim, 2012; NCDPI, 1999). Points are then calculated to derive a quantitative measure of performance. For example, for a speaking task, a rubric might include the dimensions of pronunciation, fluency, verbal communication, non-verbal communication,

and confidence. Analytic rubrics can provide feedback on different components. They make students more aware of their strengths and weaknesses because the categories are rated separately. ChatGPT, according to Weller (2023), may act as a language teacher, analyze texts and provide supportive feedback based on a rubric, but this depends on how skilful use on the part of teachers who intend to employ ChatGPT in their assessment.

Self-correction is also a valuable SA tool. In self-correction, students are given an answer sheet, i.e., a key. However, this technique can only work when there is clarity and a single correct answer. Self-correction is mainly used in tests with closed answers, such as true/false or multiple-choice, rather than open-ended items. The self-correction method can be useless to students unless the teacher discusses the incorrect answers (Wragg, 2004).

Conferences and interviews are also relevant to SA. Conferences and interviews occur between students and the teacher: one-on-one, with several students, or with the entire class. Students can assess or talk about their learning using previously set criteria. They can even determine goals and expectations with their teacher (Opp-Beckman & Klinghammer, 2006). Besides, teachers can guide their students by asking questions, as NCDPI (1999) indicated.

Progress cards are an additional SA tool. The progress card is "a simple self-assessment tool used in many different educational settings" (Oscarson, 1989, p. 5). The progress cards are built on course objectives so that each group of objectives is graded to represent a difficulty level. Students proceed according to their improvement in a particular skill or learning area. Here, a student may use a personal test card on which he ticks off in the student column each language activity that he can perform, and the teacher ticks in the teacher column once he feels that the student can prove that (Oscarson, 1989).

SA can be computer-assisted. With the help of technology, many programs, materials, and applications have been developed for self-assessed language learning in different areas, such as vocabulary and grammar. These programs or applications provide tools for measuring students' mastery of the language. Usually, a learning hierarchy is formulated, and a diagnostic mechanism is built into such programs or applications so that either the learner himself or the program can decide when a review is needed. Such programs or applications may also have a testing feature which produces statements indicating each student's level (Oscarson, 1989).

These SA techniques give students more control over the learning process and increase their responsibility for learning (Gottlieb, 2006; Shahrakipour, 2014), self-confidence and make them more involved in learning (Gottlieb, 2006; Phongsirikul, 2018). More importantly, AS makes learners' more aware of the assessment criteria to (a) identify their weaknesses and strengths (Shahrakipour, 2014) and (b) monitor their improvement in areas of weaknesses. As in many other assessment tools, SA requires clear criteria when learners assess their performance or products to ensure unbiased assessment. Even after the implementation of SA, there should be systematic follow-up feedback from teachers on student's work (Meihami & Varmaghani, 2013).

Peer assessment (PA)

In addition to self-assessment and performance-based assessment, peer assessment (PA) is an invaluable assessment form. Opp-Beckman and Klinghammer (2006) defined PA as an arrangement for students to "evaluate each other's work, using pre-set guidelines" (p. 104). The basic idea behind this assessment is to provide opportunities for students to evaluate each other's work more critically. When implementing PA, teachers may provide students with checklists, rating scales, or rubrics. For a successful implementation of PA, students should be trained in giving and using feedback and provided with a clear idea about PA. The teacher should give students clearly defined guidelines to assess each other's work and enough time for preparation, discussing and setting the assessment criteria clearly and making decisions about the PA techniques, i.e., a form, a checklist, etc. The teacher may even give the students a rubric

to understand the requirements better. After carrying out the PA, the teacher should give students constructive feedback on their performance.

Peng (2009) illuminated the benefits of integrating PA into L2 programs. It promotes students' autonomy and independence, increases their motivation, enhances their responsibility, and improves their self-confidence, as Phongsirikul (2018) endorsed. Peer assessment also helps students to develop collaborative skills, create opportunities for learning from each other, talk in the target language and get more feedback on their performance. With all these, PA can be essential in making students more aware of the course's objectives. According to Gottlieb (2006), PA promotes student involvement in their learning and helps them monitor their progress. Gottlieb added that PA is an effective means for having students practice the language with each other, which is vital in developing the target language.

Portfolios

Another assessment device is portfolios. A portfolio, an authentic and practical assessment tool, can be used as a student learning assessment tool throughout a study or program (Lotfi, 2012; Narayan, 2023). It is, in Opp-Beckman and Klinghammer's (2006) words, "a collection of student work over a period of time" (p. 106). Essentially, it is a purposeful collection that gives teachers a clear idea about students' achievements, skills, abilities, and progress over a while and in one or more learning areas (Brown & Hudson, 1998). In portfolios as an assessment tool, the purpose and criteria of assessment should be defined, and what to put into the portfolio should also be determined (Herman et al., 1992; Narayan, 2023). The criteria can even be discussed with students to make students more aware of such criteria and more involved in the assessment process. Additionally, to ensure the effective use of portfolios, they should be developed from class tasks and connected to the course and its objectives. In portfolios, students can include whatever they believe to be essential for their learning process. They can include information, samples of work, and evaluations that serve as indicators of their performance, samples of written work (written stories, essays, etc.), tapes of oral work (role-playing, presentations, sketches, etc.), and checklists of tasks and performance (Lotfi, 2012; Narayan, 2023). Students can also include reflections on their works, such as learning logs or journals. Given the electronic age, portfolios can be in paper or electronic forms. In electronic portfolios, students use web 2.0 tools, such as wikis and blogs, to upload their works on the four language skills or their reflections on their performance.

Three main types of portfolios can be considered for classroom use: assessment portfolios, showcase portfolios, and collection portfolios. The first consists of items a student chooses to include according to specific assessment criteria (Lotfi, 2012). The items included in this type of portfolio are scored or evaluated. The second type contains students' best pieces or examples of work for each objective, and the third, also called a working folder, is a collection of all the pieces of a student's work during a particular time (Lotfi, 2012). In a relevant note, Rao (2006) noted that there is no single way to develop or implement portfolios. Rao proposed three portfolio categories representing a scheme for developing portfolios, namely collections, reflections, and assessment, stating that each category represents a distinctive stage of portfolio development and has criteria that reflect its function. Regarding collections, the decision about what to put in the portfolio is usually determined by the purpose of the portfolio (Burnaz, 2011).

According to Rao (2006), it is better to confine collections to one area, such as oral language development, reading competence, listening comprehension, etc. Reflections, which can take the form of a journal or diary, learning logs, self-assessment checklists, etc., can be on strategies of learning, students' attitudes and reactions (Rao, 2006), problem areas and difficulties, what has been learnt and what has still to be learnt, and improvement plans (Burnaz, 2011). The third category, i.e., assessment, is usually determined by the purpose of the portfolio, which should be defined clearly. If the purpose is to demonstrate growth or progress, the teacher can make judgments about the evidence of progress and provide those judgments

as feedback to students or make notes of them for their records. Similarly, students can use their portfolios to self-assess and monitor their progress. If the portfolio is to be used for an assessment, the teacher should determine when and how it should be evaluated and set clear assessment criteria (Rao, 2006). The reliability and validity of the contents should also be established and maintained. In addition, data collection should be systematic and in alignment with curriculum goals and objectives. Moreover, each piece of evidence should be linked to specified criteria as a rubric or a descriptive scale (Rao, 2006).

Using portfolios in L2 programs to assess students is valuable and practical. According to Lotfi (2012), portfolio assessment promotes students' autonomy, creates opportunities for students to take responsibility for their learning and plan their learning activities, and offers authentic information about their progress and performance, helping them monitor, reflect on, and reflect on their learning progress. In addition, portfolio assessment enables students to be involved in their learning and evaluation, promoting their motivation and helping them see their weaknesses, strengths, and development in different skills and areas (Burnaz, 2011). What is unique about portfolios is that they can be used in classes of any age or proficiency level (Opp-Beckman & Klinghammer, 2006) and can be used to assess all language skills and language systems.

Games

Instructional games have become part of L2 teaching because they are a successful teaching strategy. Their importance is gained from the advantages they can provide in L2 classrooms. Instructional games can create opportunities for L2 learners to interact, communicate and practice the target language meaningfully and incidentally (Gozcu & Caganaga, 2016). They also create a stress-free learning environment, allowing students to learn in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere. Using games in the L2 classrooms purposefully, teachers can help their students learn the target language while engaging in the games and having fun (Bravo et al., 2015; Gozcu & Caganaga, 2016). Besides, using games in L2 classrooms creates an atmosphere of interaction and cooperation among students similar to that in the real world (Bravo et al., 2015), which can help L2 students learn the target language naturally.

Using games in the classroom should align the level of students of the target language and the stage of learning (teaching, reviewing, assessment). To be helpful, games should be used purposefully rather than for fun (Gozcu & Caganaga, 2016). Games are unique because they can be adapted to any situation, level and age, as Bravo et al. (2015) claimed. Using games as an assessment tool in L2 classrooms, teachers can evaluate their students' language skills and knowledge acquired during the lesson in a free-stress atmosphere and interesting and challenging manner rather than drilling. Making this process more concise and systematic requires establishing well-defined assessment criteria to be used by teachers and students as guidelines to assess students' learning and performance according to the established rubrics. Besides, the games used should be challenging and appropriate in terms of the level and age of students (Bravo et al., 2015).

Teacher Observations

A formal assessment is not enough to make a reliable judgment about students' performance. Teacher observations in a stress-free condition in L2 classrooms are critical as they can be the base for reliable instructional decisions about students' performance (Ketabi & Ketabi, 2014). Teacher observations should be systematic; otherwise, they will result in useless information (Ketabi & Ketabi, 2014) and an unfair assessment of students' performance. To make observations more systematic, L2 teachers must plan their observations to decide what to observe, when, and how often to observe. Then, teachers have to think about how to record

their observations to ensure consistency of observations for all students. To record observations, teachers can use checklists, anecdotal records or rubrics (NCDPI, 1999).

Given the recent technological advances—mainly the ChatGPT, it is important to rethink L2 learning assessment, selecting from this long list of assessment tools that fit specific learning contexts. Alternative assessment widens the spectrum of evaluation and helps assessors get a comprehensive picture of students' overall language competence that reflect everyday learning situations (Opp-Beckman & Klinghammer, 2006; Moqbel & Al-kadi, 2020; Phongsirikul, 2018). AA is not limited to one method or technique but includes many forms and techniques ranging from simple tools (e.g., checklists) to long and complex ones that may take a semester or a year (e.g., portfolios). With this variation of tools, assessment should be part of the learning process rather than a predetermined summative assessment based on which success and failure in a program are traditionally determined.

Implications

ChatGPT, construed as a cheat facilitator, heightens the importance of AAs. It provides new directions for language learners' competence assessment, representing their progress towards instructional goals and meaningful instructional activities. That said, there should be a shift from purely quantitative assessment to a mixture of qualitative and quantitative assessment focusing on students' essential content synthesis rather than assessing the learning product. To realise this, there should be a corresponding change in the teaching and learning process – a change that aligns with the digital technology assimilated to many daily activities that shape today's learners' lives. Given the tremendous potential of ChatGPT, this paper implies that teachers, besides familiarity with AAs, should be able to differentiate between Chat-GPT-generated and human-written products. L2 teachers can even use ChatGPT to generate assessment exercises for their students or measure their language competence while conversing with ChatGPT.

This implies a need for teachers with a ChatGPT mindset— teachers who devise state-of-the-art assessment tools instead of banning ChatGPT in their teaching or continuing with traditional assessment tool. They are supposed to be sensitized to the policies and the ethical use of ChatGPT and the consequences of academic misconduct. This also implies an overall shift in the teaching paradigm, which requires educators and education policymakers to revisit L2 pedagogy in their institutions and direct it toward more advanced modes that correspond well to the new pedagogies of projects implementing informal and personalized learning. Only when such shifts occur can we expect a change in the assessment procedures.

This brief account of assessment alternatives has implications for further Chat-GPT-based assessment topics. Each AA tool in this paper could be singled out for detailed exploration. This theoretical account might provide the impetus for more research on ChatGPT in terms of assessing second and foreign languages, attitudes and perceptions of teachers and students toward ChatGPT, and its impact on students' learning and teaching under certain conditions.

Conclusion

AI applications in language learning and teaching have increased in parallel to new learning models and modes. Recently, ChatGPT has directed attention towards more reliable and valid assessment tools that gauge learning outcomes— humans' outcomes, not the machine-enabled performance generated by ChatGPT and other similar AI tools. The preliminary findings about ChatGPT in L2 education indicate that such a language chatbot is expected to invade academia and mislead educators when assessing learning outcomes. Besides teaching strategies involving ChatGPT, foreign language teachers may want to vary their assessment tools instead of the long-established testing approach. Given the affordances that ChatGPT has made accessible at low cost, teachers must reimagine and reform their

traditional assessment practices and adopt AAs, mostly practice-oriented assessments that minimize heavy reliance on ChatGPT. Teachers may employ ChatGPT that fed on big data, which has become a necessity, to collect information about their students' achievements and weaknesses, learning modes and strategies in such a way that helps them select proper AA tools. The entire learning and teaching process should be redesigned and re-assessed through AAs that bring in learners' formal and informal learning— learning occurs inside and outside the classroom and becomes inseparable from learners' overall abilities and performance. Educational policy-makers, teaching designers, and classroom/online teachers should realize the potential of AI for innovative assessment in correspondence to the tremendous technological advances that have already reshaped many life aspects, including L2 pedagogy.

Disclosure Statement:

We (the authors of this paper) hereby declare that research ethics and citing principles have been considered in all the stages of this paper. Thus, we take full responsibility for the content of the paper in case of dispute.

Ethics Statement

We confirm that the manuscript has been created by the authors and not an AI tool/Large Language Model (LLM). We are fully responsible for the content of the manuscript and are thus liable for any breach of publication ethics.

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