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Table of Contents:

Book Reviews

Foreword

We are happy to present another issue with a varied array of papers from a wide variety of settings and cultures. The longer I have been involved in AEJ editing, the more I have come to realize how broad the field is and how many different valid approaches can be applied even within one area of interest. The first five papers all investigate vocabulary acquisition, but from very different perspectives and using very different approaches.

Vocabulary papers

Use of bilingual dictionaries is common in many Asian contexts. In *Type of Task and Type of Dictionary in Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition*, Mojtaba Maghsodi investigates the effect of form-oriented comprehension and form-oriented production tasks on incidental vocabulary acquisition in relation to the use of either monolingual or bilingual dictionaries. The result indicated that subjects using monolingual dictionaries (English to English) retained vocabulary better irrespective of the gender or bilinguality of the subjects.

Azadeh Nemati (*Active and Passive Vocabulary Knowledge: The Effect of Years of Instruction*) investigates the relationship between two types of English vocabulary knowledge (passive and controlled active) after different periods of school instruction in an ESL environment. The results showed that although students progressed in active and passive vocabulary knowledge, this progress was not significant for controlled active after years of instruction, while it was significant for passive vocabularies at higher levels. Nemati concludes that there is a need to incorporate more active methods for teaching vocabulary and to use instruments that can better test and activate the active knowledge of students.

In *The Effects of Collocation Instruction on the Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Learning of Taiwanese College English Majors*, Jeng-yih Tim Hsu investigates the impact of explicit collocation instruction on general English proficiency, listening, speaking, writing, reading, and lexical fluency. The findings indicate that collocation instruction improves vocabulary learning and retention more than reading comprehension regardless of academic level.

Faith Brown (*Vocabulary Knowledge and Comprehension in Second Language Text Processing: A Reciprocal Relationship?*) considers the relationship between vocabulary

knowledge and reading comprehension in the reading of expository texts. The findings reveal a reciprocal relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension in this context and underline a need for strategic reading instruction that emphasizes the exploitation of holistic aspects of language such as context to assist learning.

In a study that links culture and vocabulary, Colin McDonald and Scott McRae (*A pre-trial collection and investigation of what perceptions and attitudes of Konglish exist amongst foreign and Korean English language teachers in terms of English education in Korea*) discuss the perceptions that foreign and Korean English teachers have of Konglish in relation to English education in Korea. Konglish refer to English loan words commonly used in Korean. This phenomenon is not unique to Korea and raises interesting issues about teaching English as an international language. McDonald and McCrae help develop an understanding of both groups of teachers' view of Konglish in relation to issues of identity and ownership and discuss the need to make informed judgments concerning the exploitation of Konglish in the classroom.

Other papers

Another important cultural issue is addressed by Indika Liyanage, Peter Grimbeek, & Fiona Bryer in *Relative cultural contributions of religion and ethnicity to the language learning strategy choices of ESL students in Sri Lankan and Japanese high schools*. They consider the relationship between ethnicity and religion on the use of metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective strategies. In a composite sample of four ethnic groups: Sinhalese, Tamil, Sri Lankan Muslim, and Japanese which included Buddhists, Muslims and Hindus, they found that choices of learning strategies appeared to be associated with religious rather than ethnic identity. Naturally this is a very sensitive issue and the authors point out that care must be taken about drawing categorical conclusions about the extent to which language learning strategies might be cultural in nature and the need to allow for specific preferences associated with learners' ethno-religious affiliations.

In *Teacher Questions in Second Language Classrooms: An Investigation of Three Case Studies*, Chi Cheung Ruby Yang investigates the effects of the types of questions teachers ask on students' discourse. This study emphasizes that it is the students' responses that are more important than the questions and that one cannot be studied without the other. In the teacher training context Yang underlines the need to develop the ability to follow up responses with moves that encourage students to expand and develop their responses.

Mansoor Tavakoli, in *Investigating the relationship between self-assessment and teacher-assessment in academic contexts: A Case of Iranian university students,*

investigates the relationship between performance testing and alternative assessment. The findings appear to indicate that self-assessment can be conducted reliably and that authenticity is enhanced by using such alternative approaches.

Long Van Nguyen (*Computer Mediated Collaborative Learning within a Communicative Language Teaching Approach: A Sociocultural Perspective*) discusses the roles of computer mediated collaborative learning within a communicative language teaching approach. Nguyen concludes that CMCL is capable of resolving some issues related to the CLT approach in the Vietnamese language classroom. We feel that this study is of relevance in other Asian contexts.

Lisha Wang (*An Investigation of the Current State of College Teachers' Teaching Quality and Teacher Development*) identifies mismatches between teachers' practice and the theories underlying their practice in the current college English education process in China. Wang suggests the promotion of educational reform by encouraging reflective teaching and the combined use of teaching practice and research.

Roger Nunn,
Chief Editor

Type of Task and Type of Dictionary in Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition

Mojtaba Maghsodi

Abstract

In this study, the effect of form-oriented comprehension and form-oriented production tasks on incidental vocabulary acquisition in terms of using either monolingual or bilingual dictionaries and also considering the gender and the bilingual nature of the subjects was investigated. To meet the aim, 161 Iranian EFL university students were invited to read a text including twelve unknown target words and complete the above-mentioned tasks. The subjects were informed that they were allowed to consult the pre-assigned dictionaries in order to look up the meaning of the target items. The results of the immediate and delayed vocabulary tests revealed that subjects using monolingual dictionaries (English to English) yielded better results in retention of the words irrespective of gender and bilinguality of the subjects.

Keywords: Incidental words, Retention, bilingual nature and gender.

1. Background

The crucial role that lexis plays in second or foreign language learning and teaching has been

repeatedly acknowledged in theoretical and empirical vocabulary research. Hence, Singleton (2007) states that "the major challenge of learning and using a language -whether as L1 or as L2- lies not in the area of broad syntactic principles, but in the 'nitty-gritty' of the lexicon" (Singleton as cited in Murcia, 2007), an idea also shared by Hunt and Beglar (2005), who argue that "the heart of language comprehension and use is the lexicon" (p. 2). Other authors have gone even further in arguing that "the single most important task facing language learners is acquiring a sufficiently large vocabulary" (Lewis, 2000, p.8), or that "the most striking differences between foreign learners and native speakers is in the quantity of words each group possesses" (Laufer, 1998, p.255).

In the early stages of instructed foreign language acquisition, students mainly learn a few thousand high frequency words. Such words occur so frequently in the teaching materials to which they are exposed that many are easily acquired. However, a vocabulary size of 2000 words is inadequate for functional language proficiency. To take reading as an example, estimates of the number of words required for understanding specialized texts vary, but there is general consensus that 5,000 base words is a minimal requirement (Laufer, 1997; Nation, 1990) while for non-specialized academic reading a wider range of vocabulary is considered necessary (Groot, 1994; Hazenberg & Hulstijn, 1996). Incidental acquisition of these words is only possible to some extent, because they do not occur often enough in the foreign language learning material.

There is no doubt that virtually all second language learners and their teachers are well aware of the fact that learning an additional language involves the learning of large numbers of words (Avila & Sadoski, 1996; Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001), but how to accomplish this task is often of great concern to them. How vocabulary is acquired and the most efficient means to promote effective acquisition have been areas of unease in the field of second language acquisition (De La Fuente, 2002, p.82). All in all, they all place emphasis on the fact that

mastery of vocabulary is an essential component of second language acquisition.

Most research to date underlines high correlations between measures of reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge and indicates that gains in one relate to gains in the other (Beck, McKeown & Omanson, 1987). Reading is seen as the major vehicle for vocabulary acquisition and related L2 research confirms that introducing a reading 'flood' where learners are motivated and focused on meaning leads to measurable gains in vocabulary knowledge. A good deal of vocabulary learning through reading is apparently 'incidental' in the sense, that normally there is neither instructional manipulation nor an intention to learn words on the part of the learner (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Krashen, 1989 as cited in Wesche & Paribakht, 1999).

1.2. Incidental and Intentional Vocabulary Acquisition

Although it seems difficult to guess the meaning of all unknown words from the context, people do manage to learn vocabulary in both their native and foreign languages. The question that arises at this point, then, is how does this process take place? One view is that learning can be divided into incidental learning and intentional learning. Intentional vocabulary acquisition involves memorizing straightforward terms with their respective translations from a list. Learning is quick and therefore, usually preferred by learners, but it is also superficial. Learners encounter vocabulary in an isolated, often infinitive form and remain incapable of using it correctly in context. Didactically recommendable vocabulary acquisition exposes learners comprehensively to every term, embedding them deeply and solidly in the mental lexicon. Incidental vocabulary acquisition, through contextual deduction in target language reading, meets these recommendations. Learners encounter terms together with syntactic information, which helps them to use words accurately in an idiomatic way, in different aspects and hence engrains them in the learners' minds. Nation

(2001) defines learning from context as:

> the incidental learning of vocabulary from reading or listening to normal language use while the main focus of the learners' attention is on the message of the text. Learning from context thus includes learning from extensive reading, learning from taking part in conversations, and learning from listening. Learning from context does not include deliberately learning words and their definitions or translations even if these words are presented in isolated sentence contexts (Nation, 2001, pp.232-233).

1.3. Type of dictionary: Bilingual or monolingual?

There are three types of dictionaries; bilingual, monolingual, and bilingualized. These can be found in either paper or electronic form. Both bilingual and monolingual dictionaries have their unique strengths and weaknesses for developing vocabulary knowledge.

Hunt & Beglar, (2005) believe that apart from having short and easy-to-understand definitions, the strengths of bilingual dictionaries lie in the fact that:

a) they can improve the reading comprehension of lower proficiency L2 learners

b) they assist vocabulary learning at all levels of proficiency

c) they encourage translation

d) they foster one-to-one precise correspondence at the word level between two languages.

However, the insufficiencies of these kinds of dictionaries relate to the limited information they provide of L2 words, and more problematically, the focus on LI and L2 equivalents which gives learners the wrong message that there are perfect equivalents in two languages,

thereby failing to raise awareness that different languages may have different semantic and stylistic characteristics.

Monolingual learners' dictionaries can be used to build and elaborate a learner's vocabulary knowledge using up-to-date and reliable sentence examples drawn from corpus data that provide information about meaning and grammar. Generally, the monolingual entry can also provide more detailed and precise information about idiomatic usage, common collocations and connotations.

The main disadvantage of these kinds of dictionaries is that students who are less proficient in the L2 may not be able to benefit much from them. Nevertheless, "most authors agree that the advantage of the monolingual English learner's dictionary in terms of its reliance on the target language outweighs the disadvantage [....] and the deliberately sought semantic, grammatical and stylistic explicitness allows-even encourages-productive activities" (Hartmann, 1992, p. 153).

Since a combination of the good features of both types of dictionaries can help to clarify to some extent the aforementioned weaknesses, *bilingualized compromise dictionaries* came into existence. A bilingualized entry typically includes L2 definitions, L2 sentence information and L1 synonyms of the headword. These combination type dictionaries essentially provide translations, in addition to, the good features of monolingual dictionaries.

Using bilingualized dictionaries is more efficient than using separate bilingual and monolingual dictionaries. They are more flexible. Beginning and intermediate learners can rely on the L1 translation and advanced learners can concentrate more on the L2 part of the entry (Gu, 2003; Hunt & Beglar, 2005; Laufer & Hadar, 1997).

Researchers are interested in investigating the role dictionaries play in the learning of second or foreign language vocabulary. The lively debate amongst language teachers has

always been whether dictionaries should be used in foreign language classrooms, and if so, what *type* of dictionaries should be used. Presently, there is a common view that EFL teachers should discourage students from consulting dictionaries because students' extensive dictionary use can lead to word for word reading (Chin, 1999, p.3).

In the words of Chun & Plass (1996) and Lyman-Hager & Davis (1996), one of the most common word-focused activities used during reading is consulting a gloss or a dictionary. Glosses and dictionaries are used by learners to facilitate comprehension, but their use can contribute to small increments in vocabulary learning as well. For example, Luppescu & Day (1993) found that students using a dictionary during reading gained higher scores on a post-test than those who did not.

2. The study

2.1. Aim

The aim of the present study is to explore the impact of bilingual and monolingual dictionaries on the retention of unfamiliar words irrespective of types of tasks, (i.e. *message-oriented* and *form-oriented* tasks). The other purposes of the current study are to characterize the interaction between gender and bilinguality of the subjects and retention of unknown words. The present researcher's objectives are therefore to find out whether different kinds of dictionaries affect incidental vocabulary acquisition and if they do, to explain which of these associates with positive consequences in retention of unfamiliar words.

2.2. Subjects

The researcher in this study used non-probability sample designs (Cohen, 1998) to select the student population for this study. More specifically, 'quota sampling', which is the non-

probability equivalent of stratified sampling (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1981), was used. In order to ensure representativeness of the sample, in relation to the population, students' field of study was used as an important criterion for sampling. The subjects were 161 Iranian EFL university students, selected from a pool of over 300 students in Teacher Training Center (TTC), public and Payamnoor universities. The potential moderator variables such as age and gender were controlled. The subjects were both male and female and their ages ranged from 22 to 28 years. They were all undergraduates majoring in the English language.

It is worth noting that of the original cohort, the data from twenty-three subjects were excluded as a result of being absent for the delayed post-test. The final sample size was 138. The participants were finally categorized into two groups: Group A (87 male/female monolinguals), who were able to use just Persian as a language at home or external to that; Group B (74 male/female bilinguals) who used Turkish and Persian as a first and second language respectively. Subjects were randomly assigned to use either monolingual or bilingual dictionaries

2.3. Materials

2.3.1. Reading passage

To ensure that the reading passage was an appropriate one in terms of text difficulty level that would allow general comprehension, some passages were randomly selected and then a readability formula was run afterward to obtain an index of readability for them. The mean index turned out to be 22.83. The readability formula, after studying many texts, was then run for the above-mentioned texts, which turned out to be 23.7 and seemed quite suitable for the purpose of this study.

As the aim of the present study was to stimulate vocabulary retention following the use of

dictionary resources, careful consideration was given to the length and density of unknown vocabulary in the text. Hu and Nation (2000) suggest that the learner may reach an adequate comprehension level of a text at a density of 98% known vocabulary, but that in the intensive reading of short passages, less than 95% coverage may be suitable for developing language and the use of reading strategies. The text used in the present study, therefore, included 91% of words, which were assumed to be familiar to the learners. This density was regarded as being at an appropriate level to enable the learners to be sufficiently challenged so as to want to use the dictionary resources.

2.3.2. Target words

The text contained twelve words, including four nouns, four adjectives and four verbs, all of which were unlikely to be familiar to the subjects. This was verified in a pilot test in which fourteen students of a similar English proficiency who had not participated in the experiment were asked to underline any words in the passage that they did not know the meaning of. The twelve target words were the only words that were underlined in the text and the students were requested to focus on them. These words were *indigenous, arduous, boisterous, stunning, affability, dusk, itinerary, remuneration, resurrects, toiling, squander* and *saunter.*

2.3.3. Tasks

The researcher introduced two tasks. Each task drew the subjects' attention to each of the twelve target words in a different manner. The researcher encouraged the subjects to clear up any doubts they had in completing the tasks, and were provided with the necessary information to assist with this.

In task 1, the learners had to select the meaning of underlined words from four options,

which were high frequency words. Example 1 illustrates this task:

1- *In line 3 <u>arduous</u> means…………. .*

a) kind   b)strict   c) hard   d) observable

   As can be seen from this task, attention is drawn to the word itself, rather than to the context surrounding it. Hence, this task is called a *form-oriented task.*

   In task 2, a synonym or paraphrase of the practiced word was provided and the learners had to select its corresponding word form from four options, which consisted of the correct target word and three distracters selected from the twelve target words. This task is called a *form-oriented production* task. Example 2 illustrates this task:

2- *Which word means <u>to waste</u>?*

a) itinerary   b) arduous   c) saunter   d) squander

2.4. Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. Do learners acquire different numbers of words using monolingual or bilingual dictionaries as reflected in the result of an immediate test (a), and as reflected in the result of a delayed test (b)?

2. Is there differential gain for mono and bilinguals after intervention in immediate and delayed post-tests?

3. Is there differential gain for male and female subjects after intervention in immediate and delayed post-tests?

2.5. Procedure

In the process of carrying out the study, the researcher took the following procedures to achieve its objectives. All the procedures including the development of the background questionnaire, pre-test, reading for general meaning, task performance, immediate post-test, delayed post-test and their administration are explained in detail below:

In the first step of the research, a background questionnaire was developed in order to elicit some personal information from subjects on their bi / monolingual status, gender and age. On the basis of their answers to item 6 ('The language or languages that you use in and out of home') in the questionnaire, the subjects were first divided into two groups; *monolingual*-if a subject was able to use just Persian in communication whether at home or external to that, he/she was classified as a monolingual, and *bilingual*- if a subject was able to use either Turkish (as a first language) or Persian (as a second language) in communication, he /she was classified as a bilingual. A pre-test was then administered in which twelve words were listed in alphabetical order and participants were asked to give the meanings of any words they knew in English or Persian. In the third step, a text in which the target words were inserted in bold font was given to the subjects to read so as to understand the general meaning of the text. After a couple of minutes, the subjects, who were randomly assigned to use either bilingual or monolingual dictionaries, were asked to complete the respective tasks. It may be worth mentioning that the subjects were informed that in the event of any difficulties with the meanings of the target words, they were requested to consult dictionaries they were provided with in order to ascertain their meanings. The subjects were prohibited from writing the meanings of the target words in their notebook or on a piece of paper while

they were completing the tasks, since the aim of the present study was to test retention of incidental words while using mono or bilingual dictionaries.

Once the tasks were completed, the subjects were to give the meaning of each word either in English or Persian immediately in a so-called immediate post-test. Hence incidental acquisition of vocabulary was operationalized in the study as the ability to recall a word's meaning in L1 or L2. The above test was repeated 10 days later without advanced warning in order to check the retention of the words in a delayed post-test.

2.6. Data analysis

Having collected all data from the pre-tests, immediate and delayed post-tests, SPSS for Windows (version 14-evaluation version) was employed to calculate the impact of type of dictionary use, gender and bilingualism on the retention of incidental words. As mentioned previously, the main aim of this study was to identify how many of these twelve target words could be retained by the subjects. Therefore, a score of 0 was given for an incorrect or unattempted answer and a score of 1 was given for a correct answer. Spelling and minor grammatical errors such as punctuation were disregarded as the main focus of the study was on the ability to recall the meaning of a word.

Having administered the pre-test, those subjects who knew more than two target words were excluded. Therefore, in the event there were subjects who knew two words, their scores were adjusted accordingly by converting them from 10 (instead of 12) to a percentage grade. The immediate and delayed post-tests provided data on incidental learning of the target words. The maximum raw score on each of the tests could be 12 if all twelve words had been retained.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The first hypothesis

*Learners acquire different numbers of words using monolingual or bilingual dictionaries (a) as reflected in the result of an immediate test, and (b) as reflected in the result of a delayed test.

Before subjecting the data to repeated measure ANOVA to establish matching and randomization group, an independent sample 't' test was employed to see whether two groups differ from each other. The 't'-test revealed a non-significant value ('t' =.158; P<.876), confirming the matching of groups in the pre-test situation.

A significant increase in the mean scores was observed from pre to immediate post-test situations (F=206.620) and a decrease from immediate post to delayed post-test conditions was observed irrespective of the groups. In the pre-test, the mean score was 0.56, which was increased to 10.26 in the immediate post-test and later decreased to 6.74. However, when group-wise changes were verified, again differential changes were observed for the 'English to Persian' and the 'English to English' groups, which was statistically significant (F=6.129; P<. 004). From the mean values, it is evident that in the 'English to Persian' group, the pre-test mean score was 0.58, which was increased to 10.83 in the immediate post-test and later decreased to 5.83. In the case of the 'English to English' group, the pre-test mean score was 0.53, which was increased to 10.15 in the immediate post-test and later decreased to 7.47. From Table 1 and Figure 1, it is clear

that retention was better in the 'English to English' group than the 'English to Persian' one.

Table 1

Mean scores of mono and bilingual subjects in different groups for pre, immediate post and delayed post-tests.

GROUPS	LINGUALITY	Conditions					
		Pre		Immediate Post		Delayed post	
E to P		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
	Mono	0.50	0.58	10.75	1.26	3.25	1.50
	Bi	0.63	0.74	10.88	1.36	7.13	2.90
	Total	0.58	0.67	10.83	1.27	5.83	3.10
E to E	Mono	0.67	1.12	9.89	2.80	7.56	3.64
	Bi	0.33	0.52	9.67	2.73	7.33	2.80
	Total	0.53	0.92	9.80	2.68	7.47	3.23
Total	Mono	0.62	0.96	10.15	2.41	6.23	3.70
	Bi	0.50	0.65	10.36	2.06	7.21	2.75
	Total	0.56	0.80	10.26	2.19	6.74	3.22

E to P = English to Persian   E to E=English to English

Table 2

Results of repeated measure ANOVA for mean scores of mono and bilingual subjects in

different groups for pre, immediate post and delayed post-tests

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
CHANGE	1181.660	2	590.830	206.620	.000 (HS)
CHANGE * GROUP	35.050	2	17.525	6.129	.004 (HS)
CHANGE * LINGUALITY	14.800	2	7.400	2.588	.086 (NS)
CHANGE * GROUP * LINGUALITY	13.949	2	6.974	2.439	.098 (NS)
Error (CHANGE)	131.537	46	2.860		

Note: HS-Highly significant; NS-Non-significant

Figure1

Mean scores of subjects in different groups for pre, immediate post and delayed post-tests
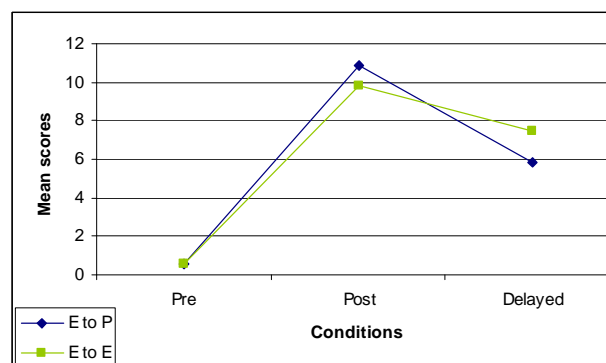
3.2 The second hypothesis

There is differential gain for mono and bilinguals after intervention in immediate and delayed post-tests:

The interaction effects between change of scores with linguality (mono and bilinguals)

(F=2.588; P<.086) and change with respect to groups and linguality (F=2.439; P<.098) were found to be insignificant, revealing that linguality had no influence.

3.3 The third hypothesis

There is differential gain for male and female subjects after intervention in immediate and delayed post-tests:

As far as the influence of gender is concerned, a non-significant F value was observed (F=2.642; P<.082) indicating that gender did not have an influence on change in the scores from pre to immediate and to delayed post-tests. In other words, the change from pre- to immediate and to delayed post-tests was similar for male and female subjects. Finally, the interaction effect between change with group and gender was also found to be non-significant (F=0.641; P<. 531 see table 4).

Table 3

Mean scores of male and female subjects in different groups for pre, immediate post and delayed post-tests

GROUPS	Gender	Conditions					
		Pre		Immediate Post		Delayed post	
E to P		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
	Male	0.80	0.84	11.60	0.55	7.80	3.11
	Female	0.43	0.53	10.29	1.38	4.43	2.37
	Total	0.58	0.67	10.83	1.27	5.83	3.10
E to E	Male	1.17	1.17	10.00	2.19	8.67	2.80

	Female	0.11	0.33	9.67	3.08	6.67	3.39
	Total	0.53	0.92	9.80	2.68	7.47	3.23
Total	Male	1.00	1.00	10.73	1.79	8.27	2.83
	Female	0.25	0.45	9.94	2.43	5.69	3.11
	Total	0.56	0.80	10.26	2.19	6.74	3.22

Table 4

Results of repeated measure ANOVA for mean scores of mono and bilingual subjects in different groups for pre, immediate post and delayed post-tests

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
CHANGE	1261.132	2	630.566	210.481	.000 (HS)
CHANGE * GROUP	23.000	2	11.500	3.839	.029 (HS)
CHANGE * Gender	15.830	2	7.915	2.642	.082 (NS)
CHANGE * GROUP * Gender	3.840	2	1.920	0.641	.531 (NS)
Error (CHANGE)	137.808	46	2.996		

Note: HS-Highly significant; NS-Non-significant

4. Conclusion

In this article, the researcher examined incidental vocabulary acquisition from reading a text and performing two tasks, which required some focus on unfamiliar words in the text. Acquisition was defined as recall of a word's meaning. The purpose of this study was to find out whether completion task type in respect of using different kinds of dictionaries affected

incidental vocabulary acquisition or not. Specifically, the researcher compared bilingual and monolingual learners with different genders. In each task, learners had to look up unfamiliar target words either in bilingual or monolingual dictionaries. The subjects were randomly assigned to use either bilingual or monolingual dictionaries. The findings of this research indicate that the completion of form-oriented comprehension and form-oriented production tasks through the use of bilingual or monolingual dictionaries led to some vocabulary learning. As previously indicated, a significant increase in the mean scores from pre- to immediate and to post-tests and a decrease from immediate post to delayed post-tests was observed, meaning that those subjects who were assigned to use a monolingual dictionary had better retention of incidental vocabulary.

However, it should be noted that the findings are not new, but they do echo the findings of other studies such as Laufer & Hulstijn's (2001), Hill & Laufer's (2003) and Diab & Hamdan's (1999), which show that learners, who read a text and perform a task, which requires the fulfillment of tasks on the new words, including looking up the words in a dictionary, do consequently remember some of these words.

5.1. Implications

It is hoped that the findings of this study will shed some light on the grey areas regarding the types of dictionaries and their impact on incidental vocabulary acquisition. It is believed that the awareness of different degrees of impact on monolingual and bilingual dictionary use on incidental vocabulary acquisition can sensitize teacher training centers, and more importantly, motivate teachers to encourage their learners to use monolingual dictionaries when looking up unknown items as opposed to bilingual dictionaries.

Acknowledgements

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Active and Passive Vocabulary Knowledge: The Effect of Years of Instruction

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Abstract: The present study investigated the relationship between two types of English vocabulary knowledge i.e. passive and controlled active, after different years of school instruction in an ESL environment. To carry out the study The Level Test for passive vocabulary size and Controlled Active Vocabulary Test were distributed amongst 100 Indian ESL learners at 5 different consequent standards (8 to 12). The results of the whole sample (**r**=.415) and at different frequency levels showed that active and passive vocabulary knowledge were correlated to each other well, considering the point that the size of passive vocabulary was always greater than the controlled active. Furthermore, because of the ESL English environment, the ratio between these two types of knowledge increased from lower to higher levels. It was also found that although students progressed in active and passive vocabulary knowledge, this progress was not significant for controlled active after years of instruction, while it was significant for passive vocabularies at higher levels. The most important implication of the present study was that in order to reduce the gap between active and passive vocabulary knowledge there is a need to incorporate more active methods for teaching vocabulary and the use of instruments that can better test and activate the active knowledge of students.

Keywords: Passive Vocabulary, Controlled Active, Vocabulary Level Test, ESL Learners, Size of Vocabulary, Depth of Vocabulary.

Introduction

There are a number of dimensions, i.e. size and depth, vocabulary competence and knowledge, receptive and productive or passive and active, inherited in the concept 'word', some of which are often neglected in teaching. There are even some tests, i.e. Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (Paribakht, & Wesche, 1997), employed to assess these dimensions. In an investigation Zareva, Schwanenflugel and Nikolov (2005) worked on the three categories of lexical knowledge i.e. partial vs. precise, shallow vs. deep and receptive vs. productive, to see which dimension was more revealing of the overall state of learners' vocabulary knowledge at different proficiency levels.

Regarding vocabulary competence and knowledge Nation (1990) believes that knowing a word means being familiar with the spoken form, written form, grammatical pattern, collocations, frequency, appropriateness, meaning, concept and associations of that particular word. There is yet another dimension in vocabulary which is often termed as 'receptive' and 'productive' or 'passive' and 'active' vocabulary. Usually, these two sets of terms are defined in relation to the language skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing. An individual's active vocabulary includes words which are used in speech and writing. Contrarily, one's passive vocabulary embodies those which are understood as they occur in reading materials or while hearing something.

The educational system in India

India's educational system up to university level consists of ten standards preceded by Lower Kindergarten (LKG) and Upper Kindergarten (UKG) and followed by two years of Pre-University College (PUC). There are two broad categories of schools labeled as 'public' and 'private' and there are two different types of syllabi namely 'Central Board Syllabus' and 'State Board Syllabus' of which the former is the same throughout India and the latter is

specific to each State and thus varies from one State to another. Public schools are divided into two classes based on the medium of instruction, i.e. English medium and those in which the State's standard language (for example, Kannada in Karnataka, Tamil in Tamil Nadu, etc.) functions as the medium of instruction.

In English medium schools in Karnataka, whether public or private, all subjects are taught in English and as the students go to higher standards they must select a second and third language as well. The second language will be the standard language of that State, i.e. Kannada in State of Karnataka, and the third language to be selected could be either Sanskrit or Hindi.

In Karnataka, all Kannada medium schools are public schools. In such schools English is taught only as a subject, from standards 4 onward and alongside other subjects. In higher standards, 8 and above, students are exposed to the third language that could be either Hindi or Sanskrit. There is still another type of school in Karnataka where the medium is Urdu, and Kannada is selected only as a subject alongside other subjects. This type of school is mainly targeted at Moslem children.

Objectives of the study

Given the fact that the relationship and integration of passive/active vocabulary of learners is one of a whole host of areas in need of investigation the present study intended to find answers to the following questions:

1) Is there any relationship between students' active and passive vocabulary knowledge in the whole sample considered together?

2) Is there any relationship between active and passive vocabulary knowledge of the whole sample at different frequency vocabulary levels, i.e. 2000, 3000, 5000 and Academic?

3) Does the ratio of active to passive vocabulary knowledge vary with years of instruction?

4) Will years of instruction (different standards) make a significant difference in active or passive vocabulary knowledge of participants?

Literature review

To assess active and passive vocabulary, different tests have already been proposed. The Vocabulary Level Test was devised by Nation (1990) to assess learners' breadth of lexical knowledge and can also be used as a measure of passive vocabulary. Nation's Test comprises words of different frequency levels. According to him, there are around 54,000 word families in English. This is while native speakers roughly add 1,000 word families per year to their vocabulary size. Regarding the size of vocabulary, researchers have more or less the same idea since August et al. (2005) also reported that children are said to learn approximately 800 to 900 roots a year up to 12 years old and have a 5000 to 7000 vocabulary repertoire in their L1 before they enter school. This means that a five year old beginning school will have a vocabulary of around 4,000 to 5,000 word families.

In terms of a second language learner the situation is quite different. According to Nation and Waring (1997), learners need to know a minimum of 3,000 or so high frequency words because it provides coverage of at least 95 percent of a running text. In addition, they argued that teachers should first focus on these high frequency words, then they should focus on helping the learners develop some strategies such as guessing from context, mnemonic techniques and analyzing word parts or even use vocabulary cards to remember words and comprehend and learn the low frequency words of the language. Later, the active version of that test was made by Laufer and Nation (1999) which is a reliable, valid and practical measure of vocabulary growth. Learners' receptive or passive vocabulary is larger than their productive or active vocabulary. This type of passive knowledge is what is usually assessed by researchers. Wei (2007), for example, mentioned that the results of the

vocabulary test he used reflected only the students' passive knowledge. What is often overlooked in this is the nature of the relationship between active and passive vocabulary knowledge. Is this relationship consistent for all kinds of words? Does the relationship change over time, and if so how and why?

In a foreign language environment, Laufer (1998) investigated the gain in three types of English vocabulary knowledge i.e., 'passive', 'controlled active' and 'free active' in one year of school instruction. She also examined how these aspects of lexical knowledge are related to one another, and what changes occurred in these relationships after one year of instruction. The conclusion was that the three dimensions of lexical knowledge developed at different rates as learners proceeded in their L2 learning. However, as mentioned by Laufer and Paribakht (1998, p. 370) the study done by Laufer (1998) was conducted only at 2 levels of learners' proficiency. According to them, a clear picture of the passive/active vocabulary relationship should probably emerge from learners' samples with a broader range of vocabulary size. Secondly, the participants she used were only EFL learners whereas Laufer and Paribakht (1998) used both EFL and ESL participants and considered passive, controlled active and free active as well as variables such as passive vocabulary size, language learning context (second or foreign) and knowledge of French. They concluded that, as expected, the passive/active vocabulary gap was smaller in the foreign language than in the L2 context.

Methodology

Participants

Participants in the study comprised 100 ESL learners from a private school in Mysore, State of Karnataka, India. English was the medium of instruction in the school and the participants were from 5 different levels, i.e. 8 to 12, with 20 students in each group. Their age ranged from 13 to 17. All the participants were from a single school and the brief interview with the

Principal revealed that teachers had to attend regular training courses and follow the teaching method introduced. Therefore, the students were exposed to similar, although it could not be labeled as the same, teaching methods and thus teaching methods as an intervening variable was at least partially controlled.

Based on the demographic questionnaire, those whose first language was Kannada (the mother tongue of the State of Karnataka) were selected as participants. They were also within roughly the same socio-economic status. By making the participants as homogenous as possible the effect of English environment was minimized. Moreover, it helped the researcher to hypothesize that changes observed were mostly, if not solely, the results of the dependent variable under study, i.e. years of instruction.

Instruments

In this study, two vocabulary tests were used to measure different dimensions of students' vocabulary knowledge. In addition, some demographic questions regarding students' background were included.

Vocabulary Level Test (Test B)

The test which was originally produced and revised by Nation (1983 & 1990) measures the size of passive vocabulary knowledge of students based on words from five frequency levels, i.e. 2,000, 3,000, 5,000, Academic and 10,000. The vocabulary level test which was used in this study was one of the equivalent forms of the original one revised and validated by Schmitt et al. (2001). In this version, there are 10 clusters at each level, except the Academic vocabulary level which consists of 12 clusters, so in total there are 156 items. It is worth mentioning that the 10.000 word level was not used simply because it was beyond the knowledge of participants of the study, so the total number of items in hand was reduced to 126.

Each frequency level of the test comprises 6 words and 3 definitions. Testees had to match target words with their corresponding definitions as follows:

1 business

2 clock   ____6____ part of a house

3 horse   ____3____ animal with four legs

4 pencil   _____4___ something used for writing

5 shoe

6 wall

This unconventional format was designed to involve as little reading as possible while at the same time minimizing the chance of providing correct answers based on sheer guessing (Read, 2001). Although, for instance, in the above example there are 3 words to be answered by the testees, they need to know 6 words because the test-takers need to check every word against the definitions in order to make correct matches.

Controlled Active Vocabulary (version c)

This test was modeled on the Vocabulary Level Test devised by Laufer and Nation (1999) and measures vocabulary knowledge at the same five frequency bands, but in the passive form. The test has 18 items in each level, 90 items in total while in this study the last 18 items were not used because like the passive vocabulary test these words were very rare and difficult for the students. The above test elicits items in short sentences with items' first few letters provided in order to eliminate other possibilities and test-takers had to provide the missing word in each sentence, for example:

I am glad we had this opp_____ to talk.

The test only bears a limited resemblance to the C-test. In the C-test the second half of words is deleted while the controlled active test provides minimal clues, i.e. one to several of the beginning letters of a target word to elicit target words and eliminate other possibilities

(Laufer, & Paribakht, 1998).

Both the aforementioned tests are available in four parallel versions, but in this study two different versions were used to ensure that similar items would not appear in the two test sets, however they were from the same frequency levels.

Data management and scoring

With the help of school authorities, the researcher administered the tests amongst all 5 different groups of participants at the same time to control the effect of time of administration. The two vocabulary tests were given to students simultaneously during their regular class time. Of course, they were required to answer the passive vocabulary test first so that the students could not take advantage of the sentences of the productive test. Both school authorities and the students were assured that their information would not be disclosed elsewhere and would solely be used for the composition of the present research.

In scoring the passive vocabulary test, each correct answer was given a 1 score, so the maximum score for the first three levels was 30 for each and 36 for the Academic word level which made the whole test score 126.

The test of controlled active comprised the same frequency levels but each level consisted of 18 items so in total the maximum score was 72. The items were marked as correct even where there were some grammatical or spelling mistakes provided that they did not distort the word's whole shape and did not imply other words.

Data analysis

In this section, each of the four research questions raised earlier will be analyzed separately using descriptive and inferential statistics.

To answer research questions 1 and 2, correlation coefficients were computed for active

and passive vocabulary of the whole sample and each separate frequency level (Standards 8-12) the results of which are shown in Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 shows the result of correlation coefficients between controlled active and passive vocabulary of all the participants taken as a single group.

Table 1: Correlation coefficients between controlled active and passive vocabulary of all the participants.

	Active total
Passive total	415** .002

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

   Table 2 also shows the correlation coefficients computed for active and passive scores of the whole sample at each frequency level, i.e. 2000, 3000, 5000 and Academic.

Table 2: Correlation coefficients among different frequency word levels for the whole sample studied.

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	**passive 2000**	-----	.855** .000	.618** .000	.711** .000	.291* .040	.272 .059	.377** .007	.331* .019
2	**Passive 3000**		-----	.834** .000	.872** .000	.351* .013	.288* .043	.446** .001	.379** .007
3	**Passive 5000**			-----	.932** .000	.251 .079	.242 .091	.445* .001	.410** .003
4	**Passive Academic**				-----	.365** .009	.309* .029	.463** .001	.446** .001
5	**Active 2000**					-----	.723** .000	.579** .000	.598** .000
6	**Active 3000**						-----	.807** .000	.684** .000
7	**Active 5000**							-----	.895** .000
8	**Active Academic**								-----

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

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

These two tables show that active and passive vocabulary are positively correlated at different levels. The correlation coefficients computed for the 2000, 3000, 5000 and Academic levels are 0.291, 0.288, 0.445 and 0.446 respectively. This correlation increases as we move towards higher word levels like 5000 and Academic word levels where we deal with low frequency words.

Table 3: The results of active/passive ratio computed for different standards (years of instruction).

Levels	8th standard	9th standard	10th standard	11th standard	12th standard
Ratio active/passive	18.92	20.27	22.43	23.83	24.43

Table 3 answers the third research question of the study which dealt with whether the ratio (active size/passive size $\times$ 100) of the active to passive vocabulary knowledge varied at different standards. Based on Tables 2 and 3 above, active and passive vocabulary is correlated but each group has a different ratio of active/passive vocabulary knowledge. An overview of Table 3 indicates that the ratio increases from 8 to 12 Standards. This means that the gap between two types of knowledge has decreased at higher levels of language proficiency.

Based on correlation and ratio one can conclude that learners who have a higher passive vocabulary size are those who also have a higher controlled active vocabulary size. This means that students have improved although as Table 4 shows the mean of passive vocabulary is larger than that of active vocabulary.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics between active and passive vocabulary of the whole sample.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Active total	17.4706	11.66594	100
Passive total	86.0588	31.26750	100

Figure 1 is indicative of the fact that all the participants' passive vocabulary is greater in size compared to their active vocabulary. In a similar way the findings
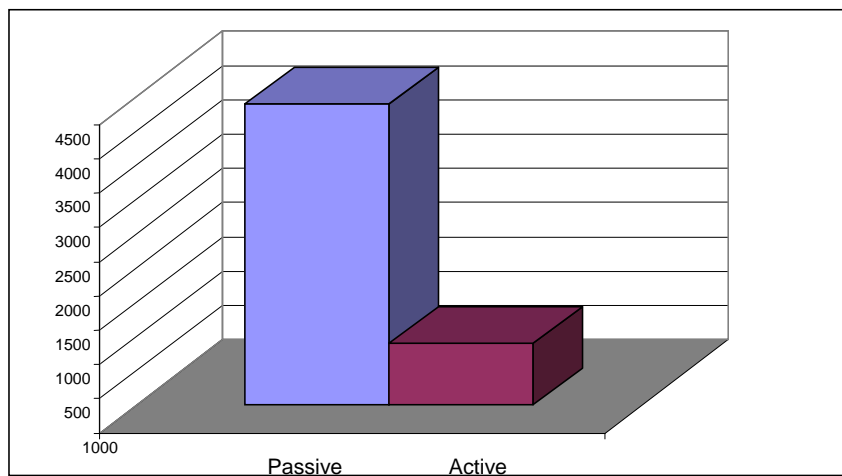

Figure 1: Active and passive vocabulary knowledge of all the participants.

regarding each vocabulary frequency level (Figure 2) reveal that the passive vocabulary is always greater than the active vocabulary in size although the correlation between the two vocabulary types may be different.
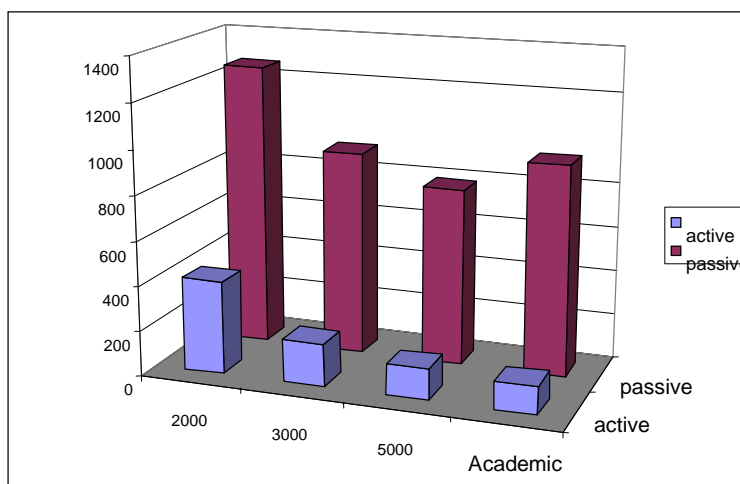
Figure 2: Active and passive vocabulary at different frequency levels.

To answer research question 4 regarding the effect of years of instruction on active and passive vocabulary, the results obtained from one-way ANOVA show that years of instruction has a significant effect on passive vocabulary (F= 2.607; P<.048). In other words, although their active vocabulary also increased it did not increase significantly from one standard to another (F= 2.114; P<.095).

Table 5: The results of one-way ANOVA computed for different standards.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Passive total					
Between groups	8999.480	4	2249.870	2.607	.048
Within groups	38842.700	95	863.171		
Total	47842. 180	99			
Active total					
Between groups	1058.680	4	264.670	2.114	.095
Within groups	5634.200	95	125.204		
Total	6692.880	99			

Using the post hoc Bonferroni test it was shown that there were no significant differences regarding passive vocabulary knowledge between any 2 subsequent standards, rather there was found to be a significant difference between extreme standard levels such as that found between standards 8 and 12.

Discussion and Conclusions

As Crow and Quigley (1985) point out most experts acknowledge the importance of distinguishing between active and passive vocabulary knowledge. However, we still do not know much about the nature of active and passive vocabulary knowledge or their

relationship. This study aimed at clarifying the relationship between these two types of vocabulary knowledge in an L2 environment.

The findings of this study, as shown in Table 4, are in line with ideas of Aitchison (1987), Clark (1993) and Laufer (1998) who stated that one's passive knowledge is much larger than one's active vocabulary. What is of importance here, of course, is the role that could be played by the educational system in reducing the gap between the two vocabulary types. A rough overview of some sample examination papers revealed that most of the items tested the passive knowledge of students rather than their active knowledge. This point, although not one of the objectives of the present paper, could be a good hint for other researchers to analyze in detail the teaching system as well as the evaluation methods used in such schools to find their possible role in intensifying the gap between active and passive vocabulary knowledge. Not long ago vocabulary was quite often, if not solely, taught through passive exercises such as memorizing long lists of words and their translations. This tradition has not yet been left out from our education system.

The greater amount of passive words shows that the majority of the words did not enter the active realm and the situation is even worse in EFL environments. Of course, the fact that passive vocabulary items outnumber the active items does not guarantee that other aspects of vocabulary such as its depth have been improved.

The correlation coefficients and the ratio together showed the changes that happened between active and passive vocabulary after years of instruction. It was found that the ratio increased from lower to higher proficiency levels. The observance of a lower gap between active and passive vocabulary at higher levels is something quite reasonable since the study was conducted in an ESL environment where students have a chance to practice their vocabulary in communication. Hence, the findings of this study are in contrast with Laufer (1998) who worked with EFL learners. She found that after one year of instruction the gap between active and passive vocabulary increased which meant that students did not enter

passive vocabulary to active use at the same rate. The findings of this research are, however, consistent with Laufer and Paribakht (1998), who showed that the gap between the 2 types of vocabulary widened somewhat as EFL learners acquired more vocabulary but for ESL students the gap lessened for learners with advanced levels of passive knowledge.

However, the result of one-way ANOVA revealed that although the gap between passive and active vocabulary decreased and the students had some improvement, years of instruction did not have a significant influence on controlled active vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, the improvement could be because of the environment and not due to the teaching method because as stated by Gairns and Redman (1986) students in an English-speaking country will have far greater exposure to the language and this should help them to use their passive vocabulary more actively. For learners in an EFL environment the degree to use language actively will depend greatly on any contact with the language they might have outside the classroom.

The results of the post hoc Bonferroni test showed that passive vocabulary at 3000 and 5000 levels between 8 and 11 and 9 and 12 were significant. Again it was predictable, since the 2000 level consisted of the most frequently used vocabulary that students used.

It is recommended that different dimensions of vocabulary, i.e. depth and width, be worked on at the same time. Evaluating these aspects by means of different tests is also practical. In teaching vocabulary, it is important to distinguish between active and passive vocabulary to encourage students to also use passive vocabulary actively. If we knew that learners were scoring highly at passive vocabulary tests, we could use some more tasks to activate that vocabulary.

Although evaluation and suitability of exercises and reading texts are somehow difficult, it is still possible through vocabulary profile which is a computer program that performs lexical text analysis proposed by Nation and is nicely complimentary with its Level Test. Through this program and Level Tests, teachers can recognize the level of students and find

suitable texts which are lexically challenging but manageable.

Teaching vocabulary is by far the most unmanageable part of teaching language and in this article the researcher just touched the edge of the iceberg but by considering the new methods of testing and changing the way of teaching and learning great improvements can be achieved. Of course, this study was done in an EFL environment; further studies with different participants and in different environments with different proficiency levels are also recommended.

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The Effects of Collocation Instruction on the Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Learning of Taiwanese College English Majors

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Abstract

Over the past decades, studies of EFL/ESL vocabulary acquisition have pinpointed the importance of collocations in language learning. Most findings showed that general collocational knowledge among EFL learners was insufficient and that collocational knowledge is beneficial for EFL learning, by greatly facilitating language learning, comprehension, and production. Nevertheless, few studies have investigated the impact of explicit collocation instruction on other aspects of EFL learners' general English proficiency, such as listening, speaking, writing, reading, and lexical fluency.

The present study examined the effects of direct collocation instruction on Taiwanese college English majors' reading comprehension and vocabulary learning. Three groups of Taiwanese college English majors were divided according to their academic levels. Each group received (a) a vocabulary pretest, (b) 3 different types of instruction—single-item vocabulary instruction, lexical collocation instruction, and no instruction—in separate classes, (c) a reading comprehension test, and (d) 3 vocabulary recall tests (immediate, 1-week delayed, and 2-week delayed). The quantitative data indicated that (1) the lexical collocation instruction improves the subjects' vocabulary learning more than their reading comprehension across all three academic levels; (2) the treatment of collocation instruction promotes the subjects' performance on the 3 recall tests, outscoring the other two instruction types in the vocabulary retention patterns. This study suggests that direct collocation instruction can be a worthy option for exploration in teaching although more extensive studies need to be carried

out to further support the findings.

1. Introduction

1.1 Collocations

The field of applied linguistics has witnessed a growing concern regarding the role of collocations (DeCarrico, 2001; Richards & Rogers, 2001; Schmitt, 2000; 2002; Zimmerman, 1997). Researchers, pedagogists, and classroom teachers have also attempted to investigate and understand how the acquisition of collocations may affect second language learners. Whether they approached this from a semantic (Firth, 1957; Lombard, 1997; Sinclair, 1991), syntactic (Benson, Benson, & Ilson, 1997; Hausmann, 1999; Howarth, 1998a; Scrivener, 2005), or phraseological (Nattinger & DeCarrico, 1992; Sosa & MacFarlane, 2002; Wray, 2000) perspective, these scholars have reached a consensus—lexical patterns reflected by collocations should not be neglected and collocational knowledge can be a crucial part of native speakers' communicative competence (Fontenelle, 1994; Keshavarz & Salimi, 2007; Moon,1992; Ward,2007; Wray, 2002).

   Recent corpus linguists working along with large size corpora, such as the Brown Corpus, the British National Corpus, and the American National Corpus (Shin & Nation, 2007; Sosa & MacFarlane, 2002), have also shed light on the understanding of collocations as they suggest that collocations are best treated as part of a continuum of strength of word association (McEnery, Xiao, & Tono, 2006; Sinclair, 2003; Thornbury, 2002). On the one end of the multi-word lexical unit continuum is a set of words of low substitutability carrying a single grammatical function; on the other end sits a string of syntactically meaningful co-appearing words which allow certain variations in the components (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999; Nation, 2001; Scrivener, 2005). Nevertheless, in real classroom

practice, collocations are best defined as 'lexical associations between grammatically correct words which co-occur with a high frequency' (Biber, et al., 1999; Lea, 2002; Lewis, 1993; 1997).

In the last two decades, research on English collocations has grown mostly out of EFL settings. Empirical studies of this trend jointly adapted a syntactic approach with which 'lexical collocations/composites' and 'grammatical collocations/composites' (Benson, et al., 1997; Howarth, 1998b) were investigated. These studies can be further divided into four sub-groups according to their foci: (1) assessment of collocational knowledge (e.g., Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Farghal & Obiedat, 1995; Zughoul & Abdul-Fattah, 2003); (2) error analysis of collocations (e.g., Huang, 2001; Liu, 1999a; 1999b; Lombard, 1997; Nesselhauf, 2003); (3) the correlation between collocational competence and language proficiency (e.g., Al-Zahrani, 1998; Hsu, 2007; Hsu & Chiu, 2008; Keshavarz & Salimi, 2007; Sung, 2003; Zhang, 1993); and (4) the effects of collocation instruction on language skills (e.g., 'listening,' Hsu & Hsu, 2007; 'reading,' Lien, 2003). Most findings showed that general collocational knowledge among EFL learners was insufficient. Particularly, when compared with native English speakers' competency, EFL learners were found to have great difficulty in producing appropriate lexical collocations (e.g., 'adjective + noun' collocations, Farghal & Obiedat, 1995; 'restrict collocations,' such as '*blow a fuse*,' a lexical collocation whose constituents are more limited in selection, Huang, 2001; 'verb + noun' collocations, Liu, 1999b). These pioneer researchers call for the explicit teaching of English collocations as they believe collocational knowledge is beneficial for EFL learning.

1.2 Significance of the Present Study

Even with the encouraging findings reported from the existing studies of collocations, few have targeted the impact of explicit collocation instruction on other specific aspects of EFL learners' general English proficiency. Among all, the role of lexical collocations has been at

the center of discussions. 'Lexical collocations' are word-associations in which one word recurrently co-occurs with one or more other words as the only or one of few possible lexical choices. Examples of lexical collocations include '*create a project*' and '*blonde hair.*' 'Grammatical collocations,' in contrast, refer to words identified by their grammatical categories rather than lexical meaning association, such as '*enjoy + Verb + ing*,' and '*look at.*' The present study concentrates on lexical collocations as they constitute the most problematic elements within the continuum of collocations. 'Collocations' and 'lexical collocations' will be used interchangeably henceforth.

In addition, from a methodological perspective, classroom practitioners are eager to know how we can implement the teaching of collocations and what effects this may bring to our EFL students. To date, only two studies, Hsu & Hsu (2007) and Lien (2003), have examined whether the direct teaching of lexical collocations enhances EFL students' general language fluency (i.e., 'listening' and 'reading' respectively). They have also revealed that collocation instruction had positive effects on their learners' language skills. Efforts should be made to conduct follow-up research, presenting a thorough picture of how collocation instruction could benefit other language skills, such as speaking, writing, reading, and vocabulary.

The present study examines the effects of direct collocation instruction on Taiwanese college English majors' reading comprehension and vocabulary learning. Three groups of Taiwanese college English majors were divided according to their academic levels. Each group received (a) a vocabulary pretest, (b) three different types of instruction—single-item vocabulary instruction, lexical collocation instruction, and no instruction—in separate classes, (c) a reading comprehension test, and (d) three vocabulary recall tests (immediate, one-week delayed, and two-week delayed). Research questions addressed by the study are as follows:

1. Are there differences in Taiwanese college English majors' reading comprehension and vocabulary recall tests as a result of single-item vocabulary instruction, lexical collocation instruction, and no instruction?

2. Are there differences in Taiwanese college English majors' reading comprehension and vocabulary recall tests among the three academic levels as a result of single-item vocabulary instruction, lexical collocation instruction, and no instruction?

3. Are there differences in Taiwanese college English majors' vocabulary retention patterns as a result of single-item vocabulary instruction, lexical collocation instruction, and no instruction?

2. Review of Literature

A review of literature finds empirical studies examining particularly the effects of "deliberate vocabulary learning" (Nation & Meara, 2002, p. 41) on Taiwanese college EFL learners' reading as well as lexical fluency. Nation & Meara (2002) make no clear distinction between 'explicit vocabulary teaching' and 'implicit vocabulary teaching' as they list several types of "deliberate vocabulary teaching" (p . 43), including 'collocation activities,' 'pre-teaching of vocabulary,' 'post-listening/reading vocabulary exercises,' 'second-hand cloze,' and 'word detecting practices.' Nevertheless, the explicit-and-implicit dichotomy is often maintained (DeCarrico, 2001; Schmitt, 2000) and adopted in the present study.

Studies of this type were conducted with the presumption that vocabulary learning and reading comprehension interact with and facilitate each other (Carrell & Grabe, 2002; Celce-Murcia, 2001; Ediger, 2001; Huckin & Coady, 1999; Sokmen, 1997). Researchers intentionally added vocabulary learning activities as treatments within an experimental study design to test whether pre-teaching or awareness-raising of vocabulary improved learners' reading and lexical fluency. Such studies were actually designed based on the key principles of L2 vocabulary learning. In one direction, vocabulary size determines the success of reading (Laufer, 1997; Nation, 2001) and "vocabulary knowledge supports reading development" (Grabe & Stoller, 1997, p. 119). In the other direction, reading is considered the most elementary of vocabulary acquisition (Schmitt, 2000) and vocabulary can be

learned through reading for comprehension (Gass, 1999; Nation, 2001). This reciprocal relationship has been recognized and best promoted by a group of scholars, who jointly introduced the recent "lexical approach" (Lewis, 1993, 1997; O'Dell, 1997; Willis, 1990). They claimed that if plentiful exposure and explicit presentation of words and phrases are done systematically and correctly, all the relevant language aspects, (e.g., grammar, reading, listening, speaking, writing, etc.) should then follow (Sinclair & Renouf, 1988; Thornbury, 2002). It is also the purpose of this current study to investigate whether the instruction of 'words' (i.e., 'single vocabulary' and 'lexical collocations' in this case) leads to the development of reading as well as vocabulary learning.

2.1 Effects of Direct Collocation Teaching on the Reading Comprehension of Taiwanese College English Majors: Lien (2003)

Lien (2003) was the first to explore the effects of collocation instruction on reading comprehension. As a teacher-researcher, she designed and carried out a quasi-experimental study at a national university in central Taiwan over a four-week period. Her subjects were 85 Taiwanese college English majors from three academic levels (i.e., sophomores, juniors, and seniors). Before reading three different articles of a similar length and difficulty, the students of three academic levels received three types of instruction —vocabulary instruction, collocation instruction, and no instruction—and took three immediate reading comprehension tests consisting of ten short essay questions each. Lien's employment of a Latin Square (Furlong, Lovelace, & Lovelace, 2000; Winer, Brown, & Michaels, 1991) in Table 1 best illustrates her study design.

Table 1

Latin Square Design for Treatment Arrangement in the study by Lien (2003)

Phase	Level 1 Sophomores	Level 2 Juniors	Level 3 Seniors
Phase I **Article 1**	Vocabulary Instruction	Collocation Instruction	No Instruction
Phase II **Article 2**	Collocation Instruction	No Instruction	Vocabulary Instruction
Phrase III **Article 3**	No Instruction	Vocabulary Instruction	Collocation Instruction

Note. The table is adapted from Lien (2003, p. 87).

Overall, Lien's findings supported that EFL learners' reading comprehension somewhat increased if receiving pre-reading word instruction and their performances on reading comprehension improved along with their academic levels. More specifically, her study results showed that "collocation instruction had more positive effects on the participants' reading comprehension than vocabulary instruction and no instruction" (p. v). However, there was no significant difference observed in the participants' readings comprehension performances among the three academic levels as a result of different instruction even though the sophomores (i.e., the lowest-level subjects) were found to react best after collocation instruction.

2.2 Effects of Vocabulary Glosses on the Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Learning of Taiwanese College Non-English Majors: Cheng (2005)

The other empirical study investigating the effects of deliberate vocabulary learning on Taiwanese college EFL students' language skills was conducted by Cheng (2005) for her Masters thesis. Different from Lien, Cheng adopted an implicit type of vocabulary instruction (Laufer & Osimo, 1991) as she used vocabulary glosses embedded in written texts as a way of raising learners' lexical awareness to assist reading comprehension as well as vocabulary learning.

At a mid-size national university of science and technology in southern Taiwan, Cheng

implemented four kinds of glosses—L1 glosses plus L2 example sentences, L1 in-text glosses, L1 marginal glosses (i.e., 3 experimental groups), and no gloss (i.e., a control group) — with 135 engineering and business students at four fluency levels enrolled in general English courses. In a three-phrase procedure, the four groups took a vocabulary pretest, read texts of a similar difficulty, received a post reading test (i.e., consisting of a reading comprehension and an immediate vocabulary recall test), and furthermore took two delayed vocabulary recall tests. Table 2 presents the treatment and subject arrangements in Cheng's study.

Table 2

Treatment and Subject Arrangements in the study by Cheng (2005)

Experimental Groups			Control Group	Readings
L1 glosses+L2 example sentences	L1 in-text glosses	L1 marginal glosses	No gloss	
Level 4 (7 sts)	Level 4 (5 sts)	Level 4 (8 sts)	Level 4 (7 sts)	Text II
Level 3 (9 sts)	Level 3 (12 sts)	Level 3 (10 sts)	Level 3 (11 sts)	Text I
Level 2 (10 sts)	Level 2 (12 sts)	Level 2 (5 sts)	Level 2 (8 sts)	
Level 1 (8 sts)	Level 1 (9 sts)	Level 1 (7 sts)	Level 1 (7 sts)	

Note 1. The table is adapted from Cheng (2005, p. 48).

Note 2. 'Sts' stands for 'students.'.

Cheng's findings mostly concurred with previous studies on the relationship between vocabulary glosses and reading comprehension as well as vocabulary acquisition (Lee & Good, 2003; Rott, Williams, & Cameron, 2002; Schmidt, 1995). She reported:

1. All the three treatments promoted EFL subjects' vocabulary learning; yet no obvious improvement in reading comprehension was found.

2. With the assistance of 'L1 glosses plus L2 examples' and 'L1 in-text glosses,' the intermediate-level non-English majors (i.e., Level 2 and 3) improved more significantly on their vocabulary learning patterns than the beginning-level and advanced-level

groups (i.e., Level 1 and 4).

3. When analyzed holistically, the subjects' vocabulary learning patterns achieved a peak on the immediate vocabulary recall test, dropped sharply on the first recall test, and returned slightly on the second recall test two weeks after the reading task.

Based on the findings, Cheng suggested that first language glosses should be considered a vocabulary-facilitating activity in helping non-English EFL college students to gain "quick familiarization" (p. v) with their classroom readings.

The two studies are inspiring to researchers with practical concerns, as they both endorse the argument that "[p]lentiful exposure plus consciousness-raising is a key principle underlying what has come to be known as a lexical approach" (Thornbury, 2002, p. 111). By modeling the frameworks of the two studies, the present study has a chance to explore whether "small methodological changes" (Lewis, 1997, p. 3) as promoted by the collocations-focused Lexical Approach actually result in more effective teaching and efficient learning (Lewis, 1993; 1997; Willis, 1990). Hence, the study intends to investigate the effects of 'pre-reading direct word instructions' (i.e., single-item vocabulary and collocation instruction) on Taiwanese college English majors' reading comprehension and vocabulary learning. These new foci of individual language skills, reading and vocabulary in this case, have not been completely examined.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study, Setting and Subjects

The subjects of the present study were 102 students in the Department of English at a national university of science and technology in Kaohsiung City, southern Taiwan. The teacher-researcher recruited altogether 32 juniors, 30 sophomores, and 40 freshmen who voluntarily participated in this short-term class during their spare time. They were compensated with gift certificates for their time and contribution to the study.

3.2 Research Design

The research design of this study can be regarded as an extension as well as a complement of the studies by Lien (2003) and Cheng (2005). In Lien's study, she acted on the 'explicit vocabulary teaching' concept as she provided two new instructional treatments; i.e., single-item vocabulary instruction and collocation instruction. Cheng, adopting the 'implicit vocabulary teaching' position, created a framework within which the effects of vocabulary instruction on reading comprehension and vocabulary learning patterns could be explored. Combining the models from Lien and Cheng, the present study employed the following instruments: (1) vocabulary pretest, (2) single-item vocabulary instruction, (3) lexical collocation instruction, (4) 3 reading texts (from which the key words and collocations are selected), (5) 3 reading comprehension tests, (6) immediate vocabulary recall test, (7) first delayed vocabulary test, and (8) second delayed vocabulary test. The entire study lasted for nine weeks. The research instruments and data collection procedures are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Research Instruments and Data Collection Procedures of the Present Study

	Juniors	**Sophomores**	**Freshmen**
Week 1	Vocab. Pretest (20 min.)	Vocab. Pretest (20min.)	Vocab. Pretest (20 min.)
	Single-item Voca. Instruction (30 min.)	Lexical Collocation Instruction (30 min.)	No Instruction
	Reading Comprehension Test (Text I) (30 min.)		
	Immediate Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	Immediate Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	Immediate Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)
Week 2	1-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	1-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	1-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)
Week 3	2-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	2-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	2-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)
Week 4	Vocab. Pretest (20 min.)	Vocab. Pretest (20 min.)	Vocab. Pretest (20 min.)
	Lexical Collocation Instruction (30 min.)	No Instruction	Single-item Vocab. Instruction (20 min.)
	Reading Comprehension Test (Text II) (30 min.)		

	Immediate Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	Immediate Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	Immediate Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)
Week 5	1-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	1-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	1-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)
Week 6	2-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	2-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	2-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)
Week 7	Vocab. Pretest (20 min.)	Vocab. Pretest (20 min.)	Vocba. Pretest (20 min.)
	No Instruction	Single-item Vocab. Instruction (30 min.)	Lexical Collocation Instruction (30 min.)
	Reading Comprehension Test (Text III) (30 min.)		
	Immediate Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	Immediate Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	Immediate Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)
Week 8	1-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	1-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	1-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)
Week 9	2-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	2-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)	2-week delayed Vocab. Recall Test (20 min.)

Note. 'Vocab.' stands for 'vocabulary;" 'min.' refers to 'minutes.'

This study is different from Lien's (2003) in that the impact of collocation instruction is tested against not only reading comprehension but also new vocabulary learning patterns. In addition, there are major differences between the present study and Cheng's (2005):

1. The teacher-researcher's active role in providing explicit word teaching is maintained.

2. Lexical collocations, instead of vocabulary glosses, constitute another form of vocabulary-focused teaching option, which is at the core of the latest discussions in EFL/ESL education.

3. College English majors, left out in Cheng's study, are the participants as their needs for improving general English fluency demand equal attention.

3.3 Instruments

3.3.1 Reading passages and comprehension tests

The three reading passages served as the basis for all the other research instruments; therefore, they were carefully selected. The passages were chosen only if they met all the 3

criteria: length, number of lexical collocations, and level of difficulty. Eventually, three articles—"Text I: Developing Your Problem-solving Skills," (Unit 7, p. 72) (see Appendix A), "Text II: Socializing the Introvert" (Unit 4, p. 40), and "Text III: Everything Must Go Online," (Unit 9, p. 92)—from *Touchstone: Book IV* (McCarthy, McCarten, & Sandiford, 2006) were used as they were all between 360 and 380 words in length, contained around 35 lexical collocations, and were placed at the highest level of difficulty by the authors.

In fact, *Touchstone: Book IV* was not selected by accident. McCarthy (2004) called it a collocation-rich textbook and this book had been used by the teacher-researcher in his EFL reading courses with the other three groups of English majors at the same university between the 2006 and 2008 academic years. Along with the twelve articles of the book, the teacher-researcher created a set of 10 essay questions for each in order to test reading comprehension. These reading comprehension tests had been piloted on students with backgrounds and English fluency levels similar to the subjects in this study. Among the twelve sets of reading comprehension tests, the four designed for Units 3, 4, 7, and 9 were considered having better reliability and validity as the pilot study students' course final scores significantly correlated with their performances on the four tests (see Appendix B for the results of Pearson correlations). The test for Unit 3 was eliminated because the reading passage in this unit did not contain enough collocations when compared to those of the other three, i.e., Units 4, 7, and 9. Therefore, these three reading comprehension tests, each of which contained 10 short essay questions (see Appendix C), were adopted as the research instruments in the present study. The full score for each reading comprehension test was 30 points as each essay question was awarded 3 points.

3.3.2 Instructional treatments

The two instructional treatments, i.e., lexical collocation instruction and single-item vocabulary instruction, were implemented by the teacher-researcher, following the procedure

specified in Table 3. Basically, during a 30-minute teaching session, the teacher-researcher distributed either the lexical collocation list (see Appendix D) or the target single-item word list (see Appendix E) to the students and informed them to form groups to discuss the list first. The student groups were later given another list of the collocations or words with the Chinese equivalences. Each group was requested to compose a sentence by using a target collocation or word. Groups then took turns presenting their sentences orally until they finished the list. When any group did not understand the Chinese translation, the teacher-researcher would provide explanations. In sum, the primary instructional difference was that the teacher-researcher did not offer possible lexical combinations as examples to the students when presenting the single-item vocabulary instruction treatment.

With regard to the no instruction treatment, no teaching material, activity, or discussion was distributed or performed in the class. During this 30-minute period, all the participants conducted self-study before taking the reading comprehension and immediate vocabulary recall tests.

3.3.3 Vocabulary pretest and three vocabulary recall tests

Previous studies have never looked into the possible connection between direct collocation teaching and vocabulary acquisition. The design of the vocabulary pretest, and three post-reading vocabulary recall tests (adapted from Cheng, 2005 and Huang, 2003) enabled the present study to closely monitor the EFL participants' progress in learning new words through different instruction types. The pretest (see Appendix F) was created in a format of matching new words with the closest meanings. Sixteen target words (selected from one of the reading passages) and eight irrelevant words comprised a word bank. The students had to match the target words with their sixteen English equivalences in order to receive 16 points, the highest possible score. It was a test determining the students' prior vocabulary knowledge.

In terms of the three vocabulary recall tests, i.e., immediate, 1-week delayed, and 2-week delayed, they were formatted differently from the pretest to avoid the possibility that the test-takers could memorize the target words before any instructional treatments. A sample vocabulary recall test (see Appendix G) consisted of a word bank of twenty-four target words (presented in one instructional treatment) and sixteen fill-in-blank sentences. Again, to obtain the 16-point highest score, the subjects needed to choose the right target words for the blanks. The item order in the word bank and fill-in-the-blank questions were arranged differently to create the other two vocabulary recall tests.

3.4 Data Analysis and Statistical Procedures

All the data were recorded by Microsoft Excel and later computed by Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 14. A preliminary analysis was first conducted by computing the descriptive statistics of the 102 college English majors' test performances. In the second stage, a one-way ANOVA and Post Hoc Multiple Comparisons (Bachman, 2004; Haslam & McGarty, 2003; Weiss, 2005) were adopted to answer respectively the three research questions raised in the study.

4. Research Results and Discussion

4.1 Analysis of Research Question One

Research question one asked: Are there differences in Taiwanese college English majors' reading comprehension and vocabulary recall tests as a result of single-item vocabulary instruction, lexical collocation instruction, and no instruction? A one-way ANOVA, in Table 4, was computed to answer this question for the 102 subjects' performances on the five tests, including vocabulary pretest, reading comprehension, three vocabulary recall tests (i.e., immediate, 1-week delayed, and 2-week delayed).

Table 4

One-way ANOVA for the Three Instructional Treatments on Reading and Vocabulary Tests

(N=102)

Tests	df	F	Significance
Vocab-Pretest	2	2.078	.127
Reading	2	73.339	.000***
Vocab-Imm	2	72.406	.000***
Vocab-1st	2	109.583	.000***
Vocab-2nd	2	137.304	.000***

Note 1: *** $p<.01$

Note 2: 'Vocab-Pretest'=vocabulary pretest; 'Vocab-Imm' = immediate vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-1st'=first

vocabulary recall test; 'Voca-2nd'=second vocabulary recall test.

As indicated in Table 4, no significance was observed on the vocabulary pretest as none of

the three instruction types had been implemented whereas there were significant differences in

the subjects' performances on all the following four tests after receiving each of the three

instructional treatments. Post Hoc Multiple Comparisons, as shown in Table 5, were further

carried out to determine the effects of instructional treatments on the subjects' performances

of the four tests.

Table 5

Multiple Comparisons of the Three Instructional Treatments on Reading and Vocabulary

Tests (N=102)

	Treatment (I)	Treatment (J)	Mean Diff. (I-J)	Significance
Reading	collocation	vocabulary	**2.549**	.000***
		no instruction	**6.990**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-2.549**	.000***
		no instruction	**4.441**	.000***
Vocab-Imm	collocation	vocabulary	**2.824**	.000***
		no instruction	**3.569**	.000***

	vocabulary	collocation	**-2.824**	.000***
		no instruction	.745	.060
Vocab-1st	collocation	vocabulary	**3.353**	.000***
		no instruction	**4.127**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-3.353**	.000***
		no instruction	.775	.034
Vocab-2nd	collocation	vocabulary	**3.510**	.000***
		no instruction	**4.467**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-3.510**	.000***
		no instruction	**1.137**	.001***

Note 1: *** $p < .01$

Note 2: 'Mean Diff.'=mean difference; 'Vocab-Imm' = immediate vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-1st'=first vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-2nd'=second vocabulary recall test.

Table 5 suggests that the 102 students performed better in the reading comprehension test after receiving either collocation or vocabulary instruction although lexical collocation instruction indeed helped more significantly when compared to vocabulary instruction. In the case of three vocabulary recall tests, the students consistently did best after the collocation instruction whereas their vocabulary test performances after vocabulary and no instruction yielded almost no significant differences (except for the second-week delayed test). To conclude, the data indicate that:

(1) The pre-reading direct word instruction, particularly lexical collocation instruction, seemed to facilitate Taiwanese college English majors' reading comprehension;

(2) The single-item vocabulary instruction, regarded less effective when compared to collocation instruction, also had positive effects on the students' reading skill;

(3) The treatment of collocation instruction overall enhanced the students' performance on the three vocabulary recall tests, outscoring the other two instruction types in the vocabulary learning.

The findings above can be contrasted and compared with those of Lien's (2003) study. Both studies found that collocation instruction had more positive effects on Taiwanese college English majors' reading comprehension. Nevertheless, in Lien's case, her student

performance on reading comprehension after vocabulary and no instruction were close, suggesting the two treatments had no significant difference. In the present study, vocabulary instruction, although inferior to the collocation instruction, also helped the students improve their reading comprehension.

4.2 Analysis of Research Question Two

The second research question asked: Are there differences in Taiwanese college English majors' reading comprehension and vocabulary recall tests among the three academic levels as a result of single-item vocabulary instruction, lexical collocation instruction, and no instruction? The test performances of each academic level are discussed separately in order to determine if any student group benefited from the three instructional types. Following the same pattern of analysis, the three student groups' performances are presented by a one-way ANOVA and Post Hoc Multiple Comparisons.

4.2.1 Performances of the juniors

The results of a one-way ANOVA in Table 6 show that there were significant differences among the juniors' performances on the reading comprehension and three vocabulary recall tests. It is necessary to see the Post Hoc Multiple Comparisons shown in Table 7 for further details.

In terms of the reading comprehension test (see Table 7), the juniors benefited almost equally from collocation instruction and single-item vocabulary instruction. There was no significant difference on their performance after the two instructional types and the juniors made progress in their reading with the assistance of either type of instruction.

Table 6

One-way ANOVA for the Three Instructional Treatments on the juniors' Performances of Reading and Vocabulary Tests (N=32)

Tests	df	F	Significance
Reading	2	34.415	.000***
Vocab-Imm	2	94.614	.000***
Vocab-1st	2	157.867	.000***
Vocab-2nd	2	176.661	.000***

Note 1: *** *p*<.01

Note 2: 'Vocab-Imm' = immediate vocabulary recall test; 'Voca-1st'=first vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-2nd'=second vocabulary recall test.

Table 7

Multiple Comparisons of the Three Instructional Treatments on the juniors' Performances of

Reading and Vocabulary Tests (N=32)

	Treatment (I)	Treatment (J)	Mean Diff. (I-J)	Significance
Reading	collocation	vocabulary	.063	.997
		no instruction	**5.406**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	-.063	.997
		no instruction	**5.344**	.000***
Vocab-Imm	collocation	vocabulary	**2.906**	.000***
		no instruction	**4.906**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-2.906**	.000***
		no instruction	**2.000**	.000***
Vocab-1st	collocation	vocabulary	**3.813**	.000***
		no instruction	**5.188**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-3.813**	.000***
		no instruction	**1.375**	.000***
Vocab-2nd	collocation	vocabulary	**3.281**	.000***
		no instruction	**5.594**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-3.281**	.000***
		no instruction	**2.313**	.000***

Note 1: *** *p*<.01
Note 2: 'Mean Diff.'=mean difference; 'Vocab-Imm' = immediate vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-1st'=first vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-2nd'=second vocabulary recall test.

As for the vocabulary recall tests, collocation instruction had a positive effect on the

juniors' performance as it helped them to score significantly better than the other two kinds of instructions. On the three vocabulary recall tests, the juniors persistently scored the highest after instructional treatment of collocations. It can be concluded that lexical collocation instruction seemed more beneficial to the junior students' vocabulary learning than their reading comprehension.

4.2.2 Performances of the sophomores

By employing a one-way ANOVA in Table 8, the significant differences among the sophomores' performances on the reading comprehension and three vocabulary tests are illustrated. Table 9 provides detailed Post Hoc Multiple Comparisons.

With regard to the reading test indicated in Table 9, the sophomores' performance pattern was almost identical to the juniors'. The sophomores also benefited similarly from collocation instruction and single-item vocabulary instruction. There was no significant difference on their performance after the two instructional types. Concerning the vocabulary recall tests, collocation instruction elevated the sophomores' performance more significantly on all three tests, indicating that lexical collocation instruction seemed more beneficial to the sophomore students' vocabulary learning than their reading comprehension.

Table 8

One-way ANOVA for the Three Instructional Treatments on sophomores' Performances of Reading and Vocabulary Tests (N=30)

Tests	df	F	Significance
Reading	2	94.674	.000***
Vocab-Imm	2	48.836	.000***
Vocab-1st	2	64.064	.000***
Vocab-2nd	2	112.598	.000***

Note 1: *** $p<.01$
Note 2: 'Vocab-Imm' = immediate vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-1st'=first vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-2nd'=second vocabulary recall test.

Table 9

Multiple Comparisons of the Three Instructional Treatments on sophomores' Performances of

Reading and Vocabulary Tests (N=30)

	Treatment (I)	Treatment (J)	Mean Diff. (I-J)	Significance
Reading	collocation	vocabulary	.067	.995
		no instruction	**8.067**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	-.067	.995
		no instruction	**8.000**	.000***
Vocab-Imm	collocation	vocabulary	**2.367**	.000***
		no instruction	**3.167**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-2.367**	.000***
		no instruction	.800	.069
Vocab-1st	collocation	vocabulary	**2.467**	.000***
		no instruction	**3.800**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-2.467**	.000***
		no instruction	**1.333**	.001***
Vocab-2nd	collocation	vocabulary	**3.333**	.000***
		no instruction	**4.333**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-3.333**	.000***
		no instruction	**1.000**	.006***

Note 1: *** $p<.01$
Note 2: 'Mean Diff.'=mean difference; 'Vocab-Imm' = immediate vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-1st'=first vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-2nd'=second vocabulary recall test.

4.2.3 Performances of the freshmen

The results of a one-way ANOVA displayed in Table 10 identify that there were significant

differences among the freshmen's scores in the four tests (i.e., reading comprehension and

three vocabulary recall tests). Post Hoc Multiple Comparisons were used to show the

differences, presented in Table 11.

According to Table 11, collocation instruction helped bring up not only the freshmen's

reading comprehension but also their vocabulary test performances. Systematic significance can be found if the mean differences between types of collocation instruction are compared to either single-item vocabulary or no instruction. In addition, there was no significant difference in the mean difference between vocabulary instruction and no instruction in the case of freshmen. The findings suggest that the freshmen group reacted best in both reading and vocabulary learning if having collocation instruction. The single-item vocabulary instruction was regarded almost as ineffective as no instruction on the freshmen's improvement.

Table 10

One-way ANOVA for the Three Instructional Treatments on freshmens' Performances of Reading and Vocabulary Tests (N=40)

Tests	df	F	Significance
Reading	2	61.941	.000***
Vocab-Imm	2	26.683	.000***
Vocab-1st	2	40.509	.000***
Vocab-2nd	2	52.877	.000***

Note 1: *** $p<.01$
Note 2: 'Vocab-Imm' = immediate vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-1st'=first vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-2nd'=second vocabulary recall test.

Table 11

Multiple Comparisons of the Three Instructional Treatments on freshmens' Performances of Reading and Vocabulary Tests (N=40)

	Treatment (I)	Treatment (J)	Mean Diff. (I-J)	Significance
Reading	collocation	vocabulary	**6.400**	.000***
		no instruction	**7.450**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-6.400**	.000***

		no instruction	1.050	.353
Vocab-Imm	collocation	vocabulary	**3.100**	.000***
		no instruction	**2.800**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-3.100**	.000***
		no instruction	-.300	.815
Vocab-1st	collocation	vocabulary	**3.650**	.000***
		no instruction	**3.525**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-3.650**	.000***
		no instruction	-.125	.964
Vocab-2nd	collocation	vocabulary	**3.825**	.000***
		no instruction	**4.125**	.000***
	vocabulary	collocation	**-3.825**	.000***
		no instruction	.300	.799

Note 1: *** *p<*.01
Note 2: 'Mean Diff.'=mean difference; 'Vocab-Imm' = immediate vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-1st'=first vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-2nd'=second vocabulary recall test.

4.2.4 Summary of the student performances among the three academic levels

To sum up, the identified differences in the Taiwanese college English majors' performances among the three academic levels as a result of the three instructional types can be summarized as follows:

(1) The lexical collocation instruction improved the students' vocabulary learning more obviously than their reading comprehension across all three academic levels;

(2) The two groups of higher-level students (i.e., juniors and sophomores) did not respond recognizably to the reading comprehension test of the lexical collocation instruction; these two academic levels improved when receiving direct word teaching regardless of instructional types;

(3) The lowest-level students, the freshmen, performed best on both reading comprehension and vocabulary recall tests after collocation instruction.

  The findings were generally in line with Lien's (2003) study in which she also revealed no significant difference observable in the participants' reading comprehension performances

among the three academic levels as a result of different instruction. Additionally, the present and Lien's study both found that the lowest-level subjects (i.e., 'freshmen' in the present study; 'sophomores' in Lien's) reacted best after collocation instruction.

4.3 Analysis of Research Question Three

Research question three asked: Are there differences in Taiwanese college English majors' vocabulary retention patterns as a result of single-item vocabulary instruction, lexical collocation instruction, and no instruction? The results of a one-way ANOVA from Table 4 have specified that significant differences were found in the subjects' performances on all the three vocabulary recall tests after the three instructional treatments. In addition, the Post Hoc Multiple Comparisons in Table 5 indicate that lexical collocation instruction was the most effective treatment type, helping the entire student group develop vocabulary learning.

  Table 12 lists the means of student performances on the vocabulary tests after each instruction type and the same data are displayed in Figure 1 for an easier comparison of the vocabulary retention patterns.

Table 12

Instructional Treatments on Student Performances of Vocabulary Tests (N=102)

Instructions	Lexical Collocation Instruction		Single-item Vocabulary Instruction		No Instruction	
	Mean	**S.D.**	**Mean**	**S.D.**	**Mean**	**S.D.**
Vocab-Pretest	7.65	1.733	7.30	1.979	7.14	1.741
Vocab-Imm	10.69	2.583	7.86	2.312	7.12	1.719
Vocab-1st	10.86	2.474	7.51	2.067	6.74	1.746
Vocab-2nd	11.26	2.404	7.75	2.205	6.62	1.561

Note: 'Voca-Pretest'=vocabulary pretest; 'Vocab-Imm' = immediate vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-1st'=first vocabulary recall test; 'Vocab-2nd'=second vocabulary recall test.

  As can be seen in Figure 1, with the assistance of collocation instruction, the students'

performance on every vocabulary test was better than each of their previous ones. In this regard, their vocabulary retention pattern was maintained in a steadily rising trend. In contrast, their performances after vocabulary and no instruction were rather discouraging. The single-item vocabulary treatment improved the students' score on the immediate recall test. The score dropped on the first 1-week delayed test but returned slightly on the second 2-week delayed test to the point close to that of the immediate recall test. As for the no instruction treatment, the score trend moved downward, indicating this treatment might have no positive effects on vocabulary retention at all.
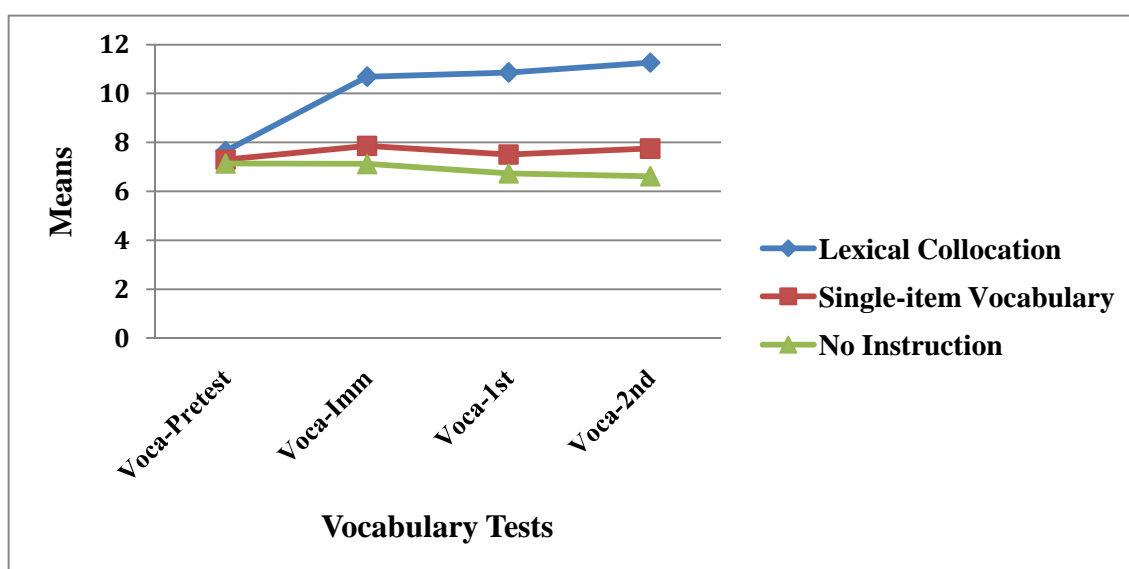

Figure 1. Language retention patterns of Taiwanese college English majors in the present study.

Previous studies on language retention or "language forgetting" (Qian, 1996, p.120) patterns attempted to describe "the forgetting of vocabulary over time" (Cheng, 2005, p. 98) of EFL learners. Findings consensually noted that EFL students often remember the largest number of new words on the test closely following a treatment or an activity, and begin to naturally forget. Often, their memory or holding of vocabulary may come back with specific follow-up instructional or awareness-raising activities (Cheng, 2005; Huang, 2003; Meara,

1997; Schmidt, 1995). In the present study, only the retention pattern after single-item vocabulary instruction fitted the findings of previous studies. The relatively positive and long-lasting vocabulary retention pattern promoted by the collocation treatment has never been reported. Such new finding of the present study, also have no similar studies with which to compare to. Hence, further larger scale research could investigate this particular issue.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Pedagogical Implications

The present study investigated the effects of direct collocation instruction on 102 Taiwanese college English majors' reading comprehension and vocabulary learning. The quantitative data indicate that (1) lexical collocation instruction improves the subjects' vocabulary learning more than their reading comprehension across all three academic levels; and (2) the treatment of collocation instruction promotes the subjects' performance on the 3 recall tests, outscoring the other two instruction types in the vocabulary retention patterns. Direct collocation instruction could be worthwhile to explore as a teaching option although follow-up instructional study needs to be carried out to further support the findings.

Nevertheless, the present study has provided several invaluable pedagogical implications. For instance, direct instruction of lexical collocations was regarded beneficial to English majors of all academic levels in their vocabulary learning. EFL teachers can actually add in this type of 'collocation-focused' pre-teaching activities before presenting reading passages. In addition, this study, along with Lien's (2003), has found that lower level English majors in Taiwanese colleges made significant progress in their reading comprehension as long as they received collocation instruction. The same type of instruction may be implemented for college EFL learners of a similar level. This concurs with the findings of Grabe and Stoller (1997) in their case study with an L2 beginner in that "the notion of core or 'nuclear', vocabulary needs

to be reconsidered..." (p. 119) if we hope to facilitate reading comprehension by teaching vocabulary. When we choose what is to be included in 'nuclear vocabulary' and to be taught first, this study suggests that we start with lexical collocations. Nattinger (1988) deems that language comprehension relies heavily on the ready-made units, i.e., collocation chunks, and the learning and understanding of collocations enhances comprehension because these word associations allow readers to predict and comprehend what may come next. Nation (2008) calls 'teaching collocations' a way of "rich instruction" (p. 60), i.e., spending four to five minutes on one word during the vocabulary pre-teaching stage in order to receive the best effects on text comprehension. Teaching and learning the most frequent collocates of a target word and its collocation-related range of meanings are the two activities strongly recommended by Nation. The findings of the present study give support to the previous scholars who all underscore the effect of collocations on language skills. That is, associations among lexical items assist contextual predictability and coherence. In other words, developing collocational knowledge may help elevate learners' comprehension in reading texts.

   Lastly, if approaching classroom teaching from a broader perspective, we ESOL teachers may find the incorporation of a lexical approach (Lewis, 1993, 1997, 2000; Richards & Rogers, 2001) or lexical syllabus (Willis, 1990; Thornbury, 2002) an applicable option as the present study has demonstrated some positive effects of teaching and learning lexical collocations.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

First of all, the length of instructional treatments was perhaps the most obvious one. As each instruction type was provided once within a limited time period, effects of direct instruction might not have been easily detected. In addition, the subject pool was somewhat limited. At the research site, the senior English majors were very hard to recruit as they did not come to the university as often as the others, making the conclusions drawn in this study in some

respects incomparable to the previous studies of direct collocation instruction (e.g., Hsu & Hsu, 2007; Lien, 2003). Thirdly, the vocabulary tests (i.e., pretest and 3 recall tests) were not flawless. While examining the subjects' word knowledge, this study only tested receptive word knowledge (Nation, 2001). Ideally there would be an additional set of tests measuring productive word knowledge of the same targeted words. New vocabulary test formats of the same purpose should be further designed.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Studies

Especially in recent years, tremendous efforts have been made to explore the effects of formal learning of lexical collocations on EFL/ESL learners. As the present study investigated the effects of collocation instruction on the reading comprehension and vocabulary learning of Taiwanese college English majors many possible directions can be suggested for future research on collocations.

This study was carried out over a 9-week period with a Latin Square design for treatments. The treatments were implemented in the same order and the same number of times (Furlong, et al., 2000; Lien, 2003). An alternative design could be to have two groups of English majors—one experimental and one control—attending a course of one complete semester. The subjects' performances on reading or vocabulary learning could be later compared at the end of the experiment. The effects of instructional types may be more obviously examined along with the increased study time.

Furthermore, this study has found that the two upper-level groups, i.e., juniors and sophomores, did not respond as well as the freshmen to the reading comprehension test after receiving collocation instruction. The same study should be replicated with college English majors in Taiwan in order to further determine whether only the lower academic level EFL students benefit from collocation instruction. By the same token, non-English majors whose language fluency is generally lower than English majors could be included into the same

73

study so that a more thorough picture of the instructional effects of lexical collocations on EFL learners would be presented.

The current study also explored whether direct collocation instruction is beneficial to vocabulary learning, a new field none of the former collocation-related studies have touched upon. Vocabulary retention rate may not have been reflected completely with only three recall tests as in the study. Future studies could be conducted with longer contact hours during which additional vocabulary recall tests could be implemented to detect subjects' pattern of vocabulary learning. For instance, one alternative way would be to design three measures of vocabulary retention, each of which accordingly favors the collocation treatment, the vocabulary treatment, and the no-instruction treatment. By having three measures of the same words, it would be possible to work out the strength of each treatment more effectively and to perhaps gain some insight into what is going on in the subjects' vocabulary learning.

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Appendix A

Sample Reading Passage I

Text Level: Book Four

Text Title: Developing Your Problem-Solving Skills

Problem solving is wrestling with algebra or chemistry homework. But it's also taking on the day-to-day challenges of being a human being. At school or work, you are confronted by challenging situations. For example, what do you do about a lost wallet, a misunderstanding with a friend or co-worker, or a forgotten assignment? How well and how quickly you deal with these situations matters. Your problem-solving skills can greatly influence your personal and professional success.

The ability to solve problems efficiently is one of the top 10 qualities that companies want in new employees. This is what Kellah M. Edens says. She is an education professor at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. "During our job interview, it's common to be asked 'what if' questions," says Edens. "How you answer will demonstrate your problem-solving ability. Generally, these questions deal with real problems in the workplace."

Why do interviewers ask "what if" questions? Applicants with good problem-solving skills usually have positive personality traits, such as patience, independence, and curiosity. Good problems solvers usually have self-esteem, competence, and a responsible attitude toward decision making. "Other problem-solving traits include flexibility, open-mindedness, and tolerance for ambiguity [uncertainty]," says Edens.

The most productive problem solvers are also creative. Take Albert Einstein. The world-famous physicist understood that most problems have many possible answers. And the first answer is not always the best. Generating multiple solutions is highly desirable. To do this, you must think less rigidly, or "outside the box," says Michael Michalko, author of *Thinkertoys: A Handbook of Business Creativity*.

Evaluate each alternative. Don't criticize alternatives. Don't criticize yourself or feel embarrassed by any errors you make, writes Michael E. Martinez, an education professor at the University of California at Irvine. If one real-life exercise doesn't get the hoped-for result, try another and another. Remain coolheaded. "Allow enough time for ideas to form," suggests Edens.

How do you do that? Take a step-by-step approach to problem solving. 1. State the problem in the form of a question. Make it clear and specific. 2. Gather accurate information. 3. Brainstorm a wide variety of solutions, both creative and conventional. 4. Examine and try alternatives. 5. Choose a solution.

Note. The article is taken from McCarthy, M., McCarten, J., & Sandiford, H. (2005). *Touchstone: Book IV*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix B

Correlations between the Pilot Study Students Course Final Scores and Student Performances on the Reading Comprehension Tests of Twelve Units from *Touchstone: Book IV* (McCarthy, et al., 2006)

Student Test Groups of Essay	Student Final Scores Fall 2006	Student Final Scores Spring 2007	Student Final Scores Fall 2007

Questions			
Unit 1	.-105	.-149	.202
Unit 2	.266	.268	.292
Unit 3	.374**	.448**	.701**
Unit 4	.489**	.541**	.499**
Unit 5	.084	.749**	.042
Unit 6	.042	.-149	.701**
Unit 7	.701**	.683**	.544**
Unit 8	.449**	.042	.-302
Unit 9	.466**	.427	.749**
Unit 10	.139	.144	.385
Unit 11	.247	.144	.385
Unit 12	.105	.084	.026

Note. ** correlations are significant at *p.* <.01.

Appendix C
Sample Reading Comprehension Test

Text Level: Book Four

Text Title: Developing Your Problem-Solving Skills

Instruction: Answer the following questions based on the article you have read.

1. Why is it important to develop problem-solving skills?

2. Why is the author comparing problem-solving with algebra and chemistry homework?

3. Why might employers ask "what if" questions during a job interview?

4. What is among the top 10 qualities companies want in a new employee?

5. What traits do good problem solvers have?

6. Why are the traits of good problem solvers important?

7. How do you think Albert Einstein tried to solve problems? Why?

8. What can be the key and foremost personality trait for a good problem solver?

9. What must you do to generate multiple solutions?

10. Why shouldn't we criticize ourselves or feel embarrassed by any errors we make while generating new solutions to problems?

Note . Questions 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9 are taken from McCarthy, et al. (2002, p. 73) while questions 2, 4, 8, and 10 were created by the teacher-researcher.

Appendix D

Sample Word List for Teaching Lexical Collocations Based on Reading Passage I

1. solve problem (verb + noun)
2. algebra homework (noun + noun)
3. chemistry homework (noun + noun)
4. day-to-day challenge (noun + noun)
5. challenging situation (adjective + noun)
6. lost wallet (adjective + noun)
7. forgotten assignment (adjective + noun)
8. problem-solving skills (noun + noun)
9. greatly influence (adverb + verb)
10. personal success (adjective + noun)
11. professional success (adjective + noun)
12. solve efficiently (verb + adverb)
13. new employee (adjective + noun)
14. job interview (noun + noun)
15. demonstrate ability (verb + noun)
16. positive traits (adjective + noun)
17. personality traits (noun + noun)
18. problem solvers (noun + noun)
19. responsible attitude (adjective + noun)
20. productive problem solver (adjective + noun)
21. generate solution (verb + noun)
22. multiple solution (adjective + noun)
23. highly desirable (adverb + adjective)
24. think rigidly (verb + adverb)
25. evaluate alternative (verb + noun)
26. criticize alternatives (verb + noun)
27. make errors (verb + noun)
28. state problem (verb + noun)
29. gather information (verb + noun)
39. accurate information (adjective + noun)
31. brainstorm solution (verb + noun)
32. conventional solution (adjective + noun)
33. wide variety (adjective + noun)
34. examine alternative (verb + noun)
35. choose solutions (verb + noun)

Note . The categories for selecting the above lexical collocations follow the works by Benson, et al. (1997), Hausmann (1999), and Kimmes (2004)

Appendix E

Sample Word List for Teaching Single-item Vocabulary Based on Reading Passage I

1. solve (verb)
2. algebra (noun)
3. chemistry (noun)
4. challenge (noun)
5. challenging (adjective)
6. wallet (noun)
7. assignment (noun)
8. problem-solving (noun)
9. influence (verb)
10. personal (adjective)
11. professional (adjective)
12. efficiently (adverb)
13. employee (noun)
14. interview (noun)
15. demonstrate (verb)
16. positive (adjective)
17. trait (noun)
18. personality (noun)
19. solvers (noun)
20. responsible (adjective)
21. productive (adjective)
22. generate (verb)
23. multiple (adjective)
24. solution (noun)
25. desirable (adjective)
26. rigidly (adverb)
27. evaluate (verb)
28. criticize (verb)
29. alternative (noun)
30. error (noun)
31. state (verb)
32. gather (verb)
33. accurate (adjective)
34. brainstorm (verb)
35. conventional (adjective)
36. variety (noun)
37. examine (verb)

Note. Only the words within the original lexical collocations which are new and demand immediate attention are presented to the students. There may be more single-item vocabulary items than lexical collocations.

Appendix F
Sample Vocabulary Pretest

Text Level: Book Four

Text Title: Developing Your Problem-Solving Skills

a. responsible	e. professional	i. productive	m. generate	q. criticize	u. award
b. challenge	f. evolve	j. penalty	n. solve	r. alternative	v. manual
c. investigate	g. manage	k. influence	o. desirable	s. error	w. trail
d. variety	h. interview	l. gather	p. evaluate	t. conventional	x. positive

Instruction: Match each word from the table above to its closest meaning below.

1. _____ taking a duty on or in charge of something

2. _____ something worth having or doing

3. _____ to affect someone or something

4. _____ something difficult but testing us in an interesting way

5. _____ to judge or grade

6. _____ to create or produce

7. _____ mistakes; things that go wrong

8. _____ a formal event a person needs to go through when looking for a job

9. _____ good and hopeful

10. _____ something which requires specific knowledge or training

11. _____ to form a big crowd

12. _____ things are created a lot in a short time

13. _____ usual or normal

14. _____ things provided with many different type of choices

15. _____ to be undervalued or attacked

16. _____ a plan or idea different from the older one

Appendix G
Sample Vocabulary Recall Test

Text Level: Book Four

Text Title: Developing Your Problem-Solving Skills

a. solve	e. professional	i. positive	m. generate	q. criticize	u. state
b. challenge	f. efficiently	j. personality	n. solution	r. alternative	v. multiple
c. assignment	g. trait	k. responsible	o. desirable	s. error	w. conventional
d. influence	h. interview	l. productive	p. evaluate	t. gather	x. variety

Instruction: choose one of the most appropriate words from the table above as you match the chosen
with one of the blanks in the sentences below. Each word is only used once.

1. It is a _____ quality for a new employee to speak at least one foreign language.

2. In the new restaurant, we actually have a great _____ of foods to choose from, including American, Italian, and even Japanese and Chinese.

3. The major _____ for the young generation can be tougher than they have thought as they now to fight against people from allover the world.

4. Most people are more _____ in the morning as we are able to think, work, and do our jobs quickly and correctly.

5. For some reason, my performance at school lately has been _____ed by friends and teachers as I seldom did anything right.

6. Cooking can be a very _____ job since it may take a few years of training and practice before is allowed to open a restaurant.

7. Shopping online is now a new _____ for people who hate traveling or enjoy comparing before making their purchases.

8. Normally, our school project is _____ed by the project leader before we turn it in.

9. There must be _____s in the data because I can never get them right.

10. Your first _____ can be nothing more like a formal meeting during which people ask questio see whether you will fit into a company or a course of study.

11. You should be happy now since everything up to this moment is so _____ and hopeful.

12. People _____ to form a long line as the department store is having a sale.

13. It is a _____ decision that you reported the money you found on the street to the police.

14. Sky diving or rock climbing are becoming fashionable sports but I still prefer the _____ ones, like jogging or bowling.

15. The success of a famous person may _____ many others to follow his/her path.

16. Group work is always best if so many people can sit down and _____ a lot of ideas.

Note . The item order in the word bank and fill-in-the-blank questions are arranged differently in the 3 vocabulary recall tests—immediate, one-week delay, and two-week delay.

Vocabulary Knowledge and Comprehension in Second Language Text Processing: A Reciprocal Relationship?

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Bio Data:

Faith A. Brown taught English at Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi, Nigeria for almost two decades. She left the university as a senior lecturer, and acting Director of the university's General Studies Department. Currently, she teaches English for Academic Purposes at the University of Botswana. She is a member (MCoT) of The College of Teachers, London, UK. In addition, she is the founder and Editor-in-Chief of Treasure Link Productions, publishers of *The Pearl* magazine. She has many academic publications, including a textbook entitled *English for Tertiary Education. An Integrated Approach*. Some of her short stories and poems have appeared in magazines. Her poem '*Saved*' was selected in an international poetry competition and published in *Transcending Moments*, an anthology of the Poetry Institute of Africa, South Africa. Her collection of poems, *Endless Seasons* is in press. Presently, she is engaged in studying reading strategies used by ESL university students.

Abstract

The overall aim of this study is to determine whether the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension is that of mutual dependency in the reading of expository texts by ESL students at the University of Botswana. Furthermore, the research explores the vocabulary size of first year students in the faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Botswana. A standardized vocabulary level test, comprehension test and questionnaire were used to investigate how the students process information. Fifty (50) first year ESL Social Sciences students were randomly sampled. Data were analysed using percentages, charts, means, standard deviations and t-tests. Findings reveal that gender does not play a significant role in successful reading of texts at university. In addition, the analysis

of the data shows that most first year social sciences students possess a large vocabulary size, especially in the academic range but only scored 62% average in the comprehension test. In addition, results indicate that there is no significant difference in the performance of the male and female students in both tests. The investigation shows that the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension is reciprocal in second language reading. It is suggested that the study be broadened to include first year students in all disciplines to factor in possible differences between areas of study, as well as other variables such as test-taking skills, previous knowledge, and level of print exposure. Further studies should also be done to assess correlations between students' vocabulary size and performance in content courses.

Keywords: reading, vocabulary, second language, University of Botswana, comprehension, text

Introduction

For decades now, vocabulary knowledge has been recognized as critical to reading comprehension (cf: Koda, 1989). Text comprehension depends a lot on knowledge of the meanings of individual words in the text. There is a large body of research that indicates a strong correlation between vocabulary and reading comprehension among both L1 and L2 readers (e.g. Grabe, 1991; Coady & Huckin, 1997; Nation, 1990). If the more knowledge of word meanings a reader has the easier it will be to understand the text; it follows then that ignorance of individual word meanings hinders comprehension.

When examined from the angle of academic reading, it becomes difficult to accept such an assertion as conclusive. A logical argument is that some students enter university with no previous vocabulary knowledge of their discipline, especially technical vocabulary, yet they learn new words largely through reading and achieve academic success. Typical first year Economics students at the University of Botswana (UB) do not study Economics as a subject in secondary school and so basically lack knowledge of the vocabulary associated with this subject-matter. However, these students are able to read expository texts successfully, having followed some reading strategies. In addition, the comprehension of the Economics text

enables them to learn the meanings of new words (particularly the specialised vocabulary) in the text, thus enlarging their vocabulary. Perhaps, it is possible then to 'accidentally' develop L2 vocabulary through successful comprehension.

Highlighting this perspective in his discussion of the important role vocabulary plays in reading comprehension, Koda (2005, p.48) adds that "[w]hat is less well understood is there is also a reverse relationship – that is, vocabulary learning and processing are equally dependent on comprehension". In other words, effective reading comprehension also enables a good reader to learn the meaning of new words and rightly decide the precise meaning of a word based on the context of its use. Consider the word *company*. It probably conjures an image of a business firm or organisation. An understanding of the text or context would clarify if it is a public or private liability company; if it is a large corporation; or if the word is even used to refer to a small military unit, the state of being with someone, a group of performers and associated personnel, a social gathering of friends, a crew on a ship, and so on. Other examples include deciphering whether such words as *man, lift, ship*, and *building* are used as nouns or verbs. The syntactic position of a word in a sentence helps in this identification but also the comprehension of the text helps to clarify the exact meaning expressed. From the above discussion, we can deduce that comprehension helps in the understanding of meanings of words in a text; just as vocabulary knowledge fosters text comprehension (cf: Koda, 2005). Acknowledging the link between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension, Nation (2001, p.144) states that "[t]his relationship is not one directional". But how true is this among ESL students at the University of Botswana?

This research is an attempt to determine whether there is indeed a mutual interdependence between vocabulary and comprehension in L2 students' text processing at the University of Botswana.

ESL Students at the University of Botswana

Many students at the University of Botswana are multilingual. They speak English, Setswana and one other language. Setswana is spoken by the majority of the citizenry, irrespective of their tribe or ethnicity. The other languages also spoken but by fewer Batswana (that is, citizens) include Ikalanga, Sekgalagadi, Seherero, Sesubiya, and Setswapong. Thus, the majority of Batswana students speak one or two indigenous languages and English. English is the official language, although Setswana is also used in many official contexts.

Setswana is the language of instruction in government primary schools in the country's capital, Gaborone. However, some schools use Setswana from standard one to four and English from standard five to seven. English medium primary schools are privately-owned. From junior secondary school, to senior secondary school and university, English is the language of instruction. Students are admitted into the University of Botswana based on the total points scored on the Cambridge approved Botswana senior secondary school final examination. Often, science students are admitted without a high school credit in English and some departments in the social sciences faculty admit students with a mere pass in English. University of Botswana students do not take placement tests to determine their levels of proficiency or competence in English – the language of instruction. All the first year students take the two compulsory EAP courses – one in the first semester and the other in the second semester.

Most of the students at the University of Botswana attend public secondary schools in Botswana. They are offered places in the university based on their performance in the Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE) Examination. First year students in the Faculty of Social Sciences study courses such as Economics, Political Science, and Law. However, these students do not study subjects like Economics and Government in secondary school. It may be argued then that first year students at the University of Botswana in the departments of Law, Political Science, and possibly Economics, lack the

previous content and vocabulary knowledge applicable to these fields of specialization. This argument, however, does not suggest that a wide vocabulary is unnecessary in reading comprehension. In fact, the reverse is the case: a wide general vocabulary is essential for text comprehension. The argument here is that it is possible for text comprehension to influence vocabulary knowledge just as vocabulary knowledge influences comprehension.

Given the above scenario, when these students engage in academic reading in these courses, they hardly depend on prior knowledge of the course content and (technical) vocabulary. Since they are faced with a series of new words as they engage in academic reading, how then do they arrive at the appropriate meanings of the new words? Do they depend solely on their general vocabulary knowledge and a dictionary to understand the text? Does an understanding of the text help them arrive at the meaning of words? These are some of the questions this study will attempt to answer.

Vocabulary Knowledge and Assessment in L2 Reading

That vocabulary knowledge is necessary for text comprehension is generally accepted. In addition, it is widely accepted that vocabulary knowledge entails receptive and productive knowledge. The former refers to the ability to understand a word while reading or listening, whereas the latter involves the ability to use a word in speaking or writing (Nation, 2001). Receptive vocabulary is considered to be at least twice the size of the productive vocabulary. Some researchers have referred to receptive vocabulary as breadth of vocabulary knowledge and productive vocabulary as depth of vocabulary knowledge (Qian, 1999; Read, 1988; Wesche & Paribakht, 1996). These two categories may be tested through tests (see Nation's, 2001, pp. 416-428), among other measures.

Various instruments have been used for vocabulary assessment (cf: Koda, 2005; Paribakt, 1997; Paribakt & Wesche, 1993 and 1999). They include verbal protocols, written tests, and questionnaires. Some assessment procedures have been criticized but they continue to be

used; although sometimes in refined or modified formats.

Koda (2005, p. 56) states that current L2 vocabulary assessment can be divided into three major groups: (a) assessing vocabulary as a part of general L2 proficiency (e.g. multiple choice formats − synonym substitution, definition completion, etc); (b) estimating vocabulary size, (e.g. tests that provide numerical evidence of words learners know, and are often used for profiling students' vocabulary knowledge); (c) measuring vocabulary depth, that is, assessing how well learners know each word. These continue to be the major objectives of vocabulary assessments. Nation's (2001, pp. 416-424) Vocabulary Levels Test (see Appendix 1) was used in this research to assess the University of Botswana students' vocabulary size.

Vocabulary and Comprehension in ESL Reading at the University.

Among ESL tertiary students, there is an urgent need for independent information processing skills. Students do most of their learning through reading. To learn then, they must be successful at reading expository texts. Expository texts are known to contain more difficult vocabulary and concepts than narrative texts (Duke & Kays, 1998). It is, perhaps, this characteristic of expository texts that makes L2 readers feel expository texts are difficult to read; hence the need for ESL learners to develop their vocabulary knowledge. Readers who possess wide vocabulary can, as Iwai (2007) points out, effectively learn unfamiliar vocabulary by associating it with something they already know and thereby are able to store the information in their long term memory. An effective but often neglected means of learners developing vocabulary knowledge is through extensive reading (Carrell & Carson, 1997; Nation, 2001). Nation (2004) identifies the benefits of extensive reading include vocabulary growth (e.g., learning new vocabulary and strengthening knowledge of previously met vocabulary), gaining enjoyment from reading, and developing reading comprehension skills.

Reliable figures put forward by research indicate that an ESL tertiary student needs to have a vocabulary level in the range of 5000 to 10,000 words in order to succeed academically (cf: Grabe 1991, p. 380; Laufer, 1997; Laufer & Nation, 1995; Nation, 2001). Since vocabulary knowledge has a key place in effective reading and ultimately academic success, it becomes pertinent then to use a vocabulary test to determine how vocabulary knowledge imparts on reading comprehension among the University of Botswana ESL students.

There is a wealth of literature on the role of vocabulary knowledge in text comprehension (e.g. Beck, Perfetti, & McKeown, 1982, Kameenui, Carnine, & Freschi, 1982; Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997; and, Stahl ,1983). Laufer (1997, p. 20) insists that "it has been consistently demonstrated that reading comprehension is strongly related to vocabulary knowledge, more strongly than to the other components of reading." Laufer describes this relationship in terms of a one-way phenomenon with reading comprehension benefiting primarily from increased vocabulary knowledge. Right as she is, recent research in L2 reading however, suggests that there is actually a mutual interdependence (or a two-way relationship) between vocabulary development and comprehension (e.g. Koda, 2005; Nation, 2001; Pretorius, 2006; Pulido, 2004; Taraban, Rynearson, & Kerr, 2000).

A learner's knowledge of a word's syntactic properties is important for lexical processing during reading comprehension (cf: Gass, 1999). This is because it guides the reader in the identification of a word's grammatical class, for example, in distinguishing nouns from verbs – consider basic words like *book, rock, house*, and *ship*. Thus, the position of a word in a sentence may be helpful in text processing and understanding. In this research, an attempt was also made to discover whether knowledge of syntactic properties is significant in L2 reading comprehension among University of Botswana social sciences students.

It may be argued, on the other hand, that a student's effective comprehension of text would enable the student to know when a word (e.g. book) is used as a noun or a verb, even when the student lacks knowledge of the syntactic properties of the words. For example, in the

sentences *She forgot the book in the classroom* and *We need to book before we can use the smart classroom* a reader largely does not require to have a knowledge of the syntactic properties of '*book*' (as noun, verb) to understand the different meanings expressed in the two sentences. An understanding of the idea expressed in each sentence is enough to enable the reader identify the specific meaning expressed – even when the learner has no definite knowledge of syntax. This understanding may then help the reader learn that the word '*book*' can be used as a noun or verb. Here the reader basically depends on contextual clues to decipher meaning; and this is an aspect of strategic reading. Recent empirical studies provide evidence supporting the effectiveness of strategic reading in text comprehension among tertiary students (e.g. Block, 1992; Dreyer, 1998; Perkins, 1991; Pretorius, 2005). These studies show that students who use meta-cognitive strategies learn more effectively and independently than students who do not.

It would appear then that there is indeed reason to believe that the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and comprehension is reciprocal. This study explores this reciprocity.

Research Questions

To better focus the research, the following questions were used to guide the study:

General: Are vocabulary knowledge and text comprehension mutually interdependent in the reading of expository texts by first year ESL students?

Specific:

1. Do first year ESL students at the University of Botswana possess the required level of vocabulary for tertiary education?

2. How do the subjects arrive at the meaning of new and difficult words?

3. Does comprehension of texts help students to arrive at the correct meaning of the words?

4. Does vocabulary knowledge help students to understand texts?

5. Is there a significant difference in the performance of male and female students?

6. Is there a significant difference between students' performance in the two tests?

7. Do students with larger vocabulary size show better text comprehension?

Methodology

Subjects

Fifty first year Social Sciences students at the University of Botswana were randomly sampled. They comprised sixteen male and thirty-four female students. This is not surprising since the female students in the faculty of social sciences far outnumber the male students. The students had completed a semester at the university during which time they had been taught Communication and Study Skills1 covering, among other topics, reading, note-making/taking, scanning, skimming, paraphrasing, summarizing, and paragraph development. The number of years for which subjects had learned English at school ranged from 12-13 years, and they spoke 1-2 African languages. 85% of the students claim to understand better and feel more comfortable reading in English than in their native language. Furthermore, 90% attended public schools.

Adapting Paribakt and Wesche's (1993, 1999) Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS), subjects were also given a 4-point scale based on their self-rated familiarity with words. The scale ranged from 1= the word is familiar and I can use it in a sentence, to 4= the word is not familiar at all and I cannot guess its meaning at all (see Appendix 2: Question 5 and Section B[e]).

Data Analysis and Procedure

All the 50 subjects were coded from 1-50 for easy reference. Subjects wrote two tests: Nations' (2001, pp. 416-424) Vocabulary Levels Test (see Appendix 1) and a comprehension test (see Appendix 2). To corroborate students' responses on the given text, the research was extended to include comprehension questions, which were used to compare their performance and their responses. The vocabulary test was preceded by the completion of the subjects' personal details. The vocabulary measure comprised five parts: the 2,000 word level, the 3,000 word level, the 5,000 word level, the academic vocabulary, and the 10,000 word level. The 2,000 and 3,000 word levels contained high-frequency words; the 5,000 word level was a borderline between high- and low-frequency levels; the academic vocabulary comprised words that frequently appear in university textbooks; and the 10,000 word level contained low-frequency words. During the comprehension test, subjects were given a reading comprehension task for a general topic text on *Globalization*. This is a relevant and fairly popular topic, especially in the social sciences. The students read the expository text and answered questions on comprehension and vocabulary. After that, they completed a short questionnaire focusing on how they processed the text. Each test was administered during a different session so that the students would not feel tired or stressed.

Answers to the tests were validated through the combined effort of three lecturers in English Language and one in Education. For the purposes of the discussion of the results, the University of Botswana scoring scale was adopted for this study: 80% and above is an 'A' grade, while less than 50% is a fail.

Results and Discussion

Chart 1: Test One Scores

STUDENTS' SCORES IN VOCABULARY TEST
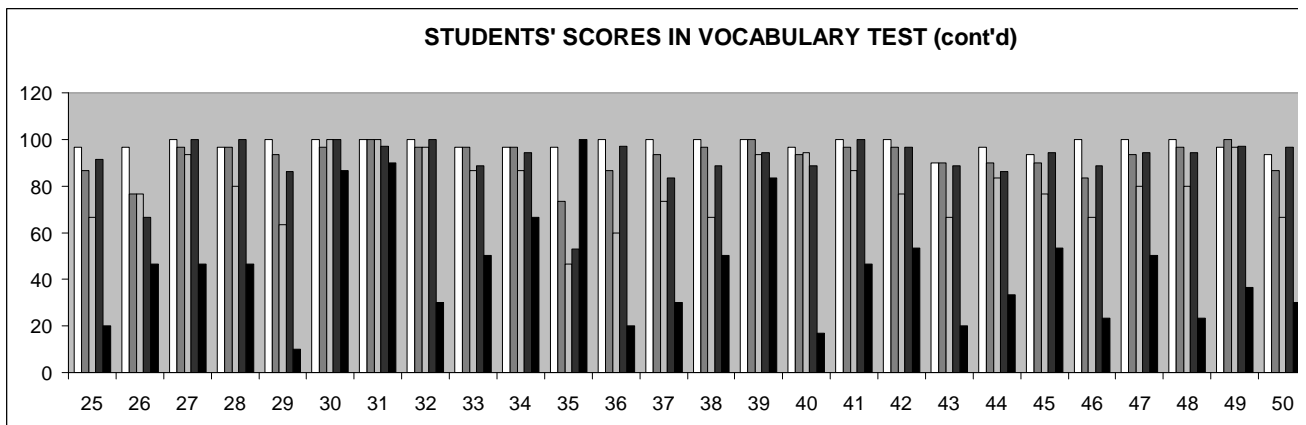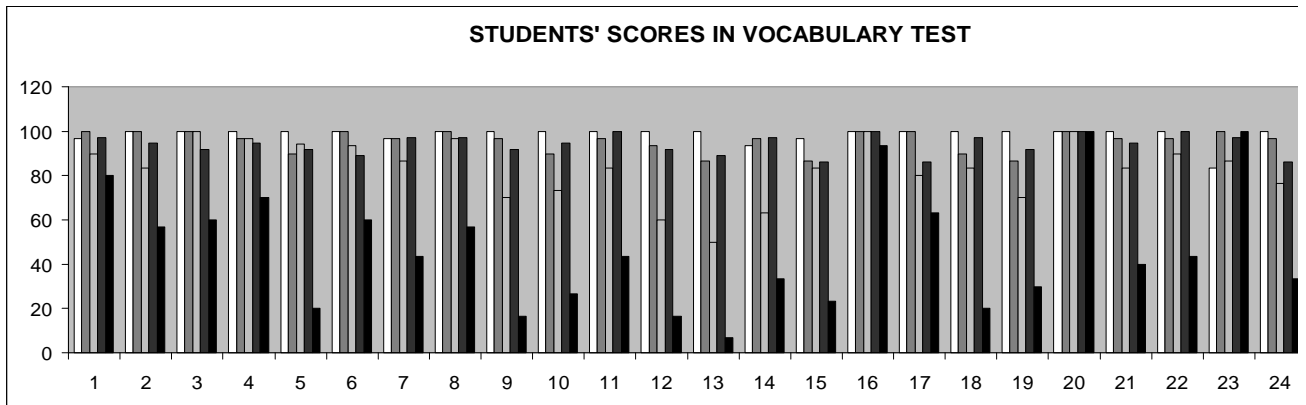

STUDENTS' SCORES IN VOCABULARY TEST (cont'd)

Chart One shows the students' scores in test one: The Vocabulary Test. It can be seen from the chart that only one student (#20) scored 100% which suggests that the student is exceptional and therefore, may not be seen as a yardstick or baseline for ESL students. An examination of the above chart shows that the majority of students performed reasonably well in the first four sections, except for the last section (10,000 word level) where the scores plummeted, possibly, because the 10,000 word range comprises low-frequency words.

Chart 2: Summary of Test One Scores according to Category (by percentage)

STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN EACH SECTION
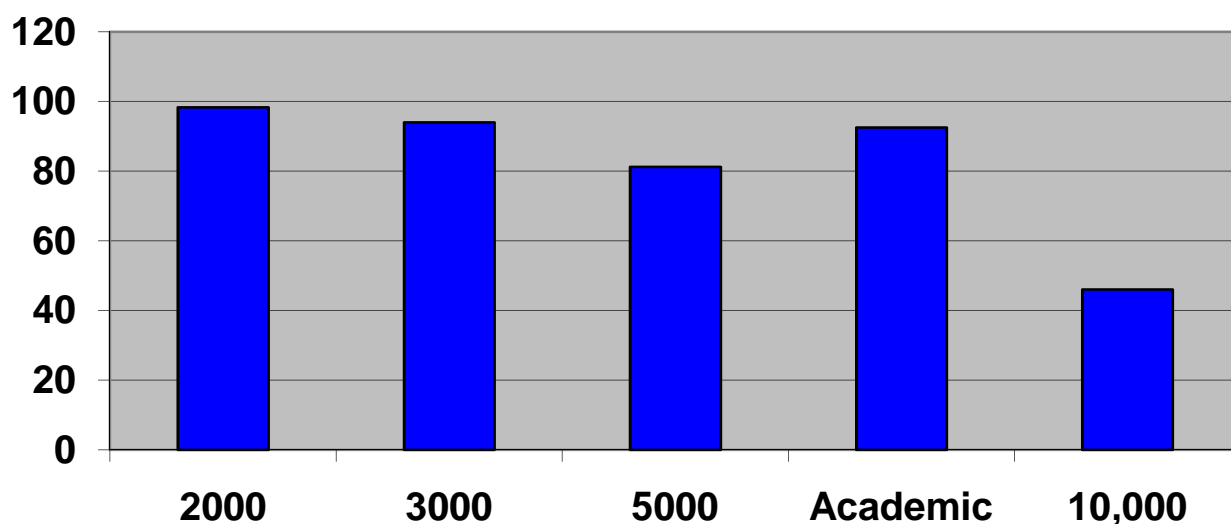
Chart Two shows the mean scores of the five sections of Test One. The students' mean scores of 81.2 (SD = 13.6) in the 5,000 words section and 46.0 (SD = 25.4) in the 10,000 words category suggests that the students' vocabulary needs further development. Their poor performance in the last category reinforces this. Thus, the students need to develop a wide general and academic vocabulary, as opposed to a technical vocabulary. Students who possess good reading habits and attitudes generally read well and possess a wide vocabulary. It is in this general vocabulary that university ESL students are expected to have knowledge of in the range of 5,000 to 10,000; hence the need to promote extensive reading. Some benefits of extensive reading, including those identified by Nation (2004), have been discussed earlier in this paper.

Results show that the students possess a high academic vocabulary (92%). In fact, they exceeded the 83% minimum score recommended by Nation (2001, pp. 196). Consequently, to the question, "Do first year ESL students at the University of Botswana possess the required level of vocabulary for tertiary education?" (see Research question 1), the answer is in the affirmative.

Chart 3: Tests One & Two Average according to Gender
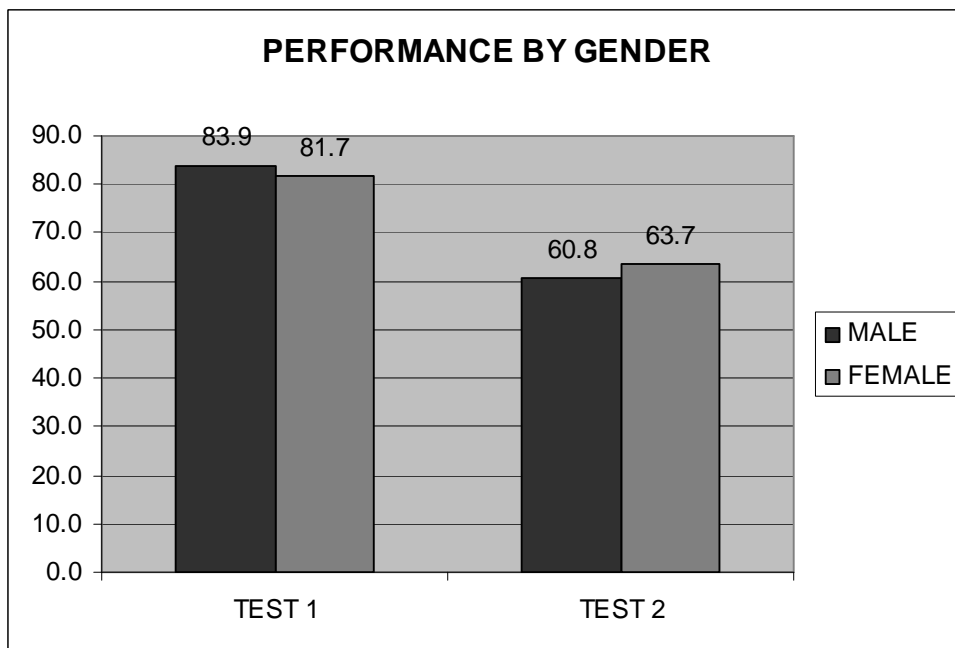
PERFORMANCE BY GENDER

Chart three presents students' performance in the two tests according to gender. An attempt was made in this study to determine if there was a significant difference in the performance of female and male students. According to the chart, the difference in performance between male and female students in the two tests is negligible. In Test One, the male students outperformed the female students by 2.2% on average, while in Test Two the female students outperformed the male students by 2.9% on average. Thus, gender may be considered largely inconsequential in university students' performance with regard to academic reading.

Chart 4: Students' Scores in Tests One and Two

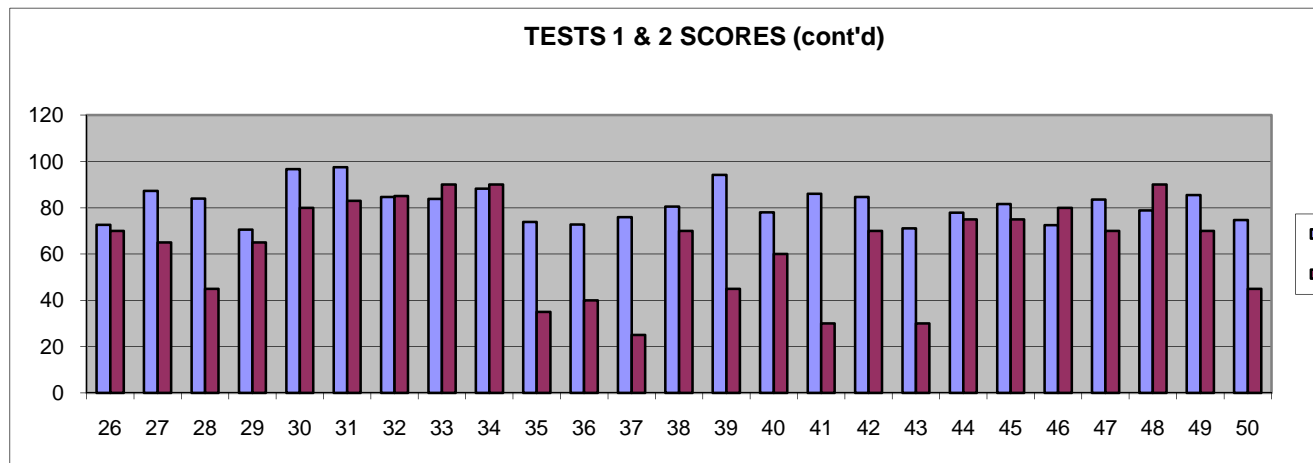**TESTS 1 & 2 SCORES**

TESTS 1 & 2 SCORES (cont'd)
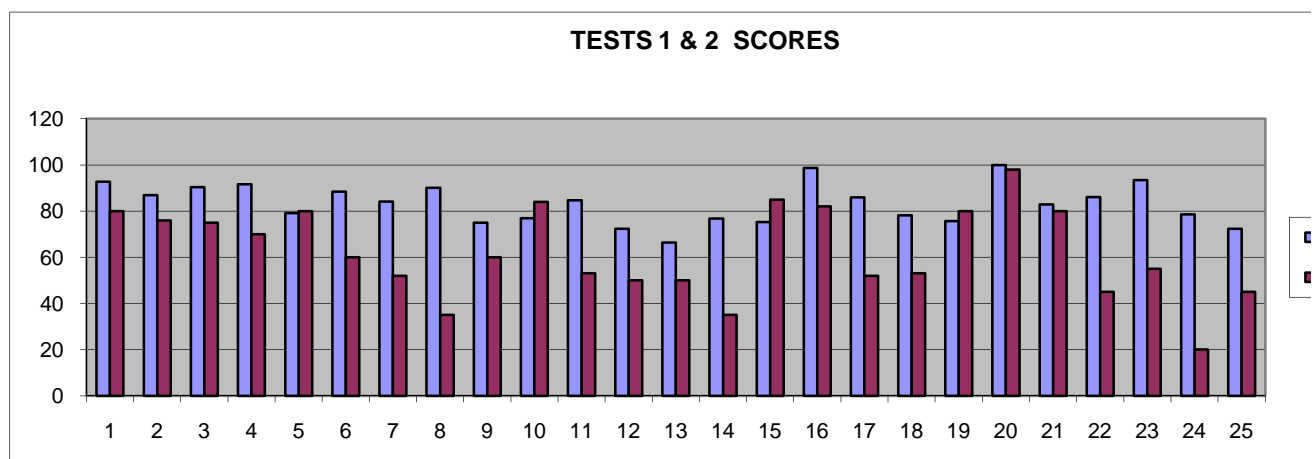
Chart Four presents students' scores in Tests One (Vocabulary) and Two (comprehension). A close examination of the charts show that some students performed fairly uniformly in both tests, while the performance of other students varied between the two tests. Results indicate that although students possess a good vocabulary (92% at the academic level); their text comprehension was merely at 62% average. Students # 8, 24, 37, 41, and 43 performed so poorly in Test Two that it is conclusive that their comprehension ability does not match their vocabulary size. This may be as a result of the students' unfamiliarity with, and consequent difficulty with, the language of the text. In fact, 82% of the students claimed to lack previous knowledge of the content of the text and 54% were unfamiliar with the topic. This is, perhaps, surprising since 'Globalization' is a major topic in the social sciences and a much-discussed current topic in the world as a whole. This also suggests that the students have poor reading attitudes and habits – issues which are outside the scope of the present study.

Application of the Paribakt and Wesche Vocabulary Knowledge scale (VKS) showed that from the list of ten words (see Appendix 2, Question 5 and B[e]), the most difficult words for the students were *supraterritoriality, proliferate, encapsulates, manifestations, contours, reversal* and *halt*. These words are in the range of 5,000 to 10,000 word levels except for 'reversal' which belongs to academic vocabulary. Moreover, the students identified the

101

following words as knowing their meanings and able to use them in sentences: *indicator, acceleration,* and *implication.* These words also appear to be located in the academic range and the mean score for this category was 92.5 (SD = 8.3). The fact that most of the students were unfamiliar with the words *manifestations, halt, reversal, encapsulates, contours,* and *proliferate* is, perhaps, because almost all the words belong to the 10,000 word level.
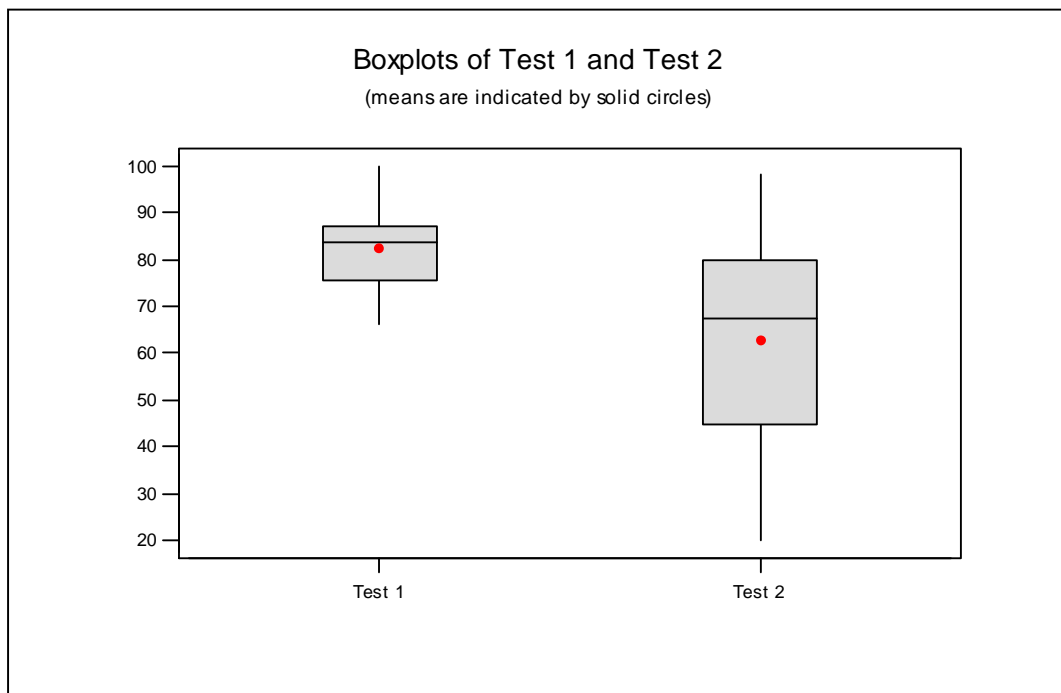
In order to obtain an in-depth analysis of the findings and draw accurate conclusions, t-tests were performed on the data.

Two sample T-Test for Test 1 vs Test 2

	N	Mean	StDev	SE Mean
Test 1	50	82.40	8.16	1.2
Test 2	50	62.8	19.7	2.8

95% CI for mu Test 1 - mu Test 2: (13.6, 25.7)
T-Test mu Test 1 = mu Test 2 (vs not =): T = 6.51 P = 0.0000 DF = 65

Boxplots of Test 1 and Test 2
(means are indicated by solid circles)

Above are a t-test result and Boxplots for Test 1 and Test 2. The boxplots show

the range of the values in the data set and they also show the mean. The result of the t-test shows that there is a significant difference in the performance of the students on the two tests (see Research Question 6). In fact, the students performed better on the first test than on the second test. Since the students performed better on the vocabulary test than on the comprehension test, it suggests that even students with a large vocabulary size may not perform well on a reading comprehension test. This indicates that there may be other variables that could be contributory to the current findings. It may be that some students have better previous knowledge of the subject, or that some are more skilled at test-taking. As suggested later in this article, such variables need to be investigated.

Two Sample T-Test and Confidence Interval

Two sample T for Female vs Male

	N	Mean	StDev	SE Mean
Female	68	72.7	18.3	2.2
Male	32	72.3	17.6	3.1

95% CI for mu Female - mu Male: (-7.3, 8.0)
T-Test mu Female = mu Male (vs not =): T = 0.09   P = 0.93
DF = 62

Using a table for testing if there is any significant difference in the performance of the female and male students on both tests (see Research Question 5), the results above further show that there is no significant difference p = 0.093. Hence, it may be reiterated that gender is not a factor in the reading comprehension of first year Social Sciences students at the University of Botswana.

Table 1: Students' Responses to the Questionnaire on Test Two

TEXT COMPREHENSION	YES	NO	UNDECIDED
Possess previous knowledge of the topic	23	20	7
Possess previous knowledge of the content	4	41	5
Clear understanding of the text	25	15	10
Contextual clues helped me understand the text	34	6	10
Position of words helped me understand their meanings in the text	16	14	20
Understanding the text helped me understand new and difficult words	27	17	6
Vocabulary knowledge helped me understand the text	27	15	8
Language of the text	Difficult	Average	Simple
	28	22	0

Analysis of the data in Table One provides answers to Research Questions 2, 3, and 4. The table shows that more students found the language of the text difficult for a number of reasons. Firstly, they were not familiar with the subject matter; at least 82% of the students lacked previous knowledge of the text content. The respondents explained that the vocabulary was specialized and so, difficult for them to understand. That 50% of the students – though not a very conclusive number – claimed to have clearly understood the text, in spite of its unfamiliarity, suggests that the use of effective reading strategies can enable a learner understand a text. This is illustrated here by the finding that 68% of the respondents indicated that contextual clues helped them understand the text (see Block 1992; Oxford, 1990). Interestingly, there is uniformity in the number of respondents (54%) who point to a complementary role between vocabulary knowledge and comprehension. While the figure may not be remarkable, it is significant that over half of the students identified this reciprocity. This mutual dependence appears to explain why there is no significant

correlation between students' performance in test one and two. A case in point is student # 8 who scored 90% in Test One and 35% in Test Two. Here, the student's vocabulary size did not enhance his comprehension of the text. Students with larger vocabulary did not necessarily show better text comprehension (see Research Question 7).

Student #20 – the only student with a high level of vocabulary (100%) – admitted to the difficulty of the language of the text and unfamiliarity with the vocabulary; but indicated that contextual clues and the position of words in sentences aided comprehension. It would seem then, that vocabulary knowledge and comprehension through effective reading strategies 'assist' each other during text processing. What is surprising though is that most students were unable to decipher the meaning of '*supraterritoriality*' from the context and yet 68% of them claimed to have used contextual clues. Less than half the students were able to correctly arrive at the meaning of the word – a word which may not be found in the dictionary but is context explicit within the text. This suggests that these students are still inexperienced in the strategic use of contextual clues.

It also appears that the majority of respondents pay little attention to the syntactic properties of words during the academic reading of expository texts. This shows that, although knowledge of the syntactic properties of words is important (Gass, 1999), according to findings in the present research, its influence in text processing among ESL first year social sciences students at the University of Botswana is insignificant. Laufer and Sim (1985) believe that the urgent need of non-native speakers was vocabulary, then subject matter knowledge, and then syntactic structure. After more than two decades their position remains valid that syntactic structure is not the most important need, providing support for the results in the present study that ESL students are generally not very concerned with syntax when reading.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of this study confirm and extend the findings of other studies on vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension among ESL students. Findings (e.g. Table One) support the claim that vocabulary knowledge affects comprehension and understanding text improves vocabulary knowledge. In spite of the fact that all the students claimed that the language of the text was average (44%) or difficult (56%), only 11(22%) scored below 50%. This shows that many students may have used certain strategies, sometimes subconsciously, to help them understand the text; instead of the sole reliance on their existing vocabulary knowledge. After all, 82% of the students claimed to lack previous content knowledge of the text and 68% say contextual clues helped them comprehend the text. On the other hand, the high score of 92% average in the academic range (Test one) and average score of 62% on the comprehension test (Test two), may indicate that existing estimates of the size of vocabulary needed to read academic texts are inaccurate. In addition, it may be necessary to test the depth of students' vocabulary through a production levels test. As Nation (2001, p. 196) observes, "[a]cademic vocabulary needs to be used productively as well as receptively so it is important to monitor learners' productive knowledge of these words." It may also be useful to explore the students' text coverage in order to estimate the text coverage of ESL students in the Social Sciences.

Furthermore, since findings from the present study did not clearly establish that students with higher vocabulary size outperform those with smaller vocabulary on the reading comprehension test (see Chart Four); students reported that vocabulary knowledge helped them understand the text, just as understanding the text helped them understand the meaning of new words. It may, therefore, be concluded that both vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension interact during text processing.

Despite the complexity of variables, results from this study are useful for setting learning goals when planning or designing a course. For instance, we need to know what aspects of

vocabulary to pay particular attention to. Nation (2001, p. 21) advises that we "ensure that the high-frequency words are well known". One way to ensure this is through encouraging extensive reading and including it in EAP courses (Carrell & Carson, 1997). Emphasizing the relevance of extensive reading, Nation and Waring (1997, p. 11) assert that it "is a good way to enhance word knowledge and get a lot of exposure to the most frequent and useful words."

Thus, effective comprehension is as much a matter of use of appropriate reading strategies as appropriate size of vocabulary. Since the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and comprehension is reciprocal, we should begin to focus on strategic reading instruction; so that even when they are not familiar with the vocabulary of a text, students can still correctly arrive at the meaning of words through an understanding of text, having used contextual clues. In addition to helping students develop their vocabulary, we should guide them towards effective use of other strategies like reading strategies and test-taking skills.

Beginning students at the University of Botswana should write placement tests to assess their levels of proficiency in English, the language of instruction. That way, students can be properly placed in different English language programmes in the university. Placement tests that include vocabulary size assessment should be administered at entry points so that EAP courses can be tailored to the English Language needs of various groups of students.

This research acknowledges that there are difficulties in teaching technical vocabulary at the university level. Many universities, including the University of Botswana, are beginning to show reluctance in doing 'jobs' they feel secondary schools should have done. As remediation is abandoned, perhaps EAP programmes should begin to increase emphasis on students' development of meta-cognitive skills. The duration of a typical remedial course is so short that very little is accomplished in the given time. Hence, there is need to focus on teaching students to become strategic readers (and skilled test-takers), skills that they will use throughout the duration of their study and beyond.

107

Such limitations of the research methodology as the difficulty of controlling for all variables as well as the unreliability of language testing generally are acknowledged. Indeed, a short set of comprehension questions cannot tell us all that we need to know about students' reading abilities; there is still much to be learned. This study has largely focused on receptive vocabulary and comprehension in informational text processing. There may be other variables that contributed to the findings in this research. It is, therefore, recommended that other variables, for example, previous knowledge, test-taking skills, print exposure and topic interest be explored.

It is suggested that further research be carried out to determine whether there is a significant relationship between vocabulary knowledge (receptive and productive vocabulary) and academic performance in content courses. In addition, the study may be broadened to include ESL students in all faculties in order to factor in possible differences by area of study. Finally, an intervention study based on instruction in vocabulary development, reading and test-taking strategies is also recommended.

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APPENDIX 1

COMMUNICATION & STUDY SKILLS UNIT, UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA

TEST ONE: VOCABULARY LEVELS TEST

Indicate all the languages you speak …………………………………………….

2. State your home language? …………..………………………………………...

3. Language of instruction in the primary school …………….

4. Did you attend a government or private primary school? ………………………...

5. Did you attend a government or private secondary school? ……………………..

6. How many years have you learned English at school? …………………………..

7. Do you understand better when reading in English or in your home language?

8. Do you feel more comfortable reading in English or in your home language?

This is a vocabulary test. You must choose the right word to go with each meaning. Write the number of that word next to its meaning. Here is an example.

1 business

2 clock

3 horse   _____ part of a house

4 pencil   _____ animal with four legs

5 shoe   _____ something used for writing

6 wall

You answer it the following way.

1 business   __6__ part of a house

2 clock   __3__ animal with four legs

3 horse   __4__ something used for writing

4 pencil

5 shoe

6 wall

Some words are in the test to make it more difficult. You do not have to find a meaning for these words. In the example above, these words are *business, clock, shoe*

Try to do every part of the test

THE 2,000 WORD LEVEL

1 copy

2 event   _____ end or highest point

3 motor   _____ this moves a car

4 pity   **_____** thing made to be like another

5 profit

6 tip

1 accident

2 debt   _____ loud deep sound

3 fortune   _____ something you must pay

4 pride   _____ having a high opinion of yourself

5 roar

6 thread

1 birth

2 dust

3 operation   _____ game

4 row   _____ winning

5 sport   _____ being born

6 victory

1 clerk

2 frame   _____ a drink

3 noise   _____ office worker

4 respect   _____ unwanted sound

5 theatre

6 wine

1 dozen

2 empire   _____ chance

3 gift   _____ twelve

4 opportunity   _____ money paid to the government

5 relief

6 tax

1 admire

2 complain   _____ make wider or longer

3 fix   _____ bring in for the first time

4 hire   _____ have a high opinion of someone

5 introduce

6 stretch

1 arrange

2 develop   _____ grow

3 lean   _____ put in order

4 owe   _____ like more than something else

5 prefer

6 seize

1 blame

2 elect   _____ make

3 jump   _____ choose by voting

4 manufacture   _____ become like water

5 melt

6 threaten

1 brave

2 electric   _____ commonly done

3 firm   _____ wanting food

4 hungry   _____ having no fear

5 local

6 usual

1 bitter

2 independent   _____ beautiful

3 lovely   _____ small

4 merry   _____ liked by many people

5 popular

6 slight

THE 3,000 WORD LEVEL

1 bull

2 champion   _____ formal and serious manner

3 dignity   _____ winner of a sporting event

4 hell   _____ building where valuable objects

5 museum   are shown

6 solution

1 blanket

2 contest

3 generation   _____ holiday

4 merit   _____ good quality

5 plot   _____ wool covering used on beds

6 vacation

1 apartment

2 candle   _____ a place to live

3 draft   _____ chance of something happening

4 horror   _____ first rough form of something written

5 prospect

6 timber

1 administration

2 angel   _____ group of animals

3 frost   _____ spirit who serves God

4 herd   _____ managing business and affairs

5 fort

6 pond

1 atmosphere

2 counsel   _____ advice

3 factor   _____ a place covered with grass

4 hen   _____ female chicken

5 lawn

6 muscle

1 abandon

2 dwell   _____ live in a place

3 oblige   _____ follow in order to catch

4 pursue   _____ leave something permanently

5 quote

6 resolve

1 assemble

2 attach   _____ look closely

3 peer   _____ stop doing something

4 quit   _____ cry out loudly in fear

5 scream

6 toss

1 drift   _____ suffer patiently

2 endure   _____ join wool threads together

3 grasp   _____ hold firmly with your hands

4 knit

5 register

6 tumble

1 brilliant

2 distinct   _____ thin

3 magic   _____ steady

4 naked   _____ without clothes

5 slender

6 stable

1 aware   _____ usual

2 blank   _____ best or most important

3 desperate   _____ knowing what is happening

4 normal

5 striking

6 supreme

THE 5,000 WORD LEVEL

1 analysis

2 curb   _____ eagerness

3 gravel   _____ loan to buy a house

4 mortgage   _____ small stones mixed with sand

5 scar

6 zeal

1 concrete   _____ circular shape

2 era   _____ top of a mountain

3 fibre   _____ a long period of time

4 loop

5 plank

6 summit

1 circus

2 jungle   _____ musical instrument

3 nomination   _____ seat without a back or arms

4 sermon   _____ speech given by a priest in a

5 stool   church

6 trumpet

1 artillery

2 creed   _____ a kind of tree

3 hydrogen   _____ system of belief

4 maple   _____ large gun on wheels

5 pork

6 streak

1 chart   _____ map

2 forge   _____ large beautiful house

3 mansion   _____ place where metals are made

4 outfit   and shaped

5 sample

6 volunteer

1 contemplate   _____ think about deeply

2 extract   _____ bring back to health

3 gamble   _____ make someone angry

4 launch

5 provoke

6 revive

1 demonstrate

2 embarrass   _____ have a rest

3 heave   _____ break suddenly into small

4 obscure   pieces

5 relax   _____ make someone feel shy or

6 shatter   nervous

1 correspond

2 embroider   _____ exchange letters

3 lurk   _____ hide and wait for someone

4 penetrate   _____ feel angry about something

5 prescribe

6 resent

1 decent

2 frail   _____ weak

3 harsh   _____ concerning a city

4 incredible   _____ difficult to believe

5 municipal

6 specific

1 adequate   _____ enough

2 internal   _____ fully grown

3 mature   _____ alone away from other things

4 profound

5 solitary

6 tragic

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

1 area

2 contract   _____ written agreement

3 definition   _____ way of doing something

4 evidence   _____ reason for believing

5 method   something is or is not true

6 role

1 construction

2 feature   _____ safety

3 impact   _____ noticeable part of something

4 institute   _____ organization which has a

5 region   special purpose

6 security

1 debate

2 exposure   _____ plan

3 integration   _____ choice

4 option   _____ joining something into a whole

5 scheme

6 stability

1 access   _____ male or female

2 gender   _____ study of the mind

3 implementation   _____ entrance or way in

4 license

5 orientation

6 psychology

1 accumulation   _____ collecting things over time

2 edition   _____ promise to repair a broken

3 guarantee   product

4 media   _____ feeling a strong reason or

5 motivation   need to do something

6 phenomenon

1 adult   _____ end

2 exploitation   _____ machine used to move

3 infrastructure   people or goods

4 schedule   _____ list of things to do at

5 termination   certain times

6 vehicle

1 alter   _____ change

2 coincide   _____ say something is not

3 deny   true

4 devote   _____ describe clearly and exactly

5 release

6 specify

1 convert   _____ keep out

2 design   _____ stay alive

3 exclude   _____ change from one thing to

4 facilitate   another

5 indicate

6 survive

1 bond   _____ make smaller

2 channel   _____ guess the number or size

3 estimate   of something

4 identify   _____ recognizing and naming a

5 mediate   person or thing

6 minimize

1 explicit

2 final   _____ last

3 negative   _____ stiff

4 professional   _____ meaning 'no' or 'not'

5 rigid

6 sole

1 analogous

2 objective   _____ happening after

3 potential   _____ most important

4 predominant   _____ not influenced by personal

5 reluctant   opinions

6 subsequent

1 abstract

2 adjacent   _____ next to

3 controversial   _____ added to

4 global   _____ concerning the whole world

5 neutral

6 supplementary

THE 10,000 WORD LEVEL

1 alabaster   _____ small barrel

2 chandelier   _____ soft white stone

3 dogma   _____ tool for shaping wood

4 keg

5 rasp

6 tentacle

1 apparition   _____ ghost

2 botany   _____ study of plants

3 expulsion   _____ small pool of water

4 insolence

5 leash

6 puddle

1 arsenal

2 barracks   _____ happiness

3 deacon   _____ difficult situation

4 felicity   _____ minister in a church

5 predicament

6 spore

1 alcove

2 impetus   _____ priest

3 maggot   _____ release from prison early

4 parole   _____ medicine to put on wounds

5 salve

6 vicar

1 alkali

2 banter   _____ light joking talk

3 coop   _____ a rank of British nobility

4 mosaic   _____ picture made of small pieces

5 stealth   of glass or stone

6 viscount

1 dissipate

2 flaunt   _____ steal

3 impede   _____ scatter or vanish

4 loot   _____ twist the body about

5 squirm   uncomfortably

6 vie

1 contaminate

2 cringe   _____ write carelessly

3 immerse   _____ move back because of fear

4 peek   _____ put something under water

5 relay

6 scrawl

1 blurt

2 dabble   _____ walk in a proud way

3 dent   _____ kill by squeezing someone's

4 pacify   throat

5 strangle   _____ say suddenly without thinking

126

6 swagger

1 illicit   _____ immense

2 lewd   _____ against the law

3 mammoth   _____ wanting revenge

4 slick

5 temporal

6 vindictive

1 indolent

2 nocturnal   _____ lazy

3 obsolete   _____ no longer used

4 torrid   _____ clever and tricky

5 translucent

6 wily

Source: Nation, I.S.P. (2001, pp. 416 – 424)

APPENDIX 2

TEST TWO

Name: Male/Female   Age: Department:

Section A: READING COMPREHENSION TASK

Read the text below and answer the questions that follow it.

Globalization

Globalization is a concept that encapsulates the growth of connections between people on a planetary scale. Globalization involves the reduction of barriers to trans-world contacts. Through it people become more able—physically, legally, culturally, and psychologically—to engage with each other in "one world".

Global connections take many forms. For instance, jet aeroplanes transport passengers and cargo across any distance on the planet within a day. Telephone and computer networks effect near-instantaneous interpersonal communication between points all over the Earth. Electronic mass media broadcast messages to world audiences. Countless goods and services (such as Nissan cars and Club Med holidays) are supplied to consumers in global markets. Moreover, some articles (including much clothing and electronics) are manufactured through trans-world processes, where different stages of production are located at widely dispersed locations on the Earth. The US dollar and the Euro are examples of currencies that have global circulation. In global finance, various types of savings and credits (for example, offshore bank deposits and Eurobonds) flow in the world as a single space. Many firms (for example, Exxon), voluntary associations (for instance, Amnesty International), and regulatory agencies (such as the World Trade Organization) operate across the globe. Climate change (so-called "global warming") and stratospheric ozone depletion are instances of anthropogenic (that is, human-induced) ecological developments that unfold on a planetary scale. Finally, people experience global consciousness, inasmuch as we define the realm of our lives in trans-world, planetary terms.

Globalization is the trend whereby these various kinds of global relations emerge, proliferate, and expand. As a result of globalization, social geography gains a planetary dimension. "Place" comes to involve more than local, provincial, country, regional, and continental realms. With globalization the world as a whole also becomes a social space in

its own right. Thus global connections entail a different kind of geography. Whereas other social contexts are territorially delimited, global relations transcend territorial distances and territorial borders to unfold on planet Earth as a single social space. In this sense globalization might be characterized as the rise of "supraterritoriality".

Of course globalization does not signal the end of other social spaces. The rise of supraterritoriality does not eliminate the significance of localities, countries, and regions. Nor does the spread of trans-world connections abolish territorial governments or dissolve territorial identities. The global coexists and interrelates with the local, the national, the regional, and other dimensions of geography.

Globalization has also not encompassed all of humanity to the same extent. In terms of territorial location, for example, global networks have involved the populations of North America, Western Europe, and East Asia much more than other parts of the world. In terms of class, global finance has been a domain of the wealthy far more than the poor. In terms of gender, men have linked up to global computer networks much more than women. Needless to say, this unevenness of globalization has important implications for social power relations. People with connections to supraterritorial spaces have access to important resources and influence that are denied to those who are left outside. In this regard, some commentators have deplored "global apartheid", as manifested in the so-called "digital divide" and other inequalities. Others have objected to a "cultural imperialism" of Hollywood and McDonald's in contemporary globalization. Since the mid-1990s such discontents have provoked a so-called "anti-globalization movement" marked by regular mass protests against global companies, the International Monetary Fund, and other prominent agents of trans-world relations.

Most manifestations of global connectivity have seen most of their growth during the past half-century. Consider the recent spread of jet travel, satellite communications, facsimiles, the Internet, television, global retailers, global credit cards, global ecological problems, and

global regulations. To take but one indicator, the world count of radio receivers rose from fewer than 60 million in the mid-1930s to over 2,000 million in the mid-1990s. Today's society is more global than that at any earlier time.

We have already noted the most direct impact of globalization, namely, that it changes the contours of social geography. However, since geography is intertwined with other dimensions of social relations, it is not surprising that globalization also has wider implications, inter alia for economics, politics, and culture.

In terms of economics, for example, globalization substantially alters the organization of production, exchange, and consumption. Many firms "go global" by setting up affiliates across the planet. Many enterprises also form trans-world alliances with other companies. Countless mergers and acquisitions occur as business adjusts to global markets. Questions of competition and monopoly can arise as a result. In addition, corporations relocate many production facilities as globalization reduces transport and communications costs. Globalization also expands the "virtual economy" of information and finance, sometimes at the expense of the "real economy" of extraction and manufacturing. All of this economic restructuring in the face of globalization raises vital issues of human security related to employment, labour conditions, poverty, and social cohesion.

In relation to politics, globalization has significant implications for the conduct of governance. Territorially based laws and institutions through local, provincial, and national governments are not sufficient by themselves to regulate contacts and networks that operate in trans-world spaces. Globalization, therefore, stimulates greater multilateral collaboration between states as well as the growth of regional and trans-world governance arrangements like the European Union and the United Nations. In addition, private-sector bodies may step in to regulate areas of global relations for which official arrangements are lacking, as has occurred regarding certain aspects of the Internet and trans-world finance, for instance. The resultant situation of multi-layered and diffuse governance raises far-reaching questions

about the nature of sovereignty and democracy in a globalizing world.

With regard to culture, globalization disrupts traditional relationships between territory and collective identity. The growth of trans-world connections encourages the rise of non-territorial cultures, for example, on lines of age, class, gender, race, religion, and sexual orientation. As a result, identity tends—especially for people who lead more globalized lives—to become less fixed on territory, in the form of nation-states and ethnic bonds. Moreover, inasmuch as multiple cultures become densely intertwined in supraterritorial flows, globalization encourages more hybridity, where individuals develop and express a mix of identities. At the same time, other people—including those who have less opportunity to participate in global relations—react against globalization with defensive nationalism. In these various ways globalization calls the nature of community into question.

Of course the extent of social transformation connected with globalization must not be exaggerated. Hence traditional sectors like agriculture and manufacturing still matter in a globalizing economy. The state still figures centrally in the governance of global flows. Territorial cultures survive alongside—and in complex interrelations within—supraterritorial communities of meaning. Thus with globalization, as with any other trend, history involves an interplay of change and continuity.

The future extent of globalization is unclear. In one scenario the 21st century will experience a continuation—if not a further acceleration—of recent high rates of globalization. In an alternative account, globalization will slow down and stop once it reaches a certain plateau. In another forecast—for example, if globalization is a cyclical trend or succumbs to traditionalist opposition—the future will bring a process of de-globalization that reduces trans-world connections.

At present the forces behind globalization (as identified above) would seem to be very strong. Current trends in technological innovations and regulatory developments heavily favour a further expansion of trans-world connectivity. A halt to globalization—let alone a

reversal—appears improbable for the time being.

Source: Encarta 2005

QUESTIONS ON THE TEXT

1. In your own words explain "Globalization has also not encompassed all of humanity to the same extent."

2. List the four effects of globalization mentioned in the passage.

3. From the text, identify six signs of globalization.

4. Explain the three possible prospects presented in the text for the future of globalization

5. In not more than a sentence, explain each of the following words as used in the passage

a. encapsulates (line 1, paragraph 1)

b. proliferate (line 2, paragraph 3)

c. supraterritoriality (line 2, paragraph 4)

d. implication (line 6, paragraph 5)

e. indicator (line 4, paragraph 6)

f. manifestations (line 1, paragraph 6)

g. contours (line 2, paragraph 7)

h. acceleration (line 2, paragraph 12)

i. halt (line 3, paragraph 13)

j. reversal (line 4, paragraph 13)

Section B: You have just read a text and answered vocabulary and comprehension questions. Please complete the following part of the questionnaire designed to help us understand how

you processed the text.

a. Do you have previous knowledge of the topic?

b. Do you have previous knowledge of the content?

c. Did you understand the main ideas expressed in the text?

d. Did you consider the language of the text to be difficult, average, or simple? Give reason(s) for your

answer.

e. Look at the words in question 5 above and choose 1-5 as is applicable to you: (1) = the word is familiar

and I can use it in a sentence; (2) = the word is familiar but I can only guess its meaning and can't use it

in a sentence; (3) the word is not familiar but I can guess its meaning; and (4) the word is not familiar at

all and I can't guess its meaning at all.

f. State how you were able to guess or arrive at the meaning of new and difficult words.

h. Would you say that your understanding of the text helped you understand the meaning of

new and difficult words?

i. Did your vocabulary knowledge help you to understand the text?

A pre-trial collection and investigation of what perceptions and attitudes of Konglish exist amongst foreign and Korean English language teachers in terms of English education in Korea.

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Bio Data:

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Abstract

This paper is a pre-trial collection and investigation of the perceptions that selected foreign and Korean English teachers have of Konglish in relation to English education in Korea. The knowledge gained in this pre-trial will help English educators, both Korean and foreign to 1) to get a better understanding of both groups of teachers' view of Konglish as it relates to issues of identity and ownership, and 2) make for more informed teaching judgments concerning the use of Konglish in the classroom. Furthermore, this study will help in closing

the communication gap that exists between native English speaking teachers and Korean English teachers by clearly illustrating their viewpoints of issues of Konglish and what they are based on.

Keywords: Konglish, English education, Standard English, lingua franca native speaker, perceptions

Introduction

The spread of English globally has raised various issues in the field of English language education for second language learners. The issue of language ownership is at the forefront as demonstrated by the front-page headline in the March 7, 2005 issue of Newsweek 'Who Owns English? Non-native speakers are transforming the global language'. The article accompanying the headlines states "the number of English speakers in Asia roughly equals the total in America, Canada and Britain" (Mazumdar, Sengupta, Mooney, Krosnar, Flynn, Valla, Lee, Mcnicoll, Theil, Rossouw, Lasso & Cunningham, 2005, p. 45). This statement leads into another area that needs to be discussed and that is with regard to the term, 'native speaker' in connection to the English language because of its globalization since, undoubtedly, "English has gained itself the status of a world language, an international language, or a lingua franca in almost all settings" (Ha, 2005, p. 244).

On the front lines of these and other issues regarding English education for second language learners are the teachers of English to second language learners in both the ESL (second language context) and EFL (foreign language context) fields. This paper narrowly focuses on these issues in order to provide a clear picture in a specific context, which can then hopefully be used to shed some light on the broader and more global views and concerns.

The aim of this paper is to evaluate the perceptions that a few selected foreign and Korean English teachers have of Konglish in relation to English education in Korea in a pre-trial approach, which will act as a lead-in to a more comprehensive research undertaking. The

conclusions made by this paper will hopefully help English educators, both Korean and foreign, to better understand how each other recognize how language relates to the broader issues of ownership, culture and identity, and will also help guide future research in this area.

The main focus of this paper is centered on one specific term – Konglish. In general, the term represents the mixture of English words and South Korean words and culture to form new words and / or meanings independent to the Korean vernacular. However, through practical use and promotion, they have become institutionalized into daily use in Korea, and are thus widely accepted. Any discussion of the interpretation, grammar, and authenticity of the terms is a separate matter from what they represent.

The term 'Konglish' is defined under two general characterizations, 1) is the use of English loanwords in a Korean context, and 2) English words being mixed with a Korean dialect and still viewed in a Korean context (Miller, 2003).

Although there is a great amount of research in the area of loanwords, what they are, where they come from and how they are integrated into another language, there is very little specific research into Korea's use of loanwords from English, better known as 'Konglish'. Research into Konglish is slowly on the increase, but its history is relatively short and volume is quite small.

Two additional terms central to the issue are 'identity' and 'investment'. The meanings of these terms have been taken from Norton in her 1997 article 'Language, Identity, and the Ownership of English'. She uses "the term *identity* to refer to how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future" (Norton, 1997, p. 410). "Because the right to speak intersects in important ways with a language learner's identity, [she] uses "the term *investment* to signal the socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language and their sometimes ambivalent desire to learn and practice it" (Norton, 1997, p. 411).

Lastly, throughout this paper, the expression, 'first language English speaker' will be used to represent what is commonly known as 'native speaker'. 'Second language English speakers' will be used to describe second language learners of English from countries such as Korea, Japan, China and Singapore or any other non-native English-speaking group.

The use of Konglish is a highly debatable topic with conflicting messages and influences affecting Korean English learners' abilities to acquire English as a second language. While many first language English speakers outright ban the use of Konglish in their classrooms, others allow it. The Korean government and local businesses continually use various forms of it, as do media and entertainment outlets (Doms, 2003a). The entire population is constantly being bombarded with Konglish expressions and it now can be considered a permanent fixture in Korean culture, and thus education; "[S]tudents of EFL in [Korea] have, rightly or wrongly, come to incorporate this vocabulary [of Konglish] into their English conversation" (Kent, 1999). By performing a study of this topic, EFL and ESL teachers will be able to 1) to get a better understanding of both groups of teachers' view of Konglish as it relates to issues of identity and ownership, and 2) make for more informed teaching judgments concerning the use of Konglish in the classroom. Furthermore, this study will help in closing the communication gap that exists between first language English speakers and Korean English teachers by clearly illustrating their viewpoints of Konglish issues and what they are based on.

Current literature for Konglish

In the field of 'Konglish', current literature has been very strong in a few areas. The first is in regards to how this assimilation of English loanwords occurs. In his 1999 paper, 'Speaking in Tongues: Chinglish, Japlish and Konglish', Kent provides a detailed categorization that clearly illustrates how the linguistic subset of Konglish incorporates English (along with

other European languages) into the Korean language. Although he briefly mentions the incorporation of other languages, he stresses the importance and dominance of English and notes that the use of English loanwords is predominantly connected to technical vocabulary and media usage. The five categories Kent (2004) lists as to how the Korean language incorporates English are as follows:

1) Direct loanwords - that are identical to their original counterpart, although possibly with a Korean pronunciation. Examples include "kopi" (˙ ˙) for "coffee" or "jusu" (˙ ˙) for "juice"

2) Hybrid terms – that are combinations of both Korean words and phrases and English ones as well. Common hybrids include "binil-bongtu" (˙ ˙ ˙ ˙) - literally "vinyl-envelope" - for a plastic bag; and bang-ul-tomato (˙ ˙ ˙ ˙ ˙) for a cherry tomato, or literally "bell tomato".

3) Truncated terminologies – that are formed from the shortening of English terms, such as such as, "remocon" (˙ ˙ ˙) for "remote control" or "super" (˙ ˙) for "supermarket."

4) Substitution - that are English words or phrases that have actually replaced the Korean counterpart. Examples include the words; "cup" which has come to replace Korean terms such as ˙ "jan", and also "shopping" to replace ˙ ˙ ˙ "jang-bo-da"

5) Pseudo loanwords – These are ideologically restructured terms, possessing semantically modified meanings such as "manicure" meaning finger nail polish; and "hunting" meaning attempting to meet women or men for dating purposes.

Konglish has evolved from post World War II use of English as a lingua franca in Korea and many parts of Asia. McArthur (2002) points out that the use of English as a lingua franca to communicate with other Asian nations as well as primarily America has gained

momentum in Korea through educational programs designed to teach English as a second language, and also the desire for parents to expose their children to English as early as possible, either through the public school system, or privately. Inevitably this push for increased English proficiency carries over some aspects into the Korean language. In his paper, 'The Impact of English on the Post-1945 South Korean Vernacular,' Lee (2004) introduces us to why Korea is borrowing words from English. He notes, as does Kent (1999), that all languages borrow from others for a variety of reasons. One of the most common is need, especially when it comes to new technologies (Kent, 1999; Doms, 2003b; Doms, 2004). Lee (2004) proposes another possible motivation for borrowing – prestige (Doms, 2003b). He gives a brief historical background about the concept of prestige borrowing and then moves into more current examples that relate specifically to English. An excellent example of this possible prestige factor is evident in the substitution of Korean words with their English counterparts (Kent, 1999; Lee, 2004). According to Cho (2006), the straight substitution of English terms for Korean ones is directly associated with their history, when after the Korean War, America was the dominant influencing nation. American products that were introduced to Korea were seen as of a higher quality than anything else available and America's help with the rebuilding process of the country has left its mark on the Korean psyche. Because of Korea's close association in recent history with America, it has linked its identity to (American) English through an attempt to acquire it. Thus, an 'investment' (Norton, 1997) exists from Korea's point of view in regards to the English language. Lee also introduces the idea that whenever an individual learns English, he or she "is inadvertently adopting or assimilating many of the cultural aspects and may be, inevitable, influenced by it" (Lee, 2004, p. 4). This is best exemplified by the promotion of Konglish terms by the South Korean government and media. Konglish can be readily found throughout news stories in printed newspapers and television captions and advertisements solidifying its entrenchment into the Korean culture, lexicon and thus the Korean psyche (Kent, 1999; Lee,

2004). It would seem then that although English remains the lingua franca for Koreans to communicate globally, Konglish has permeated Korean language and culture and become engrained in daily language use among Koreans themselves.

This introduction of the cultural aspect by Lee (2004) is important. Because Konglish is now a fixture in the Korean language, it has become an integral part of their daily lives. It contributes to their essential linguistic tool set to make sense of the world they now live in. English, and as a whole is so important in Korea, that it is considered a necessary resource to Koreans in their drive for education, power and success (Doms, 2003b; Doms, 2004). The prestige factor of English contributes directly to a person's social status. What this leads to is a direct connection to the Korean identity as it relates to English and subsequently to Konglish.

The final area of Konglish that has been well covered by the existing literature is in regards to the problematic aspect of loanword usage. For teachers who consider themselves 'purists', the use of Konglish is considered a serious problem (Doms, 2003a) whereas Kent (1999) sees this as contributing to the problems that Korean English learners may come across. He directly connects the misuse of loan word terminology and the creation of pseudo loanwords, two of the areas he categorized, as leading to mistaken interpretations of these Konglish terms by non-native speakers. By identifying that it is a problem combined with the permanent entrenchment of the use of Konglish, teachers need to recognize both and thus understand that simply ignoring Konglish is not sufficient. An effective means of correctly and more efficiently teaching the use of these expressions in the classroom is needed (Kent, 1999).

Three issues for research & observation

The investigation addresses some of the gaps that are prevalent in the current research. Specifically, three key issues are looked at: 1) what do teachers understand of the phenomena of Konglish? 2) What are teachers' attitudes to the use of Konglish in English language classes? And 3) what are teachers' perceptions or attitudes toward 'standard' English? The complete list of questions asked of the teachers regarding the three areas can be found in the Appendix 1 of this paper.

Although we will be looking at the issue of Konglish predominantly from the viewpoint of English second-language teachers working and living in Korea, this paper is not to be considered as a full research project involving formal and officially approved interviews with teachers. Instead, we approached this project as a literature review, pretrial analysis and lead-in to a more fully developed research undertaking. The participating teachers involved numbered only four and included three Canadians and one Korean. All four teachers are currently working in Korea at the university level and have a range of 6 to 9 years of teaching experience.

In consideration of personal trust and consideration, the names of the teachers have been kept anonymous. Instead, they are referred to as FT1, FT2, FT3 (for the three foreign teachers) and KT4 (for the single Korean teacher). Additionally, the discussions with these teachers were conducted individually and not as a group. Thus, any overlaps in views, opinions or gradual changes by the teachers are coincidental and were brought out through their own development as the discussions were in progress.

Through our experience of living and working in Korea, we were already aware that the issue of Konglish was not something seriously discussed among teachers, but was more of a topic of fun and sometimes ridicule. Because of this, we felt it was important to broach the topic with a few teachers in a more serious and thought-provoking way, one in which the teachers involved would be left still thinking about the issue of Konglish in a manner that was previously non-existent.

Methods and Techniques

Research Method

In order to gather the relevant opinions and attitudes towards Konglish in the most efficient manner for this pre-trialling study, we chose an interactive method (Palys, 2003), utilizing an interview/survey technique to gather and analyze the comparative viewpoints of the selected teachers. Lewin (2005) would classify this as a non-experimental quantitative method. The interview/survey was administered through a semi-structured interview in order to allow more flexibility in pursuing the issues at hand. By semi-structured, we are referring to the combination of open-ended and structured questions. The technique known as "funnelling: first asking broad, open-ended questions on [the topic] and following up with successively narrower, more well defined structured questions" (Palys, 2003, p. 177) was be employed.

This method of research allowed for a study from the participants' point of view and in doing so achieved the richest descriptions of data possible. Any shared or differing viewpoints were illuminated by this research method. Furthermore, it allowed us the opportunity to ask about any specific incidents or situations that had occurred during their work experience while at the same time allowing the participants to reflect back on such incidents (Stark & Torrance, 2005).

It should be noted that a qualitative approach feature existed in this research method because of the dominant use of open-ended questions in an effort to elicitr a free response from the participants (Lewin, 2005). Interview techniques are "common to both quantitative and qualitative research traditions" (Palys, 2003, p. 159). We were aiming to concentrate more on depth than quantity for this study project (Stark & Torrance, 2005).

Data collection techniques

Since this study was not concerned with any change in an individual, a cross-sectional design of data collection was applied. Furthermore, because this study looked at the opinions and

attitudes of two different participant populations – native English speaking teachers and Korean English teachers, a parallel-samples design best suited the needs of this study.

The primary reason for proposing a semi-structured interview method as opposed to a standard questionnaire was to allow and to encourage any elaboration of points by the participants in order to make sure their attitudes and opinions were being made and were clear. Open-ended questions were the primary focus because they are considered superior when hearing opinions and are also better for discussing sensitive or passionate issues. They also allowed for participants to discuss what is important to them and thus did not apply any limitations to them. We, the researchers/interviewers, minimally interpreted the words and concerns of the participants (Palys, 2003). This was especially important in regards to information gathered from the Korean English teacher as consideration had to be taken into account that they would be expressing themselves in a second language and not their native language. The interpretation also probed into any unrealized motives the participants may have had for their opinions, which they either were unaware of or were unmotivated to share (Research methods in education, 2005). Furthermore, by applying the in-person, face-to-face interview, a higher rate of participation was achieved as well (Palys, 2003).

In order to ensure the reliability of the collected data and the effectiveness of the interviews, both written note taking and audio recording were used. The tape recording allowed for more careful analysis of the results as well as allowing for an objective third party to evaluate the reliability of the results (Research methods in education, 2005). In addition, due to the small sampling of participants, the overall findings of this study may not be generalizable statistically, however we believed that readers of the study, who would be teachers in this case, would be able to "recognize aspects of their own experience in the [study] and intuitively generalize from the [study]" (Stark & Torrance, 2005, p. 34). In addition, because the findings were based on a comparison of teachers' views while contrasting foreign and Korean viewpoints, the validity of the findings came from participants' responses themselves

143

and not simply from our own interpretations of them (Stark & Torrance, 2005).

An interview schedule was set up to ensure the appropriate amount of time was available for conducting the interviews in addition to securing appointments with the participants. The technique mentioned earlier, funnelling, was also helpful to control the pace and time afforded to performing each interview. Furthermore, enough time for any follow-up work needs was considered if required.

Participants

A total of four teacher/participants were used for this study. The participants for were divided into two groups – three foreign English-speaking teachers and one Korean English teacher. Participants from the foreign teacher group are currently working at the university level in Korea. Furthermore, for the foreign English speaking teachers, a three-year minimum experience background at the university level or five years at a private adult institute was required. This requirement was imposed in order to ensure they had a reasonable amount of experience with the issue at hand (Konglish) and were therefore able to speak to it legitimately. Since the Korean English teacher would have a natural experience of Konglish usage, if they were currently not working at a university, experience within the last three years was accepted. Furthermore, we used our own judgment in choosing teachers who we deemed to be genuine about their occupation. This was based on their experience working in Korea, their educational background, and known attitudes of teaching English in Korea. Demographic data including age, gender, nationality, and education and teaching experience in Korea was also collected for comparative purposes.

Sampling

The sample of participants was taken from known contacts in the English teaching industry at the university level in the Republic of Korea. Thus, non-probability sampling was adopted

as a particular group was being targeted on a small scale (Lewin, 2005). More specifically, opportunity sampling drove the selection process as the group being targeted was known and thus a relationship had already been established and was decided upon based on our own judgement (Lewin, 2005). Considerations were made as to which participants were chosen to participate in the study in order to ensure the highest degree of effectiveness of the interviews and lower any deficiencies that may appear due to the already established relationships (Lewin, 2005). In researching who should be asked to participate in this study, consideration was given to any recommendations given to us by those we deemed appropriate and who we felt were respected in the field of English education in Korea (Stark & Torrance, 2005). Although the sampling size is quite small, we believe that some aspect of it will be generalizable and applicable to the group in question, that is to EFL and ESL teachers in Korea as a whole who at least share the qualifications outlined for the participants (Lewin, 2005).

Data analysis procedures

Before any analysis of the data began, it was first transcribed into text form. Next, it was separated into the two groups – one group being the foreign English speaking teachers and the other the Korean teacher. From here, efforts were made to look for recurring patterns (Stark & Torrance, 2005) within each group as well as cross-cultural patterns. Additionally, to reflect the in-depth interview collection technique, the bulk of our analysis is presented in descriptive form.

Understanding the Phenomena of Konglish

The first issue investigated from the participating teachers was what they understood about the phenomena known as Konglish. They were not informed beforehand as to what the topic was going to be in order to get a sense of their first reaction to the questions, rather than

prepared statements. We believed that this would allow for more true feelings and opinions without having to be concerned about any possible consequences of their answers, real or imagined.

The first reaction by the teachers, when asked for their thoughts about Konglish in terms of English education in Korea was dominated by feelings that Konglish had both positive and negative aspects. The positive aspects revolved mildly around how Konglish can be helpful to students as an effective source of language learning for word and expressive meaning, as well as to help build student vocabulary corpora. Heavily stressed was the possibility of confusion and misunderstanding in communication outside of Korea if Konglish were used. Both FT3 and KT4 stressed a possibility of interrupted understanding while FT2 was more adamant, saying it was simply inappropriate, without explaining why. FT1 had similar thoughts as FT3 and KT4 regarding the possibility of confusion occurring during a communicative event outside of Korea, however the opinion was much less resolute. FT1 went further, pointing out that students should be made aware of the 'correct' standard English versions of the Konglish expressions they utilize, so as to reduce confusion and misunderstanding while conversing in English outside of Korea. FT1 also made a distinction in raising the issue of language ownership; He pointed out that Konglish is an expression of Korean-English, saying that the English language also belongs to the Korean people, at least a piece of it. This concept is supported by McLean's Magazine article, 'English doesn't belong to English-speaking countries anymore.' Additionally, FT1 also pointed out similar practices in other countries, such as the phenomena of Singlish, which occurs in Singapore.

All four teachers generally agreed in their definitions of Konglish. Each used words such as, 'changed', 'adapted', and 'altered' in their descriptions of how English words become Konglish expressions, saying that English words are reproduced to fit Korean culture, a type of Korean spin, based on cultural, societal and other influences. It was very clear that their

answers were based on their experiences of working in Korea and that their conclusions had not been arrived at through any specific academic study. There are a few reasons for this. Firstly, as pointed out earlier, there has not been much written in the academic world regarding the topic of Konglish. Secondly, Konglish is often shown, described and talked about publicly and openly in a light hearted manner and in jest by first-language English speakers. The predominant form of illustrating Konglish comes in the form of words and expression like 'window shopping', 'hand phone', 'glamour', 'one-shot', and 'one-room' that first language English speakers hear on a daily basis in and out of the classroom, and may even be regularly used by first language English speakers after sufficient exposure to these and other phrases.

Teacher FT1 again stated the point made earlier that Konglish has somehow become a part of Korea's culture and heritage – that Koreans somehow desire to have their own piece of the English language, which again brings up the point of language ownership.

Explanations as to how and why Konglish is used in Korea had some points of commonality among the three foreign teachers. The main reason stated was cultural habit, an aspect of which has developed over time and has simply spread across the lives of the Korean people. A point of uncertainty was raised, however, as to whether or not Korean students (and people in general) even realize they are using Konglish. If they do realize it, then it is probably used for fun, as one teacher pointed out. What is interesting, though, is the lack of consideration for the historical connection and influence of the United States that has been so predominant. Only KT4 discussed the influence of the United States, over the past 30 or so years, and the cultural exposure to them that has impacted upon the Korea people and their culture. The three foreign teachers do seem to realize this as well, but in a more vague and unaware sense, which is owing to a lack of experience in feeling the impact of a clear and acutely foreign culture and language onto their own. Canadians, for example have

certainly felt the influence of American culture on their own, however the effects are less noticeable on account of their shared language, border and historical tie to England. Any American cultural impact that might be felt is relatively subtle, and may be easily brushed off or unnoticed by most Canadians. As a result of this, there would be lack of shared experience with Korean English language students in regards to the issue of loanwords, and in particular Konglish. Only FT3 mentioned that Konglish is mostly used in relation to high-tech terms, as supported by Kent (1999) in his research.

Because of the dominance of second language English learning throughout the world, when loanword phenomena like Konglish, Japlish, Chinglish and Singlish are cited in discussion, they are easily scrutinized and often ridiculed. In contrast, there is little to no attention given to the adoption of loanwords in English. The easiest and clearest illustration of this point is how English speakers pronounce words that have been borrowed from other languages. For example, the English pronunciation of "Kimchi", is not the same as how Korean people would pronounce it. English speakers pronounce it with a predominant 'k' sound while the correct Korean pronunciation is closer to a 'g' sound. This does not even take into account the different English accents like English, Canadian, Australian or Irish. Perhaps a clearer example is the cultural transformation of the Korean family name 'Pak' (˙) into the Americanized 'Park', which is done for all Korean immigrants and visiting athletes, such as the baseball player Park, Chan-ho or the golfer Park, Se-ri. Doing an epistemology check of the word 'Canada' finds that it is "said to be a Latinized form of a word for 'village' in an Iroquoian language of the St. Lawrence valley that had gone extinct by 1600" (Online Epistemology Dictionary, 1560).

After discussing these base points of Konglish, the teachers were asked to consider whether or not something more was being expressed by students, perhaps relating to identity or some other cultural or social phenomenon. Initially, each teacher was momentarily

stumped as they had never considered or thought about it before. Their eventual feelings on the matter differed somewhat. Teacher FT1 went back to his earlier comments about Konglish being habitual and a method of casual expression with a comfort aspect to it for Korean students. He also restated his acceptance of Koreans wanting a piece of the English language. He was, however, unsure as to whether or not the desire had reached a cultural level, and again restated that it was more likely a matter of habit. Teacher FT2 stated directly that Korean students are expressing their culture through Konglish. Teacher FT3, focusing on university level students, stated that there is an aspect of 'trendiness' to using Konglish, especially in terms of pronunciation. Additionally, FT3 felt that putting a Korean pronunciation on English words illustrates some resistance to conforming to the English language being taught. Teacher KT4 stated that Konglish is something more than just a linguistic phenomenon, but did not elaborate any further.

The varying opinions of all the teachers clearly show that more data collection is needed in this area. Furthermore, more data collection would have to include the opinions of the students themselves. It would be interesting to see if Korean students have considered this issue and how their answers would compare to English teachers, both first language English-speaking teachers as well as Korean English teachers.

Konglish use in the classroom

The second issue looked at in the pretrial analysis was the teachers' attitudes toward the use of Konglish in English education classes. With their thoughts more focused and organized regarding Konglish subsequent to the first section's informal discussion, teachers were then put into a more comfortable setting in the next section where the questions and areas covered related directly to their work experience in the classroom.

When asked about allowing the use of Konglish in their classrooms, there was only one

common factor among all the teachers – they were not strict about its use or non-use. From this point, a clear distinction appeared between the teachers, where three were of one opinion and one was of another. FT2, FT3 and KT4 all stated that they made it a point to correct their students' use of Konglish. Specifically, KT4 stated that at the sentence level, Konglish needed to be corrected because it interrupted communicative understanding outside of Korea. FT2 pointed out that Konglish is only useful in Korea. FT3 focused on the pronunciation aspect of Konglish and even went so far as to say that she tells her students that using Konglish will not help them to achieve their goals, which is to communicate with English speakers.

It was interesting to note that teachers FT2, FT3 and KT4 all expressed that they were not strict about its use, but then went on to say that they always corrected it anyway. If they are not strict about it, then why correct it? FT3 mentioned that she does not take it seriously and that she makes fun of its use in class, although not in a mean or degrading way toward the students. At the same time, however, she is strict in making sure it is corrected, just as FT2 and KT4 are. There seems to be a conflict between the attitude toward Konglish in general and its use in the classroom. This relates back to the general mockery of Konglish by non-Koreans.

FT3 also brought to light two other issues through her statements. The first relates to her focus upon pronunciation. Correct pronunciation is often an obsession of many Korean students, and even their parents. There have even been cases where parents have subjected their children to surgical procedures to have their tongues lengthened because of the belief that Korean tongues are too short and inhibit their ability to pronounce English words correctly (Seoul Selection, 2005). This notwithstanding, we have for many years now considered the issue of correct pronunciation and have not yet been able to conclude what it means. Whose English pronunciation is correct: a Canadian's, an Australian's, an American's? This question moves into the area of accents in which there are hundreds, if not

thousands in the English language, all of which would be considered 'native'. Is there a difference between two conversations, the first in which one person is speaking English with a Korean accent and the other is speaking with a Canadian accent while in a second conversation one person is speaking with a New York accent and the other with a Liverpool accent? Since English has gone global, one cannot be so sure anymore. Although it is expected and even in some cases required to teach pronunciation, the importance of communication and understanding of the message being relayed cannot be overlooked, regardless of the pronunciation.

The second issue raised by FT3 was in regards to her statement that using Konglish would not help students to achieve their goals, that being to communicate with English speakers. Continuously hearing phrases like, 'English is the global business language', and with articles like the one from McLean's Magazine, which question the ownership of English (whether or not it belongs to first language English-speaking countries like the US, Canada, Australia and England or to second language English-speaking countries like India and China because of the vast number of second language English-users), it should not be assumed anymore that the primary goal of second language English education is for communication with first language English-speakers. It is quite possible that businesspeople from various non-English speaking countries are conducting business in English, and each with accents rooted in their native language. The important thing is not, whether or not they are speaking just like a first language English speaker, but simply that they are communicating and that their messages are being relayed and understood correctly.

Continuing with this line of thinking, it may prove interesting to conduct broader research that fully encompasses the phenomena of Konglish, Japlish, Chinglish and Singlish especially because of their relative geographic connection and similar economic strengths. This means studying what similarities exist, if any, between their adaptations of English. It seems presumptuous of us, as first language English teachers, to think that Konglish is not

useful outside of Korea. Perhaps some similarities exist between Konglish and the Japanese, Chinese and Singaporean forms of '~ishes' that people may be able to use to communicate effectively in English while incorporating their own adaptations. There is perhaps a sharing going on between Northeast Asian people, which has as yet gone unnoticed because of the lack of research done in this area, both individually and comprehensibly (Kent, 1999). Additionally, KT1 pointed out that some of her students have told her that they can, at times, understand a Japanese English speaker better than a first language English speaker, owing it to the fact that they are more familiar with the Japanese language and accent.

Upon analyzing the teachers' thoughts about the use of Konglish in their classroom we noticed, as was mentioned earlier, that there is a distinction between FT1 and the others. The distinction was the correcting of the use of Konglish in the classroom. FT1 had an opinion that drastically differed from the others. He first offered the opinion that the majority of first language English teachers are generally against the use of Konglish in the classroom. He also cited an example of hearing another first language English teacher lecture a group of Korean students and others at a speech contest about how all foreign English teachers hate Konglish and that they should never use it. FT1 considers the use of Konglish to be perfectly acceptable during class and even encourages its use. However, students are also told the Standard English meaning of the word (if it had a changed or altered form) so that they can understand and use both versions in case one or the other results in confusion or a breakdown of communication. Again, this may depend upon whether or not they are speaking with a first language English speaker or with, perhaps, another second language English user who also uses an '~ish' adaptation that it cooperatively understood.

At this point, two areas of analysis can be combined for a broader Korean-based perspective to be considered. If Konglish is both a part and an expression of Korean culture, and is therefore used by the whole population, is it reasonable to think it is proper to teach students in the classroom that Konglish is incorrect, as FT2, FT3 and KT4 think?   By

including this countrywide factor, KT4's opinion started to move toward that of FT1, who brought up the point of ownership. She began to question the ownership of language, asking why Koreans, themselves, cannot customize English in their own way, stating an opinion similar to that of Kent (1999) who said that since "it can no longer be said that English is one language with one culture and a set of functions or code unique to itself" (Kent, 1999, p. 13). This illustrated a possible change in her viewpoint subsequent to the consideration of other aspects of Konglish and language that were raised during the discussion.

The teachers were also asked a series of questions that were meant to have them consider the relationship between the students themselves and the English language through Konglish. All four teachers agreed that Konglish use can be a method for students to try to get closer to, or bond with English however a few differences were readily apparent. FT1 restated his belief that students are attempting to gain ownership of the language and that they are expressing their desire to identify with the language differently from first language English speakers. FT2 felt that students were trying to bond with English, even though it is a mistaken form of English. FT3 considered that closeness was possible, but that a separation from English was more dominant. She supported her view by restating her earlier feelings that Konglish use actually inhibits communication with English speakers and that therefore any real bonding that may exist as a result of Konglish is between the students themselves and not with the language or with the teacher.

Because of its widespread use, the teachers acknowledged the bonding that occurs between students through Konglish. It introduces a level of comfort between them because is equalizes the students who may be at different levels of proficiency. Except for FT2, the teachers thought it could be a method for building confidence and other aspects requisite to language acquisition, for example developing vocabulary, but from that point, opinions and concerns on the need for correction, especially in terms of pronunciation were raised again.

FT1 was highly positive, once more, in the use of Konglish for bonding between students, between students and teachers and between students and the English language. KT4 gradually became more positive, as well, now considering that Konglish use could be a possible medium between students and their language skills, but did not offer any specific ideas on how any enhancement could be achieved similar to Kent's (1999) viewpoint. FT1 offered some ideas, saying that just as America developed its own style of English when it separated from England, the same principal applies for second language English learning countries, like Korea. Teacher FT1 thought that encouragement was the most important thing, which was a vastly opposing view to that of the other Canadian teachers interviewed. In addition, FT1 pointed out that textbooks, TV programs and the like could include Konglish in their publications and programming which could lead to an increase in new vocabulary and the practical use of this new vocabulary. This would have the added benefit of contributing to the national identity and would force a new responsibility onto foreigners, or more specifically, onto first language English speakers to become aware of and to learn about the new and changing face of English whose evolution is also being driven by the growing numbers of second language English speakers. Phan Le Ha, states that:

> when the native speaker norms are in contact with the norms of other
>
> speakers of English, it is often the case that the former are used to make
>
> judgments against the latter. Despite its international status, English in
>
> different forms of uses is still used to exclude many of its users, to construct
>
> an inferior Other. As such, it celebrates globalization yet limits integration,
>
> and strengthens the power of certain dominant forms of English (Ha, 2005, p.

244).

This is not only a reflection of the protective nature of first language English speakers over the ownership of English; it is also a reflection of the power relationship that is in play between teachers and students.

What is also interesting to note is that the teachers who expressed a need for Konglish correction in the classroom also admitted to sometimes using it themselves. The reasons for this ranged from a need to clarify a point for students, to using it to discuss topics like the Konglish term, 'one shot' ("bottoms up!") in relation to a discussion about drinking. In addition, the comedic aspect was also raised in that Konglish was funny and therefore somehow made the class more fun. This seems in conflict with some earlier thoughts by these teachers. First, if Konglish is something that needs to be corrected, then using it to clarify a point would appear to be an ineffective approach. The students would continue to associate the Konglish terms used by the teacher in association with the point needing clarification. Furthermore, if Konglish use has no bonding characteristic to it between teachers and students, then why would a teacher use it in order to make the class more fun for the students? The use of Konglish as a means for introducing discussion topics would also be seen as a method for bonding with students because of the shared language.

Furthermore, the use of it as a means of introducing a discussion topic also appears to be a form of stepping-stone for students to acquire and build upon their English skills. We might also conclude that this conflicting appearance of the use of Konglish relates to the broader issue of power relations in the classroom between first language English teachers and second language English learners in terms of language ownership.

Perceptions of 'Standard English'

The third issue addressed in this pre-trial experiment is in relation to the term, 'Standard English' and what teachers' perceptions are towards it. No historical background or any additional information was provided to the participating teachers as to an exact meaning or implication. This was done purposely in order to collect a preview of how teachers would react and first consider the term.

The issue of Konglish was still addressed and incorporated into this part of the discussion as well in order to build up to a final closing of the discussion that solely concentrated on the term and an associated term – 'native speaker'. First, the teachers were asked to consider if any consequence of misunderstanding or stunted conversation would result between a first language English speaker and a Korean speaker with generally good English skills if Konglish was a part of the conversation. Teachers FT2 and FT3 revisited the point that many people from Western countries would find it difficult to understand, problems would thus arise and would therefore not be an effective way to communicate. KT4 had similar concerns, but included more variables in her answer, which included the Korean's ability to clarify any Konglish terms as well as the amount of Konglish terms used during the communication – more Konglish may confuse the context of the conversation leading to more problems. Teacher FT1 restated his view that most teachers and people (through his personal experience) have an anal and narrow view of English in terms of what is considered correct and what is not.

This question was used as a way of introducing the possibility of viewing Konglish as a type of English slang, as regional, national or generational. At this point, it became clear that the questions overlapped too much and became a little confusing to the teachers. For a more in-depth study of Konglish that includes an area relating to slang, a clearer picture and formulation would be needed in order to collect understandable and usable data. However, from the questions used in this pretrial, some conclusions can still be made. The teachers

who have been shown to have a more negative view of Konglish, FT2, FT3 and in some instances KT4, were willing to consider Konglish as a type of slang that is simply unknown to them because of regional factors. These teachers however were less comfortable in considering Konglish as generational though. Because it has become ingrained into the base of Korean culture, it has transcended generational lines. Teacher FT1 however, because of his positive views concerning Konglish, of it being a valid form of expression was hesitant to consider it as a form of slang. However, he did like the idea of comparing Konglish and English slang with English terms and slang from other English countries. This he felt illustrates what is happening globally, specifically the broader implications of the other 'ishes', like Singlish and therefore believed first language English speakers are going to have to open up their minds and broaden their views of who owns the English language. The other teachers had difficulty looking beyond English speaking counties and seemed to feel that enough similarities exist between them that problems would only arise when a second language English speaker entered the mix.

Since all the teachers at some point and in some manner made a connection between Konglish and Korean culture, we felt it was important to also gather their viewpoints in regards to culture and there own teaching practices. By teaching English in Korea, all expressed that English culture (as in Western culture) was a part of what came with teaching and learning the language. A few of the teachers mildly expanded on this point to include lifestyle, sarcasm, manners, morals and etiquette, however it was clear to me that this was still in terms of western culture, except for FT1. The broader view of considering any new forms of English being generated by countries like Korea, China and Singapore and what contributions they can make to the English language is an area that is in need of study, but we believe this has provided a starting point for such an undertaking.

The interview was brought to a close by inquiring about two seemingly simple terms – 'pure' or 'Standard English' and 'native speaker'. As expected, FT1 stated that no form of

pure or Standard English exists today. He touched upon the power relationship between first language English speaking countries and second language English speaking countries in terms of ownership – that a standard form would be an attack upon these second language countries. Throughout the whole discussion with him, he stayed true in his willingness to share the ownership of the English language and to try and empower second language English speakers and countries in their quest for English language acquisition. He felt that English does affect identity formation, which is why he urges and assists students in their desire to communicate with the world in their own way through preservation of their cultural identity (Ha, 2005). Interestingly though, all of the other teachers who participated also stated that in the current climate, no standard of English exists and that languages are always in flux. This seemed to be somewhat of a contradiction in regards to their earlier statements on the issue of Konglish. If there is no standard form, than how can a group lay claim to it and decide what is appropriate, relevant, and useful on the global stage? Clearly, this shows a need for more research into this area both globally and regional for countries like Korea, Japan, China and Singapore who are openly changing the face of English.

The second term, 'native speaker' was inquired about in two ways. The first was in asking what makes a person a 'native speaker'? The dominant factor among the teachers was the communicative outcome, in that communication is achieved. Points like grammar and pronunciation were put aside in favour of the communicative aspect of language, including by FT3 who had previously made clear points regarding the importance of pronunciation. The second was whether or not the term 'native speaker' was outdated with so many countries learning English. As expected, FT1 stated that it was and that a great number of second language English speakers have no problems with English communication, even though they will never sound like a native speaker because of their accent, which will not be recognized as a first language English speaking accent. Teachers FT2 and FT3 used the argument of accents to either defend the use of the terms, or to show a willingness to

consider a different term in its place. However one was not offered. Teacher KT4 chose to make a simple statement that it was outdated, but did not elaborate any further.

Throughout this paper, we have not used the term, 'native speaker' to refer to people who come from primary English speaking countries and who use English as their first language, selecting the term 'first language English speakers' instead. This has been done purposely because of our view that the idea of a 'native speaker' is outdated, and continuous use of this term can inhibit the learning process of second language English learners. Korean students sometimes use this term as something to strive for (in regards to speaking and sounding like) when it is impossible because of the psychological block of knowing they are second language learners and because of the obvious factor of where they are born, that being not a primary English language country.

Final thoughts

These points have made it clear that there is an underlying issue of language ownership by first language English speakers that requires investigation as well as the fact that most teachers have not clearly looked at all the points and issues that revolve around topics like Konglish and all that it entails. Furthermore, it shows that teachers have not read any academic studies conducted on the topic of Konglish, which is partly due to the lack of these as shown in the literature review.

Lastly, one point that also needs consideration is the large number of foreign students, like Koreans, who are traveling to first language English speaking countries for the purpose of improving their skills. Although they will undoubtedly be learning the standard use and pronunciation of Konglish terms they are already familiar with, they will still be inserting their own versions and interpretations of English, by way of Konglish, into the host country they are visiting. It is not unreasonable to foresee that such Konglish terms as 'one-shot' could start to appear in the vernacular of first language English speakers who are in contact

with these visiting Korean students just as visiting first language English speakers do in Korea as illustrated by the comments made by the participating teachers of this pre-trial study.

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Appendix 1

Informal Interview Questions:

Name _____

Age _____

Nationality _____

Academic background _____

Teaching experience – years _____, types of classes taught _____

A. What do teachers understand of the phenomena of Konglish?

What are your initial thoughts regarding the topic of Konglish in terms of English education here in Korea?

What examples of Konglish first come to mind when the topic is raised?

How would you define or describe what Konglish is?

How would you say that Konglish is mostly used and why?

When students use Konglish, is anything more being expressed, like something relating to identity or cultural or social aspects?

B. What are teachers' attitudes to the use of Konglish in English education classes?

Do you allow students to use Konglish in your class? Do you consider it an acceptable form

of language coming from your Korean students?

Is Konglish something that needs to be corrected in the classroom by English teachers?

(If the teacher thinks Konglish is incorrect)
Since all Koreans use Konglish, do you think it is possible to teach students that Konglish is incorrect?

If a student uses Konglish, would you think he or she is trying to separate him or herself from English or trying to get closer to English as a second language learner?

Do you think the use of Konglish by students could be used as a confidence builder and a stepping-stone for acquiring; building upon and achieving enhanced English skills? If yes, do you have any thoughts as to how it could be achieved?

What benefits do you think there are or might be for students to use Konglish (in the classroom) from their point of view?

Can the use of Konglish in the classroom be a form of bonding between Korean students, their English teacher and the English language?

Do you or have you used Konglish terms in your classroom when teaching? If you have, which one(s) and why did you use it/them?

C. What are teachers' perceptions / attitudes toward 'standard' English?

If a good Korean English speaker was to use Konglish in a conversation with a native English speaker in an English speaking country, do you think the conversation would be difficult or stunted, or would a conversation of understanding still be achieved?

Would you consider Konglish as a form of English slang that could be viewed as regional, and thus possibly unfamiliar to you, but not necessarily wrong?

What do you think of making the comparison of Konglish and English slang with English terms and slang from different English countries or regions?

Would you consider making the comparison between new English slang and Konglish as new or generational English slang?

If word meanings are being purposefully changed or altered, are they being misused or are they always incorrect?

When you are teaching English, do you feel you are teaching more than just a language (a method/means of communicating)? If yes, what?

Is there a 'pure' or 'standard' form of English anymore? If 'yes', how would you define or describe it and if not, why not?

What criteria would you use to consider someone a native speaker of English?

Do you think the term 'native speaker' is outdated with so many countries learning English?

Relative cultural contributions of religion and ethnicity
to the language learning strategy choices of ESL students
in Sri Lankan and Japanese high schools

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Abstract

Ethnicity and religion have been shown to be significantly associated with the use of metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective strategies by Sri Lankan high school students learning English as a second language (Liyanage, 2004) In order to further examine the role of ethnicity and religion in determining the Language Learning Strategies (LLS) of ESL students, survey responses from a sample of Japanese high school students visiting an Australian school was added to those from the Sri Lankan sample. The composite sample comprised four ethnic groups: Sinhalese, Tamil, Sri Lankan Muslim, and Japanese. Sinhalese and Japanese participants were Buddhists, and Tamil and Muslim participants were Hindus and Islamists respectively. The choices of learning strategies across these four groups appeared to be associated with religious rather than ethnic identity. The notion that language learning strategies are cultural in nature needs to be carefully reviewed to allow for specific preferences associated with learners' ethnoreligious affiliations. Further study is needed to investigate the advantages of capitalising on instruction based on natural preferences compared to the culturally broadening educational advantages of exposing children to non-preferred strategies.

Keywords: Language learning strategies, Culture, Religion, Ethnicity

Introduction

Although modern interest in understanding human thought processes and the way in which human beings learn through mental processes can be traced to the late 19th century (Wenden, 1987), the topic of Language Learning Strategies (LLS) has drawn the attention of researchers since the 1960s. Since then, researchers have tried to (a) identify strategies employed by good language learners, (b) define and list strategies used to learn languages,

and (c) to identify factors that affect learners' LLS choices (Wenden & Rubin, 1987). As demand for formal instruction in second languages by students from countries, cultures, and ethnic communities seeking global access to educational and economic opportunities has increased, scholarly investigation has become increasingly relevant and purposeful.

Out of the many factors affecting learners' LLS choices that has been identified in the literature, cultural backgrounds of learners have been shown to have an effect on the use of LLSs. Oxford (Oxford, 1996b; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989) asserted that culture and national origin strongly influenced the kinds of strategies used by language learners. Studies from various parts of the world have shown learner strategy choices to be related to cultural background (Levine, Reves, & Leaver, 1996; Oxford, 1996b; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Politzer & McGroarty, 1985; Rubin, 1975). Most of these studies have adopted quite loose groupings of learner identity associated with the students' country of origin and reported general findings linked to these existing descriptions.

For example, different studies have examined strategies used by Japanese students in learning English. For example, Politzer and McGroarty (1985) studied Asian ($n = 18$, mainly Japanese) and Hispanic ($n = 19$, mainly Latin American Spanish speakers) students in the United States. They found that the two groups of students belonging to two nationalities used different learning behaviours. For instance, the Asian participants were found to be using learning behaviours that facilitate greater gains in linguistics and communicative competence, while the Hispanics showed learning behaviours that facilitate overall auditory proficiency and auditory comprehension. They explained their differences in terms of students' different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Similarly, Oxford (1996a) reported that Japanese students used strategies aimed at precision and accuracy, whereas Hispanic students relied on learning strategies such as predicting, inferring, and working in groups. That is, Japanese students preferred to work alone rather than together in groups, and they based their judgements on reason rather than on personal interactions through group work (Oxford, 1996a).

166

Levine et al. (1996) investigated the extent to which language learning strategies are related to the learners' educational background. These researchers compared recent immigrants to Israel from the former Soviet Union and long-term Israeli residents. They observed a clear difference in the application of strategies. Immigrant students showed a preference for traditional strategies such as memorising grammar rules, rote learning, using lists of words in translation, doing grammar exercises from a text book, and translating verbatim into the native language. Long-term Israeli residents employed strategies tending towards more communicative approaches. The differences of strategy application between the two groups were attributed to contradictory learning habit infusions caused, in turn, by different instructional systems.

An implicit assumption has arisen in such studies suggesting cultural differences in how people choose language learning strategies. That is, national or geographical classifications have been regarded as criteria for differentiating cultures. Important elements contributing to this broad notion of culture have remained ambiguous. Specifically, these studies have tended to investigate strategy preferences of students in a particular country rather than considering these students' ethnic, religious, and linguistic backgrounds. Hence, the summary profiling of language learning strategy preferences reported in different countries has not explored strategy preferences of specific cultural groups, marked by their ethnolinguistic or ethnoreligious variables within a country.

Moreover, the instrumentation used to measure strategies has been a further challenge to comparability of language learning strategies between countries. The definition and classification of LLS have been problematic from earlier days of LLS research (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). The existence of distinct LLS taxonomies with no common consensus has continued to cause such difficulties (Oxford, 1994). Out of the range of LLS taxonomies designed and used with different cultural groups, the taxonomies of Oxford (1990) and O'Malley and his colleagues (1985) have occupied a prominent place in LLS research in that

they acknowledge and classify strategies according to different practical or theoretical processes involved in second language learning. The 62 strategies in Oxford's LLS descriptive taxonomy provided a rich practical platform for researchers and practitioners assessing strategies used in second language learning to generate items for a questionnaire.

Chamot and colleagues (Chamot, Kupper, & Impink-Hernandez, 1987; Chamot & O'Malley, 1993; O'Malley & Chamot, 1993) criticised atheoretical description of the learning and memory processes of learners. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) pointed out that Oxford's classification of strategies attempted to include every strategy that has been cited in the learning strategy literature to that point in time and that it had lead to the generation of several new taxonomies. Hence, they argued that strategies most important to learning could not be prioritised in the Oxford taxonomy and that the boundaries of some of its subcategories are not clear and tend to overlap. O'Malley et al., (1985) classified strategies in terms of how and at what level learners process new information—metacognitive, cognitive and social-affective—based on a cognitive theory (Anderson, 1996, 2000, 1981). Chamot et al. (1987) designed a 48-item LLSI to elicit learner strategies used by students of Spanish and Russian as foreign languages. They gathered information about 16 different strategies with this LLSI but discovered 10 more strategies for which no questions had been framed, at the end of the study. Liyanage (2004) adapted the LLSI designed by Chamot et al. (1987) to embrace these 10 strategies and to include 16 questions on these strategies. The adapted 63-item LLSI comprised a total of 26 strategies clustered into metacognitive, cognitive, and social affective headings (20 items measuring metacognitive strategies, 34 items cognitive strategies, and 9 items social affective strategies). Participants used a 4-point Likert response scale to rate how often they utilized ('never' to 'very frequently') the behaviours described in each of 63 items.

Sri Lankan example

Liyanage (2004) reported that the combination of ethnicity and religion in Sri Lankan students significantly influences the selection of language learning strategy types (metacognitive, cognitive, and social affective). The three distinct subcultures in Sri Lanka were Sinhalese, Tamil, and Sri Lankan Muslims. The Sinhalese used Sinhala as their first language, and the Tamils and Muslims used Tamil as their mother tongue. In these samples, participant ethnic identity coincided with religious identity: That is, the Sinhalese were Buddhists, the Tamils were Hindus, and the Muslims were Islamists.

Liyanage used the adapted LLSI to collect Sri Lankan data on strategy preference from school-age participants studying English as a second language. He adapted the original inventory to the cultural context but retained its structure. He made changes at lexical, phrasal, and sentential levels in order to localise the inventory for application in the Sri Lankan context. The inventory was translated into two languages of Sinhala and Tamil in line with the two respective mother tongues used in the country. Scale scores for the three metacognitive, cognitive, and social affective strategy types were obtained by summing across items and then dividing by the number of items. As might be expected, reliabilities for both versions of these three scales tended to be better for the two scales with larger numbers of items. (For a detailed discussion on reliability, see Liyanage, 2004.)

Liyanage (2004) reported a pattern of differences for Sinhalese, Tamil, and Muslim students. Amidst a host of other variables, a demographic variable involving a mix of ethnicity and religion was centrally and significantly related to language learning strategies. However, the close identification between ethnicity and religion in the Sri Lankan study made it difficult to discern whether language learning strategies were selected on the basis of ethnicity or religion. These two demographic markers of Sri Lankan culture were confounded with each other.

Religion and ethnicity

Cultures have been described as unitary entities (Hall & Hall, 1990) within which cognitive and behavioural elements exhibit strong interdependent relationships. Little work has been done to investigate how learners have organised their behaviour and thought to engage in learning to meet culturally valued goals. Liyanage (2004) showed that the variables of religion and ethnicity had strong relevance to the variety of cognitive and social-behavioural elements mediating how school learners organised their thinking and acting during second language learning. Investigation of cultural aspects of language learning in that study, however, could not unpack the relative influence of these overlapping variables on strategy selection.

Membership of a religious grouping could be expected to interact with the learning strategies adopted by ESL learners. Religion has served as an important behavioural element in the culture of a given community (De Waal Malefijt, 1968; Eliot, 1962; Geertz, 1968; Howard, 1996; Lawson & McCauley, 1990; Vernon, 1962). Turner (1991) argued that religion binds people into a sacred community and, therefore, has the power to make social groups into religious groups. Religion has played a part in all known societies (Bowker, 2002). Moreover, religion has functioned as a force that interacts with cultural institutions such as family, law, marriage, politics, and education (De Waal Malefijt, 1968) and, thus, has shaped the operation of these institutions (Vernon, 1962). It has been claimed more generally that the expression of religion in value systems, morals, and ethics has shaped how people perceive the outer world and interact with one another (Eliot, 1962; Howard, 1996). The strength of the fusion of religion and culture has stimulated both literary writers (e.g., Eliot, 1962) and social scientists (e.g., Vernon, 1962) to emphasize the indivisible nature of these two variables. 'We do not talk of religion and culture…but rather emphasize that religion is culture' (Vernon, 1962: 39). 'The culture will appear to be the product of the religion, or the religion the product of the culture' (Eliot, 1962: 15).

Ethnicity has been recognised as another important element in the culture of a given community (Bedell & Oxford, 1996). A common culture has been a force binding people together into particular ethnic groups. Ethnic groups have typically used languages associated with ethnic identity (Fishman, 1999; Howard, 1996) and, where possible, have signalled their ethnicity by the language they use. Religious differences have entered into the formation of ethnic identity, marked signature features that define one ethnic identity relative to the other, and helped to shape the boundaries between ethnic identities (Howard, 1996).

However, ethnic variation has not always applied to all people in a given community. For example, ethnicity and religion has worked together for most Sri Lankans. Although the Sinhalese ethnic community in Sri Lanka has remained predominantly Buddhist, that community has included a few Christians and Hindus. In the same way, some members of the predominantly Hindu Tamil community in Sri Lanka have adopted other religious affiliations as Christians and Hindus. However, the overlapping of religion and ethnicity as cultural variables has made it difficult to distinguish which of those two variables makes the stronger contribution to culture.

Aim

Therefore, the present study sought to identify whether ethnicity or religion are more important in determining the language learning strategies of ESL students. For the purposes of this study, a sample of Japanese high school students visiting an Australian school was used in conjunction with the Sri Lankan sample. The rationale for including the Japanese students was that, whereas, for the Tamil and Muslim participants, ethnicity and religion are confounded, the Japanese students differ from the Sinhalese in terms of ethnic identity but are similar in terms of religious identity. Should Japanese and Sinhalese participants select similar strategies, this shared preference would indicate the relative importance of religious identity. On the other hand, marked differences between the Japanese and ethnically Sri

Lankan participants would indicate the relative importance of ethnicity.

Methodology

The sample for the present study comprised four ethnic groups, with LLSI responses from 1,027 participants included in the analysis. Of these participants, 14% ($N = 141$) were Japanese students, 30% ($N = 303$) were Sinhalese students, 28% ($N = 283$) were Tamil students, and the remaining 29% ($N = 300$) were Muslims. The percentage of Japanese female students (57%) was more or less equivalent to that in other groups (Muslims = 53%, Sinhalese = 50%, Tamil = 49%). Members of these four subsets were similar in terms of age range (16-18 years) and in terms of the length of time that they had studied English (approximately 10 years).

To facilitate the collection of data from the Japanese sample, the adapted LLSI used with the Sri Lankan study (2004) was translated into Japanese (English to Japanese) by a competent translator. Data collection took place in two locations. A convenience sample of Japanese high school students visiting a state high school in Queensland, Australia was used to collect the additional data. Data from the Sinhalese, Tamil, and Muslim groups were collected in government-run high schools in Sri Lanka (Liyanage, 2004).

Results

The analysis involved a combination of descriptive and inferential data that distinguish the two cultural variables of religion and ethnicity. First, cross-tabulations indicated the binary composition of the sample on these variables, and means for the three LLS categories were then generated from binary combinations of religion (Buddhist - not Buddhist) and ethnicity (Japanese - not Japanese) made possible by the addition of the Japanese sample. Then, linear regressions of the relative contributions of these cultural variables on the use of each language learning strategy were made.

Descriptive statistics

This merged sample included students from two countries and three religious groups. One of these religious groups, the Buddhists, included students from Japan and also from Sri Lanka (the Sinhalese). This combination of samples provided the opportunity to clarify the relative influence of religion and ethnicity on language learning strategies.

Table 1 presented the cross-tabulations. The addition of the Japanese sample made it possible to compare the effect of (a) religion, in terms of whether or not the students were Buddhists to those of (b) ethnicity, in terms of the relatively broad ethnic distinction between Japanese and Sri Lankan students. This cross-tabulation was then used to clarify the important issue of the extent to which language divisions (i.e., whether students spoke Japanese, Sinhalese, or Tamil) overlap with the analysis in terms of ethnic identity.

Table 1: Cross-tabulation of religious and ethnic identity

		Ethnicity				Total
		Japanese	Sinhalese	Tamil	Muslim	
Religion	Buddhist	141	303	0	0	444
	Hindu	0	0	283	0	283
	Muslim	0	0	0	300	300
Total		141	303	283	300	1027

Figure 1 (left-hand figure) indicated that non-Buddhist students obtained higher scores on the three language learning strategy types than the Buddhist students. That is, the combined scores of the Tamil and Muslim students in Sri Lanka were higher on all three learning strategy types. Figure 1 (right-hand figure) also indicated that Sri Lankan students obtained higher scores on the three language learning strategy types than did Japanese students. These data indicate that both ethnicity and religion are contributing to selection of language learning strategies.
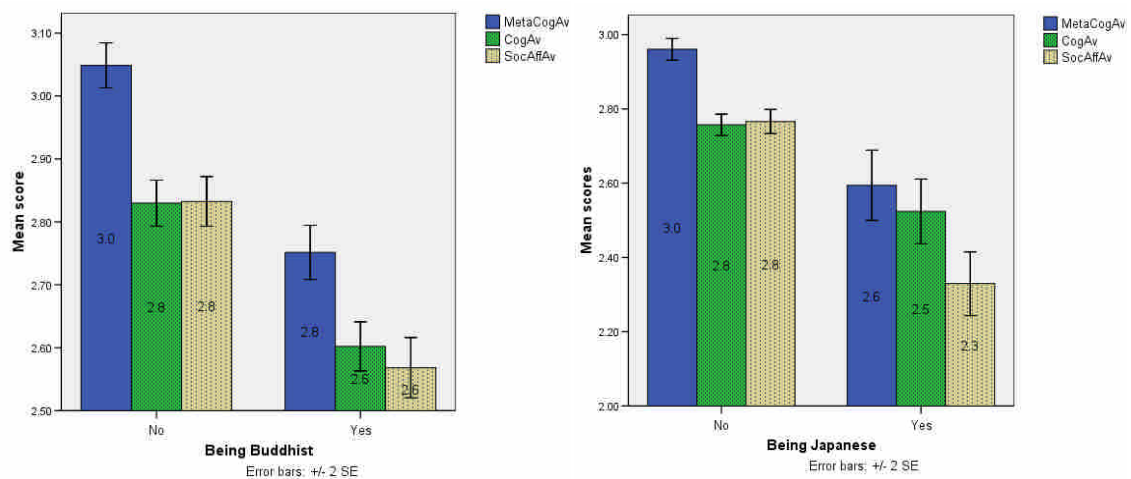
Figure 1. The association between religious group (left-hand) and ethnicity (right-hand) and scores on the three learning strategy types

Inferential statistics

The relative contribution of religious identity and ethnic identity were entered as dummy variable IVs or independent variables) on three separate linear regression procedures for metacognition, cognition, and social-affective scores (as DVs, or dependent variables). In each of the three analyses, both variables were significantly associated with the outcome variable. However, religious identity (whether or not students were Buddhist) contributed far more strongly than did ethnic identity (whether or not students were Japanese). For two of the three outcome scores (Metacognition, Cognition), the contribution of religion, as estimated by the size of the beta weight, was more than twice the size of the contribution of religion.

Table 2. Beta values for religion and ethnicity in relation to the three strategy type outcome scores

Outcome score/Predictor	Metacognitive β	Cognitive β	Social Affective β
Not being Buddhist	0.296	0.257	0.215
Not being Japanese	0.126	0.058	0.207

Discussion

What emerges with the addition of the Japanese sample is the relative importance of religion regardless of ethnic origin. To be more specific, Japanese and Sinhalese Buddhist students obtained significantly lower outcome scores than did the non-Buddhist Tamil or Muslim students. One interpretation is that the pattern of group differences found in the Sri Lankan study extends to Japanese students in a conceptually sensible manner. That is, the pattern of group and gender based differences for metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective average scores are such that the two groups with common religious values (i.e., Japanese students and Sinhalese students) differ in similar ways from Tamils and Muslims. This common pattern is consistent with religious identity rather than ethnic identity being most important in determining the selection of learning strategies. It follows that religious rather than the ethnic aspects of culture play the more active role in shaping the cognitive and behavioural organisation of language learning strategies.

What previous studies of LLS have failed to recognise is the fact that each country has people who have different religious and racial affiliations and different first languages, all of which create different subcultures. Sometimes, fallacies of definition have filtered through even the few studies that have attempted to go beyond the national and geographical descriptions. For example, Grainger (1997) investigated the influence of ethnicity on the strategies used to learn the Japanese language by students from Australia, Korea, Thailand, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Germany, the United States, and Malaysia. His use of mother tongue to determine ethnicity or cultural affiliation was questionable, especially in countries where several ethnic groups share the same first language. For example, in the case of Sri Lanka, Tamils and Muslims sharing the same first language belonged to two distinct ethnic groups.

It has also been argued that previous research has paid little attention to the learners' religious backgrounds when describing the language learning strategies of different cultures. Many relationships have been found between learners' cultural backgrounds and language

175

learning strategies in a number of studies. These studies, however, have considered learners' geographical location (country of origin) as the single most important criterion for delineating cultural contexts but have excluded any possible impact of religion on individuals' culture.

It appears, therefore, that students' language learning strategy preferences need to be identified not only at a macro level where cultures are demarcated by their geographic boundaries but also at a micro level where aspects such as religion and ethnicity contribute to the formation of those cultures. This layering is seen as important because the strategies identified on macro levels may not necessarily be applicable to learners on micro levels. With respect to second language learning strategy instruction, when the strategies that are being taught to the students differ from students' strategy preferences based on their ethnoreligious affiliations, the results of that instruction may be counterproductive (Liyanage, 2003; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Politzer & McGroarty, 1985).

Therefore, it is seen as appropriate that pedagogical approaches should grow within the socio-cultural contexts of the learners. Pedagogy needs to be sensitive to material and rhetoric indigenous to the particular ethnoreligious affiliations to which the students belong. The aim of such approaches would be to maximise and benefit the process of target language learning through strategies naturally preferred and sought by the students. There may be instructional value in showing students strategies that are outside their natural preferences, insofar as exposure to less preferred strategies can broaden the students' macro awareness of different ways of learning languages. However, teaching models based on strategies that are not naturally favoured by students cannot be expected to be as instructionally effective or efficient as those that fit with their ethnoreligious affiliations.

Conclusion

Based on the current findings with the Sinhalese and Japanese students, it seems evident that the religious identity of the learners is more important in determining the selection of learning strategies than ethnic identity. Replication studies are needed in various other contexts (e.g., with ethnically different Muslim and ethnically different Hindu students). Nevertheless, the conclusion reached in the present study has potentially serious implications for various contexts. In particular, it should signal the need for care to be exercised in ESL teacher training programs to avoid the exclusive focus on Western methodologies that may be inappropriate in contexts where long-standing religious influences have predisposed learners to prefer particular culturally determined learning strategies.

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Teacher Questions in Second Language Classrooms:
An Investigation of Three Case Studies

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Abstract

The present study investigates the types of questions asked by three NNS pre-service English teachers teaching in three different bands of secondary schools during the whole class teaching portion of their lessons through analyzing the transcripts of their videotaped lessons. A special emphasis is put on exploring the effects of the types of questions teachers ask on the students' discourse patterns. Similar to the results of previous research, the findings of this study show that in all the three lessons, yes/no questions, and closed and display questions were frequently asked by the teachers, while open and referential questions were rarely or even never asked. However, the referential questions themselves will not make students produce longer responses unless the teachers are able to encourage their students to elaborate further rather than just accepting those brief and syntactically less complex responses. The implications of this study are that pre-service teachers should be provided with more training in developing their questioning techniques. Also, to facilitate second language development and bring about more dialogic forms of whole class teaching, students could be asked to expand their thinking, justify or clarify their opinions in the follow-up moves.

Introduction

Traditional language classroom interaction is usually characterized by a rigid pattern, particularly the acts of asking questions, instructing and correcting students' mistakes. This phenomenon can be found in Tsui's (1985) study of Hong Kong secondary English classes. In Tsui's report on two Form 2 English lessons, she discovered that teacher questions were the most dominant in the lessons. The interaction generated was predominantly a teacher-centred question-answer-feedback interaction, or the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) pattern suggested by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), during which student knowledge was displayed and evaluated.

Teachers in traditional classrooms tend to dominate the interaction and speak most of the time because they think that close and persistent control over the classroom interaction is a precondition for achieving their instructional goals and students' unpredictable responses can be avoided (Edwards & Westgate, 1994). This is especially the case for those teachers who lack confidence in the subject matter they teach (Smith & Higgins, 2006). A common consequence is that open-ended questions are rarely asked because of the unpredictability of students' responses. Instead, pupils act mainly as the receivers of knowledge and their responses are constrained by the types of questions asked by their teachers (Edwards & Westgate, 1994). This interaction pattern is likely to inhibit students' opportunities to use language for communication (Hasan, 2006).

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the questions asked by three pre-service teachers teaching in three secondary schools with different banding during the whole class teaching portion of their English lessons through analyzing the transcripts of their videotaped lessons. A special emphasis is put on exploring the effects of the types of questions the teachers ask on the students' discourse patterns. Similar to the results of previous research,

the findings of this study show that in all the three lessons, yes/no questions, and closed and display questions were frequently asked. The effects were that the responses given by the students were generally brief and syntactically simple.

Significance of the study

The present study involved the investigation of the questions asked in the whole class teaching portion of three English lessons taught by three pre-service teachers and thus, contributes to our knowledge about such teacher trainees' developing skills in the teacher-student interaction in the whole class teaching. Previous local research studies devoted to classroom discourse analysis have mainly been related to analyzing input and interaction in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms (e.g. Tsui, 1985) or, more specifically, the teacher-student interactions in an English classroom (e.g. Chan, 1993), and the teachers involved were the more experienced teachers. The present study, however, was devoted to investigate the questioning techniques of three inexperienced teachers teaching in secondary schools with different banding in the whole class teaching portion of their English lessons. Through analyzing the lesson transcripts, the types of questions asked frequently by the pre-service teachers were found and their effects on the students' discourse patterns were explored.

Literature review

Teacher questions

Teacher questions, as a kind of input provided by a teacher (Hasan, 2006), form an integral part of classroom interaction (Ho, 2005). Nunan and Lamb (1996, p. 80) suggest that teachers use questions "to elicit information, to check understanding, and also to control behavior". In most classrooms, questioning remains the common strategy for eliciting responses from students during the whole class teaching. Chaudron (1988, p. 126) mentions

that "teachers' questions constitute a primary means of engaging learners' attention, promoting verbal responses, and evaluating learners' progress". In other words, it means that teacher questions play an important role in managing classroom routines. Studies of ESL classrooms have mainly focused on the effects of teacher questions on learner production of the target language and the types of student responses given (Tsui, 1995). Thus, the present study was conducted to investigate the effects of the types of teacher questions asked on the production of the target language and the types of responses given by the students. Different from the other studies that focused only on open/referential and closed/display questions, the effects of yes/no questions were also investigated.

Teacher questions have been categorized in a number of ways: 1) open and closed questions, 2) display and referential questions, and 3) yes/no questions. Tsui (1995) classifies the category of open/closed questions according to the kind of response elicited. The former can have more than one acceptable answer while the latter can accept only one answer. The second category of questions, display/referential questions, relates to the nature of interaction generated (Tsui, 1995). For display questions, the teacher already knows the answers. They are asked in order to check if the students know the answers. On the contrary, for referential questions, the teacher does not know the answers and the students answer the questions in order to give the teacher information (Tsui, 1995). Thompson (1997), however, categorizes the first two types of questions based on two dimensions. One relates to "the content of the question" (p. 101): whether it asks something about facts or opinions, while another relates to "the purpose of the question" (p. 101): whether the teacher already knows the answer or not. It is believed that closed or display questions elicit "short, mechanical responses" while open or referential questions elicit "lengthy, often complex responses" (Ho, 2005, p. 298). The last type of questions, the yes/no questions, is categorized by Thompson (1997) according to "the grammatical form of the question" (p. 100).

However, it is too simplistic for the above systems to classify teacher questions into either

open or closed. From the analyses of the questions asked by three non-native ESL teachers during reading comprehension in the upper secondary school in Brunei, Ho (2005) found that there are numerous instances of questions, particularly those reading comprehension questions, that can neither be considered closed nor open. These questions are mainly used to gauge students' overall vocabulary level, grammar and other general knowledge. Banbrook and Skehan (1989, p. 146) also note that the display-referential distinction can be influenced by "the students' interpretation of the teacher's intentions" of asking the questions.

   Open or referential questions are more preferred on pedagogical grounds because they are the questions commonly asked in the 'real world' of students outside the classroom (Long & Sato, 1983). However, "there is a divergence between what theorists would consider to be good practice and what is actually going on in classrooms" (Banbrook & Skehan, 1989, p. 142). In a traditional language classroom, factual questions are the most common while open questions are the least common (Myhill, Jones, & Hopper, 2006). This situation can be found in Harrop and Swinson's (2003) analysis of recorded teaching of ten infant school teachers, ten junior school teachers, and ten secondary school teachers. It was found that many questions asked by these three groups of teachers were closed questions (44.6%, 41.1% and 48.6% respectively), while open questions were rarely asked (7.1%, 7.4% and 9.8% respectively). Also, in Burns and Myhill's (2004) research study in which episodes of fifteen minutes from 54 lessons were drawn from Year 2 and Year 6 classes, the analyses showed that the most common form of questions asked by the teachers is the factual questions (64%). The questions teachers ask are mostly display questions because of the unpredictability of the students' response for open questions (Edwards & Westgate, 1994). The answers are usually predetermined by the teacher and so negotiation of meaning is rarely necessary.

Effects of teacher questions

Most research on teacher questions has focused on open/referential and closed/display questions but yes/no questions are also commonly used.

The effects of display questions on students' discourse patterns were generally considered to be negative but positive for referential questions. Brock (1986) conducted a research study in which the effects of referential questions on adult ESL classroom discourse were investigated. In this study, four experienced ESL teachers and twenty-four non-native speakers (NNSs) enrolled in classes in the University of Hawaii's English Language Institute were involved. Two of the teachers were provided with training in incorporating referential questions into classroom activities while the other two teachers were not provided with any training. As a result, the treatment-group teachers asked more referential questions than did the control-group teachers. Each teacher was randomly assigned with a group of six students for a single period of forty minutes. The results showed that the student responses in the treatment-group classes were significantly longer and syntactically more complex than those in the control-group classes. This suggests a positive correlation between asking referential questions and students' production of target language. In another study, the ethnographic research done by Ernest (1994), it was discovered that when the teacher asked display questions, students' responses were brief, with little elaboration. Lastly, Goodwin (2001, p. 11, cited in Myhill, Jones, & Hopper, 2006, p. 15) argues that "pupil responses tend to be short, and the teacher does not encourage elaboration of responses" when the display questions are asked.

From a pedagogical point of view, it appears that asking display or factual questions will produce negative effects on students' second language learning and thus, they should be avoided. Nunan (1987) also believes that display questions do not resemble real communication and are therefore pedagogically purposeless. However, Burns and Myhill's (2004) study showed that among the factual questions asked, 45% of them had a function of

inviting more responses. McCarthy (1991) also claims that display questions and closed questions still have the function for the teacher to check the students' state of knowledge and provide them with opportunities for practicing language forms. Therefore, Nunn (1999) emphasizes that display questions are pedagogically purposeless only when they are viewed from the perspective of communicative language teaching.

For the yes/no questions suggested by Thompson (1997), Gower, Philips, and Walters (1995, cited in Thompson, 1997) point out that these questions are easier for learners to answer and may therefore be suitable for those weaker students as they do not need to produce much language output. However, the research evidence in this aspect is limited that further research devoted to this area seems to be essential.

In brief, classroom data from a number of studies show that display questions are commonly asked while referential questions are rarely asked. For the former type of questions, the responses elicited tend to be brief, with little elaboration, but the responses elicited by the latter type of questions are usually longer and syntactically more complex. In the present study, the major purpose is to find out the type(s) of questions the teachers ask frequently in the lessons and their effects on the students' discourse patterns.

Research design and methods

In the present study, a case study approach was used in which the lessons of three non-native ESL pre-service teachers were studied with the purpose of investigating the questions asked in the whole class teaching portion of their lessons.

The participants

The selected participants in the present study were three Year 3 NNS pre-service teachers (one male and two females) in a tertiary institution in Hong Kong. All of them were from the same programme - Bachelor of Education (Honours) (Languages) (Four-year Full-

time) programme. They did not have any real teaching experience and they had their first block teaching practice during the period the study was conducted. They were obtained from nonprobability convenience sampling. All of them were assigned to the researcher as her supervisees as it is part of her duty to supervise students in their teaching practice, based on her preferred geographical location of the schools. The three pre-service teachers were allocated to a Band 1, Band 2 and Band 3 school according to their residential addresses. The total number of students in these three classes was 42 (27 males and 15 females), 34 (all males) and 36 (18 males and 18 females) respectively.

The setting

The three pre-service teachers were allocated to three different banding[1] of secondary schools in the same district in Hong Kong for their teaching practice. One of them was allocated to a Band 1 EMI (English as the medium of instruction) co-educational school, one (the male teacher) to a Band 2 CMI (Chinese as the medium of instruction) boys' school and one taught in a Band 3 CMI co-educational school. The teaching level of all these student teachers was junior secondary level (Forms 1 and 2).

Three classes of students were involved in the study. First, the investigated class of the Band 1 school was a Form 2 class of average academic ability among the five classes of the whole form. For the Form 1 class in the Band 2 school, it was a mixed-ability class with the highest passing rate in the English form test. And in the selected Band 3 school, there were only two Form 2 classes and the involved Form 2 class was slightly higher than the other class in their overall English level.

The data

The data for the present study was the transcripts of three videotaped English lessons. The three lessons taught by the three pre-service teachers were video-recorded and only the

whole class teacher-student interactions were transcribed, with the student-student interactions or private talk among the teachers and their students during group, pair or individual work being excluded. The lesson of the Band 1 class was a vocabulary lesson, with its topic about beach, whereas the lessons of the Band 2 and the Band 3 classes were grammar lessons about passive voice and past continuous tense. The total class time of the three lessons is 51 minutes 12 seconds, 49 minutes 47 seconds and 40 minutes 10 seconds respectively, while the total transcribed time in the whole class teaching portion of the lessons is 19 minutes 24 seconds, 22 minutes 56 seconds and 13 minutes 27 seconds respectively.

Data analysis

Teacher questions

To identify the questions asked by the three teachers, like Banbrook (1987), apart from those beginning with interrogatives, the utterances ended with rising intonation were also treated as questions. Through the quantitative analyses of the lesson transcripts, the number of different types of teacher questions in each sentence of the teachers' utterances were coded, as suggested by Tsui (1995) and Thompson (1997), including 1) yes/no questions, 2) open and closed questions, and 3) display and referential questions, and counted. In order to count the number of different categories of questions easily, the open or referential questions were categorized into the same group, and closed or display questions were also grouped together.

Effects of teacher questions on students' responses

In order to find out the effects of the types of questions the teachers asked on students' production of the target language and the types of responses given, the lesson transcripts were analyzed quantitatively by calculating the average length (that is, the number of words)

of the students' responses to the three types of teachers' questions. Similar to Brock's (1986) study, for the purpose of this study, only those responses that immediately followed the teachers' eliciting moves were considered. Once the teachers spoke again, the responses were considered to have ended.

Results and findings

Type(s) of questions the teachers asked frequently in the whole class teaching portion of the lessons

The lesson transcripts of the present study show that in the whole class teaching portion, except for the lesson in the Band 1 school, open and referential questions, which can have more than one acceptable answer and the teacher does not know the answers respectively, were rarely asked. On the contrary, yes/no questions, and closed and display questions, which have only one acceptable answer and the teacher has already known the answers respectively, were asked frequently. This situation is shown in Table 1 below.

Table1. Types of questions the teachers asked in the whole class teaching portion of each lesson

Types of questions asked	Band 1 class	Band 2 class	Band 3 class
Yes/No questions	36 (42.35%)	85 (52.15%)	16 (39.02%)
Closed and display questions	20 (23.53%)	75 (46.01%)	25 (60.08%)
Open and referential questions	29 (34.12%)	3 (1.84%)	0 (0%)
Total no. of questions asked	85	163	41

In the Band 1 class, the type of questions asked most frequently by the teacher was yes/no questions (42.35%) that expect mainly some yes/no type responses. For example, "Are you ready for the lesson?", "So who can tell me err do you like going to the beach?", etc. Some questions that do not have the grammatical form of yes/no questions but expect yes/no responses were also categorized as yes/no questions. For example, "Alright? OK?". There

were 36 yes/no questions asked by the teacher, followed by 20 closed and display questions, and 29 open and referential questions. The closed and display questions were asked in this lesson mainly to check the students' knowledge of the vocabulary items. For example, "But how do we call those big chair and then we use it under the umbrella?". Another example is "In the middle of the sea, you will see a big floating thing. How can we call that?". For the open and referential questions, they were asked mainly at the beginning of the lesson (that is, the lead-in part of the lesson). For example, the teacher asked the referential question "Why don't you like going to the beach?" to find out the reasons for the student's disliking the beach. Some open questions which accept more than one answer were also asked. One example is "So which beach do you think is the best in Hong Kong?". Lastly, there were some questions asked in this lesson that only aimed to elicit students' non-verbal react. For example, "Who say yes? Who say no?". Here, though the teacher did not know the answers of the questions, she expected students' non-linguistic react only (i.e. raising their hands).

In the Band 2 class, slightly more than half of the questions (85 questions) were yes/no questions that elicited mainly yes/no responses from students. Some of them aimed to check students' progress, for example, "Finished?", but some only aimed to draw students' attention. One of the examples is "It is still the receiver who receives the action and here we change the object to subject. Is this clear?" Nearly half of the questions asked, 75 questions (that is, about 46.01%), belong to the closed and display questions. The closed and display questions were asked in order to check if the students know the answers of the grammar exercise, for example, "How can I change these into passive voice? Err, yes, Andrew?", or to check the students' knowledge of the grammar point, for example, "Who is the receiver receive the action? Which one is the receiver?" Lastly, three referential questions can be found in this lesson, "… How many of you have learnt this in primary school?", "You just said 'are readed' or 'read'?", and "Number 5 is wrong. Number 6 is also wrong. How come?". For the first question, though the teacher did not know the answer, he expected only

non-linguistic react from his students (i.e. putting up their hands). In the second question, the teacher did not hear clearly what his student had answered and therefore, asked for clarification. But for the last referential question, the teacher uttered the question probably because he did not know why his students made so many mistakes in the grammar exercise, rather than expecting an answer from the students.

Finally, in the Band 3 class, more than half of the questions asked (25 questions) were closed and display questions. 16 yes/no questions but no open and referential questions were asked. The closed and display questions asked aimed to draw students' attention to the use of the past continuous tense (for example, "From 9 to 10 am last Sunday, what was I doing?") and to check their knowledge of the past continuous tense (for example, "So which one is the past continuous tense in this sentence?"). Yes/no questions were sometimes asked to draw the students' attention to what had been written on the blackboard. For instance, the teacher asked "OK. Anything wrong? Any problems with the answers?"

To sum up, in the whole class teaching portion of the three investigated lessons, yes/no questions, and closed and display questions were frequently asked to check students' progress and knowledge or to draw their attention to the teaching point. On the contrary, except for the lesson of the Band 1 class, open and referential questions, which elicit longer and often more complex responses, were rarely asked.

Effects of the types of questions teachers asked on the students' discourse patterns
Previous research, for example, Brock (1986) and Ernest (1994) has generally shown a positive correlation between asking referential questions and students' production of target language but a negative correlation between asking display questions and the length of students' responses. The results of the present study show a similar pattern. The effects of different types of questions asked by the three pre-service teachers in the whole class teaching portion on the length of students' responses are summarized in Table 2 below:

Table 2. The length of students' responses for different types of questions asked in each lesson

Length of students' responses for different types of questions asked	Band 1 class	Band 2 class	Band 3 class
Yes/No questions			
One word	13 (92.86%)	28 (73.68%)	3 (75%)
Two to three words	1 (7.14%)	5 (13.16%)	1 (25%)
Four to six words	0 (0%)	5 (13.16%)	0 (0%)
Closed and display questions			
Three words or less	5 (100%)	36 (92.31%)	10 (100%)
Four to twelve words	0 (0%)	3 (7.69%)	0 (0%)
Open and referential questions			
Three words or less	4 (36.36%)	N/A	N/A
Four to nine words	7 (63.64%)	N/A	N/A

From Table 2, it can be found that students' responses were generally brief when the teachers asked yes/no questions. In the investigated Band 1 class, nearly all the yes/no questions asked (92.86%) elicited one-word responses only (that is, either 'Yes' or 'No'). In only one instance, the yes/no question elicited a two-word response ("Life guard") which was actually the pronunciation of the phrase elicited by the teacher.

In the Band 2 class, again, many of the responses, 28 responses (73.68%) were one-word responses. However, in some instances (10 responses), the yes/no questions produced two-to-three-word responses or even four-to-six-word long. For example, the teacher's yes/no question "Can I move on?" was followed by the students' three-word response "No, you can't". Longer responses produced by the yes/no questions can also be found. One of the examples is "It's absolutely clear what you have to do now? Is everybody clear?" was followed by a student's long response "Write a sentence into passive voice.".

Lastly, in the Band 3 class, among the four yes/no questions, three elicited only one-word

responses. Only one elicited a three-word response ("No. It's wrong.").

The closed and display questions asked by the three teachers in the whole class teaching portion of this study also generally elicited brief responses. Excluding the unclear or unintelligible speech, the responses given in Chinese, and the spelling of vocabulary items, all the five responses in the lesson of the Band 1 class elicited by the closed and display questions were of three words or less. For example, "Bench" elicited by the closed/display question "How do we call those big chair and then we use it under the umbrella?". One more example is the response "Swimming suit" which was elicited by the question "What do you wear on the beach?".

In the Band 2 class, most of the responses elicited by the closed and display questions (92.31%) were of three words or less. For example, a one-word response "Jason." was elicited by the closed and display question "Who is the doer?". Only 3 responses (7.69%) were of four to twelve words. One example is "My bed is cleaned tidied by me every day." which was elicited by the question "How can I change these into passive voice?". Another example is "Are bought by me in the tuck shop every day." elicited by the question "Some snack what?".

In the Band 3 class, all the closed and display questions elicited short responses of three words or less. Some examples include "Having lunch." elicited by "1:30 pm. What was I doing?" and "Were climbing." elicited by the question "So which one is the past continuous tense in this sentence?".

However, when the open or referential questions were asked, the students' responses tended to be longer. In the Band 1 class, among the eleven responses elicited by the open and referential questions (the unclear or unintelligible speech is not considered), 63.64% (7 responses) were of four-to-nine-word long, for example, "The water is clean.", "I think boring. I think it is so boring.", etc., though 36.36% (4 responses) of them were of three words or less in length such as "Girls." elicited by the question "What can you see on the

194

beach?".

To briefly summarize the results, for the effects of the types of questions asked on students' responses, in all the three investigated lessons, most of the students' responses were very brief, with three words or less when closed and display questions were asked, and with only one word when yes/no questions were asked. Longer responses of four to twelve words could only be found in a few instances of the Band 1 class when open and referential questions were asked.

Discussion

Types of questions the teachers asked frequently in the whole class teaching portion of the lessons

Similar to previous studies such as Burns and Myhill (2004); Myhill, Jones, and Hopper (2006), the results of the present study indicated that except for the Band 1 class, open and referential questions were rarely or even never asked. On the contrary, yes/no questions, and closed and display questions were asked very frequently in all the three lessons, especially in the Band 2 class. Wong-Fillmore (1985, p. 41) claims that "questions which elicit one-word answers are not as good as open-ended ones which call for longer and more complex responses". However, a number of yes/no questions were asked in the Band 1 and Band 2 classes.

The types of questions asked by the three teachers are related to the pedagogical purposes of the lessons and "the nature of the instruction that is being provided" (Banbrook & Skehan, 1989, p. 147). In the present study, the two lessons of the Band 2 and Band 3 classes were grammar lessons while the lesson of the Band 1 class was a vocabulary lesson. In the initial stage of the Band 1 class, the teacher wanted to invite students to talk about if they like going to the beach or not and therefore, some open and referential questions were asked. But then in the subsequent stages of the lesson, the teacher asked a lot of closed and display questions

in order to elicit the target vocabulary items from her students. This phenomenon reflected what Banbrook (1987) suggests that there are clear differences in the number of display questions asked at different stages of the lesson, which is closely related to the nature of teaching activity being engaged in. And, in the Band 2 and Band 3 classes, the teachers asked a lot of closed and display questions in order to draw the students' attention to the correct form (for example, "Notes 'is' or 'are'?" in Lesson 2) and check their knowledge about the target grammatical structure (for example, "So which one is the past continuous tense in this sentence?" in Lesson 3). As suggested by Littlewood (1993), in teaching grammar, before having any communicative language practice, we may often want to engage the learners in practicing the language so that they can focus clearly on the structure itself. This can be achieved through some question-and-answer practice. Here, though the information is known and no real communication is taking place, the major purpose is to enable learners to practice the language structure so that they can use it later in authentic communication.

Effects of the types of questions teachers asked on the students' discourse patterns

From the results of the present study, it can be found that when closed and display questions were asked, the students' responses tended to be very brief (mostly of three words or less). This aspect is consistent with the ethnographic research done by Ernest (1994). In only a very few instances of the Band 2 class, the responses had four to twelve words. However, the long responses were produced by the display questions only because of the long answers of the students' grammar exercise. This can be discovered in one of the responses, for example, "Some snack bought by me in the tuck shop every day.".

Thus, to investigate the effects of the types of questions teachers asked on students' discourse, it seems to be inadequate to count only the number of words of the students'

responses. In the investigated lesson of the Band 1 class, though seven responses (63.64%) produced by referential questions had four to nine words, they were only slightly longer in length than those produced by display questions. However, these responses were rather simple without giving more elaboration. Some examples include "I think boring. I think it is so boring" produced by the question "Why don't you like going to the beach?" and "The water is clean" produced by "Isaac, you said Clear Water Bay (is the best beach in Hong Kong). Why?".

Smith and Higgins (2006) suggest that in many instances, it may not be the questions asked that determine the amount of student responses but how the teacher responds to the student's answer. This phenomenon can be illustrated in the Band 1 class. In the initial stage of the lesson, the teacher started with some yes/no questions to ask the students if they like going to the beach or not. It is, in fact, the way that the teacher responded to the students' one-word yes/no answers by asking them for clarification (e.g. "Why don't you like going to the beach?") that made the students expand on their responses and produce longer responses.

Implications for education

The results of the present study imply that pre-service teachers should be provided with more training in developing their questioning techniques. Those teachers who teach in higher banding schools or classes with higher language level, in particular, should be able to encourage their students to elaborate further on their responses rather than just accept brief and syntactically simple answers. The investigated Form 2 students in the Band 1 class were supposed to have higher English level and therefore, should be encouraged to give longer and syntactically more complex responses. To develop teachers' questioning techniques, analyzing lesson transcriptions is a good way to raise teacher trainees' awareness of the types of questions they ask so that they may avoid asking too many yes/no questions which inhibit students' opportunities to develop their second language skills.

Besides these, more referential questions should be asked. As mentioned previously, the types of questions asked are usually determined by the pedagogical purposes of the lessons. However, even in grammar lessons, teachers should not just ask display questions that elicit mainly the answers of grammar drilling exercises. Instead, teachers should design some less controlled but contextualized practice in which they can guide students to give acceptable answers by asking some referential questions. In this way, students' second language development can be facilitated.

Limitations of the study

The major limitations of the present study are summarized as follows:

The first limitation relates to the small number of participants involved in the study. As this study investigated the questions asked by three pre-service teachers in the whole class teaching portion of the three selected lessons, the results were only applicable to the situations that occurred in the three lessons and thus they are by no mean adequate to draw any firm conclusions on this topic.

Another limitation comes from the three investigated classes. Because of the use of nonprobability convenience sampling, the data were obtained from three classes of a totally different nature, in terms of the medium of instruction adopted in the schools (English versus Chinese as the teaching medium), and the gender (mixed gender versus single sex), grade level (Form 1 and Form 2) and academic level (Band 1, Band 2 and Band 3) of the students. All these differences might have some impact on how the students responded to their teachers' questions.

Finally, due to logistical constraints of the research and the system as the supervisor of teacher trainees, different topic areas were taught in the three lessons. In this study, one selected lesson was a vocabulary lesson while the other two lessons were grammar lessons. Different types of questions may be asked with different topic areas because of their different

pedagogical purposes and teaching activities and therefore, the results may not be comparable.

Conclusions

The present study investigated the questions asked in the whole class teaching portion of three investigated lessons and addressed the effects of the types of questions teachers asked on the students' discourse patterns. The types of questions asked are, in many cases, determined by the pedagogical purposes the teachers want to achieve. However, to facilitate students' second language development, teachers, especially secondary school teachers, should not just ask questions that elicit only brief responses such as the yes/no questions. They should also ask questions that require elaboration and elicit longer and more syntactically complex responses. To bring about more dialogic forms of whole class teaching, students should be encouraged to expand their thinking by justifying or clarifying their opinions in the follow-up moves as well. On the other hand, we should not be too absolute to suggest that there is a positive correlation between asking referential questions and students' production of target language but a negative correlation between asking display questions and the length of students' responses. The referential questions themselves will not make students produce longer responses unless the teachers are able to encourage their students to elaborate further rather than just accepting those brief and syntactically less complex responses.

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1. According to the Information Leaflet on the Secondary School Places Allocation System 2005/2007 Cycle, the scaled marks of all students in Hong Kong in their internal assessments at the end of Primary 5, and both in mid-year and at the end of Primary 6 will be put into an order of merit. Then students are equally divided into three Territory Bands (Band 1, Band 2 and Band 3, with Band 1 students having the highest academic level), each consisting of 1/3 of the total number of primary students in Hong Kong.

Computer Mediated Collaborative Learning within a Communicative Language Teaching Approach: A Sociocultural Perspective

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Abstract

The article aims to discuss the roles of computer mediated collaborative learning (CMCL) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom equipped with a communicative language teaching (CLT) approach. The discussion moves from an overview of the principal domains of sociocultural theory (SCT) applicable to collaborative second/foreign language learning to the review of the current CLT approach, the main focus of which is the context of Vietnamese language education. CMCL is then analysed in terms of how it is able to support and enhance language improvement in the given CLT context. The conclusion drawn from the discussion is that CMCL with its potential benefits is capable of helping resolve certain issues raised by the introduction of a CLT approach into the Vietnamese language classroom, including Confucian educational values, examination-oriented educational system, class management, and authentic communication. It is thereby argued that CMCL may possibly flow smoothly on a CLT foundation when the whole context is viewed through a SCT lens, and that though the focus is on the particular Vietnamese social setting, there is no reason that the concerns considered in this paper cannot be shared in other relevant settings.

Keywords: Sociocultural theory, communicative language teaching, computer mediated collaborative learning (CMCL), EFL.

Introduction

The emergence of information technological innovation, English as a world language, and a growing need for a comprehensive language teaching methodology challenge language teaching programs worldwide, especially in Asian countries. Together with the development of CMC technology and the revival of collaborative learning method as one of principal components of communicative language teaching (CLT), foreign language teaching and learning via computer mediated collaborative learning (CMCL) has experienced a remarkable increase in many parts of the world (Lamy & Hampel, 2007; Leahy, 2008). Based on social interaction among group members, CMCL is believed to possess a number of potential benefits, especially in academic, social, and psychological areas of language education (Beatty & Nunan, 2004; Lamy & Hampel, 2007; Ware & O'Dowd, 2008). The potential didactic outcomes of CMCL used in foreign language instruction are inherently dependent on a strong theoretical and methodological approach of CLT to guide its integration into the language learning phenomena. With this strong backdrop, foreign language instructors will be able to make principle-guided decisions in their pedagogical use of CMCL.

Theoretically, attention has shifted from psycholinguistic approaches to sociocognitive perspectives, emphasizing language development through meaningful social interaction (Warschauer, 2000). Looking from a sociocognitive perspective (Vygotsky, 1978), language instruction has been viewed not only in terms of providing comprehensible input and negotiated output, but also in the sense of helping students enter into the authentic social discourse situations and discourse communities that they would encounter outside the classroom. This interdisciplinary and socially informed language-based approach to learning sheds light on the role of social interaction in creating an environment not only to learn language but also to learn through language (Wells, 1999).

This paper therefore aims to discuss the interrelatedness among the three concepts, namely

the sociocultural theory (SCT), CLT, and CMCL in the Vietnamese sociocultural context. Thus, how CMCL is applicable to CLT informed by SCT is the main focus of the discussion.

1. Sociocultural theory: The framework

According to Torres and Vinagre (2007), the pedagogical framework that supports collaborative language learning can be traced back to Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory. SCT, or cultural psychology or cultural-historical psychology, is defined as the study of "the content, mode of operation, and interrelationships of psychological phenomena that are socially constructed and shared, and are rooted in other social artefacts" (Ratner, 2002, p. 9). The theory has had considerable influence in the fields of education, and more recently, second language acquisition (SLA), and computer assisted language learning (CALL). Examining Vygotsky's contributions will help understand how SCT can be applied to CALL (Warschauer, 2005) in general and CMCL in particular. According to Vygotsky (1978), knowledge is first seen on the social plane and afterwards becomes internalised on the psychological plane and that knowledge is socio-historically mediated. In SCT, learning is a process that entails not only internalisation of the knowledge of the learning task, but also transforming and using the internalised knowledge for other purposes in the process of the learner's social and cognitive development. In other words, the sociocultural approach focuses on the nature of the learner, of the world, and of their relations. Knowledge is thus constructed in joint activity, and learning is a process of participating in cultural and social practices. Therefore, to understand human thinking and learning, the context and setting in which that thinking and learning occurs must be examined thoroughly.

Among many aspects of SCT, the main principles, including genetic analysis, mediation, and the zone of proximal development along with the issue of internalisation, are believed to be relevant to the rationale behind the CMCL in CLT approach.

1.1. Genetic analysis

Genetic, or developmental, analysis, as a renewed research methodology, is proposed by Vygotsky (1978) to study the culturally organised human mental system. This approach, as the heart of the SCT (Lund, 2008), is motivated by the hypothesis that various aspects of mental processes can be understood only by comprehending their origin and the transitions they experience (Wertsch, 1991). The method includes four genetic domains, namely microgenesis – the unfolding of particular events, ontogenesis – the development of the individual, phylogenesis – the development of the species , and sociocultural history (Vygotsky, 1981).

   This approach to research methodology recommends that the application of CMCL into education in general and in language teaching and learning in particular can be thoroughly understood when being placed in a "broader historical, social, and cultural contexts" (Warschauer, 2005, p. 43). This is because learning, as viewed from the concept of sociogenesis, is processed between, rather than within, minds (Lund, 2008). In other words, the genetic method helps to extend our view when examining the nature of collaborative learning via CMC environment, of which the explanation and understanding should always be situated in an all-encompassing social and cultural framework.

1.2. Mediation

Another important construct in the SCT of learning and significant to CMCL is the notion of mediation (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007) which is one of the three main themes that runs through Vygotsky's formulation of a sociocultural approach to mind. Vygotsky claimed that "higher mental functioning and human action in general are mediated by tools (or "technical tools") and signs (or "psychological tools")" (Wertsch, 1991, p. 90). In Vygotsky's view, such forms of functioning as problem solving, logical thinking, critical thinking and learning are the result of the interaction of the human mind with the environment mediated by those tools,

including symbolic/psychological tools (numbering systems, art, music, and language), and to a lesser extent by physical tools (material objects), which have been culturally constructed. It is therefore reasoned that human cognition can barely be understood separately from the society and culture in which it develops. In other words, viewed from this perspective, social and individual psychological activity is mediated by the tools and signs in one's sociocultural milieu. Lantolf (2006) examined the domains of mediation as social mediation (mediated by others in social interaction), self-mediation (mediated by the self via private speech), and artefact mediation (mediated by language, tasks, and technology).

The investigation of mediation, as a potential framework of research on human-computer interaction and human-human communication via computers, demonstrates that new technologies may transform prior forms of human activity, and that computer mediated interaction is thereof not simply a combination of a traditional form of written language plus computers, but rather there are now a completely new form of communication that needs to be discovered (Warschauer, 2005).

1.3. Zone of proximal development

The zone of proximal development (ZPD) is put forth by Vygotsky as one of the "most profound contributions to the educational debate" (Daniels, 2001, p. 56) and on which CMCL framework is based. The ZPD, according to Lantolf and Thorne (2007), has had a significant influence in a variety of research areas, including developmental psychology, education, and applied linguistics. The most frequently referenced definition of the ZPD is by Vygotsky:

> The [ZPD] … is the distance between the actual developmental level
> as determined by independent problem solving and the level of
> potential development as determined through problem solving under
> adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers

(Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

The ZPD is hence an essential feature of leaning, and learning is a result of dynamically social interactions by which teachers or expert students can offer appropriate models and supports to novice students to progress through the ZPD. According to Lantolf and Thorne (2007), the ZPD is considered a framework that brings all of the pieces of the learning setting together, including the teacher, the learner, the social and cultural background, the goals and motives as well as the resources available to them. Lantolf and Thorne (2007) also emphasised the two critical issues that further characterise the ZPD, namely that cognitive development has its origin in social and interpersonal activity becoming the foundation for intrapersonal functioning, and that this process involves internalisation.

In summary, looking from the sociocultural perspective conceptualised by Vygotsky (1978) into language education, the role of social interaction is clarified in creating an environment to learn language, learn about language, and learn through language (Warschauer, 1997). Vygotsky (1978) emphasised the importance of collaborative learning in assisting each student to advance through the ZPD. As illustrated in Figure 1, learners traverse the ZPD through two interpretations: a) the modelling - the teacher models an approach to learning; and b) the text-mediation - viewing texts (verbal, written, or nonverbal) as thinking devices, which has been developed from i) collaborative-apprenticeship learning, and ii) semiotic-apprenticeship learning. While the semiotic-apprenticeship learning is previously reflected mainly through cognitive amplification via written texts, the collaborative apprenticeship learning highlights the use of expressive speech and writing, peer collaboration, and meaningful problem-solving tasks. As a result, informed by the sociocultural perspective, the text-mediational view - as an applicable framework - connects "concepts of expression, interaction, reflection, problem-solving, critical thinking, and literacy with various uses of talk, text, inquiry, and collaboration in the classroom" (Warschauer, 1997, p. 472).
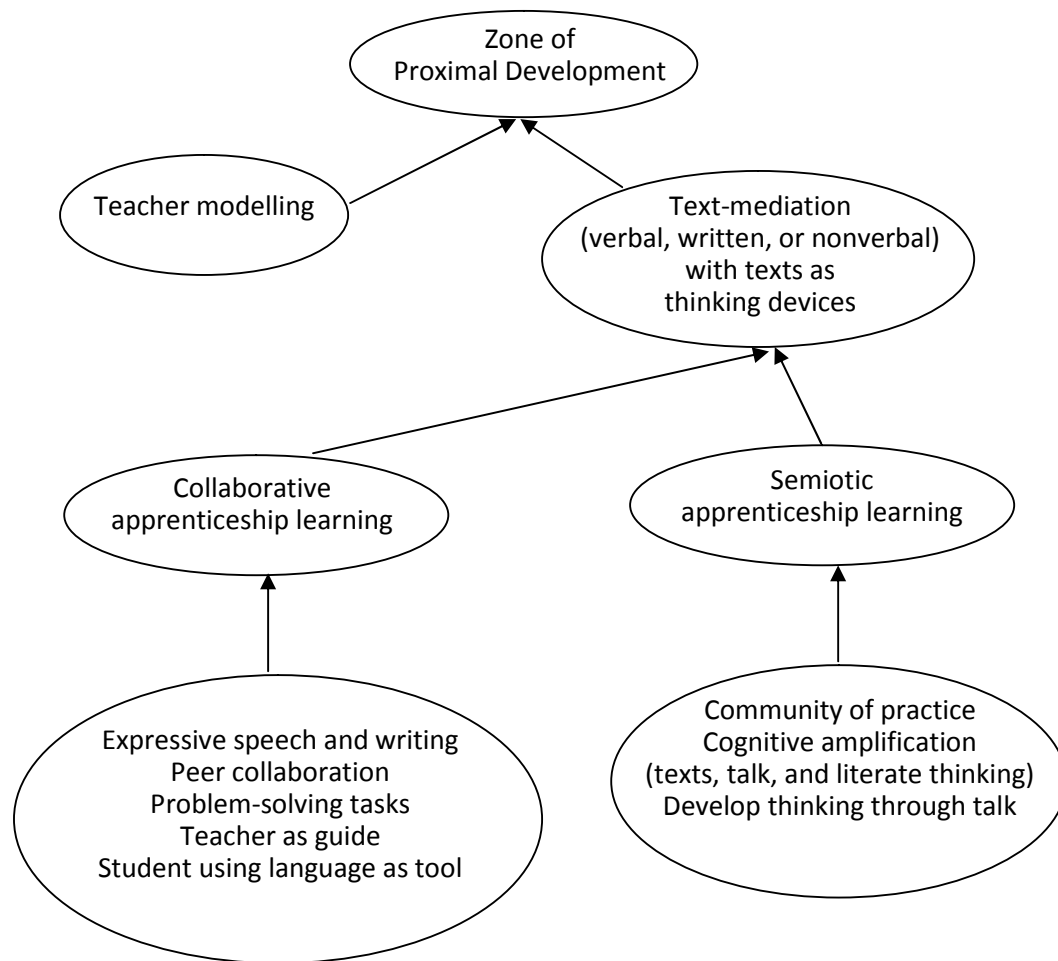
Figure 1: Sociocultural framework for collaborative learning (Warschauer, 1997)

2. Communicative language teaching: The promises

There is obviously a social turn in research on foreign language education in general and CLT in specific (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). The adaptation of SCT into CLT "implies a shift from theories of universal generative grammars, genetic blueprint and innate structures" (Lund, 2008, p. 38) to viewing language a cultural mediational tool with its cultural conventions. Similarly, SCT also informs a turn from individual acquisition to artefact-mediated collaborative participation in language learning (Lund, 2008; Savignon, 2007). CLT therefore needs to be revisited; and another definition of CLT from an SCT perspective seems to be necessary.

2.1. The re-visited CLT

The life circle of language teaching methods continues to rotate. Old approaches and methods manipulate or bring forth to new ones in a popularly known as competition-between-rival cycle. Among them, CLT may currently be considered and accepted as an inclusive approach to language teaching, which encompasses various approaches and methods, motivations for learning English, types of teachers and the needs of individual classrooms and students themselves; it is learner-centred and emphasises communication in real-life situations.

The notion of communication is accordingly central in CLT; and CLT advocates learning through communication. In CLT, communicative emphasis tends to be placed on the development of the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing for many purposes. Teachers are provided with a repertoire of communicative activities in their selection of teaching skills and learners are given opportunities to practice the language skills in the classroom (Littlewood, 2007). Learners, as the centre of the teaching-learning process (White, 2007), are encouraged to use language in order to communicate with others, rather than speaking and writing just to practise language. According to Nunan (1991, p. 279), there are five basic characteristics of CLT, including 1) CLT emphasises learning to communicate through interaction in the target language; 2) CLT introduces authentic texts into the learning situation; 3) CLT provides opportunities for learners to focus, not only on the language but also on the learning process itself; 4) CLT enhances the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning; and 5) CLT attempts to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

These five basic features are later endorsed by Holliday (1997) and Richard (2005), who differentiated CLT from traditional approaches, such as grammar-translation method, according to a set of principles summarised in table 1.

Table 1: CLT vs. traditional approaches to language teaching

Principles	Traditional approaches	CLT
Goals of language teaching	Grammatical competence	Communicative competence
How learners learn a language	Process of mechanical habit formation.	Processes of purposeful interaction and collaborative creation of meaning negotiated.
Classroom activities	Memorization of dialogues and drills in classroom as a lab.	Pair/group work activities, role plays, and project work in classroom as a social community.
Roles of teachers and learners	Teacher: model for correct speech and writing. Learners: individualistic	Teacher: facilitator and monitor. Learners: cooperative and collaborative

In terms of classroom practice, while considering classroom as a social community with its own collaborative characteristics, Richards (2005) further extended the process-based CLT movement to the two well-known models of instruction: task-based and content-based which "take different routes to achieve the goals of communicative language teaching - to develop learners' communicative competence" (Richards, 2005, p. 29). While in task-based instruction language is acquired via the mediation of meaningful tasks, language acquisition is mediated by the content areas of interest in content-based mode. Besides, these modes are often mingled, i.e. task-based instruction regularly contains content-based model and vice verse.

It should be noted from literature of the field that communicative competence consists of several components. Whereas Canale and Swain (1980) suggested a model of communicative competence including grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence, communicative proficiency is believed to

be more specific with two hierarchical components: the first factor being the grammatical structure of language manifested by the production of texts (written and verbal), and the second being the contextually constructed communicative expertise needed to pragmatise the grammar-tuned language production (Bachman & Palmer, 1996). Communicative competence is thus planned and developed in accordance with a particular social and cultural milieu.

2.2. The Re-defined CLT

Precisely, CLT - as a language teaching approach with principles established and filtered over the past four decades in the field of second language acquisition - was born under the light of SCT (Meskill & Anthony, 2005). Viewed from SCT perspective, language is not only a means of communication but also the reflection of culture and human thinking process. SCT-based CLT approaches are based on several fundamental assumptions. First, learning is normally mediated by the social and cultural tools. Second, language is best learned through the active negotiation of meaning via social interactions. Third, learners' linguistics performance improves through the ZPD via collaborative learning with peers. Finally, collaborative learning as a principal communicative strategy plays a significant role in a CLT language classroom.

 Once CLT is viewed from the SCT perspective, it should be examined in accordance with space and time. In terms of space, it might be admitted that CLT applied to an Asian-based classroom must be different from CLT as applied to a Western-based classroom, for example. As far as time is concerned, it would hardly be completely suitable to implement the philosophy and the concept of the 20th century CLT to the 21st century language classroom. In other words, if we are going to approach CLT from a sociocultural perspective, we cannot assume that the values that underlie CLT are universal (Sullivan, 2000). This idea is later endorsed and expanded by Savignon (2007), who confirmed that "… CLT is an approach

that understands language to be inseparable from individual identity and social behaviour. Not only does language define a community; a community, in turn, defines the forms and uses of language. The norms and goals appropriate for learners in a given setting, and the means for attaining these goals, are the concern of those directly involved" (Savignon, 2007, p. 217). As a result, CLT-based language learners, viewed from SCT, are not only individuals trying to possess and assimilate vocabulary and grammar but also participants in various speech communities, including social resources, material resources, and semiotic resources (Lund, 2008).

Cultural, historical, and institutional factors on a local level must be taken into account. It is not sensible to simply assume that what works well in one educational backdrop will work well in another, and to ignore the interrelatedness of history, culture and pedagogy, as well as the argument that ELT methodology is associated with an Anglo-American of communication (Savignon, 2007; Sullivan, 2000). The next section is an overview of the English language teaching and learning situation in Vietnam with its own specific issues as an example, and how CLT with its potential collaborative learning as a strategy is recognised there.

3. CLT in the Vietnamese Context: The problems

3.1. The Context

In the past thirty years, English has become the first, dominant foreign language in Vietnam, where English language education has become a compulsory module of education. In a recent national conference on Higher Education Quality on 5 January, 2008, it was prescribed by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education that the national scheme of enhancing the widely usage of English must be soon completed with the aim that until 2020 all undergraduates graduating from the university will successfully communicate in English language speaking communities. In order to attain this, it is promulgated by the

Deputy Prime Minister that from now [2008] to 2010, the Ministry of Education and Training together with universities has to prepare a comprehensive English teacher training process. This is then to be followed by gradually upgrading the English teaching and learning quality (N. T. Nguyen, 2008, translated). This is to illustrate that English language education in Vietnam is substantiated from the very top level of administration as one of the national policies in the economic and political context of Vietnam's becoming the 50th member of the WTO at the end of 2007.

Nevertheless, although the importance of English has been widely and publicly recognised, the practical teaching and learning situation leaves questionable issues. National education in general and English teaching and learning in particular is at the moment sketching a dull picture. The quality of English education is still a concern to many Vietnamese educators and public. With twelve years of secondary education and at least four years of tertiary education, students have at least eleven years of learning English. But, the fact shows that nearly most of these students are hardly able to communicate in English after many years of continuous English learning simply because of shyness, inadequate vocabulary, or lacking the necessary communicative knowledge (Bui, 2006). The causes for this may include unsatisfactory *badly-paid* teacher quality, uninteresting learning materials, inadequate teaching and learning facilities, passive Confucian learning styles, over-sized mixed-ability-student classes, the lack of language environment for practice, and the out-of-date teaching methodology reflected in curriculum contents, syllabus and teaching styles. The list may be endless, but most importantly, it is the teaching methods in which most classrooms have been teacher-centred or teacher-fronted (Sullivan, 2000) and examination-oriented that is to blame. It is admitted that the methods are outdated, relying almost entirely on stringent teacher-centred methods and rote learning.

Though it dies hard, the grammar-translation method of ELT that merely focuses on structure and form is losing its popularity (T. M. H. Nguyen, 2007). CLT has been gradually

taking its place and gaining its status since 1990s. Various ELT workshops and seminars have been organised by educational agencies for university and school teachers throughout the country. Meanwhile, quite a few teachers, especially at university level, have been sent to North America, England, Australia, and New Zealand for postgraduate programs in TESOL or Applied Linguistics. The prospect of applying CLT into Vietnamese classroom contexts appears to be optimistic with teachers expressing their positive attitude toward CLT with its communicative ways of teaching. Many teachers have tried to implement new ideas from those workshops and seminars by combining them with the valued features in the traditional educational systems (Lewis & McCook, 2002). The aching reality, though, reveals that there are still many English classrooms with more traditional practices than a CLT approach; or where the CLT is initially applied, the situation still does not improve due to the widely held mistaken interpretation that CLT only deals with speaking and not with grammar.

3.2. The conflicts

What has gone wrong? Is CLT incompatible with Vietnamese classroom practice? Is collaborative learning with pair/group work not suitable for Vietnamese students? It appears that the option of integrating Western-style CLT into an Eastern educational program reveals a number of complexities and problems. These problems and issues may however be sorted out when the situation is examined under the SCT prism. In terms of social setting, it should be kept in mind that different norms of education are set in diverse cultural background; and various cultural environments define a good teaching approach in different ways (Sullivan, 2000). What is good for CLT in Western or Anglo-American, developed, "inner-circle" countries renders completely different values when applied to non-western, developing, "expanding circle" countries, such as Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam. Briefly, like many other adoptions of policies, theories and practices, CLT is socially grounded. What is inside, under, above, and around the meaning of CLT and collaborative learning in classroom is believed,

viewed and analysed otherwise in Anglo-American culture and in Confucian society, influences of which on educational values are discussed below.

One of the main hindrances may result from the evident conflict between CLT with Vietnamese traditional educational values known as Confucianism (Sullivan, 2000). Confucianism perceives education more as a process of knowledge accumulation than as a process of using knowledge for immediate purposes (Hu, 2005). Confucianism applied to classroom practice requires an epistemic teacher-centred mode of learning underlining knowledge transmission. Learners coming to class are expected to listen and absorb word by word from the teacher. The classroom is viewed as a very formal auditorium where orders are strictly monitored by the teacher, and the students are supposed to follow. As regards collaborative learning, Confucian learners prefer pair/group work with mutual contribution and perform better in groups with high team-spirit though it should be minded that this notion of collaborative work is born out of collectivistic, and not individualistic, culture with its different norms and values. The shift to learner-centred methodology with pair/group work as a principle strategy therefore needs to be carefully and sensitively observed in order to overcome the cultural mismatches between theoretical foundations of CLT and Confucian traditions of learning.

Also influenced by Confucianism is the system of public assessment which may be next to blame. Can communicative competence be still taught in the English classroom with a strong traditional examination-oriented educational system like in Vietnam and other East Asian countries, for example? In these countries where teachers are evaluated by how many of their students pass the national exam, rather than by how the students learn, many teachers complain that students and parents worry too much about public examinations (Littlewood, 2007) which focus mostly on grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension and which are nationally and institutionally held quite often all year round. As far as this type of assessment is concerned, the social conflict occurs between the government's macro

strategies on English with communicative inclination (as presented previously in this section) and the students and parents' also macro demands to pass the public product-oriented and form-based examinations, which makes the application of CLT a big challenge. A syllabus focusing on both meaning and form with both product and process orientation may be called for to solve this type of conflicts. In fact, both form and meaning as well as both product and process tendency, are interwoven and are major components in most modern CLT classroom activities elsewhere.

Difficult classroom management regarding pair/group work participation is also prospected as another obstacle. Like teachers in China (Li, 2003 cited in Littlewood, 2007), Vietnamese teachers of English also complain that the use of CLT results in troubles for over-sized classroom management when all students, usually around 35-50, start pair/group work. The situation becomes detrimental. The class may turn out to be very noisy, disturbing the formal educational environment and leading to complaints from other teachers in neighbouring classrooms. In other cases, many students, being different in social, cultural and academic backgrounds along with individual personalities and motivation, may just sit there, reluctantly participating in the collaborative task, doing something else, leaving active students to do most of the designated task, and hence wasting class time. This may bring about teacher resistance and unwillingness to implement various pair/group activities as a method of teaching into the class.

Finally, even though collaborative work has been established in several particular classrooms, it is hard to create genuine communication in an EFL environment. Different from ESL students who need to use the target language in everyday life for surviving in the target culture, EFL learners generally do not have adequate access to the target language outside the classroom and usually practice what they have learned within the classroom boundary (Campbell, 2004). Moreover, EFL students who all normally share the same first language as in Vietnam usually do not have immediate need to use English in the classroom

216

and find it harder to gain opportunities to communicate in English outside the classroom womb (Pham, 2005). It seems unreal, though practical, to ask them to make authentic communication in English to each other while they can just solve the task in their own language. Therefore the mother tongue is quite often heard during collaborative learning tasks to solve communication problems.

Notionally, no difficulty cannot be overcome provided teachers are aware of situational constraints academically, socially, and psychologically. Based on the recommendation that CLT should be adapted rather than adopted into the classroom environment (Littlewood, 2007), comprehensive action research has been intensively and extensively conducted in Vietnamese context (Bui, 2006; P. M. Nguyen, Terlouw, & Pilot, 2006; T. M. H. Nguyen, 2007; Pham, 2005, 2007; Sullivan, 2000; Tomlinson & Dat, 2004). Educators and teachers have been searching for ways to improve the situation, in which more culturally sensitive pedagogies are called for. In addition, with the growing popularity of technology in general and computers use in particular, a couple of innovative ways have been discussed to implement the information technology into the language classroom practice (Bui, 2006) even though these are still in the *beta version*, i.e. theoretically. It is suggested that together with the development and rising requirements of educational standards, the language teachers must now, in addition to the knowledge of the target language, i.e. English and CLT as the current language teaching approach (L. V. Nguyen, 2008), possess an expertise of CALL, with the know-how of CMC as a foundation, based on the belief that CMCL will be able to help surmount part of the above-mentioned obstacles in order to achieve effective collaborative learning. The next section is the examination of CMCL and the exploration of how and in what ways it can help overcome certain problems arising from CLT application in the Vietnamese context.

4. Computer Mediated Collaborative Learning: A Solution

4.1. Collaborative Learning and CMCL: Characteristics and Components

Collaborative learning, defined as a process in which participants are collectively responsible for developing knowledge through structured activities, and in which the instructor's role is to facilitate and co-participate in the learning process (Nunan, 1992), is one of the principal elements in a sociocultural perspective of learning, in which learning is seen as a social process rather than restrained within an individual. Regarding language learning, collaboration is not only valued for its contribution to learners' "accumulation of language knowledge" (Donato, 2004, p. 289) but also conceived as an approach that enables learners to involve themselves in the social community of practices, whereof supporting individual's sociolinguistic development and reciprocal contribution to that language community.

Though the terms collaborative learning and cooperative learning are sometimes used interchangeably by some authors (e.g., Greenfield, 2003; P. M. Nguyen, Terlouw, & Pilot, 2005), the two terms in fact are different according to Beatty & Nunan (2004). Whereas cooperative learning takes place when individuals in a pair/group split the task in order that each member solves a part of the task, collaborative learning is the interdependence of the pair/group members as they share ideas, negotiate all aspects of the task and co-construct a conclusion. While cooperative learning is seen by some researchers as including collaboration, I agree with Chung (1991), who considers collaborative learning as an *umbrella* term including cooperative learning as one of the components. Viewed from the classroom practice, cooperative and collaborative are on the continuum. On the cooperative end, group-based learning is constructed in a well-structured task and algorithmic skills; the collaborative extreme, in contrast, involves a loosely-structured task and a synthesis skill (P. M. Nguyen et al., 2005). In other words, learners are required to take more control of their learning process in collaborative than in cooperative learning. It is suggested that collaborative learning can be applied to higher level skills than cooperative learning; and

collaborative objectives can be seen as one of the motivational elements, along with competitive and individualistic goals, in classroom learning (Beatty & Nunan, 2004).

Based on various dimensions surrounding collaboration, including the context, the domain, the theory, the type of control and tasks, and the type and role of participants, that characterise collaborative learning (Kumar, 1996), Ingram and Hathorn (2004), operationalise collaborative learning into three critical attributes, namely interdependence, synthesis of information, and independence. These three attributes are measured by analysing the three components of participation, interaction, and idea synthesis of the collaborative group. While participation is important as collaboration cannot occur without roughly equal participation among the participants, equal participation in itself is not enough. The level of interaction and synthesis of ideas of the group should also and mainly be analysed. Without these three characteristics, group work may be many things, but it cannot be called collaboration (Ingram & Hathorn, 2004). It is therefore summarised that the key point of collaborative learning is to build up a community of status equals in which learners can gain a sense of real responsibility to perform an authentic discourse in the academic community.

In general, CMCL presents an environment in which a student interacts with one or more collaborating peers to solve a given problem, mediated by a computer including all of its communicative facilities, prevalently divided into asynchronous and synchronous communication capacity with high and multiway interactivity. A recurrent theme in the literature is that collaborative learning and collaboration via CMC enhance communicative language teaching and learning from the sociocultural perspective. CMCL, as a mediator of language learning, creates not only an enriching opportunity for language practice itself but also a promising environment for general skill development (Warschauer, 1997).

4.2. CMCL: Intercultural and Intracultural Collaboration

CMCL is widely known for affording both intercultural and intracultural collaboration. Intercultural CMCL is also known as telecollaboration, in which participants are from at least two different countries. Conversely, intracultural CMCL involves participants who share a native language (Abrams, 2006), and can be conducted within-class and out-of-class, i.e. on campus, at canteens or at home. Intercultural CMCL is studied in Ware and O'Dowd's (2008) research, for example. Spanish students learning English and American students learning Spanish exchanged online across the two countries over a year-long period in a telecollaborative research project. These students were required to write at least an essay in their foreign languages weekly. They were placed into pairs (one English native and one Spanish native) and then exchanged their writings through the function of asynchronous CMC in Blackboard for peer responses. Another similar telecollaborative language learning is in Greenfield's study (2003), which examined highschool students' attitudes toward and perceptions of a telecollaborative email exchange between a 10th grade English class in Hong Kong and an 11th grade English class in Iowa.

On the other hand, Liu and Sadler (2003) divided their EFL students in a large university into traditional group and technology-enhanced group. The two groups followed the same syllabus; but different from the traditional group who used pen and paper for their writing and editing, the technology-enhanced group exploited Microsoft Word for writing assignments and MOO for group discussion. The study, thereof, investigated whether differences in modes of interactions resulted in differences in students' quality of peer revisions. Similarly, Beatty and Nunan (2004) also investigated intracultural CMCL. However, they examined collaborative learning at the computer, rather than via CMC tools, such as email and chat. Students in their study were divided into pairs, sitting and collaborating orally in front of the computer to solve various language exercises. The study strived to test the hypothesis that a constructivist interface generated greater collaboration

than the behaviourist model of instruction.

It is this intracultural type of CMCL that I would focus in the discussion throughout this paper, i.e. foreign language students collaborate through a combination of both face-to-face and CMCL support, within in-class as well as out-of-class settings.

4.3. CMCL as a Solution

The text-based nature of CMC has meant that collaboration has become a prime source of data for researchers from both interactionist and sociocultural approaches who are investigating second language acquisition. Online interaction environments, which involve active construction of knowledge, can be potentially used as a powerful tool for collaborative learning and group communication. CMC, according to Kaye (1989), can provide a valuable dimension to collaborative learning as it both fosters more equally distributed turn-taking and supports more thoughtfully composed inputs. Similarly, Harasim (2007) claimed that this technology provides a new way for interaction between teachers and learners and among learners themselves and this new form of online environment creates a new domain which facilitates collaborative learning.

Reviews on online collaborative learning started with Warschauer's (1997) influential study, which discussed five distinguished features of CMC that were believed to enhance collaboration: (a) text-based and computer-mediated interaction, (b) many-to-many communication, (c) time/place-independence, (d) long distance exchanges, and (e) hypermedia links (p. 472). Warschauer presented CMCL by using a conceptual framework starting with famous theories of input and output and leading to sociocultural learning theory. Later studies (Beatty & Nunan, 2004; Greenfield, 2003; Sotillo, 2006; Ware & O'Dowd, 2008) have also shown the promising capacities of CMCL in language learning with various academic, social, and psychological benefits.

Academically, CMCL is believed to foster the increasing acquisition of not only linguistic

competence but also communicative proficiency. In other words, CMCL facilitates classroom practice which focuses on both form and meaning. Previous studies have noted that during their collaboration, learners produce a wide range of linguistic complexity and discourse structures, including modification devices that facilitate learners' negotiation for meaning and form (Lee, 2004; Smith, 2005; Sotillo, 2006). Sotillo's pilot study (2006), for instance, concluded that successful learner uptake occurred as a result of corrective feedback immediately following the detection of lexical or grammatical errors, which helps expand their grammatical competence and develop their vocabulary stock. Furthermore, it is evident from Pellettieri (2000) and Blake (2005) that through electronic interactive negotiation in which more time is needed to process input and output, learners develop critical thinking skills and problem-solving techniques. Since both form and meaning are concentrated on when CMCL is applied in the classroom, the social conflict between CLT principles and the traditional form-focused examinations is moderately solved. CMCL activities, from SCT view, preclude the separation of language use and language acquisition (Donato, 2004).

In terms of classroom management and learning behaviour, the amount of learner participation and interaction has widely been proved to increase in CMCL. It is reported that CMCL has the role of fostering greater amounts of participation, equalizing contribution, augmenting autonomous learning, enhancing class control via electronic management systems (Kern, 1995; Lee, 2004; Smith, 2005; Warschauer, Knobel, & Stone, 2004). In particular, most of the students of Spanish in Lee's study (2004) expressed their comfort in the novel learning environment as they did gain general confidence in the target language as well as computer skills. Likewise, Smith (2005) reported that students in electronic discussions used a wide variety of discourse structures and noted that this variety was greater in the electronic discussions than in the oral discussions, which resulted in increased participation and motivation for meaning negotiation and authentic interaction which is hardly established successfully in the traditional classroom.

Classroom research on CMCL demonstrated that learners reflect less anxiety and increase self-esteem, thereby liberating the minorities (Honeycutt, 2001) during electronic communication than in face to face interactions, which has led students, often reluctant to participate in oral discussions, to contribute more actively in electronic discussions (Al-Sa'di & Hamdan, 2005). Similarly, data analysis in the study by Kitade (2000) revealed three salient distinctive interactional features of CMCL which facilitated encouraging conditions for developing positive attitudes towards language learning: no turn-taking competition, text-based interaction, and a lack of nonverbal cues. CMCL, as a motivational factor, is hence viewed as supporting a real communicative community, expanding active involvement among students.

To sum up, CMCL somewhat mitigates some of the issues raised when CLT approach accompanied by collaborative features is applied to the Vietnamese context. The application of CMCL into the language classroom brings about promising improvements in enhancing collaborative learning among learners. It not only increases communicative language competence but also consolidates linguistic functions in terms of grammatical and syntactic complexity. The interaction and communication during collaborative learning activity via CMC are believed to assist the internalisation of linguistic skills and enhance the development of students' social and cognitive competence. In other words, both linguistic skills and pragmatic knowledge as well as critical awareness are developed through collaborative language learning via the Internet. This will hopefully meet both government-level demands of communicative orientation of language education and parental requirements of form-focused exam orientation of language learning.

Besides, CMCL also proves itself as one of the significant motivators for learner participation in CLT-based classroom practice, reducing shyness and anxiety, at the same time, boosting more real communication and interaction in authentic discourse communities, especially beneficial for EFL learners who, pedagogically unlike ESL learners, hardly have a

real language community. Research on CMCL has proposed that the integration of CMC into EFL classroom may foster a more authentic atmosphere for language practice (Chen, 2005). Interactions through CMC, even with their classmates, create an EFL-supported environment, in which there is a reduced use of the first language compensated with an increased production of the target language. This is proved far better than face-to-face communication (Smith, 2003; Sotillo, 2000). In the same vein, the over-sized class problems will also be disentangled since the teacher now electronically facilitates several small groups via the online course management system rather than a single huge one.

5. Pedagogical implications

The integration of CMCL to the CLT-based language learning process, therefore, entails promising innovations and feasible applications for teachers and researchers who are interested in technology-enhanced classroom practice.

First of all, it can be a big move away from the traditional teaching-learning process that emphasises knowledge transmission from teacher to student, in favour of sociocultural approaches that emphasise discovery learning and view knowledge as the product of social activity. This move will surely involve a series of modifications in classroom practice, teacher's/students' roles, and methods of assessment. In terms of classroom practice, teaching and learning activities are now hardly restricted in the 2 x 4 approach, meaning that learning takes place between two covers of the book and inside the four walls of the classroom. Rather, students are able to conduct collaborative learning activities beyond the classroom walls, both on- and off-campus. Because of this, there will be a dramatic shift in the roles of the teacher and learners with the tendency that more power will be transferred onto the learners. The teacher is regarded both as an active communicative participant in the learning process and, at the same time, as a "reflective practitioner" (Lamy & Hampel, 2007, p. 73) in the teaching process. Meanwhile, learners' higher degree of autonomy and self-

direction are encouraged to attain learning goals. Also, as collaborative learning may become one of the main learning activities, methods of testing and assessment will hopefully slide, away from individual and product-orientation, toward group-based process of learning.

Second, CMCL with its continuously developing nature has been embedded into education and everyday life. One of the many developments of technology in education is the movement of CMC technology from the labs to the classrooms. Not long ago, a computer was just a tool; it was not an end in itself but a means for learning English. Today, English is not an end in itself; it is just a tool for being able to communicate via computers (Warschauer, 2004). As a result, English learning and collaborating through CMC seems unavoidable in attaining academic and professional goals. In fact, learning English through computer assisted collaboration and becoming computer literate through learning English is now the trend in many ESL/EFL learning and teaching programs. Because of this, language teachers and educators should therefore be aware of and prepared for at least two clearly identified innovations, including 1) the new literacy which implies a new genre of language, with its particular features and characteristics, being used in the virtual world (Crystal, 2006); and 2) the nature of mediated communication itself which powerfully affects methods of classroom interaction as textual CMC now "presents its own set of high-stakes contexts and modalities" (Thorne, 2008, p. 442).

Finally, learning how to work collaboratively, learning with computers and collaborating via CMC all prepares students for future life in the workplace and in communities. This is 21st-century learning style, preparing students for 21st-century jobs (L. V. Nguyen, in press). It is cautious, however, that CMCL does not make a successful class itself. No matter how advanced the technology may be, it cannot, and should not be considered to, determine the teaching and learning practices. Technology is in and of itself never the focus of the renovation process, but rather a mediational tool. Potential features of CMCL applicable to CLT do not automatically bolster the learning process and therefore lead to good learning

results. These potentials should be carefully evaluated against reality when applied to classroom practice. Significantly, the application of CMC into classroom collaborative work needs supports from not only societal and institutional levels but also teacher's teaching philosophy and experience, together with students' expertise of and perceptions to collaboration via CMC and willingness to participate. Figure 2 summarises essential components for a successful CMCL class.
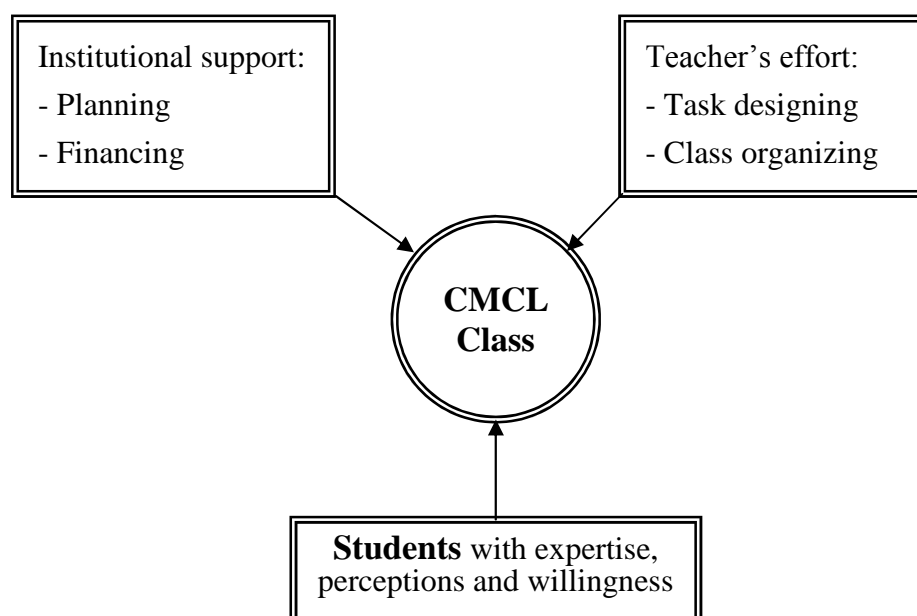
Figure 2: Contributing factors for a successful CMCL classroom

Conclusion

The interrelatedness among the three concepts is evident. The application of CMCL into the CLT-based classroom seems to be feasible as viewed under the SCT perspective. While it is argued that SCT provides an "overarching explanatory framework for collaborative learning" (Donato, 2004, p. 284), there is no reason to "networked learning if you do not value learning through co-operation, collaboration, dialogue, and/or participation in a community" (Goodyear, Banks, Hodgson, & McConnell, 2004, p. 2). Today, with the complementary nature of SCT and collaborative learning tools, learning is viewed as fundamentally social and derived from authentic engagement with others in a community of practice.

Since CLT-based language learning via computers has become widespread and is gradually complementing, if not replacing, the traditional methods in the predictable future; and CMCL has become a real-world artefact and social needs, the educational issue is now hardly about whether to bring CMCL into the language classroom or not, but rather how to be able to make use of it effectively and efficiently. Moreover, technology itself is better seen as neither a creator nor a destroyer, but rather an element in classroom and curriculum design.

Clearly, there is no gain without pain. A great deal of time, energy, efforts, and of course money will have been spent and sacrificed by the time the revolution of bringing technology into the class is realised in the Vietnamese sociocultural setting. Gain has been evidently achieved elsewhere the world over. It is supposed certain gain can be attained in Vietnamese educational context.

One last word, theory is still theory; a series of empirical action research comprising of quantitative, qualitative, ethnographical, and statistical methods with social and cognitive process orientation are required for a persuasive and comprehensive application of CMCL into the CLT-based language classroom.

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Investigating the relationship between Self-assessment and teacher-assessment in academic contexts: A Case of Iranian university students

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Abstract

The main purpose of the present study is to investigate the relationship between performance testing and alternative assessment. More specifically, the study addressed the following questions: 1) Is there any correlation between student self-rating and teacher-rating in a speaking test? 2) Is there any correlation between student self assessment and teacher assessment of speaking in informal settings? And 3) How much correlation exists between interview and classroom informal assessments? The participants of the study were 35 sophomores majoring in English literature, who had to enroll for a speaking course, which was compulsory and prerequisite for other courses. Their oral performances were observed via narration task throughout the term, and they all participated in an interview test administered at the end of the course for assessing their general speaking ability. The subjects' speech production in the classroom was scored using both holistic and discrete marking procedures. As a consequence of running Pearson correlation, a number of interesting findings emerged: Except the correlation between self-rating and teacher-rating on an interview test, which was moderate, all of the correlations among other variables such as self-rating and self-classroom assessment; teacher-rating and teacher-classroom assessment; and self-assessment and teacher-classroom assessment were high. And thus, high correlations among these measures indicate that alternative assessment such as self-assessment is likely to be as reliable and as valid as performance testing. The implication that can be drawn from the findings of this study is that, in order to make a plausible link between performance testing and informal assessment, we have to move further toward authentic assessment which is more relevant to classroom evaluation in academic contexts.

Keywords: Alternative assessment, Performance testing, Self-assessment, Teacher-

assessment, Self-rating, Teacher-rating

1. Introduction

The major shift of emphasis from teacher/centered approaches to more learner/centered approaches caused both language teachers and assessors to look for more authentic ways of measuring the learners' performances on performance-based tests such as writing and speaking. This movement was accelerated as we entered the post-method era in which assessment is part of learning since by assessing him/herself; the learner tries to learn something. Testing was no longer viewed as checking the outcome but rather regarded as part of the process of learning. This notion, indeed, underscores the idea of a constructivist post method era whereby the focus is on assessment as process rather than as product, and meaningful learning occurs when learners are actively engaged in constructing and expanding their knowledge and in working out how to apply their knowledge to solve problems (Ashbacher, 1997; Omalley & Valdez Pierce, 1996). Following this line of research, a number of new testing alternatives such as self-assessment, portfolio assessment, teacher assessment have become popular these days (Clapham, 2000; Hancock, 1994). The major aim of this study was to probe the relationship between performance testing and alternative forms of assessment and increase the chance of more dialogs between language testers and assessors (Clapham, 2000, p. 150). An attempt was made to investigate one form of alternative assessment, self-assessment, in order to find evidence in support of authentic assessment which causes the learner to be autonomous in terms of being a self-learner and a self-assessor participant.

2. Theoretical backgrounds

Classroom assessment has always formed an important part of all teachers' memories, but this is different from the time when they used paper-and-pencil tests, performance tests, or

more recently alternative assessment. Assessment is probably one of the least understood areas in language teaching and learning (Cohen, 2001). Assessing the academic achievement of every student is a necessary part of class activities that presents a challenge for teachers throughout the world. This study focuses on one type of alternative assessment system: self-assessment and its relationship with teacher-assessment. Before dealing with this issue, it is essential to clarify the super ordinate term, i.e., alternative assessment, and examine its relation with testing in general and performance-based testing in particular.

To begin with, let us mention a few words as to the distinction between 'assessment and 'testing. The term assessment is used with a variety of meanings. In fact, Bachman (2005, p. 6) argues that assessment is used so generally in various ways in the fields of language testing and educational measurement that there seems to be no consensus on what precisely it means. As noted by Clapham (2000, p. 150), the term 'assessment' is used both as a general umbrella term to cover all methods of testing and assessment, and as a term to distinguish 'alternative assessment' from 'testing'. Bachman (2005, p. 7) defines assessment as *"... the process of collecting information about a given object of interest according to procedures that are systematic and substantively grounded."* Valette (1994) argues that, 'tests' are large-scale proficiency tests and that 'assessments' are school-based tests. According to Bachman (Ibid), there are two characteristics that distinguish assessment from informal observations and reports; that is, the assessment is systematic and substantively grounded. In sum, language testing has to do with the theories of test construction and test validation, but assessment is closely related to the evaluation of class performance using procedures such as self rating, self assessment, authentic assessment, etc (McNamara (1996; Clapham, 2000).

As for alternative assessment, the term refers to informal assessment procedures, which are usually used in the classroom. Typical examples of such methods consist of self-assessment (Harris, 1997), portfolios (Hamp-Lyons 1996), learner diaries or journals (Genesee and Upshur 1996), and authentic assessment (Omaley and Valdez Pierce (1996). To further

236

clarify the term, *"Alternative assessment refers to procedures and techniques which can be used within the context of instruction and can be easily incorporated into the daily activities of the school or classroom"* (Hamayan, 1995, p. 213). It is particularly useful with English as a second language because it employs strategies that ask students to show what they can do. In contrast to traditional testing, which measures students based on what they are to reproduce and recall, alternative assessment evaluates students according to what they can integrate and produce (Hamp-Lyons, 1996).

To explain the distinction between alternative assessment and performance testing, Shohamy (1995) points out that, they have much in common. Indeed, the major difference between the two seems to be that performance testers are much concerned about the validity and reliability of their instruments while alternative assessors are not (Hamayan 1995). Both, however, are concerned with asking students to create or produce something, and both focus on eliciting samples of language which are as close to real life as possible (see Upshur and Turner 1998; Kormos 1999; Papajohn 1999; Linch, 2001). A defining characteristic of performance testing is that *the focus of assessment is more on the candidate's actual performance rather than his more abstract demonstration of knowledge usually obtained through means of paper-and-pencil tests* (McNamara 1996, p. 6. As to its similarity with performance testing, the same could well be said of methods of alternative assessment.

As for the term self-assessment, which is under investigation here, it is regarded as one of the alternatives to language testing. It is compared with teacher-assessment so as to capture its importance in relation to students' autonomy towards L2 learning. More information in this respect will be presented in order.

One of the pivotal elements in self-directed learning is to provide opportunities for learners to assess their progress and focus on their own learning (Harris, 1997; Brown, 2004). Recently there has been a shift of emphasis in language testing away from traditional assessment to alternative assessments that are more authentic in their elicitation of

meaningful communication (Brown, 2001, 2004). Self-assessment technique recognized as one of the alternatives to testing is defined by Mc Namara (2000) as "the process by which learners are trained to evaluate their own performances"(p. 136). It helps learners to monitor their own progress and make accurate judgments on the level of their language proficiency (Lim, 2007). It derives its theoretical justification from the *principle of autonomy* in second language acquisition (Brown, 2004).

As Nunan (2007, p. 148) argues besides assessment by the teacher, self- assessment has also become popular. This is specifically relevant to classrooms where teachers wish to encourage learner autonomy and a focus on learning processes as well as learning outcomes. This idea has emanated from recent paradigm shift from positivism to constructivism which views language learning as dynamic rather than static. In post-constructivist method era, the focus was shifted from viewing the learner as a passive recipient of knowledge to more active and dynamic participant (Omalley & Valdez Pierce, 1996). A plethora of research (e.g., Tavakoli, 2008; Ashbacher, 1997) in constructivist learning theory tells us that meaningful learning occurs when learners are actively engaged in constructing and expanding their knowledge and in working out how to apply their knowledge to solve problems.

Influenced by this shift of emphasis, learner is viewed as the language processor who constantly learns and assesses learning. Following this line of inquiry, a number of alternatives to testing such as authentic assessment, portfolio assessment, self-assessment, etc. were proposed so as to find more evidence for describing the learner's progress in qualitative terms (Omalley & Valdez Pierce, 1996; Hancock, 1994).

Of these alternatives, self-assessment is the focus of attention in this study to be investigated. It is argued that self-assessment is the key element in language learning which helps the learner towards autonomy whereby the learner can monitor his progress and relate learning to his individual needs (Harris, 1997). In this view, Harris (1997, p. 12) considers

self-assessment as one of the fundamental elements in learning autonomy. The term autonomy has entered in the literature since the emergence of learner-centered approaches, and been the focus of attention in recent years. For instance, in describing the shift in education from man as the product of his society to man as the producer of his society, Holec (1981, p. 3) defines autonomy as "*the ability to take charge of one's own learning*". From this definition, it can be understood that autonomous learners should adopt the role of self-assessors and self directed learners. But the most salient questions are: what is the role of self-assessment in academic settings and how is it correlated with teacher-assessment? Perhaps, it is in this context that self-assessment is needed to focus on the learner's perception of progress, especially when she/he is engaged in more performance-based activities such as speaking and writing.

Moreover, Nunan (2007, p. 148) states that, "*While self-assessment has been criticized on the grounds that not all learners are accurate judges of their own ability, this criticism misses the point to some extent, which is to involve learners in their own learning processes ...*". This idea is further supported by Cram (1995, p. 282), as cited in Nunan (2007), 'The major purpose of self-assessment is to provide the opportunity for learners to develop an understanding of their own level of skill, knowledge or personal readiness for a task in relation to their goals.'

Since self-assessment is compared with teacher-assessment in this study, a few words on this issue seem to be warranted as it is dealt with in the following paragraphs.

As mentioned in the literature (e.g., Rea-Dickins, 2001; Lynch, 2003; Edelenbos & Kubanek, 2004), interest in teacher assessment, especially regarding teachers' diagnostic competence (i.e., their ability to interpret students' foreign language growth), can be related to a number of reasons. First, theories concerning the relationship between assessment and instruction in language teaching have been developed. Second, there have been a number of innovations in the field of education, including greater school autonomy and the redefinition

of teacher roles and qualifications (e.g., facilitators of learning, Information Communication Technology-related skills, specialist skills in dealing with multicultural classes). Developments such as these have thus created new perspectives regarding teacher assessment.

There are very few studies that consider the manner in which teachers assess their students' foreign language skills at the same time as in the process of teaching and learning. General assessment studies on teacher behavior in language classrooms have shown that teachers spend a relatively small amount of time assessing individual student performance (Edelenbos & Kubanek, 2004). However, this observation is altered if we consider correcting a student's utterances to be a type of assessment, as this occurs frequently. In general, formal testing is assumed to be the only type of assessment a teacher uses. The mental 'steps' a teacher takes when assessing a student's progress remain largely unexplored. In this study, teacher-assessment was observed when the instructor used several outside criteria together with his interpretive powers to assess students' speaking ability in both formal and informal settings.

In terms of application, the term alternative assessment is still vague; much research is needed in this respect to bring it into full clarification. So, by focusing on one form of alternative assessment, self-assessment, and its relation with teacher-assessment, this study was an attempt to explore some issues in this direction.

3. Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this study is two fold. First, it aimed to investigate the relationship between performance testing and alternative assessment in an attempt to open up some conversation between testers and assessors. Second, the study was particularly moving towards a model of authentic assessment in which learners are engaged with the process of assessment by focusing on self-assessment and self-rating whereby their oral behaviors are under inspection

By considering the aforementioned purposes and problems, this study was conducted to

find plausible answers to the following questions:

1) Is there any correlation between student self-rating and teacher-rating in a speaking test?

2) Is there any correlation between student self assessment and teacher assessment of speaking in a classroom context?

3) How much correlation exists between an interview test and classroom informal assessments?

The reason for using the term like self-rating in the speaking test instead of self-assessment is that because it is more compatible with testing situation. Student self-assessment is, on the other hand, applied in the second question since it is classroom oriented and more relevant to informal evaluation of students' progress. More information about the operationalization of the variables under investigation such as participants, instrumentation and data collection procedures will be provided in the next section.

4. Methodology

4.1 Participants

The population from which the participants were selected included junior students of English literature from the University of Isfahan. The number of the participants was 35 and they all enrolled for the speaking course (Oral reproduction of stories). Their language ability can be operationally defined in the sense that they had all passed a number of courses in English such as grammar; reading; listening and some other ones so as to be qualified for registering in the speaking course. By applying different elicitation procedures, their oral performances were closely observed during the term. The materials and procedures used in this respect are described and delineated below.

4.2 Materials and procedures

For the purpose of the study, a number of instruments (both formal and informal) were

prepared to elicit data on the variables discussed above. They are described below.

4.2.1 IELTS interview tests

In order to assess the participants' general speaking ability, a version of IELTS interview tests (2005) was utilized at the end of the term. The test took the form of a face to face interview between one participant and one examiner. The participants were assessed on their use of spoken English to answer short questions, speak at length on a familiar topic, and also to ask questions and interact with the examiner. Each interview took between 11 to 14 minutes, and consisted of a conversation between the candidate and an examiner. All of the procedures suggested by IELTS were observed. A sample of IELTS interview test is presented as follows:

1 Introduction

The examiner and candidate introduce themselves and the candidate is encouraged to talk briefly about their life, home, work and interests.

2 Extended discourse

The candidate is encouraged to speak at length about some familiar topic of general interest or of relevance to their culture, place of living or country of origin. This will involve explanation, description or narration.

3 Elicitation

The candidate is given a task card with some information on it and is encouraged to take the initiative and ask questions either to elicit information or to solve a problem.

4 Speculation and Attitudes

The candidate is encouraged to talk about their future plans and proposed course of study.

Alternatively the examiner may choose to return to a topic raised earlier.

5 Conclusion

The interview is concluded.

IELTS results are reported on a nine-band scale. This band scale consists of different levels from zero to native like ability to communicate in spoken English each of which is a short behavioral description for speaking ability observed at that level. (For more information, see the speaking test of UCLES, 2005). The nine bands and their descriptive statements are shown in Appendix 1 below.

To lower the effect of the subjectivity of scoring on interview test, two raters were used. The raters were trained how to administer the interview test based on the training manual issued by University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) each year. In order to operationalize self-assessment, the students were also trained how to evaluate their speech production at the end of the interview using the IELTS nine-band scales for speaking with their relevant descriptors (See Appendix 1).

As for scoring, each interview was scored discretely, i.e., based on language elements such as pronunciation, grammar, lexical resources, fluency and coherence. The inter-rater reliability of the raters was estimated to be .78 for the interview test.

In order to find more evidence in support of the relationship between performance testing and alternative assessment on the one hand, and self-assessment and teacher-assessment on the other, classroom informal assessments were also applied, which will be describe below.

4.2.2 Classroom informal assessment

As the course began, the instructor introduced the course requirements and different classroom activities and tasks that the students had to do during the whole course. The students attended the class two hours per week. The purpose of the oral reproduction course,

according to the syllabus, was to enable the students to develop their ability to speak in the target language in academic contexts.

In terms of class activities, the instructor utilized one major task: narration. That is, students were assigned stories that they had to prepare for the presentation next cession when the class met. In the classroom, each student was supposed to narrate the story, while at the same time the instructor involved both the narrator and other students in several other academic tasks. The academic tasks are presented below:

• Story narration

• Story interpretation

• Peers' questioning and answering

• Content analysis of the story

• summarizing the story

This way the class continued, and each student had a chance of performing narration task twice. Each session the class met, the instructor focused on the performance of three students, and the rest of the class was involved with class discussion about the story under analysis. In terms of the time of scoring student's speaking performance, the instructor used immediate scoring (when the student finished telling the story), and delay (when his/her speech production was tape-recorded for later scoring). The instructor used both holistic and analytic marking in order to assess the students' speech production in the classroom.

As for scoring of the informal classroom assessment of speaking in academic contexts, the system with analytic criteria suggested by Farhady, Jafarpur and Birjandi (1994, Chap 12) was applied. It is used with some minor modifications. This system is employed due to the fact that it includes comprehension in the assessment of oral production. And this is in line with recent views on speech production model in which listening and speaking are integrated (cf. Douglas, 1997). As illustrated in Appendix 1 below, the spoken performance of the participants in the classroom was described according to six major language elements such

as pronunciation, structure, vocabulary, fluency and coherence, and comprehension along with 30 bands of analytic sub-scales. That is, each language element has 6 bands for scoring (See Appendix 1). This scale was used in classroom for rating both self-assessment and teacher assessment of students' speech performance. To avoid the subjectivity of scores obtained on informal assessment, the instructor rated each participant's performance twice. The intera-rater reliability of scores was .82.

To organize the data obtained from classroom oral assessment, the average of the two samples of speaking taken from each student was regarded as his/her final score. On the part of self-assessment, the average of student self-assessment of their speech behaviors obtained from the two samples was also taken as their final scores. After collecting the data from both formal and informal assessment procedures, they were classified and summarized for further analysis which will come next.

5. Analysis of results

As mentioned above, the major purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between performance testing and alternative assessment. For this purpose, a number of research questions were posed to be examined in the light of a correlational study. To investigate the research questions posed above, a number of null hypotheses were set forth to be studied as follows:

1) There is no relationship between student self-rating and teacher rating in a speaking test.

2) There is no relationship between student self-assessment and teacher assessment of speaking in a classroom setting.

3) No relationship exists between an interview test and classroom informal assessments.

In order to investigate the aforementioned hypotheses, a number of data analysis procedures such as descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used the results of which will be fully described and delineated below.

5.1 Descriptive statistics

In order to examine the normality of the distribution of scores in terms of their means, dispersion and variance, first descriptive statistics was used. The purpose is to capture the sample statistics. Second, inferential statistics was run in order to come up with population parameters.

A quick glance at the results of descriptive statistics (Table 1) would indicate that the means obtained from student self-rating and teacher rating in an interview test are not that much different. The same also is true concerning student self-assessment and teacher classroom assessment. And the standard deviation of scores among different measures is not large. This superficial analysis has thus revealed that these measures may be related to each other in terms of the ability they assess. Of course this analysis is useful for obtaining sample statistic but not for population parameters.

Table1. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	N	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Interview Self_Rating	35	9.00	7.2000	.99410	.988
Interview Teacher_Rating	35	8.50	6.1571	1.24127	1.541
Classroom Self_Assessment	35	28.00	23.5143	3.09051	9.551
Classroom Teacher_Assessment Valid N (listwise)	35	28.00	21.0857	3.82231	14.610
	35				

5.2 The first null hypothesis

In order to investigate the first null hypothesis, Pearson Product moment correlation was run the results of which are depicted in Table 2. Setting the level of significance at .01, the index of .67 would indicate that there is a moderate correlation between student self-rating and teacher rating in the interview test. That is, the hypothesis was rejected with the p-value of .001.

Table2. Interview test: Correlation between Self-rating and Teacher-rating

		INTER-SR	INTER-TR
INTER-SR	Pearson Correlation	1	.677(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	33.600	28.400
	Covariance	.988	.835
	N	35	35
INTER-TR	Pearson Correlation	.677(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	28.400	52.386
	Covariance	.835	1.541
	N	35	35

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

5.3 The second null hypothesis

To investigate the second null hypothesis as to the relation between teacher assessment and student self-assessment in classroom setting, another correlation was conducted the results of which are illustrated in Table 3 below. The index of .82 with the value of .001 would indicate a high correlation between student self-assessment and teacher classroom assessment. That is, the second null hypothesis was rejected with the p-value of .001, leaving little indication of errors in the measurement.

Table3. Correlation between Classroom- Teacher-assessment and student Self-assessment

		Class-Teacher-Assessment	Class-Student-Assessment
Class-Teacher-Assessment	Pearson Correlation	1	.823(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	496.743	330.457
	Covariance	14.610	9.719
	N	35	35
Class-Student-Assessment	Pearson Correlation	.823(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	330.457	324.743
	Covariance	9.719	9.551
	N	35	35

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

5.4 The third null hypothesis

For the third null hypothesis, another set of correlations was run between student self-rating and self-assessment in an interview test and in an informal assessment. Of course for both situations students were clearly trained what to do in terms of assessing themselves. As it is observed in Table 4 below, the correlation between student self-rating and self-assessment is .95 with the p-value of .001 leaving a little error behind in terms of the measurement. This high correlation is regarded as a valuable empirical evidence in support of correlation between performance testing and alternative assessment.

Table4.　Correlation between Self-rating and Classroom- Self-assessment

			INTER-SR	Class-SA
INTER-SR	Pearson Correlation	1		.952(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.001
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	33.600		99.400
	Covariance	.988		2.924
	N	35		35
Class-SA	Pearson Correlation	.952(**)		1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	99.400		324.743
	Covariance	2.924		9.551
	N	35		35

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

To further provide empirical evidence for the investigation of the third null hypothesis as

to the relationship between performance testing and alternative assessment, the pearson product moment correlation was again run. As shown in the Table below, the high correlation, i.e., .99 between teacher rating in an interview and in an informal setting would support the relation between teacher rating across different situations and further advocate the relationship between performance testing and alternative assessment. This relationship is approved with the p-value of .001, that is, small error in the measurement (Table 6).

Table5. Interview: Correlation between Teacher-rating and Classroom- Teacher-assessment

		INTER-TR	Class-TA
INTER-TR	Pearson Correlation	1	.992(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	52.386	160.029
	Covariance	1.541	4.707
	N	35	35
Class-TA	Pearson Correlation	.992(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	160.029	496.743
	Covariance	4.707	14.610
	N	35	35

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

In fact, it can be concluded that these high correlations across different raters, measures and situations would indicate that there possibly exists a meaningful relationship between self-assessment and teacher assessment. And the results indicate that performance testing and alternative assessment may be highly related to each other both across situations and raters.

These findings together with their implications will be discussed in the section below.

6. Discussion and Conclusions

As a consequence of running a set of Pearson product moment correlations, a number of intriguing findings were obtained which will be discussed in the following order.

As shown in Table 2 above, the obtained correlation between student self-rating and teacher rating was moderate, and it is meaningful at .001 level of significance. The first null hypothesis was thus rejected. This moderate correlation can be interpreted in the sense that student self-rating is a useful strategy which helps the learner toward more autonomy in self monitoring and self directing language learning. This finding is in line with Harris (1997) that argues for self-assessment as a key learning activity.

This moderate correlation with teacher rating would thus indicate that student self-rating gives us a dynamic picture of students' progress, especially when they are directly engaged in their own learning and assessment in formal academic context.

The findings in Table 3 would indicate that the correlation between student self-assessment and teacher assessment in classroom setting is high, so the second null hypothesis was also rejected. This finding can account for the plausibility of self-assessment in classroom setting as a dynamic process and advocate the argument by Harris (1997) that self-assessment strategy aids the learners to evaluate their own progress and focus on their own learning. This is further supported by Henner-Stanchina and Holec (1985, p. 98). That is, *students concurrently create and undergo the evaluation process, judging their achievement in relation to themselves against their own personal criteria based on their own objectives and learning expectation*s.

By focusing on such individual reflections, self-assessment can begin to make learners see their learning in personal terms. For instance, as argued by Chamet and Omalley (1994, p. 119) (cited in Harris, 1997), self-rating requires the student to exercise a variety of learning

strategies and higher order thinking skills that not only provide feedback to the student but also provide direction for future learning. It can thus be concluded: by giving responsibility to students as to their own progress and to their own learning would mitigate the student teacher relationship so that they can become more motivated in participating in their evaluation for future learning expectations.

As to the relationship between the interview test and classroom informal assessment, the findings in Tables 4 and 5 illustrate that the correlation between them is significantly high. Therefore, the findings reject the third null hypothesis. The finding obtained in this regard is a strong empirical evidence in support of Shohamy (1995) who argues that alternative assessment and performance testing have much in common to the extent that both of them focus on assessing the student's actual language performance. The high correlations, i.e., .95 and .99 in Tables above, would account for more commonalities between performance testing and alternative assessment than differences. However, this finding provides useful results for the argument put forth by Clapham (2000) regarding the difference between performance testing and alternative assessment. That is, scholars would argue that language testers are more concerned with the validity and reliability of their instruments, but language assessors are not (Shohamy, 1996; Hamayan, 1995). It can thus be argued: because alternative assessment like self-assessment is more relevant to the content of material and to the context of use it is as valid as performance testing.

In terms of reliability, alternative assessment is claimed to be reliable because the square of correlation between the two measures taken by the same students is the degree of the common variance between the two. So, by this kind of justification, the minimum reliability estimate that can be obtained from correlations (Tables 4 and 5 above) is .81, which is a plausible index for any measures. From this argument, it can be concluded that alternative assessment like self-assessment can be as reliable and as valid as performance testing.

More recently, attempts have been made to describe reliability and objectivity of

alternative assessments in qualitative terms (e.g., Huerta-Macias, 2002; Genesee & Upshur, 1996; Hamayan, 1995; Hamp-Lyons, 1996; Hancock, 1994; O'Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996). For instance, Huerta-Macias (2002, p. 339) argues: Another concern that is often raised with respect to alternative assessment is the lack of objectivity. Yet, the notion of objectivity in standardized tests has also been challenged. That is, standardized tests merely represent agreement among a number of testers on scoring procedures, format, and/or content for that specific test. They are not really objective; they just collectively share the same biases. Therefore, in this sense, a standardized test is no more objective than an alternative assessment instrument. There is no reason, then, to consider alternative assessment as being any less objective than traditional testing.

The implications that can be drawn from the findings of this study are to be explained in order. First, as opposed to performance tests, alternative assessment techniques are more relevant to classroom situations and useful for making low-stakes decisions. They are better operationalized in the classroom where the focus is on specific content, and scores obtained through these procedures are interpreted according to criterion-referenced testing. Second, the results of the study further call attention to the distinction between testing and assessment in the sense that assessment is more related to language teaching rather than testing (cf. Brown, 2004). Third, in order to make a plausible link between performance testing and informal assessment, we have to move further toward authentic assessment which is more relevant to classroom evaluation in academic contexts. Finally, the strong correlation between self-assessment and teacher-assessment obtained in this study would indicate that teachers should trust some multiple sources of information other than external measures or their interpretive powers.

As for the limitations of the study, it can be said, through simple correlations one can not obtain reliable and valid measures of alternative assessment techniques. But rather, more sophisticated statistical operations are needed to come to such a big claim as to the reliability

and validity of alternative assessments. For example, in the light of generalizability study (using a factorial design), one can come up with more sources of variance in this respect because different factors such as measures, tasks, prompts, raters, and examiners are involved. Another limitation is that because of large class size and lack of facilities, individualized techniques for learning and assessment are more difficult, if not impossible. Lastly, as rightly stated by Harris (1997, p. 12), the concept of self-assessment is against deep-rooted cultural expectations about learning. This also holds true in our situations where self-assessment is not considered at all by the educational system.

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Appendix1. IELTS 9-band scale used for rating the interview test.

Name: **Native language:**

ility in speaking which represents your level of ab ,in table below 0-9Please circle the number :Instruction

.English

Band Scales	Descriptive Statements
9	Expert User — Has fully operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.
8	Very Good User — Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies. Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.
7	Good User— Has operational command of the language, though occasional inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning.
6	Competent User — Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.
5	Modest User — Has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.

4	Limited User — Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language.
3	Extremely Limited User — Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
2	Intermittent User — No realcommunication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.
1	Non User — Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly afew isolated words.
0	Did not attempt the test. — No assessable information.

Appendix 2. *Band scores for assessment of speaking (adopted from Farhady, Jafarpur & Birjandi, 1994, p. 238-239)*

Self-assessment and teacher assessment rating scale

Name: **Native language:**

<u>**Instruction**</u>

Please think about your skill in speaking English and assess your oral ability according to the criteria such as pronunciation, structure, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.

select the level in the table below that most closely matches your skill in spoken production.

Language Components	Band Scores
Pronunciation	6 Phonemically acceptable throughout 5 Few phonemic errors but never hindering comprehension 4 Occasional phonemic errors necessitate attentive listening. 3 Frequent phonemic errors require frequent demands for repetition. 2 Constant phonemic errors make comprehension very hard. 1 Severe errors make understanding virtually impossible.
Structure	6 Almost no error 5 Few insignificant errors only 4 Occasional petty errors but no problem with understanding 3 Frequent errors occasionally interfere with meaning. 2 Constant errors interfere with understanding. 1 Severe errors make understanding virtually impossible.
Vocabulary	6 Appropriate and extensive use of words in any domain 5 Appropriate use of adequate vocabulary to discuss general topics and special interests 4 Occasional use of inappropriate words

	which do not, however, affect the message
	3 Frequent use of inappropriate words distort the message.
	2 Constant use of wrong words, limited vocabulary
	1 Inadequate basic vocabulary
Fluency and Coherence	6 Fluent and effortless speech like a native speaker
	5 Natural and continuous speech with pauses at unnatural points
	4 Fluent speech with occasional problems
	3 Frequent problems hinder fluency and demand greater effort.
	2 Slow speech, hesitant, and sometimes silent
	1 Virtually unable to make connected sentences
Comprehension	6 Comprehends everything
	5 Comprehends everything except for very colloquial or rapid speech or low-frequency items
	4 Comprehends nearly everything but occasional rephrasing
	3 Comprehends slower-than-normal speech
	2 Comprehends only slow and simple speech
	1 Comprehends very little of even simple and slow speech

An Investigation of the Current State of College Teachers' Teaching Quality and Teacher Development

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Bio Data:

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Abstract

In the progress of China's education reform, the general public has realized the importance of English education, especially college English education, more than ever. In the teaching process of college English education, college EFL teachers' quality is a key issue. However, little research information is available to answer two critical questions about the EFL teachers' quality of China: what the current state of college EFL teachers' teaching quality is and how to improve teachers' teaching quality. An investigation is presented here about current EFL teachers' quality of several Chinese universities and some problems in the current college English education process. The results identified that there are inconsistencies/mismatches between teachers' practice and the theories underlying their practice. Based on the problems, some feasible suggestions were made for teacher development, such as reflective teaching and combination of teaching practice and research. This research can be helpful in identifying the current state of college EFL teacher development and in promoting the education reform in Chinese universities.

Key words: college EFL teachers, teaching quality, teacher development, reflective teaching

1. Background and Significance

In the primary, secondary schools and colleges of China, there are nearly 100 million foreign language learners (Liu Daoyi & Gong Yafu, 2001). For most of the learners in China, English learning is classroom-based education. Because of this, EFL teachers' teaching quality is very important for the improvement of students' English. With the globalization of

world economy and China's entry into WTO, especially the successful application of sponsorship in 2008 Olympics in Beijing, the short-lived proficiency of college graduates' English has become a national issue. In addition, the National Education Department conferred a document recently, entitled "The standards for national basic education－English course", which stipulated that the English level of high school graduates should achieve the English level of eight (Zou Qiong, 2004).   This situation has set off new challenges for college EFL teachers. Improvement on English teacher development is extremely necessary.

Although the development of EFL teachers and their training has received more attention from the foreign language researchers in recent years, the current state of EFL teachers' education in China is far behind than what exists in other countries (Liu Daoyi & Gong Yafu, 2001). Teacher education in China is focused more on the teaching of literature and theoretical linguistics rather than EFL teachers' training and the teaching of pragmatics (Utley, 1986). This is an abnormality in China's education system

The abnormal phenomenon in the teacher education of China is closely related to the history of teacher education development. In second language teaching, the knowledge base for traditional teacher education programs consists of linguistics and language learning theories, and a practical component based on language teaching methodology and opportunity for practice teaching. (Richards, 1990) It was not until 1990s that second language teacher education began to focus on how teachers learn to teach with efforts to construct knowledge base for second language teacher education. In the field of educational research, many existing studies on teaching theories focused on teaching methodology, learning strategies, teaching materials as well as syllabus, while the research about teachers themselves was limited. Among the 400 articles published in foreign language teaching and research journals in recent ten years, only 3 articles were about the research of teacher quality with the key word as "teacher". (Xie XiuBang, 2000). Since 2000, a few articles about teachers' development in several foreign countries were published in the mainstream

academic journals of China. However, these articles mainly focused on the introduction of theories and practical methodologies of foreign countries, such as Britain, America and Canada (Xia Jimei, 2006). The direct investigation of current state of teachers' quality of China has not received the attention it deserves in recent publications.

The hypothesis of the present study is that there exists an inconsistency e between teachers' practice and their implicit theories in China. Even for conscientious teacher, there were some problems in their teaching, that is, what they did sometimes conflicted with their beliefs. It was found that teaching quality was related to degrees and occupational degrees and that English major teachers' teaching quality was better than non-major teachers'.

This investigation reflected on some problems in the present EFL teachers' education in China, which has been ignored for a long time. Feasible solutions were suggested in this study as well. The data collected in this investigation was very important for discerning the trend of the college EFL teachers' professional development in China.

2. Research Questions

The aim of the research is to investigate the current state of the teachers' teaching quality in some Chinese universities including several normal universities and seek out feasible solutions for improvement. In order to obtain necessary information, the investigation focused on: teachers' own voices and their students' voices, in order to attempt a well-informed understanding of "what the teachers actually did in the classroom".

The following research questions addressed the aim of this study:

(1) What are the positive characters of college EFL teachers in teaching?

(2) What are the problems in college EFL teachers' development?

(3) Is there any inconsistency between college EFL teachers' practice and the beliefs, which they identified?

(4) How to improve the teaching quality of college EFL teachers?

3. Methodology

3.1 Subjects

The subjects involved in the study were a convenient sample of 58 college English teachers and 176 college students.（The teacher questionnaire handed out was 70, the percentage of effective data collection is 82.8%, the student questionnaire handed out was 190, the percentage of effective data collection is 89.5%.）The participating teachers and students were mainly from LiaoNing Normal University, QiQiHaer University, Ningbo Science and Technology Institute, Shenyang Aviation University, JiLin Normal University and Haerbin University of Science and Technology.

Table 1. Basic information about the subjects

Total (student)	176
Gender	Female: 129 (73.3%)
	Male: 47 (26.7%)
Grade	Grade 1: 38 (21.6%)
	Grade 2: 112(63.6%)
	Grade 3: 26(14.8%)

Total (teacher)	58
Gender	Female: 48(82.8%)
	Male: 9 (15.5%)
Eng. Major teacher	29 (50.0%)
Non Eng.-Major teacher	27(46.6%)
Academic Degree	Masters: 29(50.0%)
	Bachelors: 28 (48.3%)
Occupational Degree	Assistant: 25 (43.1%)
	Lecturer: 22 (37.9%)
	Vice professor: 10 (17.2%)

3.2 Methods of Data Collection

Methods employed in the educational research on investigating teacher quality included

interview, questionnaires, observation and reading teaching diary. Among them, questionnaires consisting of close-ended and open-ended questions are the most extensively used methods. Considering the limited conditions of the investigation, questionnaire was chosen as the major instrument. The questionnaires were developed in stages and have been guided by two principles. First, the items were meant to conform to the general cognition about theoretical bases of the development EFL teachers. Second, the items were designed to contrast the college EFL teachers' practices and the principles that they identified.

Teacher questionnaire

The questionnaire contained three main parts: personal background (6 items), directions, and main body (28 items).

The five general factors in the main body were materialized into specific items, which were designed according to the related questionnaires of some experts (Xia Jimei, 2002; Jia Aiwu, 2005) as well as guidelines for English language teacher education (1988). Scale construction for the items adopted Likert scales, which was the most widely used and the data results are convenient for analyzing by SPSS 13.0 software. The items were put into five general factors, which formed five categories. The respondents are asked to put the right number after each items, to show how often (far) they practice (agree with) the behaviors (statements).

Student questionnaire

The student questionnaire also contained three main parts: personal background, direction, and main body. The main body had sixteen specific items in total, which aimed to investigate teachers' practice in classroom on the basis of their language ability and teaching methodology based on improving teaching quality. These items were designed to collate with certain items in the teacher questionnaire in order to get the real information about

teachers' practice in classroom. Scale construction for the items also adopted Likert scales, identical to the teacher questionnaire. A grid consisted of five degrees: strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree and strongly agree, corresponding to number 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Pilot study

The initial questionnaires were handed out to 25 experienced teachers and 50 students. After discussing with some teachers participating in this pilot investigation and my classmates, modifications were made on the initial questionnaires. The last version of teacher questionnaire described above consisted of 28 statement items that fell into five categories: self language capability (8), teaching practice (7), ability for improving teaching (6), teacher beliefs (5), and self evaluation and expectation (2). Student questionnaire consisted of 16 items in total.

4. Results and Data Analysis

4.1 Reliability Analysis of the Teacher and Student questionnaires

Cronbach alpha was used to exam the internal reliability. (Qin Xiaoqing, 2003). The calculation of Alpha indicated that the reliability coefficient of teacher questionnaires was 0.7892, and the student questionnaires was 0.8354, both of which indicated that the reliability of the questionnaires were acceptable.

4.2 Construct Validity Analysis – Factor Analysis

Before conducting factor analysis, KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were employed to check whether the teacher questionnaire was suitable for factor analysis. KMO of the teacher questionnaire was 0.653, which was moderately acceptable to carry on factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity suggested that Sig. was 0.000 (<0.05), which indicated that items were obviously related, that is, there were common factors existing. From these two tests, the teacher questionnaire has been found to be relatively suitable for factor

analysis.

Table 2 is the result of the eigenvalue, variance and cumulative variance of the factors extracted from the data based on the size of eigenvalue and the shape of the Scree plot. Table 2 indicated that the eigenvalue of five factors were all bigger than 2 (>1 is acceptable), and cumulative variance was 65.596%, which suggested that the five factors stood for 65.596% of variance amongst the subjects. The loadings of each item in factors, which symbolized the relationship between the common factors and the variables were between 0.493 and 0.889, higher than 0.30, which is considered to be significant. From these data was concluded that the teacher questionnaire had good construct validity.

Table 2. Eigenvalue, variance and cumulative variance of the factors

Factors	Labels	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative Variance%
Factor 1	Self-capacity	4.507	18.026	18.026
Factor 2	Methodology	3.337	13.349	31.375
Factor 3	Improving teaching	3.234	12.938	44.313
Factor 4	Beliefs	2.777	11.108	55.421
Factor 5	Evaluation & expectation	2.544	10.174	65.595

4.3 Descriptive data about the Differences between Teachers' Beliefs and Students' Beliefs

Comparing these two questionnaires, data analysis is as follows:

(T=teacher questionnaire, S=student questionnaire)

In the aspect of self-language capacity, most teachers were satisfied with their listening, speaking, reading, and writing ability (An1-An8 are all landslide agreement). However, the speaking ability in applying communication strategies (An2), the reading ability in understanding professional books, such as appreciation of literature (An6) were relatively weaker than other abilities. 72.8% students thought that college teachers' language capacity met the needs of classroom teaching (An1 in S). 71.1% students agreed that their English teachers tried to use English in class (An2 in S).

91.4% teachers indicated that they were conscious to instruct learning strategies, cultivate five abilities, and motivate foreign language learning. (An9 in T) 63.7%, 72.7%, 54.5% students thought that their English teachers cultivated learning strategies in reading, vocabulary learning, and writing (An4, An9, An5 in S). 65.9% students indicated that their teachers often offered materials they were interested in. (An14 in S)

89.6% teachers permeated western culture in teaching process (An10 in T), and 72.7% students thought their teacher did well in this aspect. (An6 in S)

38% teachers indicated they always took language points as teaching emphasis, 37.9% teachers sometimes did so (An11 in T). 69.9% students believed that their teachers took language points as teaching emphasis and 27.3% students thought they learned nothing but language points. (An7 and An15 in S)

44.9% teachers did concrete teaching menu, and completed the teaching tasks according to it. (An 12 in T)

Only 38% teachers often designed multi-media class wares to enrich teaching content, 27.6% teachers seldom did this, and 34.5% never did this. (An13 in T)

65.2% teachers said that they often designed class activities to make students get information and improve language ability during the process of communication and interaction between students and teacher-students. An14 in T) However, only 50% teachers thought that communication approach was the most effective method, 43.1% was uncertain, and 6.9% disagreed. (An26 in T)

55.1% teachers often had periodical evaluation through different ways with students. 54.6% students thought their teacher really did evaluation in teaching process. (An15 in T and An11 in S)

60.3% teachers combined teaching and researching, changing teaching methodologies necessary to improve teaching quality; 63.8% teachers often discussed teaching experience with colleagues. 51.7% teachers often wrote teaching journals to reflect teaching, checking

the good and weak points from themselves. (An16, An18, and An 19 in T)

53.4% teachers often read core journals, periodicals in English aspects and professional books, 39.7% read sometimes, and 6.9% never read at all. (An17 in T)

44.8% teachers were always conscious to find their interesting subjects and practise teaching research, 43.1% was sometimes, and 12.1% was never. (An20)

91.4% teachers indicated they often took students' advice and suggestions to meet their needs. (An21 in T) While only 54.2% students thought the teachers really listened to their words. (An14 in S)

94.6% teachers thought English was a communication tool and the purpose of foreign language teaching was to enhance students' ability to apply English to their living and learning. 77.6% teachers identified the relationship between students and teacher in classroom was language communication and cooperation. At the same time, 55.2% teachers believed that teacher was the most important factor in teaching efficiency, 17.2% was uncertain, only 27.6% disagreed. (An25, An28, An24 in T)

81.1% teachers did not think it was right to giving up on the "poor students" (An27 in T) While 65.9% students agreed that their teachers did not give up on "poor students", 14.8% students thought the teacher really did, 19.3% students were not clear about this (An12 in S).

60.4% teachers were satisfied with their professional development. 93.1% teachers were anxious about getting further education, such as training, going abroad and getting a PhD.

In order to have a direct view of the differences between teachers' beliefs and students' beliefs, the different percentage towards the same statements was summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. A summary of the differences between teachers' beliefs and Students' beliefs

	Teachers' beliefs （sample size =58）	Students' beliefs （sample size=176）
College teachers' self-language capability meets the needs of teaching.	Speaking : 93.0%	72.8%
	Listening : 92.8%	
	Reading : 80.0%	

			Writing : 85.0%		
They are conscious to instruct learning strategies.			91.4%		in reading: 63.7%
					in vocabulary learning:72.7%
					in writing: 54.5%
Teachers permeate western culture in teaching process.			89.6%		72.7%
Teachers take language pointes as teaching emphasis			38.0% always do		69.9%
			37.9% sometimes do		
Teachers often do periodical evaluation of students.			55.1%		54.6%
Teachers often take students' advice and suggestions to meet their needs .			91.4%		54.2%

4.4 Statistical Data of the Current State of College EFL Teachers' Teaching Quality in China.

Table 4. Statistical data of the current state of college EFL teachers' teaching quality in China

	Percentage of category	Sample size	Mean score of teacher evaluation	Std. Deviation	p number
Academic Degree	Teacher with Masters (50%)	29	110.069	8.1894	p=0.006
	Teacher with Bachelors (48.3%)	28	103.931	9.3277	
Occupation al Degree	a. Assistant (43.1%)	25	104.68	10.2710	(a vs. b) p=0.343
	b. Lecturer (37.9%)	22	107.23	7.6403	(b vs. c) p=0.195
	c. Associate Professor (17.2%)	10	111.30	8.9573	(a vs. c) p=0.082
Eng.Major teacher vs. Non-major teacher	Major teacher (50.0%)	29	105.55	10.3943	p=0.236
	Non-major teacher (46.6%)	28	109.00	7.3686	

In order to identify the differences of teaching quality across academic degrees, occupational degrees, English major teachers and non-English major teachers, independent samples tests were employed.

The result indicated that teachers with masters or degrees higher than that were better in teaching quality than teachers who only had bachelor degrees. There was no significant difference between teacher assistant, lecturers and associate professors. However, the means of total marks in each group was: 104.68, 107.23, and 111.30, which showed that there was some difference in teaching quality among assistants, lecturers and assistant professors, but it was not significant. However, English major teachers and non-English major English teachers did not have significant differences in teaching quality.

4.5 Positive Characteristics of College EFL Teachers

The two most positive features/characteristics of teacher development was that: college EFL teachers in China was changing, teaching quality in universities has been improving. The findings stated below can illustrate this:

1. Through the investigation, it was found that the structure of college EFL teachers' degrees had obviously been improved. 50.0% teachers had master's degrees, which may be due to the enlarged enrollment of the postgraduates. More college EFL teachers were getting systematic instruction in their college English education, which is the basis for improving college teaching quality.

2. College EFL teachers' language capacity generally met the needs of classroom teaching, but further improvements should be made in communicative strategies, and the reading ability with reference to the comprehension of professional materials, such as professional English books.

3. In the process of teaching, college EFL teachers had gradually allowed an awareness of western cultures to permeate in their classrooms and encourage their students to compare it with Chinese culture. Because of this the students would develop a better understanding of

271

western culture, which could be beneficial for improving their ability in international communication. They encouraged their students to construct their own metacognitive strategies of learning. At the same time, they tried to apply some methodologies advocated by the specialists of our field, such as the communicative approach.

4. Most teachers were anxious to go for further study, which indicated that: college teachers were not satisfied with the current state of their teaching ability; they were willing to improve their current teaching quality in order to face new challenges. Meanwhile, the high desire for further study reflected that college EFL teachers in China had fewer chances for training or going abroad for further study.

4.6 Problems in Teaching Quality of College EFL Teachers

The investigation of college EFL teachers' teaching quality has alerted me to some problems in the teaching process.

1. From the perspective of humanism, Education is the development of the whole person rather than focus solely upon the development and employment of cognitive skills. However, many teachers nowadays appear to have taken the language points as their teaching emphasis. They consumed most of the time to explain grammar and vocabulary items and paid less attention to the discussion of topics embedded in the lessons. Therefore 27.3% students in the investigation indicated that they learned nothing but language points, which suggested that teachers didn't help students develop a sense of personal identity to achieve future goals.

2. Most college teachers seldom did periodical assessment of students. As a result, the students could develop the habit of self-evaluation. Constructivism assumes that individuals are actively involved in constructing personal meaning, which is from their own personal understanding and experiences. All knowledge is meaningless in isolation. If teachers did not help students construct their own ways of learning strategies, how can students learn English efficiently?

3. Some teachers did not listen to their students' suggestions or beliefs about using supplementary materials they were interested in. In order to become self-actualized learners, learners should be helped and encouraged to make choices for themselves in what and how they learn.

4. There was inconsistency between teachers' practice and the principles they identified. Richards (1998) categorized teachers' knowledge into two dimensions: knowledge related to subject matter and curricular issues and knowledge related to teacher's implicit theories of teaching or their personal and subjective philosophy and their understanding of what constitutes good teaching. In some situations, college teachers knew how to carry out an efficient class, while they didn't know why they should do in this way. Some implicit theories in their mind contradict with one another. Furthermore, these contradicted beliefs resulted in inconsistent teaching practices. As indicated in the statistical data, almost every college EFL teacher perceived the belief that the purpose of foreign language teaching was to improve students' ability to use the language. Most of them identified that classroom teaching should be student-centered. Communication and cooperation between teacher-students and peers are very important. However, more than half the teachers believed that teacher was the most important factor in teaching efficiency. Teachers' implicit beliefs acted as "filter", through which new information and experience was interpreted. In this case, it's really hard for college teachers to achieve excellence in teaching with the confusion that their implicit theories impose on them.

5. There is a lack of independent research ability in college EFL teachers,. This is largely due to their lack of self-awareness. Many do not know how to update the information on the latest research, teaching developments and conduct classroom –based research.

6. Applying multi-media class wares can enrich the content of classroom practices and increase the English learning interests of students. However, not many college EFL teachers often used this method, which might be due to two reasons. One was that universities did not

have enough equipment to satisfy all the teachers' needs for using multi-media; the other was that many teachers were not efficient in designing multi-media class wares, as well as using multi-media cost effectively.

7. Few teachers knew about the habit of reflection. Not many teachers knew what a real reflective practitioner was and had the habit of writing teaching journals. Reflection is to make the tacit or implicit beliefs explicit, which is an efficient way to improve teaching quality.

5. Discussion

5.1 The inconsistency between teachers' beliefs and students' beliefs.

As the data stated in table3, there were differences between what teachers believe and what students believe in some aspects. Overall, teachers had a higher evaluation compared with students' evaluation in these aspects. Especially, there were obvious differences in two aspects. 91.4% college EFL teachers believed that they were conscious about the teaching of learning strategies. While the percentage of students who believed that their teachers really did was lower. During the process of helping students construct learning strategies, more teachers were concerned about the teaching of vocabulary learning strategies, which indicated that teachers had the implicit belief that vocabulary learning was the most important issue in English learning. This belief contradicted with their belief that the purpose of foreign language learning was to enhance students' ability for practical application of the language. In this respect, teachers did not have explicit theories and principles to guide their teaching practice.

The other obvious difference was that 91.4% college EFL teachers said they often took students' advice. However, half of the students did not believe that. By taking advice and suggestions from students, teachers could know what the students were interested in and what they needed to learn. Furthermore, they could adjust their teaching methods to improve

274

the learning efficiency of students. Therefore, college EFL teachers should encourage students to propose their suggestions and frequently communicate with students, which would be a better way to get valuable suggestions and students' real beliefs.

5.2 Feasible Ways for Teacher Development

1. Reflective teaching is an impetus for the development of college EFL teachers in China. Changing teachers' implicit knowledge is one of the most important goals in EFL teacher education. How to change teachers' implicit theories or personalize outsiders' knowledge turns out to be a critical question. This has been a recurring notion of reflection. Reflection on practice can act as a bridge between received knowledge and experiential knowledge.

There are many approaches to reflective teaching in EFL classroom, such as, teaching journals, lesson reports, surveys and questionnaires, audio and video recordings, observation and action research (Richards & Lock hart, 1996). Each procedure has both advantages and limitations. The purpose of this investigation can help decide which procedure is used. Sometimes, a combination of some procedures is necessary.

Through the reflective teaching, college EFL teachers can not only solve the problems existing in the teaching process, such as low efficiency of language learning, lack of awareness of doing teaching research, but they can also achieve a better understanding of teaching and learning process and reconstruct their own practical theories from practice, making their teaching principles explicitly.

2. Combing the teaching practice with research is another way of improving college EFL teachers' teaching quality. Teachers should be conscious to find the interested topics and conduct research during the process of teaching. The practices of teaching provide rich resources and good conditions for research, at the same time; research will benefit teaching practice and improve teaching quality inversely. Reading journals, professional works, communication with peer colleagues and writing reflective journals all can be the ways of

becoming aware of the research topics that are interesting to teachers.

3. College leaders/superiors should provide more chances for college EFL teachers to undergo trainings, to do further study, or go abroad. These will not only broaden the view of teachers but also provide them with opportunities to communicate with teachers in other colleges. Through these methods, teachers can improve on their language capability as well as their teaching quality.

6. Conclusion: Limitations and Future Research

The investigation on college EFL teachers teaching quality was carried out by questionnaires. Besides the inherent limitations attached to questionnaire research, some other limitations can be pointed out:

As stated in methodology part, the samples were selected in convenient ways. The questionnaires were delivered to different colleges and schools. The investigation was not conducted face to face by me. These factors all had some impact on the results of the investigation. Due to lack of ready-made instrument to investigate college EFL teachers' teaching quality, the questionnaires were constructed on the basis of reading extensive literature and related questionnaires. The reliability coefficients of the teacher and student questionnaires were 0.7923 and 0.8354, which indicated room for improvement.

The teacher samples were too small considering the large number of college EFL teachers in China, which should be sampled on as large a scale as possible. However, the scale of the sample had compromised the results of factor analysis. The value of KMO test was only 0.653, which necessitated a bigger sample. If the sample could be over 100, the internal validity would be more optimistic.

In the investigation of the current state of college EFL teachers' teaching quality, the interview can be conducted as a complement for getting more and deeper information. In order to improve teaching quality of college EFL teachers, a training program about

reflective teaching can be conducted. The effect of the course on college EFL teachers can be studied by questionnaires, observation, and interview. Meanwhile, follow-up studies need to be done to further determine whether such impact still exists or what contributes the loss of the impact after a period of time, such as a term, or a year.

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**<u>Appendix 1 (Note: To make the questions easy to understand, the original
questionnaires used in this investigation were in Chinese.)</u>**

<u>The Questionnaire of College EFL Teachers' Teaching Quality</u>

<u>(Translated teacher questionnaire)</u>

The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate the teaching quality of college EFL teachers in China. Please choose the number that accurately expresses your ideas towards each statement. Thanks for your cooperation.

Personal background:

Name of College：_____ Sex：

Degree：____ Occupational degree：

English Major Teacher □ Non-English Major teacher □

Whether achieved training: Yes □ No □

Direction: Choose the numbers that represent your real ideas, and write them down on the underlines at the end of each statement.

1＝This statement is never or almost never true of me

2＝This statement is usually not true of me

3＝This statement is somewhat true of me

4＝This statement usually true of me

5＝This statement is completely true or almost completely true of me.

I Self Language Capability

1. My speaking ability can meet the needs of teaching in class and in daily life.
2. I can apply communicative strategies in the communication process, such as explanation, implicit expression.
3. I can catch the main idea of most conversations in Standard English.
4. I can understand the culture embedded in articles.
5. I can comprehend the basic concepts of professional books.
6. I can understand all kinds of articles including literary works, and can appreciate the beauty of language and styles in them.
7. I can write coherent summaries.
8. I can write narrative or descriptive articles according to personal experiences, other materials.

II Teaching Practice

9. I am conscious to combine the factors that influence the learning efficiency in foreign

language teaching process, for instance, the good learning habit, foreign language learning strategies, five language capabilities and learning motivation.

10. I gradually influence Western culture in the process of teaching and cultivate students' international communication abilities.

11. I put my teaching emphasis on the explanation of language points.

12. I complete the teaching tasks exactly according to my detailed teaching plans

13. I often use multi-media courseware to enrich the teaching content.

14. I always design class activities, which enables to improve students' application of language in the process of peers' intercommunication.

15. I make periodical assessments for students in different methods.

III The ability of Improving Teaching

16. I integrate teaching with research, and apply the new teaching ideas and methods in order to improve teaching quality.

17. I usually read core English journals and the professional books.

18. I often exchange teaching experiences with my colleagues and reflect on my own teaching experiences.

19. I have formed the habit of reflection, writing teaching journals to check the advantages and disadvantages for myself.

20. I am conscious to find the topics interested in the teaching process and do teaching research myself or with my colleagues.

21. I always take the advice and suggestions of students and meet their needs .

IV Self Evaluation and Expectation

22. As a college EFL teacher, I am satisfied with my professional development.

23. I have a strong desire to improve my teaching quality in any ways, such as training, further study and going abroad as an exchange scholar.

V Teacher Beliefs

Direction: Choose the numbers that represent your real beliefs toward English teaching, and write them down on the underlines at the end of each statement.

1＝I strongly disagree with this idea.

2＝I disagree with this idea.

3＝I am uncertain of this idea.

4＝I agree with this idea.

5＝I strongly agree with this idea.

24. I believe that teacher is the most important factor in teaching efficiency.

25. I think language is a communicative tool; the purpose of language teaching is to enhance the application of language for students.

26. There are many methodologies in foreign language teaching, but I think communicative

approach the most efficient way.

27. For the "poor students" in class, I think they do not do anything but disturbing the discipline of the class.

28. I believe that the relationship between teacher and students is communication and cooperation.

Appendix 2 (Note: To make the questions easy to understand, the original questionnaires used in this investigation were in Chinese.)

The Questionnaire of College EFL Teachers' Teaching Quality
(Student questionnaire)

Personal background:

Name of college : _____ Major: _____ Grade: _____ Sex:

Directions: The purpose of questionnaire is to investigate the teaching quality of college EFL teachers in China. Please reflect the true information of your college English teacher. Choose the number that accurately expresses your ideas towards each statement and write it down on the underline at the end of each statement. Thanks for your cooperation.

1＝I strongly disagree this idea.

2＝I disagree this idea.

3＝I am uncertain of this idea.

4＝I agree this idea.

5＝I strongly agree this idea.

1. I think the language capability in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating can satisfy with the need of English teaching.

2. My English teacher tries to speak English in the process of teaching.

3. My English teacher always designs class activities such as discussion. So we have the chances to communicate with teachers and my classmates.

4. My English teacher often provides chances for us to practise reading and instruct the reading strategies to us.

5. My English teacher often gives us assignment to write some short paragraphs and explain the problems in our writing.

6. My teacher always introduces western culture and compares it with Chinese culture.

7. My English teacher always focuses on language points during the teaching process.

8. My English teacher only gives us the answers of the after-class exercises and doesn't give any explanation.

9. My English teacher often instructs vocabulary learning strategies, such word-building

and the rules of pronunciations.

10. When my English teacher teaches us English words or expression, he/ she always put them in the meaningful context.

11. My English teacher often gives us assessment periodically and evaluates our leaning of English.

12. My English teacher seldom pays attention to the "poor students" in class.

13. My English teacher always takes our advice and suggestions to improve his/ her teaching methods.

14. My English teacher often complements knowledge we are interested in.

15. I feel that I learn nothing but English language points in English learning.

16. Overall, I am satisfied with the teaching of my English teacher.

A synthesis of research on second language writing in English

Ilona Leki, Alister Cumming, & Tony Silva. New York: Routledge, 2008. Pp. ix + 259 pages

Reviewed by Pisarn Bee Chamcharatsri

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Though there are some reviews of L2 writing available, they are somewhat outdated. Ilona Leki's *A synthesis of research on second language writing in English* rectifies this by providing an up-to-date review of historical and groundbreaking issues that have occurred in the field of L2 writing over the last 25 years.

The book is divided into three main sections: "Contexts for L2 Writing, Instruction and Assessment," and "Basic Research on Second Language Writing." The first section, *Contexts for L2 writing*, examines eight different populations of second language (L2) writers both in and outside of school settings. Chapter 1, "Young Writers," discusses the issue of early literacy development. *"*Writing in Secondary School," chapter 2, calls for future research for this student population. Chapter *3* "Undergraduate Writing" synthesizes and summarizes research contributing to improvement of writing instruction to this population. Chapter 4, *"*Graduate Student Writing," talks about the issue of (re)construction of students' identities in the new settings and new discourse communities students attempt to gain access to. Chapter 5, "L2 Adult Newcomer, Resettlement, and Community Literacy," reports the research in two areas: the need of literacy used daily and in classroom settings. *"*Workplace Writing in L2" in chapter 6 comments that L2 writing in the interpersonal and

social environment levels is more significant than literacy needed in this setting. Chapter 7 *"Scholarly Writing in L2"* illustrates the emerging of varieties of written discourse in publishing works*,* and chapter 8 *"Ideological, Political, and Identity Issues in L2 Writing"* calls for future research in L2 writing in different genders, races, contexts, and sexual orientation.

The second section "Instruction and Assessment," consists of two chapters and discusses L2 writing curricula and assessment. Chapter 9, "Curriculum and Instruction," addresses both macro and micro level of curricula and pedagogies and three major theories affecting L2 writing curricula: sociocultural theory, theories of language socialization, and multiliteracies. Chapter 10, "Assessment," discusses and provides examples of substantial studies for two major approaches to assessing L2 students' writing: formative assessment and formal tests or examinations of proficiency in writing.

The third section, "Basic Research on Second Language Writing," focuses on the foundation of research in L2 writing. The authors include the instruction of how to use this section of the book. Chapter 11, "Writer Characteristics," addresses five categories of L2 writers including L2 variables, L1 variables, transfer, psychological and sociological, and demographic variables. Chapter 12, "Composing Processes," focuses on the process L2 writers employ when they write such techniques as revision, planning, and translation. Chapter 13, "Text: Textual Issues," discusses different textual topics including cohesion, organizational/rhetorical patterns, and coherence. Chapter 14, "Written Text: Grammatical Issues," mainly refers to grammatical issues based on published studies. At the end of chapter 14, a complete bibliography is available in five categories: Study author(s), year of publication, number of subjects, subjects' L1(s), and subjects' L2(s) (pp. 180-199). For the *Afterword* section, the authors identify the direction of future research in L2 writing that the field should move towards "local contexts for learning and teaching L2 writing and also longitudinal, cross-case, long-term [research]" (p. 201), an area which might yield new

results and could be valuable to the scholarship.

The attempt of compiling the study of second language writing in English is both ambitious and highly appreciated, yet there is room for improvement. The issues presented in sections one and two, for example, are thematically discussed, yet section three is not in the same arrangement. Instead, the lists of most frequent to the least published topics are categorized with no referring page numbers. This arrangement complicates the intention of making this section as a quick reference for scholars and students who are interested in these issues. Despite this minor shortcoming, the book is an important resource which serves as an up-to-date historical reflection of L2 writing scholarship.

From Corpus to Classroom: Language Use and Language Teaching

Anne O'Keeffe, Michael McCarthy, and Ronald Carter. Cambridge: Cambridge University

Press. Pp. xv + 315.

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It seems self-evident that corpus linguistics has much to offer the language classroom. Yet

practicing teachers are often ill at ease when asked what they really feel about corpora. On

the one hand, the findings of many corpus research projects seem to offer curiosities rather

than teachable material. So if we are confronted with findings such as the fact that red occurs

twice as frequently as yellow or Friday twice as much as Tuesday (both courtesy of the

CANCODE corpus), we are likely to be a little bemused, but our habit of teaching lexical

sets will probably remain unaffected. On the other hand, corpus findings often seem to

destabilize our understanding of English by showing how real people do not follow the rules

that we are teaching. Teachers may find this perturbing, not least because it undermines our

sense of security and places a question mark over the usefulness of our endeavors. Given this

scenario, *From Corpus to Classroom* endeavors to offer a bridge between corpus findings

and real applications.

   From Corpus to Classroom begins with a useful overview of corpus design,

analytical techniques, and ways in which corpora have influenced teaching practice. The

second chapter looks at word frequency, centering mainly on core vocabulary (the first 2,000

words of English) and how we decide what to teach at basic and advanced levels. Chapters 3

and 4 on chunks, collocations, and idioms prove interesting as an account of the "banal, hidden, subliminal patterns of the everyday lexicon" that resist exposure (p. 79). Examples such as those given here offer genuine insights into the way English works in practice, as well as providing language teachers with potential areas for classroom work.

Chapters 5 and 6 explore the issue of using corpora to research grammar and include a case study on get-passives which illustrates the complications of using real spoken data as a source for grammar instruction. The authors discuss probabilistic approaches to grammar based on corpus data and suggest that grammar teaching should be supported by encouraging students to explore contexts of use. In their view, there are degrees of noticing, from right/wrong to assessment of what is likely in a particular context. The teacher's role is to expose learners to "the richness and variety of spoken language" and open "windows on to the immense grammatical variety we find therein" (p. 139). The final chapters examine findings from the CANBEC corpus and the Academic section of CANCODE and discuss the usefulness of corpora in teacher training.

In short, *From Corpus to Classroom* is highly accessible for teachers and provides a sound practical introduction to the subject for graduate students and course writers, with a useful appendix containing an excellent survey of existing corpora. Moreover, these authors are particularly forward-looking in moving away from unhelpful native-non-native dichotomies into the area of the expert user, to explore functional, international English as a model for classroom teaching. In general, corpora are still under-exploited in teaching, and more work in this area is needed to bring out their full potential. Books such as this are essential to open up corpus research to a wider audience, thereby encouraging the creative pedagogical application of research findings.

E-Learning initiatives in China: Pedagogy, policy and culture

Helen, Spencer-Oatey (Ed.). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007. Pp. xviii + 290.

Reviewed by Lisa Cheung

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E-Learning initiatives in China: Pedagogy, policy and culture aims to offer critical insights into the current practice and future potential of E-learning in higher education in China. Taken as a whole, this single tightly-knitted collection provides the academic audience, mainly education specialists and e-learning experts, a comprehensive and indispensable discussion of the incorporation of digital technology into education in the region.

This collection comprises fifteen timely chapters which are separated into five sections. The first section, "Background," starts with two chapters that give an introduction to digital technology (chapter 1) and present a full picture of e-learning in China, focusing on its application in the tertiary context (chapter 2). The five chapters in the second section, "Designing and Delivering Online Courses in China," address a wide spectrum of pedagogic issues in the design and implementation of online courses in China. Some interesting issues explored include courseware design in the Chinese context (chapter 3), learner and teacher autonomy (chapter 4), building of online learner communities (chapter 5), flexible delivery (chapter 6), and training of e-learning tutors (chapter 7). The five chapters in sections three and four, together, offer insights into the issues of "Managing the Interplay between Pedagogy and Technology" and "Managing Collaboration Processes." Chapters 8 and 9

examine the plausibility of pedagogical methodology in the implementation of E-courses. Chapters 10 through 12 deal with the management of collaboration in the *eChina-UK Programme*--a range of e-learning initiatives such as the *eChina-UK project* and the *eChina-UK DEFT* project. The remaining three chapters in the final section, "Addressing Policy Issues," are devoted to the discussion of intellectual property rights (chapter 13), the informationization of higher education in China (chapter 14) and e-learning developments (chapter 15).

Well organized and written in a highly readable style, readers will appreciate how this rich collection puts cross-cultural understanding and E-learning under the microscope as it taps into the insights of "the micro-context of a particular activity or communicative interaction to the macro-context of educational policy and institutional structures" (p. 8), yet the text is not without shortcomings. This first of which is that the book mainly focuses on the characteristics and trends of the e-learning initiatives from the *eChina-UK Programme*, but says little on the measurement of the success of these initiatives or how such successes are to be measured. On the other hand, discussion of manpower or training possibilities could be made since E-learning is not only about technology but also about training people. However, despite the limitations, the text is probably the best practical reader available today for understanding the discipline of E-learning in China.

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Submissions for the Quarterly Issue

Submissions guidelines

The *Asian EFL Journal Quarterly* is a fully peer-reviewed section of the journal, reviewed by a team of experts in EFL from all over the world. The *Asian EFL Journal* welcomes submissions written in different varieties of world Englishes. The reviewers and Associate Editors come from a wide variety of cultural and academic backgrounds and no distinction is made between native and non-native authors. As a basic principle, the *Asian EFL Journal* does not define competence in terms of native ability, but we are a strictly reviewed journal and all our reviewers expect a high level of academic and written competence in whatever variety of English is used by the author. Every effort will be made to accept different rhetorical styles of writing. The *Asian EFL Journal* also makes every effort to support authors who are submitting to an international journal for the first time. While major revisions may be requested, every effort is made to explain to authors how to make the necessary revisions.

Each submission is initially screened by the Senior Associate Editor, before being sent to an Associate Editor who supervises the review. There is no word minimum or maximum.

There are two basic categories of paper:

Full research papers, which report interesting and relevant research. Try to ensure that you point out in your discussion section how your findings have broad relevance internationally and contribute something new to our knowledge of EFL.

* Non-research papers, providing detailed, contextualized reports of aspects of EFL such as curriculum planning. Very well documented discussions that make an original contribution to the profession will also be accepted for review. We cannot accept literature reviews as papers, unless these are "state of the art" papers that are both comprehensive and expertly drafted by an experienced specialist.

When submitting please specify if your paper is a full research paper or a non-research paper. In the latter case, please write a paragraph explaining the relevance of your paper to our *Asian EFL Journal* readership.

Authors are encouraged to conform with international standards of drafting, but every effort will be made to respect original personal and cultural voices and different rhetorical styles. Papers should still be fully-referenced and should use the APA (5th edition) format. Do not include references that are not referred to in the manuscript.Some pieces submitted to the quarterly issue may be reclassified during the initial screening process. Authors who wish to submit directly to the Teaching Articles section should read the separate guidelines and make this clear in the submission e-mail.

Referencing: Please refer to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.) – Contributors are also invited to view the sample PDF guide available on our website and to refer to referencing samples from articles published from 2006. Due to the increasing number of submissions to the *Asian EFL Journal*, authors not conforming to APA system will have their manuscripts sent back immediately for revision. This delays publication and taxes our editorial process.

Format for all submissions (Please read this before submitting your work)
All submissions should be submitted to: asian_efl_journal@yahoo.com

i) The document must be in MS Word format.

ii) Font must be Times New Roman size 12. Section Headings: Times New Roman (Size 12, bold font). Spacing: 1.5 between lines.

iii) 'Smart tags' should be removed.

iv) Footnotes must not 'pop up' in the document. They must appear at the end of the article. Use the superscript font option when inserting a note rather than the automatic footnote or endnote option.

v) Citations - APA style. (See our website PDF guide)

Use the APA format as found in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), 5th Edition, for headings, citations, reference lists and in text referencing. Extra care should be taken for citing the Internet and must include the date the site was accessed.

About APA Style/format: http://www.apastyle.org/aboutstyle.html

APA Citation Style: <http://www.liu.edu/cwis/CWP/library/workshop/citapa.htm>

APA Style Workshop: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/apa/index.html

vi) Keywords: All articles must include Keywords at the beginning of the article. List 4-6 keywords to facilitate locating the article through keyword searches in the future.

vii) Graphs and Charts - either in the body of the document or at the end. In certain cases, a graphic may not appear in the text of the web version of the *Asian EFL Journal* but a link to the graphic will be provided.

viii) Paragraphs. Double space between paragraphs. Indent the beginning of each paragraph with three strikes of the space bar except those immediately following a heading, quotation, example, figure, chart or table. Do not use the tab key.

ix) Keep text formatting (e.g., italics, bold, etc.) to the absolute minimum necessary. Use full justification. All lines to be against Left Hand Side Margin (except quotes - to be indented per APA style).

x) Abstract The abstract should contain an informative summary of the main points of the article, including, where relevant, the article's purpose, theoretical framework, methodology, types of data analysed, subject information, main findings, and conclusions. The abstract should reflect the focus of the article.

xi) Graphs – to fit within A4 size margins (not wider)

Thank you for your cooperation.

<asian_efl_journal@yahoo.com>

Please include the following with your submission:
Name
School affiliation
Address
E-mail
Phone number
Brief Bio
Data noting history of professional expertise

Qualifications

An undertaking the work has not been published elsewhere

Abstract

Any questions regarding submission guidelines, or more detailed inquiries about less common citation styles, may be addressed to the Editorial Board.

Book Reviews: The *Asian EFL Journal* currently encourages two kinds of submissions, unsolicited and solicited. Unsolicited reviewers select their own materials to review. Both teachers and graduate students are encouraged to submit reviews. Solicited reviewers are contacted and asked to review materials from its current list of availability. If you would like to be considered as a solicited reviewer, please forward your CV with a list of publications to the Book Review Editor at:
asianefljournalbookreviews@yahoo.com.

All reviewers, unsolicited and solicited, are encouraged to provide submissions about

materials that they would like to suggest to colleagues in the field by choosing materials that

they feel have more positive features than negative ones.

Length and Format:

1. Reviews should be prepared using MS Word and the format should conform to 12 pica New Times Roman font, 1.5 spacing between lines, and 1 inch margins.
2. The reviewer(s)' full names including middle initial(s), title, school affiliation, school address, phone number, and e-mail address should be included at the top of the first page.
3. The complete title of the text, edition number, complete name(s) of author(s), publisher, publisher's address (city & state), and date of publication should be included after the reviewer(s)' identifying information.
4. Reviews should be between 500-700 words.
5. A brief biography of the author(s) should be included after the review.
6. A statement that the submission has not been previously published or is not being considered for publication elsewhere should be included at the bottom of the page.

Organization: Reviewers are encouraged to peruse reviews recently published in the quarterly PDF version of the Journal for content and style before writing their own. While creativity and a variety of writing styles are encouraged, reviews, like other types of articles, should be concisely written and contain certain information that follows a predictable order: a statement about the work's intended audience, a non-evaluative description of the material's

contents, an academically worded evaluative summary which includes a discussion of its positive features and one or two shortcomings if applicable (no materials are perfect), and a comment about the material's significance to the field.

Style:

1. All reviews should conform to the Journal's APA guideline requirements and references should be used sparingly.
2. Authors should use plural nouns rather than gendered pronouns such as he/she, his/her him/her and adhere to the APA's Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language, which can be found at: http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/publications/texts/nonsexist.html.