LINGUA

YEAR XX, NO. 1 / 2021, NEW SERIES

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Language Manipulation in ESP Course and Test Design

Adrian Ciupe

University-level ESP curricula are more often than not dependent on variables such as time, specificity and students' existing language proficiency as well as various methodological constraints. Predominantly lexical in nature, designing custom-made courses, examination rubrics and other related content can pose serious challenges to teaching, learning and testing within a self-contained process underlying a set of available tools. This paper sets out to explore a few practical suggestions in manipulating the language present in original resources towards designing class teaching and testing materials within the above-mentioned framework. It will look at how original resources (topic-based texts) can be pooled and tagged effectively and how they can serve in creating new discrete language units / contextual backgrounds useful in the construction of level- / complexity-based teaching and testing task prompts.

Premises and guiding principles

Teaching ESP at tertiary level may pose considerable challenges to language instructors working within relatively tight curricular constraints. By way of illustration, citing my own case (I teach business English at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Department of Modern Languages and Business Communication, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania), I would start by mentioning a few clear-cut variables that need to be taken into account: (1) large mixed-ability classes (up to 40 students typically ranging from A2 to C1 CEFR levels); (2) short course time: 28 teacher-guided hours per semester, including course introduction and student assessment; (3) coverage of all four skills, speaking, listening, reading and writing, using specialised language (ESP); (4) topic-based syllabi reflecting main academic courses and specialities in areas like marketing, advertising, banking, finance, trade etc. Meeting just these four main variables may already constitute a really daunting task. The focus of this article is principally on topic-based language that needs to be included in unitary, consistent teacher-designed materials, given the non-existence of ready-made course books that can satisfy all four variables mentioned above.

Right from the outset, ESP mainly concerns the lexis typically found in (highly) specialised areas like the ones already mentioned (marketing, advertising, banking etc.). Lexis is basically one of the central organising principles of any syllabus (Hill, 2000, p. 65) – all the more so in the case of ESP, as Jane Conzett emphasises: "Perhaps the very nature of ESP and business training [...] puts collocations at the forefront of its language work; [...] the relevant books and training materials emphasize lexical phrases as a matter of course" (2000, p. 81). The basic argument regards phraseology in general and collocations in particular, since individual words are useless unless they are taught as collocates of other words: "There is no point in knowing the meaning of the words *impetuous* or *initiative* unless you also know the collocations: *impetuous behaviour*, *take the initiative*" (Hill, 2000, p. 60). This is particularly important in what regards sub-technical collocations as to be found in ESP. Michael Lewis (2000a, p. 195) clearly exemplifies this by referring to

> medical students who know *cardio-vascular* and *ankylosing spondylitis* [but who] may not know collocational items such as *straighten your arm*, *ease the pain*. They may also need to be warned of impossible collocates such as **treat the pain*. This sub-technical vocabulary lies between general English and the technical vocabulary of a particular specialism, and is of great importance to ESP learners, as it is precisely this language which they need to communicate about their specialism to non-specialists, such as patients, supplier or customers.

To give a business English example, many, if not all, of my students, regardless of level, perfectly know the meaning of *life / medical / travel insurance*; however, only *few* of them are aware that we say *take out insurance* and not **make an insurance* (impossible collocation). Perfectly illustrating that language acquisition is non-liniar (Lewis, 2000b, p. 155), even higher-level students may be prone to make such errors – using impossible collocates despite a generally higher proficiency level.

Consequently, it may be assumed that learning new vocabulary basically amounts to knowing how to use 'known' words, which, in turn, presupposes that authentic examples of usage are extremely important (Woolard, 2000, pp. 31, 35) – in this regard, Michael Lewis also warns that natural language examples should not be edited too much (2000a, p. 133):

The larger the chunks are which learners originally acquire, the easier the task of re-producing natural language later. The message to teachers is clear: don't break language down too far in the false hope of simplifying; your efforts, even if successful in the short term, are almost certainly counterproductive in terms of long-term acquisition.

Taking stock of the above premises and guidelines, in what follows I will be looking at possible instances of language manipulation by teachers / course designers / examiners, based on two practical perspectives: (1) how original topic language samples can serve as models for ESP language re-creation involving a teacher's creative writing abilities and (2) how the new language samples (c.f. *example sentences*) thus created can accommodate various teaching and testing formats (c.f. *rubrics*) graded by complexity, difficulty and proficiency level in providing for mixed-ability language class instruction.

Topic tags / key words and source language

In order to be able to find the most relevant language contexts to include in ESP teaching and / or testing material, teachers (presumably course designers as well) may first find it useful, if not essential, to compile lists of topic tags – basically, a collection of highly lexicalised key words pertinent to the topic in question. For illustrative purposes here, I will be focusing on the topic of *marketing and advertising*. Such lists are not easily available as ready-made teaching materials, which would require any teacher (course-designer) in this position to produce them based on personal experience – and, why not, creativity. Of course, such lists cannot be exhaustive or fully 'objective'; however, they can certainly serve the initial purpose. Here is my own example of such a list for the topic under discussion (*marketing and advertising*):

AD, ADVERT, ADVERTISE, ADVERTISEMENT, ADVERTISING, article, audience, BANNER, BILLBOARD, BRAND, BROCHURE, BULK, campaign, campaigner, cash, choice, CLEARANCE, clerk, CLIENT, COMMERCIAL, competition, competitor, competitive, complaint, concept, CONSUMER, CONSUMERISM, CONSUMPTION, COST, CUSTOMER, deliver, delivery, demand, DISCOUNT, disloyalty, dissatisfaction, e-COMMERCE, fashion, FLYER, GOODS, helpline, HOARDING, hotline, image, impact, Internet, item, JINGLE, LEAFLET, LOGO, loyal, loyalty, luxury, magazine, MANUFACTURE, MANUFACTURER, MARKET, MARKETING, media, medium, newspaper, offer, OUTLET, PACK, PACKAGE, PACKAGING, PACKET, PRICE, PRODUCE, PRODUCER, PRODUCT,

programme, PROMOTION, prototype, provider, public, PUBLICITY, quality, quantity, radio, range, receipt, reduce, reduction, respond, respondent, response, RETAIL, RETAILER, revenue, rival, SALE, SALESMAN, SALESPERSON, satisfaction, SELLER, SERVICE, SHOP, SHOPPING, SLOGAN, sponsor, sponsorship, STORE, SUPERMARKET, survey, tactic(s), target, television, TRADEMARK, TV, variety, web, webpage, website, WHOLESALE.

In the above example, the words in capitals are more *highly lexicalised* than the ones in lower case letters – this means that they are much more likely to be used with reference to the given topic (*marketing and advertising*) while the others may also be used as such but with varying degrees of frequency and for other (business) topics as well. As I have already mentioned, there can be no clear-cut 'rules' for compiling such a key word list (which can also be further expanded) – but this is obviously better than nothing or a mere exercise in approximation. At a glance, it can be seen that the list includes mostly nouns – this is because nouns are usually highly lexicalised and they are also the most frequently occurring part of speech in fixed and semifixed phraseology; to mention the main patterns and structures including *nouns*, here is a quick list:

(fixed phrases)
    1. NOUN + preposition
    2. preposition + NOUN
    3. preposition + NOUN + preposition
    4. any idiomatic structures including NOUNS
(semifixed phrases / collocations)
    5. (phrasal) verb + NOUN
    6. NOUN + (phrasal) verb
    7. NOUN + (*of*) + NOUN
    8. adjective + NOUN
    9. (phrasal) verb + preposition + NOUN

Verbs and adjectives can also be included in lists like this if they are highly lexicalised, e.g. the verb *advertise* or the adjective *competitive*. By the same token, conversion can also be accounted for, e.g. *market* can be a noun or a verb.

Essentially, such a list could never be exhaustive or fully objective; it can always be added to and, incidentally, an interesting (warm-up) task for students could be to elicit from them further suggestions of such words frequently used when talking about a certain topic, like the one treated here (*marketing and advertising*). Teachers could subsequently include these suggestions (or not) in revised editions of self-made teaching materials.

With the aid of such a list, teachers can go on to find relevant sample usage of the key words (topic tags) selected. One of the best tools facilitating such an edeavour could be a web-based sentence finder like Ludwig Guru (Ludwig Guru, n.d.). Searches using this app, for example, can yield up to 60 discrete instances of usage per key word searched – this (i.e. 60 results) is a software limitation intended not to throttle the search engine, given the number of people using the site at one time; a workaround (i.e. getting more than 60 results per key word searched) would be to do separate searches for inflected forms, e.g. *advertisement*, *advertisements*; *advertise*, *advertises*, *advertised*, *advertising*; *produce*, *produces*, *produced*, *producing* etc. – inflected form searches will yield 60 results each, which amounts to sufficient language usage examples to be used as 'raw material' later on (see further sections here).

Undoubtedly, ESP teachers / course designers may opt for other ways to find relevant illustrative language on the Internet; however, using a sentence finder like Ludwig Guru can save a lot of time compared to laborious manual searches, site by site.

Language manipulation (1): creating new contexts

This section exemplifies how teachers and / or course designers can create new usage contexts based on the original language that can be found and carefully selected using a sentence finder like the one mentioned. Right from the outset, it should be stressed that such language manipulation towards creating new contexts is *in no way* about using the original sentences as such or paraphrasing them, as this would obviously cause copyright problems. The purpose of the original sentences is *simply* to provide an instance of good practice in language use by offering teachers a 'model' of 'ESP in use' in terms of distinct lexical phrases and syntax structures – in other words, an illustration of how collocation and colligation can work together in a practical language context. Essentially, teachers can identify and select certain linguistic components (mainly phraseological) in the original sentences which can be useful from a pedagogical point of view, subsequently creating new, independent contexts that have *nothing* to do with the overall content expressed in the original source language (sentences) – this is where teachers' creative writing abilities come into play. The intended result of such language 'manipulation' is to come up with *newly created content* incorporating *language in general / standard use*. The following are five examples of this technique (they will also be used in the next section):

Original sentence 1 (key word searched: 'marketing'): "You should receive *marketing* emails only from us and, if you agree, from other organisations we have carefully chosen" (The Guardian, n.d.); new, teacher-created context: "Having received lots of *marketing* emails from them, I decided to unsubscribe from their newsletter."

Original sentence 2 (key word searched: 'marketing'): "… all of which suggests that the success of coffee shops in places like Brighton and Hove has been driven not by *marketing* but by consumer demand – and that shows no sign of abating" (Newsham, 2014); new, teacher-created context: "Showing no sign of abating, our company's success has been driven by careful *marketing* and also high consumer demand."

Original sentence 3 (key word searched: 'marketing'): "Since the tripling of tuition fees universities have been spending more money on *marketing* – embracing social media and revamping their branding" (Ratcliffe, 2014); new, teacher-created context: "At the board meeting we decided not only to spend much more on *marketing* by embracing social media, but also to put a bit more effort into revamping our branding."

Original sentence 4 (key word searched: 'marketing'): "The full impact of the rise in popularity of energy drinks has not yet been quantified, but the aggressive *marketing* of energy drinks targeted at young people, combined with limited and varied regulation have created an environment where energy drinks could pose a significant threat to public health" (Siddique, 2014); new, teacher-created context: "The aggressive *marketing* of fast food targeted at this age group and its rise in popularity year on year led to a considerable impact on public health."

Original sentence 5 (key word searched: 'advertisements'): "The government has continued to strengthen these tobacco control efforts by restricting *advertisements* at point-of-sale and increasing the coverage of graphic warnings on packages" (Savedoff, 2014); new, teacher-created context: "Industry regulators have been trying to strengthen their tobacco control efforts by restricting *advertisements* at point-of-sale."

To sum up, here are again the five newly created contexts (the words in capitals are supposed to be practised / tested in a range of question formats as illustrated in the next section):

1. Having received lots of marketing EMAILS from them, I decided to UNSUBSCRIBE from their newsletter.
2. Showing no sign of ABATING, our company's success has been driven by careful marketing and also high CONSUMER demand.
3. At the board meeting we decided not only to spend much more on marketing by embracing social media, but also to put a bit more effort INTO revamping our BRANDING.
4. The aggressive marketing of fast food targeted AT this age group and its rise IN popularity year on year led to a considerable impact on public health.

5. Industry REGULATORS have been trying to STRENGTHEN their tobacco control efforts by restricting advertisements at point-of-sale.

As a final comment here, these new contexts (example sentences) created (1) carry *other* content than the original sentences, so no copyright problems can be invoked; (2) language manipulated in this way – the options are infinite and solely based on a teacher's creative writing skills – can be made to be rich in phraseological elements worth teaching and testing; from this point of view, here is a list of all pertinent collocations and other phrases (many times merged together into more complex *language chunks*) present in the five examples above:

1. to receive emails from someone; marketing emails; to unsubscribe from a newsletter.
2. to show no sign of abating; a company's success is driven by something; careful marketing; high consumer demand.
3. at a board meeting; to spend (something / much more) on marketing; to embrace social media; to put (a bit more) effort into something; to revamp (one's) branding.
4. aggressive marketing of something; fast food; marketing (is) targeted at someone; an age group; a rise in popularity; year on year; to lead to an impact on something; a considerable impact on something; public health.
5. industry regulators; to strengthen (one's) efforts; tobacco control efforts; to restrict advertisements; advertisements at point-of-sale.

It ultimately comes down to a teacher's decision *which* phraseological / vocabulary elements to focus on in teaching or testing, as well as *how many* of them per sentence. As a reminder, in the next section I will be showing how the words in capitals in the five newly created sentences can be taught / tested, in a range of level- / difficulty-graded formats.

Language manipulation (2): designing exercises and test questions
One of the most practical and well-suited lexical exercise types I would consider is that in which students are presented with a number of sentences, with one or two blanks per sentence – more than two blanks may unjustifiably increase the level of difficulty. The set of sentences is preceded by a set of words students have to choose from and fill in the appropriate sentence blanks. Starting from this general rubric framework, I have developed nine exercise formats according to the difficulty / complexity / level desired to be practised or tested.
In what follows, I will be fully illustrating format (1), the least difficult, and format (9), the most difficult one.

Format 1: the number of prompt words is *equal to* (=) the number of blanks; the prompt words do not have to be changed, as they are already available in the forms required by the context; students simply have to identify – and *not* change in any way – the items needed (answers provided at the end of each sentence, in capitals). Example:

Prompt words: ABATING, AT, BRANDING, CONSUMER, EMAILS, IN, INTO, REGULATORS, STRENGTHEN, UNSUBSCRIBE

1. Having received lots of marketing _____ from them, I decided to _____ from their newsletter. EMAILS, UNSUBSCRIBE
2. Showing no sign of _____, our company's success has been driven by careful marketing and also high _____ demand. ABATING, CONSUMER
3. At the board meeting we decided not only to spend much more on marketing by embracing social media, but also to put a bit more effort _____ revamping our _____. INTO, BRANDING
4. The aggressive marketing of fast food targeted _____ this age group and its rise _____ popularity year on year led to a considerable impact on public health. AT, IN
5. Industry _____ have been trying to _____ their tobacco control efforts by restricting advertisements at point-of-sale. REGULATORS, STRENGTHEN

Format 9: the number of prompt words is *greater than* (>) the number of blanks; *distractors* are added, including prepositions and / or phrasal verb particles (students will obviously have to *exclude* these wrong choices) ; *some* of the prompt words have to be changed *grammatically* (inflections) *and / or lexically* (derivation) – answers provided at the end of each sentence, in capitals. Example:

Prompt words: ABATE, ADVERTISE, AT, BRAND, CONSUME, EMAIL, IN, INTO, ON, POST, REGULATE, RULE, STRONG, SUBSCRIBE

1. Having received lots of marketing _____ from them, I decided to _____ from their newsletter. EMAILS, UNSUBSCRIBE
2. Showing no sign of _____, our company's success has been driven by careful marketing and also high _____ demand. ABATING, CONSUMER
3. At the board meeting we decided not only to spend much more on marketing by embracing social media, but also to put a bit more effort _____ revamping our _____. INTO, BRANDING

4. The aggressive marketing of fast food targeted _____ this age group and its rise _____ popularity year on year led to a considerable impact on public health. AT, IN

5. Industry _____ have been trying to _____ their tobacco control efforts by restricting advertisements at point-of-sale. REGULATORS, STRENGTHEN

Regarding the prompt words given, the distractors / words which students do *not* have to use in the above exercise are: ADVERTISE, ON, POST, RULE.

Further, here is a brief outline of the formats in-between (2 to 8, in order of difficulty):

Format 2: the number of prompt words is *less than* (<) the number of blanks; prepositions and phrasal verb particles are *not* given – students have to come up with them; the prompt words do *not* have to be changed.

Format 3: the number of prompt words is *equal to* (=) the number of blanks; *some* words have to be changed *grammatically* (inflections) but *not lexically* (derivation).

Format 4: the number of prompt words is *equal to* (=) the number of blanks; *some* words have to be changed *grammatically* (inflections) *and / or lexically* (derivation).

Format 5: the number of prompt words is *less than* (<) the number of blanks; prepositions and phrasal verb particles are *not* given – students have to come up with them; *some* words have to be changed *grammatically* (inflections) *only*.

Format 6: the number of prompt words is *less than* (<) the number of blanks; prepositions and phrasal verb particles are *not* given – students have to come up with them; *some* words have to be changed *grammatically* (inflections) *and / or lexically* (derivation).

Format 7: the number of prompt words is *greater than* (>) the number of blanks; *distractors* are added, including prepositions and / or phrasal verb particles (students will obviously have to *exclude* these wrong choices); the prompt words do *not* have to be changed.

Format 8: the number of prompt words is *greater than* (>) the number of blanks; *distractors* are added, including prepositions and / or phrasal verb particles (students will obviously have to *exclude* these wrong choices); *some* words have to be changed *grammatically* (inflections) *only*.

On a final note, for quite a few years I have been using different variations of the above formats with my students. Given the flexibility of this general framework, I have been able to teach and test a vast amount of ESP language, both in terms of collocation and colligation. Moreover, another visible advantage has been the possibility to adapt teaching and testing material to a few level ranges within the same mixed-ability class of students by focusing on both simpler and more complex lexical items within the same exercise / set of sentences. Not least, I have been able to provide my students with `double-checked` quality language used in real-life professional contexts.

Conclusions

Not only that ESP is higly specific in nature regarding professional topic areas adapted to various language levels, but ready-made courses and tests from established ELT publishers can be extremely hard to find in order to meet the sometimes quite tight specifics of local / in-house requirements; academic curricula may differ widely from one university to another in terms of topic coverage, existing entrance and exit student levels, mixed-class management and available time for specialised language instruction. This is where tertiary-level teachers (academics) may come into their own by also adopting the role of course designers aided by their own creative writing abilities. This may be, indeed, a daunting challenge in that it is *one* thing to be able to teach from a ready-made course book and *quite another* to use your own language proficiency, experience and creativity as a teacher in designing *your own*, fully adapted materials – both for teaching and assessing your students, diverse as they are.

Creating full-sentence ESP usage examples can obviously involve many dangers through different kinds of inadequacy, as Michael Lewis elaborates at large (2000b, pp. 166-7). In this article, I have suggested a possible solution to this problem, through language manipulation on two basic levels: (1) finding the best quality, 'tried and tested' examples of ESP usage and (2) being able to 'deconstruct' this language (i.e. by 'reverse-engineering' it) towards 'constructing' *new* language that is not only well-informed and amply accounted for in real life, but also as much adapted as possible to pedagogical objectives; in other words, I have illustrated some ways in which carefully selected language *input* may become *intake* towards *output* – a claim supported by my own teaching practice and experience. Should there be any other ESP teachers willing to test the strategies herein, they may find the following reminders to be in order:

1. keep as close as possible to natural language; creating *very complex* contexts within *one* example sentence may lead to unnecessary difficulty through artificial 'feats', which could defeat the purpose of this entire endeavour;
2. tag topics by key words; these should be highly lexicalised nouns (more frequent), verbs and adjectives (less frequent);

3. look for source language with the aid of a fit-for-purpose sentence finder program / search engine; this may require a paid subscription but can make light work of getting the results wanted in comparison with manual / slower / traditional searching methods;

4. in creating your own contexts, keep in mind that *flexibility* (c.f. the 9 suggested formats) should go hand in hand with the ability to *customise* such work towards a final, *consistent* pedagogical product: a *unitary* ESP course book or testing scheme.

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Lecturer Adrian Ciupe, PhD. He is a member of the Department of Modern Languages and Business Communication within the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. He has been teaching business and general English, business communication, advanced writing and speaking skills to BA and MA students and also preparation courses for the TOEFL test and the Cambridge Exams Suite in a variety of systems and formats. His main areas of interest include ESP, ELT, course and syllabus writing / design, online English teaching, computer-assisted language learning (CALL), the Lexical Approach, lexicology/lexicography, language proficiency testing, corpora concordancers and language learning apps for Android, iOS and Windows. (adrian.ciupe@econ.ubbcluj.ro)

Exploring Cognitive Skills in ESP Learning

Delia Rusu
Ruxanda Literat

The present paper aims to offer a window on the role that the conscious acquisition of knowledge plays in developing communicative strategies which the language learners operate with in their everyday activities or professional settings. The mental representations of reality and the logical processes such as analogies or inferences which people use in relation with others are treated in the first part of the paper so as to create the background to the study of how language awareness benefits the way people learn and use the language. Pre-existing knowledge structures on whose basis we can automatically interpret what has not been said or written pave the way for our understanding of new experiences. This is the basic reason for which we consider that all these logical processes and representations are worth exploring in the context of language learning, teaching and use. With a wide spectrum of activities at our disposal we have experienced the use of a number of activities that stimulate learners` curiosity about language and the effectiveness of using it. Our conclusion is that through social interaction, learners can gradually build knowledge and understanding of their current communication strengths to discover the usefulness of what they learn and to consciously apply their knowledge in order to connect to the present changing world.

Consciousness; thoughts; cognitive skills; learning; tasks.

1. Cognitive processes

1.1. Consciousness and intentionality - an overview

The concept of *cognition* has been much debated upon by experts in various fields, each trying to discover the working of the mind as accurately as possible. However, in any of these fields, cognitive processes are based on attention, memory, reasoning and processing, although the attempts to define cognition seem to be rather diverse. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica (2021) refer to it as the states and processes involved in knowing, which in their completeness include perception and judgment. Cognition includes all conscious and unconscious processes by which knowledge is accumulated, such as perceiving, recognizing, conceiving, and reasoning. Put differently, cognition is a state or experience of knowing that can be distinguished from an experience of feeling or willing. (para 1). The question that arises here is whether we should really distinguish

the "experience of feeling or willing" from that of "knowing" or we had better consider them a prerequisite for knowing. In other words, is it not by senses and intentionality that we acquire knowledge?

Although senses or the way we perceive things - in terms of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling or touching - have long been considered as belonging to a different category than that of the cognitive processes that enable us to interpret our senses, recent interdisciplinary research has shown that this delineation may be much blurrier than previously considered. Basically, there is an obvious connection between our senses, thoughts and experience which consequently triggers our actions and lays the foundation for our understanding and knowledge acquisition. Through thoughts, which are derived from sensory images, we are able to envisage our experience of the world. Thoughts can gradually develop and lead us into solving the demands that feelings impose on thinking, in a similar way that *ego* imposes itself upon *id* in Freud`s "reality principle" (Kendra, 2021), thus creating an internal image of our experience of the world. The sensory information we receive in order to understand the world around us and interact safely with it is quite extensive and complicated, and it is the cognitive processes that help us distill the input down to its essentials. They are, therefore, critical for our everyday life and govern our thoughts, as well as actions.

As for *intentionality*, it is absolutely impossible to get into the mind of the speaker and figure out exactly the person's intentions. People have desires, beliefs and other intentional states, and it is assumed that they really mean things by the words they utter. More or less definite in content, mental states are representative of utterances which are more or less definite in meaning. Our mental states can relate to reality in different ways. Beliefs represent how things are, so they can be considered true or false. When it comes to desires and intentions, their aim is not to represent how reality is, but how we would like it to be or what our intention is to make it be. Thus, intentions and desires are not true or false, like beliefs, but fulfilled or frustrated.

In spite of the fact that we are not fully aware of what actually takes place in the brain, and we can only control a small part of our thoughts, we make extensive use of our inner speech and visual imagery to interpret our own mental states. It has been shown (Robison, 2013) that most of our thinking processes go on subconsciously and just few of our thoughts actually come into consciousness at a time. Biological phenomena, as they are considered, *consciousness* and *intentionality* are not just ordinary properties of the brain, though all human intentionality is said to reside in the brains of individuals. Despite the fact that most of our intentional states are unconscious, in order for unconscious intentional states to be genuine intentional states, they must be accessible to consciousness.

According to Chafe, "language gives evidence of the organization of thoughts from moment to moment into a focus and a periphery: a limited area of fully active

consciousness surrounded by a penumbra of ideas in a semiactive state." (2001) A useful tool in segmenting speech, the intonation units express constantly changing foci of consciousness and are a pervasive feature of speech which contributes to understanding the flow of thought. As a whole, a topic can only be present in a semi-active state. It is too large as a conceptual unit to be accommodated within the narrow or limited capacity of active consciousness.

A characteristic feature of consciousness, not common for other biological phenomena, is its subjectivity, or the quality of each person's consciousness of being private to that person. The organization of consciousness extends over more than mere instants. This is obvious for instance, when we begin making an utterance, we maintain an iconic memory of its beginning, so that we know what we are saying by the time we get to its end. At the same time, there is a conscious field that unifies all of our experiences at any given instant. Consciousness also comes under the aspect of familiarity or situated experiences, in that we are conscious of our boundaries, or time, or mood. The entire brain somehow unites the variety of our stimulus inputs into a single conscious experience.

1.2. Mental representations

Reality consists in part of representations and once we have the capacity to represent, we actually have the capacity to create social reality. To have a mental representation, people take the limited input and processing the content by applying schemas, they elaborate on it in diverse ways. Besides schemas, people use mental constructions or models in which they represent specific events, objects and relationships in utterances. These mental instantiations of the world which is described are based upon the situation, the discourse and the purposes people have to serve. The mental models can be changed if the word which follows disrupts the expectation in the model so far. The generic information displayed or represented in schemas, is, in fact, the starting point for the mental model, which is then completed by visual and spatial relationships that represent instantiations of an event or scene.

Among the numerous logical processes speakers employ in a conversation are the techniques of association that use arguments which establish a certain type of link between elements, the techniques of dissociation which help distinguishing between what is mixed up or associated, syllogisms, enthymemes, inferences, analogies or metaphors. Needless mentioning, all these logical processes enable us to communicate and express ourselves in meaningful ways in everyday conversations.

Inferences connect the discourse to the local circumstances in which they are produced. They help determining not what a certain expression means, but what the speaker conveys by means of the message his utterances contain. Inferences refer to the interpretative processes based on hypotheses on the significance and intention of the utterance. They are left to the interlocutor who faces an uncertainty whether the

reconstructed thesis is a fruit of his imagination or it is embedded in the text itself. What is interesting about inferences is that they allow the speaker to say certain things and make seem as if they have never been said. Therefore, we do not take on the responsibility of having said them, and this fact points to the efficiency of our utterances and the innocence of silence.

Analogies, or the report between a part and another part already existent in the representations of the listeners, enable the new thing to be illuminated by the old or familiar one. Defined on the grounds of analogy, metaphors represent mappings from one domain to another, from source to target enabling the human mind to make inferences. Therefore, inferences done in the source domain can normally be done as well in the target domain. In the case of source domains, evidence shows that they tend to be based in spatial or physical experience and stored in the mind as image schemas. Cognitive linguists appreciate metaphor not for its being a figure of speech but for the neural and mental configurations that influence how people think, imagine or reason in their existence. There is also the category of conceptual metaphors which shape people's reasoning processes and abstract concepts. Studies show that they influence the way people learn new information, make decisions, and solve problems in various domains if the material they encounter has a similar metaphorical structure.

1.3. Pre-existing knowledge

Findings from cognitive sciences have demonstrated that the new acquisitions that people make in terms of knowledge are based on their prior experiences, on what they already know or believe to be true. Therefore, attention should be paid not only to what is present behind forms and structures but also to psychological concepts such as beliefs, expectations or background knowledge. This is how we can explore what the writer or speaker has in mind: "If we think of the sentence as a picture of a fact, then equally the fact is a picture of the sentence." (John Searle)

Language users normally make sense of what is said or written in terms of their usual experience of things. Their tendency is to make instant interpretation of what is familiar to them and to ignore possible alternatives. Pre-existing knowledge structures - also called schemata - enhance our ability to automatically interpret what has not been written or said. They function like familiar patterns from our previous experience on whose basis we interpret new experiences. The part they play in the context of language learning, teaching and use is worth considering, especially when there is a risk that the content of the lecturing course might not always lead to desired learning. This is the reason why the language instructors should make sure that students` prior knowledge or beliefs are not false or inadequate because this would greatly impact upon their perception and interpretation of what is taught in the classroom. They should constantly monitor the students` developing ideas, address their false beliefs or misconceptions and enable them

to reflect upon their changing conceptions in such a way as to yield positive learning outcomes.

2. Cognitive skills in action

Whether languages for specific purposes are studied as a means to acquire specialized knowledge or as a way of getting around in the work environment, our concern must involve the above mentioned aspects regarding cognition to the point where the use of language is something that can be understood, that is internal to the human mind and which allows for interpretations, computations and mental representations underlying utterance understanding. It is not enough to incorporate new knowledge into long-term memory schemas if we, as language instructors, do not activate the learners` cognitive skills that could retrieve the new information later on, when needed. The instructional design in ESP can consequently be aligned with the professional performance environment and lessons and activities can be organized around the tasks that the students will perform in their future jobs. In this way, the newly acquired knowledge and skills will be learned in their context of application where the retrieval cues can be found.

As we have shown in the first part of the present work, the senses- whether visual or auditory-have their contribution in transferring new knowledge and encoding it into a coherent idea which will then be incorporated into the pre- existing knowledge which is stored in the long-term memory. In order for these processes to take place, the working memory needs to act and process information, and since the working memory capacity is quite limited, overloading it with procedural information during practice is not effective. Therefore, the instructional activities must focus on a progressive cognitive engagement and employ techniques that reduce the cognitive overload. The nature of the materials to be learned as well as the level of expertise of the learners count a lot when it comes to developing cognitive schemata. To the weight of materials and expertise we can add the manner in which the tasks are presented. In this sense, the instructional methods should not only focus on constructing schemata, but also on automating them for those aspects that have been practiced a lot and are consistent across problems.

The exponential growth of learning tasks can be considered in a similar way to that suggested by Bloom`s taxonomy, that is engaging learners in lower order thinking skills to gradually involving them in more demanding or higher order thinking skills such as analyzing, evaluating and creating information. Equally beneficial could be the sequencing technique in the instructional process, especially in the early stages of learning, when the essential or the most representative elements for the task are revealed to students first so that they can get a general idea of the whole concept which will later on be elaborated upon in more depth. Pre-teaching parts of the task before actually allowing students to complete it would be another way of decreasing the cognitive load

in the practice phase, thus enabling the construction of schemata that will facilitate the learning of subsequent schemata which will promote transfer of learning.

Similarly to EGP classes where spacing the practice during a lesson is highly beneficial for knowledge acquisition, ESP spaced practice sessions, especially those based on technical content, prove superior in long- term retention as compared to those where the same amount of practice is completed all at once. In other words, once the language instructors have regularly distributed the practice and adjusted it according to the levels of their audience, they can expect better learning outcomes as the working memory actually frees its limited capacity more frequently and allows new information to enter. Managing the cognitive load is also possible when the structure of the tasks relies on completion strategies which start with worked examples or case studies to gradually move up to problems which require transfer of learning. The performance is obvious when the learners start with self-explanations of illustrated concepts, then generalize the examples to increase their abilities to imagine or anticipate solutions to finally reach the problem-solving phase.

To be more precise, there are numerous activities we can use in ESP classes so as to promote students` thinking and make them more engaged and motivated in what they are doing. We can rely on *the scientific method* which has various areas that enhance collaboration and learning in any environment, encouraging the students to think. It has *questioning, hypothesizing, experimenting*, then *observing* and finally *concluding* and *reporting*. Effective questioning and listening techniques empower students as learners to answer open questions, challenging ones, not just "yes/ no" type of questions. Besides answering, they should also be asking questions, as this will show what they are interested in. When the students hypothesize or when ideas are bounced around there is a lot of thinking involved, and at the same time perceiving, as they are able to see the reactions of the others they interact with and evaluate their responses.

When it comes to defining things, asking students to write their own definitions of the concepts under discussion rather than having the good answer provided by the language instructor will engage learners in exploring big ideas but also learning the language needed to define the respective things. Even if they have a different approach, what the students gain by writing definitions is that they personalize the concept. Moreover, in a group activity, they could listen to the definitions the other groups have provided, discuss what is right or wrong with them and eventually correct the inaccuracies.

We can alternatively try to use *thinking routines*, "a set of questions or a brief sequence of steps used to scaffold and support student thinking" (Project Zero's Thinking Routine Toolbox, n.d.), such as: see-think-wonder, think /write – pair - share, I used to think - now I think, what? - so what? - now what?. For instance, in order to discuss the content and also look at the language in the *think-pair-share* routine, the students will

have to first think about the answers on their own or write them down and before asking them to provide the answers, they would have to pair up or work in groups where they will discuss the issues in order to see if they agree on the content. It is only after this phase that they will share their answers with the other colleagues.

ESP instructors need to equip the students with specific tools, to create those situations in the classrooms that will constantly develop students` thinking skills. They should offer them thinking opportunities at every step of the process so as to be able to structure their prior knowledge, the way they think about the concepts under discussion, the new information that they could have to summarize at the end of the lesson, in a one-sentence summary, for example. To these purposes, they can use diagrams or visual organizers, such as Venn diagram, mind maps or concept maps.

Presentations and project work are also beneficial in stimulating students` engagement and enhancing learning and collaboration. Getting learners to do research and combine ideas so as to come to their own conclusions and to present them in ways that are not just composition- based, but role-play, discussion, video or any way they would like, will definitely guide learners` thought processes. Pretending to be someone – such as in the case of a role-play or simulation – means exploring language in a way that is effective in the given situation. Learning how to use vocabulary, having a wide range of it, understanding what the connotations of a certain word are and where to use it properly is going to help learners be able to express themselves and be truly creative. Following on from that, the idea of appropriacy should not be forgotten. The audience has to understand the utterance; it has to be effective in order for it to fulfill the requirements, such as knowing when to use certain language, in which situations and to which audience. If they are working in a field of ESP for example, they can write an article advertising a new product for their company, but if it is full of jargon and people do not understand it, it is not going to be effective. People need to see how that specific product is an improvement on the old one, so they will have to explain that. The idea of creating a wide pallet of language including phrases or specific vocabulary is very important and would not overcharge the cognitive load, since out of this *garden of words* that is represented by vocabulary, when setting out to teach, the language instructors choose to give learners as much as they consider appropriate so that the learners take away as much as they can.

Finally, feedback and reflection must be encouraged. For the students, feedback means locating the content, introducing it within the context of our subject. When learners do something creative, they can learn from their mistakes and they can reflect on that and consider in what way they could improve their work and what other approaches they could take the following time they do a similar task. They must be encouraged to look at their work critically, but in a fair and constructive way, because reflection should be seen as a process to learn more, move forward and become more effective.

3. Conclusions

In trying to understand how cognition shapes what is important and how people decide what to consider important, we have cast light on the cognitive processes that involve consciousness and intentionality, as well as on the sensory information which is strongly connected to our mental representations and prior experience, and the way all these relate to our acquisition of new knowledge. In our attempt to teach and support our learners` cognitive skills, we have employed tasks and activities that focus on a progressive cognitive engagement and enable constructing schemata which will eventually facilitate knowledge transfer. Among the activities and methods discussed, we have included the scientific method, thinking routines, visual organizers, presentations and project work, but also reflection on thinking and why it is important to equip our learners with cognitive skills.

Such activities that promote thinking skills, along with those involving emotional abilities, have been pushed forward to the forefront of ELT. Clear evidence in recent years has been the integration of the 21[st]century skills into the lessons - collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, communication - that we aim to equip our learners with so that they can be more successful to face the challenges of the modern world. Language teaching now is not just about acquiring linguistic abilities, it is also about demonstrating, fostering and acquiring these 21[st]century skills. In the work place or in the academic environment, people who can demonstrate effective cognitive and emotional abilities can actually be seen to possess leadership qualities, be able to build successful relations, communicate or collaborate effectively with their colleagues, deal with social challenges inherent in the work place or with some of the pressure or problem-solving tasks that we need to do on a daily basis.

Our belief is that focusing on different communicative and collaborative tasks the students are able to demonstrate greater qualities in critical thinking and problem-solving or decision-making tasks. Ultimately, probably one of the most important things that comes from the classes where emphasis is laid on exploring cognitive skills is that the channels of communication between the language instructor and the students are enhanced, they are able to talk more openly about their progress and this actually allows for a better communication and engagement on a deeper level.

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Associate professor Ruxanda Literat, Ph.D. She is the Head of the Department of Modern Languages and Communication within the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Her main areas of interest are: interpersonal and professional communication, applied linguistics, English for Specific Purposes, didactics of modern languages (Ruxandra.Literat@lang.utcluj.ro)

Teaching assistant Delia Rusu, Ph.D. She is a member of the Department of Modern Languages and Communication within the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania). Her main areas of interest are: (applied) linguistics, English for Specific Purposes, pedagogy. (delia.rusu@lang.utcluj.ro)

Back to the Metacognitive Drawing Board: A Lesson Learnt during Hard Times

Ioana-Gabriela Nan

The past year and a half has been a time of reckoning for many educators. Seemingly well-adjusted, smoothly working systems – whether personal, professional or institutional – have been unexpectedly and extensively put to the test. Under such pressing circumstances, while discovering the previously overlooked, yet very real, advantages of technology for our new digital classrooms, we may also have become acutely aware of the persistence of issues that technology alone cannot solve. Insufficiently addressed before, one of them in particular seems to have been rendered even more visible by our sudden shift to the online medium. No matter how many online or offline resources we can use in class or recommend to our students, unless we also teach them how to take full advantage of these resources by translating this process into improved learning outcomes, our work is only half done and technology only partially useful.

This past year's teaching experience has thus been a time of reflection on the fact that, essentially when it comes to young adults transitioning from high-school to university studies, nothing can replace or do more good in the long run than familiarising our students, as soon as possible, with metacognitive learning strategies. If we manage that, then, regardless of whether our work continues online or shifts back to the physical classroom environment, we will have ensured that such strategies enable them to be self-reliant, confident and independent learners, not only for the duration of their academic training, but, indeed, for life.

Reflective teaching/learning; metacognitive skills; metalinguistic skills; self-regulated learning; Bloom's taxonomy.

Introduction

Humanity is the species that learns by teaching itself. We have become the species known as Homo Sapiens by way of being Homo Docens. Trying to sum up in one word the talent that differentiates our species from all the others on the planet, neuroscientist Stanislas Dehaene (2020) does not hesitate to identify "learning" as this unique ability, which is the capacity of our brains for hypothesising and selection. Starting from analysis of the current environment – natural, linguistic, cultural or economic – we can move on to selecting the applicable solutions to survival hurdles. Thus, learning is postulated as the key to the successful adaptation and continuous evolution of the human species. Actually, from simple organisms devoid of any cortex, to the mammals we ourselves

consider "intelligent", learning is widespread in the animal world (Dehaene, 2020). As with humans, their learning is simply indispensable to survival. However, the quality that differentiates human from animal learning is speed. By learning, humans can change their behaviour in a matter of minutes, so their adaptation to the unpredictability of the natural world is far more successful than that of any animal (Dehaene, 2020).

According to this evolutionary logic, classroom learning can be seen as a very recent invention, a socially-designated institution in charge of increasing this natural ability in a systematic way. Despite its relative novelty, the invention of school and of an educational system has been found to increase our brain potential collectively, becoming the main engine and accelerator of our brain capacity (Dehaene, 2020). That being said, we may still notice, and sometimes hear our higher-education students say themselves, that they do not know how to learn, which indicates that something in our educational process is missing or insufficiently acknowledged (Yancy McGuire, 2015). It seems that it is more important than we may have thought to teach students how to learn.

Metacognitive skills

We are born with learning algorithms that many of us may remain unaware of for life. That is because most of the time we learn intuitively, without paying attention to how we do it (Dehaene, 2020). What is important, after all, is the goal (getting a degree or a passing grade, or just acquiring some new skill or behaviour). Yet scientific knowledge about how we memorise information, understand it or make errors in the process is already both significant and accessible to us. For the past thirty years, research in neurobiology, cognitive psychology and computer science has brought us closer and closer to an explanation of how the process of learning happens. We can, in other words, get to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of our own brains.

For example, students who rely on this knowledge for their academic success would probably wish to do all they can to exploit their learning strengths, while improving what they can understand are their less strong learning abilities. Moreover, at the end of this conscious self-analysing process, they will have acquired their own learning style, something that will serve them for the rest of their life, no matter what they wish to learn after they have graduated (Velzen, 2016; Perkins, 2009). This may be one of the best objectives any university education can set to achieve.

On the other hand, as professionals in the field of education we cannot afford to ignore this science of learning. As authors have aptly noticed (Haukås, Bjørke & Dypedahl, 2018), we cannot teach without understanding how we – and students - learn. We need to be able to follow the mental model of a learner if we wish to teach effectively. What are their intuitions, what are the steps they need to follow to progress, what kind of factors can help them develop their skills? To start from, it seems that all learners, irrespective of age or learning content, benefit from "the four pillars of learning" (Dehaene, 2020) - four mechanisms that are fundamental to boosting the universal

learning algorithms embedded in our brains. These are: focused attention, active engagement, error feedback and consolidation.

It is worth noting that the first of these elements, the importance of focus to learning and to achievement in general, is perhaps the one whose role has been particularly underlined by a number of authors recently (Schewe, 2020; Dweck, 2017; Kahneman, 2011). In his book of the same title, Daniel Goleman (2013), for example, calls the ability to focus "the hidden driver of excellence" in all areas of life, from education to professional leadership. Cal Newport (2016) also believes that success also measured by how well we are able to focus in a world constantly abuzz with irrelevant information as ours is nowadays. His definition of attention is that of "a state of distraction-free concentration that push your cognitive capabilities to their limit". Newport is the author of a number of books on the "deep work" that learning presupposes. Most of these books are also warning students that studying is not the equivalent learning. By advising them to "study less" and still "win at college" and be "straight-A" students (Newport, 2005; Newport, 2018), he actually means to teach them effective metacognitive strategies as opposed to spending time unproductively.

Taking all this information into account, it is difficult to understand why learning how to learn is still described by one academic as "the best kept secret in education" (Yancy McGuire, 2015). The question is whether such advice that comes from neuroscientists, popular authors and university professors alike should remain "hidden", or "secret", as they are often presented to be. In addition, this may be a good time to teach students about learning. After more than a year relying on technology just to move on and coming to appreciate both its advantages and disadvantages of Internet sites and apps to teaching and learning, the time may be ripe for us to start afresh by correcting what we have noticed that technology cannot offer or solve in terms of learning. For that we may have to go back to the fundamentals that, in a rush for quick adaptative solutions, we may have insufficiently considered: the fundamentals of learning how to learn.

One more issue to revisit when it comes to teaching methodology is the issue of learning itself. Traditionally, the ways in which students learn have traditionally been studied separately from the ways in which teachers teach. Consequently, the results of the best students have usually been assumed to be the corollaries of their teachers' good practices. Yet, whether we are willing to admit it or not, the most positive learning outcomes are the consequences of the interaction between appropriate instruction and students' self-regulating learning practices (Svinicki & McKeachie, 2014).

"Learning how to learn" and "cognition about cognition" are two of the briefest and most frequent definitions of the process scientifically known as "metacognition". While cognitive knowledge refers to *what* we learn in terms of what we understand and remember, metacognition, as the word suggests, refers to our knowledge about the learning strategies we use to gain knowledge (*how* we learn). We are talking about the

process of learning, of how aware we are of the strategies we use when we learn something new, and of how we monitor and regulate our own learning (Velzen, 2016).

The body of research on metacognition started in psychology, with John Flavell's questions about meta-memory (the ability to consciously apply memorizing techniques to improve learning outcomes), and it has been expanding for the past fifty years. In the 1980s, ten years after Flavell's ideas were put forth, a theory of metacognitive learning has resulted from psychological and educational research on metacognition. This theory has found its application in the instructional environment at every level, where younger and older students can be taught about what they can do to learn more effectively.

The advantages of acquiring metacognitive learning skills are many, including the fact that they can be applied across the curriculum and that they enable students to take control of what they learn as individuals - or, using one author's analogy, they "put the students in the driving seat" (Perkins, 2009). One of the consequences is that they can choose the information that they consider relevant, before they incorporate it into their existing knowledge. Most importantly, metacognitive skills have life-long value. Metacognition is truly the beginning of "life-long learning", and the component we could think of as the ultimate goal of teaching students how to learn while at university.

Moreover, if we look at the bigger picture, the advantages of metacognition seem to encompass all areas of education: it is advantageous to teaching (teachers are better able to support their own and their students' development); it is advantageous to learning – in fact, as all the authors seem to agree, it is fundamental to learning, and, as educational institutions around the world become more and more aware of the competitive advantage of having successful students, it is also advantageous for educational policies, where it has already been included as "a key competency for meeting individual and global challenges" (Haukås et al., 2018).

However, "understanding the nature and purpose of learning and its processes" (Alistair Smith, 1998) is not an easy task. It requires a demanding mental effort that fresh university students in particular may not be used to making. Still, if we lose the opportunity to teach these skills at the right time, students will most likely replace them by drilling and memorization, as they often tend to do. And, while these strategies may work for the next day test, this is not the kind of deep, lasting learning that depends on long-time memory and that we would like to see. Committing information to long-time memory relies entirely on some level of understanding of how learning works (Velzen, 2016).

Admittedly, most students are hardly to blame. As mentioned before, they already use their innate brain algorithms to make the best of studying. But studying is not yet learning. One study has found that, of the almost 500 pre-university students and first-year students that participated, only 20% can explain their learning strategies clearly and meaningfully, using words like "summarise", "reread", "associate", "take notes", "paraphrase", "visualise", "represent" (Velzen, 2016). More than 60% of them have only

tacit knowledge of the learning process. The conclusion of the study is that the more explicit our general knowledge of the learning process is, the better we can understand how effective learning works and the better we can use it to advance to a higher level of knowledge. It also shows the need for students to be taught about the difference between tacit (or absent) and explicit knowledge of their learning process and it suggests that this can be done in class and by teachers of all disciplines. In addition, a psychological study has shown that 75% of learning outcomes are affected by factors other than intelligence, including motivation, previous knowledge and executive knowledge of learning strategies (Schewe, 2020).

This suggests that metacognition or, as one researcher insists on calling it, "general knowledge of the learning process" (Velzen, 2016), is not limited to this explicit knowledge of how to develop one's cognitive knowledge. It has two more components, one executive and one personality-related, both developing from the first: understanding the cognitive demands of the learning task at hand and, equally importantly, understanding what kind of learner one is. Taken together, these three components of metacognition include all the information a learner needs if they are to understand and analyse how effective their learning is (Velzen, 2016).

Because of its defining feature – effectiveness of learning – metacognition has often been associated with the process of acquiring expertise in a given domain. Experts usually have a well-structured knowledge base, and, in addition, a set of strategies for acquiring and incorporating new information into this database (Svinicki & McKeachie, 2014; Velzen, 2016). For example, research has shown that experts in chess work according to this formula: Expertise = f (K, S), where "Knowledge" and "Search" make up the two main coordinates. Similarly, a student who has learnt about learning would also be able to search through his or her general knowledge of the learning process and come up with the most useful study techniques for a particular learning task.

Metacognition and language teaching/learning

When it comes to language learners, metacognitive skills are the advantage of the best of them. Such skills are usually translated into a high level of awareness of the complexity of the language they are learning. That is why we may sometimes become a little suspicious of students who declare English to be "so easy to learn". There may be only two reasons for this level of self-assuredness: it is either that they have long-practised metacognitive skills of learning English, in which case they will be able to cope smoothly with acquiring any new business English vocabulary, or they have very little, and perhaps only an implicit idea about language learning skills, in which case they need to be made aware of what this process really implies, before moving on to specialised language.

An appropriate level of metalinguistic awareness (Collins & O'Brien, 2011) may reflect, for instance, ways in which a student's mother tongue is similar/different from

English and from other foreign languages he/she may be familiar with. It may also mean awareness of the difficulties he/she may face in the process of learning, of the beliefs and motivations he/she has about learning English and, last but not least, of the strategies they can use in the learning process (Haukås et al., 2018).

Having said that about students, it is equally true that, as non-native speakers of the languages we teach, we never cease to learn ourselves, so these categories of learning awareness are already with us. As some authors underline (Svinicki & McKeachie, 2014), in the case of language education, metacognition naturally includes both teachers and learners. This may be one more reason for us to teach students the same skills about language learning we have managed to acquire. Moreover, research has found (Svinicki & McKeachie, 2014; Kirby & Lawson, 2012; Marzano, Pickering & Pollock, 2001) that modelling self-regulation strategies and providing feedback to students who are learning them is profoundly effective. So, how do *we* use a bilingual/monolingual dictionary? How do *we* learn new words? How do *we* plan, monitor and evaluate our own language learning? Such questions are part and parcel of our practice of reflective teaching, but by transferring them into the classroom and into the learning content, we can integrate cognitive with metacognitive strategies to encourage the process of self-regulated learning.

Such reflective, metacognitive moments can be introduced at several points during a lesson (at the beginning, to help focus; at the end, to review and reinforce the most important information; after each new concept taught, to achieve the same reinforcement effect). It does not need to take long. Small activities such as CATs (for Classroom Assessment Tools) can draw students' attention to their different cognitive skills, from recall and understanding, to analysis, synthesis, critical thinking and problem solving. Many Centres for Teaching and Learning affiliated to universities in the United States or Canada (for example, Kentucky University's Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching, or Vancouver Island University's Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning) offer detailed descriptions of suggested activities like these. The clearest and most immediate advantage of using them in class is that, as students become more aware and more involved in their own learning process, we too, as teachers, can take steps to correct, improve or even redesign our classes in view of what we find out about this process.

Besides such classroom activities, some of us may wonder whether it is necessary for us to teach students about Bloom's taxonomy, perhaps even at freshman level. Usually, we refer to the revised version of Bloom's classification, published in 2001 (Anderson & Krathwohl). We use it to plan our lessons or lectures, so we see it as essentially *our* tool. Isn't it too much to "disclose" it to students? What would the advantages be? And when should we do it? Saundra Yancy McGuire, an experienced professor of chemistry at Louisiana State University, advocates strongly for this idea (Yancy McGuire, 2015). She openly admits that she was thirty years into her academic teaching career before she changed her mind about teaching the simple, straightforward

metacognitive strategies mentioned above. The reason was that she felt, like many of us do, that it was not her responsibility to teach students what they should have already known when they got to college. However, the stark reality is that, according to the SAT reports she quotes, less than 50% of all American students admitted to college are also academically prepared to do college-level work. Perhaps some of us can also identify the same situation in our own schools.

As for the right time, she suggests introducing Bloom's taxonomy in one session dedicated exclusively to learning strategies, and which can be taught either of the beginning of the first semester or, better still, just after the first exam. The reason for this second option is simple: perhaps the information may have a lot more impact when the test results show that the students' existing study strategies are not working. Another advantage of this dedicated-session approach is that it also gives one time to have an open discussion about relevant questions that students may not even be aware of (Perkins, 2009). For example, the difference between studying and learning: would they study harder to get a grade of ten, or to be capable, if tested, of teaching the material reasonably well themselves (Velzen, 2016)? Other authors mention what they call the "infusion approach" to teaching learning strategies (Perkins, 2009), which is about incorporating metacognitive strategy learning into our regular pattern of teaching and learning. Whatever timing pattern we may choose, once students are made aware of the levels of Bloom's taxonomy, they would be able to analyse, perhaps for the first time, their own kind of learning by identifying at what level of Bloom's they have been operating and comparing it to the level at which they need to operate as university students (Yancy McGuire, 2015). The bottom line is to make them understand what many of us already know: the fact that one can only say one has learnt something when one can actually teach it to others.

Conclusion

We all wish to contribute to our students' academic success. But a successful student is a strategic learner, one who believes in his/her ability to succeed, who has a good idea of how to go about completing his/her assignments, who is diligent, resourceful and persistent. We all want students who see learning as an active and systematic process that they control themselves, who are aware of what they know and of the information gaps in their knowledge (Svinicki & McKeachie, 2014) and who see us as partners in the learning process, rather than as providers of educational services.

To underline once more how metacognition can contribute to this kind of mutually beneficial relationship, there is evidence of a hierarchy of learning success, starting from "effective learners" in primary and secondary school and moving up to "strategic learners" in higher education. The results of the research, provided by the British EEF (The Education Endowment Foundation), show that the four most effective approaches teachers can implement in order to help learners manage their own learning, from primary

school onward, are: collaborative learning, providing feedback, metacognition and self-regulation, and peer-tutoring.

When the impact of these approaches was further analysed by considering their cost-effectiveness for the school, corroborated with the extent of evidence to support the impact claims, the one approach found to have the highest impact for very low cost and based on extensive evidence was metacognition and self-regulation. In other words, explicit modelling of learning behaviours on our part, and organising small, reflective, learning-oriented activities during each class can actually mean a lot in the long run.

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Assistant Lecturer Ioana-Gabriela Nan, Ph.D. She is a member of the Department of Modern Languages and Business Communication within the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania). Her main areas of interest are: literary journalism, philosophy of literature, language-teaching in higher education. (ioana.nan@econ.ubbcluj.ro)

Student Engagement in Online Business English Instruction

Veronica-Diana Micle

This paper focuses on the essential role student engagement has acquired in online modern language instruction by providing literature definitions of the construct and by suggesting practical strategies for its acknowledgement, enhancement, and management.

There is an overall multifaceted complexity associated with the concept of student engagement that reflects itself in the provision of numerous definitions and possible useful applications to the context of language teaching and learning. Student engagement informs instructors' decision-making process as well as influencing the quality level and efficiency of online exchanges. When language instructors tap into the richness potential of student engagement, academic language courses gain in both aim achievement and humane rapport developments. This paper focuses on defining student engagement, offers an overview of important online engagement frameworks in the literature, finally arguing for pragmatic politeness strategies as being key in promoting student engagement in online higher education.

Online language instruction; student engagement; student engagement framework; higher education; politeness strategies.

Introduction. The Academic Context.

There are many challenging aspects involved in teaching a modern language online. This paper is rooted in a language instructor's need to engage students genuinely and meaningfully in online Business English and Business Communication courses. On the one hand, there is the larger academic context to consider and, on the other hand, the instructor's personal teaching style that renders itself truly effective only when placed in a mutually engaging communication context. Being a university lecturer teaching Business English/Communication lectures and practical courses in an online context equals with being an actor on a stage that is in itself a virtual one and, therefore it encompasses both opportunities and pitfalls.

The Faculty of Economics and Business Administration within the 'Babes-Bolyai' University has been adapting to the post Covid 19 realities by attempting to provide much needed support to staff and students alike. The transition has not necessarily been a smooth one as it has brought about important changes and shifts in the teaching/learning dynamics. The courses and seminars have completely moved onto an online medium that has posed a series of newly emerged questions and a re-orientation towards teacher-student exclusively online communication. Frontal learning and teaching has been readily replaced by virtual Moodle/Zoom interactions and it has promptly forced teaching staff

to become knowledgeable about teaching strategies and techniques appropriate for various student age groups, CEFR language levels and cultural backgrounds.

This fully online academic program has been enforced since March 2020 and has involved the use of an institutional management system (Moodle) and a video conferencing platform (Zoom). It is beyond the scope of this paper to reveal in detail the many challenging issues connected to the use of technology in the language classroom. There is an overwhelming body of research on this topic. Irrespective of the particular technological and app choices a teacher makes, irrespective of the unique student group culture one tries to instil, there is a common red thread that invariably holds our attention as language instructors due to the fact that it represents the control panel for all our online instructional activities: creating and maintain students' engagement in online classes.

Business English online instruction has meant the teaching of both content and form to students in Economics who study university programs that are formulated in terms of skills development and Business content acquisition (topics such as Professional Communication, Management, Accounting, Finance, Marketing or Promotion). The focus on skills development is constant as it enables university graduates to practically use English in the respective workplaces upon their graduation. In the post-Covid 19 era, language instructors have experienced first-hand the occurrence of newly emerged student needs: technological awareness, computer literacy, empathetic communication styles, consistent encouragement to perform when online, important tailoring of materials to suit the virtual environment, the constant supervision of interactions/or lack of them followed by continuous quality feedback and assignment explanations and support. Business English is alive only in contexts that simulate genuine professional contexts that are fuelled by lively interactants who are both informed and effective. This is where student engagement steps in reformulating teachers' curricula and approaches in a significantly personal way. This paper contends that online university language courses need to be founded/re-formulated bearing in mind the quality research done on the subject of online student engagement and it states that the 2018 proposed *Online Engagement Framework for Higher Education* (Redmond, Heffernan, Abawi, Brown & Anderson, 2018) is a conceptual framework that may be adapted successfully to various educational and cultural contexts. We also claim that politeness strategies contribute to fostering genuine academic emotional engagement in online instruction.

Defining Online Student Engagement

Attempting to define the phrase *student engagement* is a challenging endeavor. The phrase is often associated with the field of education and learning describing the degree of involvement, interest and enthusiasm a learner displays when involved in an educational context. Nevertheless, *engagement* is by no means strictly connected to students or learners. Employee engagement is also essential in organisations and

corporate cultures that pride themselves on generating a collaborative atmosphere that places values on employee wellbeing; this in turn, yields return on company investment in its human resource. According to Axelson and Flick the phrase *student engagement* "has come to refer to how involved or interested students appear to be in their learning and how connected they are to their classes, their institutions, and each other." (Axelson & Flick, 2010).

Engagement is a concept that is used in a rich plethora of contexts, designating one essential element that cannot be excluded from the core qualities an interested stakeholder has in the process of communication and collaboration towards a desired outcome. Furthermore, *engagement* generously encompasses a wide range of meanings and interpretations that may be given full value and clarity in specific academic or work-related contexts (Dixson, 2015; Lawson & Lawson, 2013). Student engagement cannot be separated from an enthusiasm-filled attitude towards learning and studying within an academic environment. Perhaps one of the most inspiring explanations of the phrase has been provided by Krause who contends that student engagement has become "a catch-all term most commonly used to describe a compendium of behaviours that involve student learning" (Krause, 2005, p.3). The researcher further explains that the concept includes the "time, energy, and resources students devote to activities designed to enhance learning at university" (Krause, 2005, p.3).

Within an academic environment, students need to engage not only with the content they have to learn and process, but also, most importantly, with their peers and the teaching staff. This engagement is *a high-end type of engagement* as it is connected to their willingness to perform, outperform and collaborate knowingly on subject related matters. When the online interface is juxtaposed between the communication interactants, engagement becomes a powerful tool that can only be benefited from in a state of awareness and rapport.

Drawing on the rich body of research within the field of education, methodology and teaching foreign languages, the clarification of the construct is often available through a connection drawn between students' personal engagement with learning, their academic interactions with course instructors or with their own colleagues and (possibly Zoom break-out rooms) peers. (Chen, Lambert, Guidry, 2010). Consequently, the role of course instructors and tutors has been consistently reformulated as that of intermediaries or facilitators of meaning loaded conversations and topical discussions. Fleckhammer and Wise (2011) noted that "online students...need to be able to engage with their learning in an independent style, but it may be that overall academic engagement can be facilitated for this cohort by developing a greater sense of social engagement" (Fleckhammer & Wise, 2011, p.393).

There are many reasons behind (language) instructors' interest in defining, comprehending and researching the construct of student engagement in higher education as

it has been undoubtedly connected to academic performance and improved social and networking competences. Engaged students are the ones that are motivated to be consistent in their student work and studies. In 2010, Chen, Lambert, and Guidry (2010) claimed that student engagement tends to impact the *educational outputs* to a an even greater extent than students' personal backgrounds or the specific academic institutions or universities whose (under)graduate programs they follow. In other words, student engagement may represent the unique selling point a learner has that would differentiate them from other similar academic achievers. Within the context of online instruction and virtual connections, higher education institutions have decidedly focused on the connection between successful online courses provision and the potentially fruitful strategies and tools that may enable them to become attractive and in line with technological advancement, various available management learning systems, and teaching/learning apps. The interface between computer assisted teaching and learning and the much needed and sought after achievement of academic knowledge and practical skills is represented by student engagement occurrence. This is by no means an easy endeavor. Whereas in frontal, face-to-face education student engagement is more easily observed and subsequently enhanced and controlled, in virtual learning and teaching there is a certain difficulty in, on the one hand, manifesting online engagement and, on the other hand, maintaining and enhancing it through valid study programs and syllabi. Field researchers agree that student engagement research to date has "devoted relatively little attention to online learning" (Coates, 2009, p.66). Additionally, there is an increasing attention directed at the role educators/ trainers have in ensuring online student engagement by being themselves engaged in the teaching/learning process (Pittaway & Moss, 2011). Additionally trainer engagement is rooted in painstaking course preparation, feedback provision and politeness loaded online interactions. The need for more effort to engage is a prerequisite. The changes associated with teaching and studying in an online environment are fundamentally important to occur as the traditional/online transfer impacts teaching/learning styles, appropriacy/cultural sensitivity of resources and materials, personal and professional styles and organizational/course cultures that have a different dynamic.

The extensive bodies of research have given rise to an array of conceptualisations of online student/ staff engagement supporting the multifaceted complexity of this umbrella construct that has become a melting pot of interlinked cognitive, socio-cultural, affective, behavioural, ecological and organizational factors and even the actions of students as a collective (Kahn, P., Everington, L., Kelm, K. *et al.*, 2017). The multidimensional aspect of engagement is in itself the main reason for its rather particularly personalized adaptation to each trainer's agenda and instructional goals. Online academic lectures and courses are deemed more or less effective by online students depending on the degree in which engagement has been observed, experienced or felt.

It is also important to notice how relevant student empowerment has become in online modern language instruction. Universities and educational institutions play a huge role in designing student-centred curricula and programs at the same time creating environments (physical or virtual ones) that are safe, discrimination free and conducive to fruitful collaboration and interactions. Learning a foreign language is embedded in a larger context that has to be socially, culturally and educationally inviting. The mutual transfer of input/output, the acquisition of an overall different *role* and *identity*, the enthusiasm-filed quid-pro-quo between trainer and student as well as the professional use of strategies and approaches to communication, the non-formal student knowledge brought onto the academic discussion table- all these issues impact how much and what type of student engagement is displayed.

Our contention is that online student engagement is achieved through painstaking class preparation, feedback monitoring and syllabus adaptation in order to create a teaching style that invites collaboration and honest academically valid exchanges. Nevertheless, one essential element that shapes student engagement in relation to higher education is the student himself/herself as they also are key players in class collaboration and practice. This idea is also mentioned by Coates (2006) who states the fact that "the final responsibility for learning rests with students". (Coates, 2006, p.29). The focus should also be on the specific types of activities that students find engaging in online learning. Collaborative speaking/problem-solving activities, pair-work, video and audio support, relevant and timely post-activity feedback are some of the examples that have been provided by The Faculty of Economics students as possible engaging tasks. High achievement students are those who can also assess their own increased level of interest in class activity, they are also able to sustain engagement themselves and to expect it to continue in future tasks and projects. Conversely, low-achievement students deal with course-related tasks by applying themselves less and by showing decreased engagement levels.

Instructor presence is one essential element in the development and maintainance of online student engagement. In the existing literature on the topc, it is clearly shown that there is a need for an active and dynamic instructor presence in online teaching and learning in order for the *virtual coordination* of instructional efforts to be fruitful and student-friendly (Gayton and Mc Ewen, 2007; Young, 2006). Nevertheless, the way in which the social instructor online presence is coordinated and devised among tasks, activities, and peer-collaboration is also a thorny academic issue. There is valuable research on the topic that contends that higher education course instructors should have but a minor involvement in ongoing student discussions because too much of a tutor interference might actually hinder student engagement and impede on genuine problem solving discussions taking place on available learning management systems (Pickett, 2006; Dennen, et al., 2007; Levy, 2008).

There are many strategies and techniques course instructors may employ in order for their social online presence to be felt by their respective students. The way in which one decides to make an introductory video-based presentation in order to introduce himself/herself to the student cohort may deeply impact the genuine positive interpretation of the tutor's intentions and care for achievement of instructional goals. Posting assignments associated with warm but clear recommendations, efficient question management, pre-course preparatory pieces of advice, careful time management of student online speaking time, rules regarding camera on/off policies when interacting online, creating an overall collaborative online class culture, the use of interactive apps that add value to content-based explanations shape up an instructor's presence. They articulate a unique imprint of a tutor's engagement. This *performative type of engagement* on the part of instructors is bound to reflect back at and further enhance student engagement. (Kehrwald, 2008, pp. 94-95). A Google form Course Evaluation questionnaire has been administered to approximately 180 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students in Economics within the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration in Cluj-Napoca. When asked to state their most relevant concerns in relation to fully online learning/teaching of their Business English/Business Communication Course, an overwhelming 78% of them have stated that their fear is that there is a lack of connection between students and trainers and between themselves and their peers. For online student engagement to occur and to safeguard there has to be a genuine social connection between course stakeholders and interactants.

To conclude this part of the present paper, we subscribe to the red thread claims under online student engagement being defined as a *multidimensional, multifaceted, rainbow-coloured construct* that is placed at the very core of online learning and teaching. Online student engagement is an umbrella term that is directly connected to motivation enhancement, performant instructional outcomes, self-confidence and flow perceptions in technology-enhanced language learning (Liu, Wang and Tai, 2016). Flow is another element within the context of online engagement as frontal and computer mediated education and learning correspond to two fundamentally different realities that invite engagement in distinct ways. According to Csikszentmihalyi, flow is a psychological theory that refers to a peak or optimal personal experience requiring a complex mix of nine conditions to occur (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Within the context of computer-based teaching and learning, online student engagement is a construct that enables course instructors to plan ahead for it to occur as well as to reflect upon the condition it has occurred in for future reference and practice.

Online Engagement Frameworks in Higher Education

There are many scientific, educational and methodological approaches articulated in order to define and gauge student engagement. It is beyond the purpose of this paper

to offer a literature review of all these frameworks. Nevertheless, in this section of the paper, we will refer to some of the benchmark references to date as they offer a theoretical background to the attempts made at introducing student engagement in higher education frameworks that encourage instructors and learners alike to be aware of its implications.

In 1984, Alexander Astin initially explored and articulated the *college engagement* aspects subsequently titling these research efforts "The Engagement Theory". Famously Astin is also responsible for offering one of the first definitions where the construct of engagement is twinned with that of *involvement* and is defined as "the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience." (Astin, 1993, p. 34). Being active in one's academic work as well as being willing to communicate with one's colleagues, peers and teaching staff are all elements enumerated under the same concept. (Astin, 1984).

The Student Course Engagement Questionnaire (SCEQ) is one important benchmarking framework that is often referred to as a foundation for higher education institutions defining and assessing *student engagement levels* (Handelsman, Briggs, Sullivan, and Towler, 2005). It consists of four distinct elements which have relevance and impact: *skills engagement* (staying up on readings, putting forth effort); *emotional engagement* (tailoring course content to students' reality, assessing their needs, backgrounds and expectations); *participation/interaction engagement* (fostering a collaborative, open atmosphere where discussions can take place); and *performance engagement* (achieving course aims, turning in assignments, passing exams and assessments). (Handelsman, Briggs, Sullivan, and Towler, 2005, p.187).

In recent years, with the constant ranking of institutional and educational outcomes, the degree of student engagement has become ever more important and relevant. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, The Trustees of Indiana University, United States, 2016) or The College Student Experiences Questionnaires (CSEQ) are two of the frameworks that have been designed for this purpose.

One of the most comprehensive online engagement frameworks for university education (*The Online Engagement Framework for Higher Education*) was provided in 2018 by a group of researchers from The University of Southern Queensland and Monash University (Australia).

As the authors state in their introductory remarks, it is a "*conceptual framework* which builds upon recurring themes within the literature, including students' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours" (Abawi, Brown, Heffernan, Henderson & Redmond, 2018, p.183). This is one of the most useful research frameworks put at higher education instructors' disposal and is the product of *a constant comparison method* applied on existing bodies of research in order to pinpoint *current and emerging themes*.

The framework identifies indicators for five key elements of online engagement, and the authors propose that the framework provides a guide for researchers and academics when exploring online engagement from a conceptual, practical and research basis. The framework can be used to reflect critically upon the effectiveness of online courses and their ability to engage students. (Abawi, Brown, Heffernan, Henderson & Redmond 2018, p.183).

The novelty of this comprehensive framework lies in its detailed description and exploration of *student engagement* in order for the research to be applied for online learning and teaching purposes. At its scientific core, the framework suggests five essential elements that effective student engagement within the online environment comprises: *social engagement, cognitive engagement, behavioural engagement, collaborative engagement*, and *emotional engagement*. (Abawi, Brown, Heffernan, Henderson & Redmond, 2018, p.189). The most valuable contribution is the fact that this framework can be used by course instructors, trainers, and academics to understand, enhance, apply and reflect on the role student engagement plays in the online environment. Online engagement elements gathered from extensive literature bodies are associated with specific indicators in order for instructors to get a global picture of what research states and what practical applications have resulted within the online engagement construct in higher education.

Face in Online Learning and Teaching

In what follows next, we will refer to one of the elements included in The Online Engagement Framework (2018) entitled *emotional engagement* and we will discuss the importance that face /self-image has in mediating collaborative communication and in building online student engagement.

The concept of *face* is difficult to define and has been often debated upon ever since its unique representation by Erving Goffman in 1967. From an idiomatic standpoint, it signifies *dignity/prestige* and it represents a fundamental concept in domains such as sociology, sociolinguistics, semantics, psychology, political science, communication, face negotiation and politeness.

The politeness theory encompasses complex, valuable research support and practical politeness strategies (whether positive or negative) expressing concern for *face* preservation of discourse participants. When human beings collaborate in order to communicate and negotiate discourse outcomes, they normally express a desire to stay

independent and autonomous as well as a need to be socially accepted and appreciated for their role in the communication instance.

Brown and Levinson (1987), the authors of the most debated upon work on politeness, contend that when participating in social exchanges by communicating with others, certain *speech acts threaten the face of the interlocutor*, previously defined as the "positive value a person effectively claims for himself" (Goffman, 1967, p.5). Course instructors and students interact for instructional, organizational and more personal purposes. The communication that takes place whether face-to-face or online is bound to be difficult at times. Instructors do not only transmit, share or explain content but, most importantly, attempt to engage students by creating rapports that are genuine and meaningful. We strive to offer feedback that cannot always be positive. It can, nevertheless, be positively phrased and presented so as not to offend or discriminate against students. Face-threatening acts are cognitive strategies that can impose on the student's positive/negative face Openly negative instructor comments on students' work/performance such as "*no, unfortunately, that is not the correct explanation for the phrase financial backers*" threatens the students' positive face, causing them to feel unaccepted by the group they are in and socially misplaced. Additionally, *negative face,* one's need to fundamentally be independent and not impeded on by other people's actions or comments, may be threatened by feedback comments or requests phrased accordingly "*Tell me what you know about the marketing mix elements*" or by adding new questions or requests such as "*You have to include much more information if you want to make a valid point.*"

In online teaching/learning tutors often find themselves in the situation of needing to criticize students' input, attitude towards learning, behavioural features, engagement level, invalid assignments, etc. When such a situation arises, we are faced with three important options: to engage in the face threatening act –*baldly*- as we would like to make progress and be efficient, not to perform the face-threatening act face threatening act, or to mitigate the situation by applying positive or negative politeness strategies (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Positive politeness strategies are used in order to enforce collaboration and inclusion as discourse participants are ensured that their needs are respected and their face is preserved. Negative politeness strategies reduce the face threat to a minimum allowing the hearer to keep his/her autonomy without being imposed on.

The positive effects of politeness are undeniable. Polite individuals/tutors are deemed as having more charisma, they are also more positively assessed and they have a positive impact on students. Their expertise is not questioned as communication channels are open and the focus is on inclusion and common problem solving. Conversely, instructors who engage in face threats without attempting to mitigate the imposition on the hearer can be described as being unlikeable, ineffective and uncooperative, creating feelings of dissatisfaction and unfairness (Carson & Cupach, 2002). In computer-mediated instruction, applying face-work becomes a must. The virtual interface reduces

the quality and timeliness of nonverbal communication cues, hence requesting a constant companion that mitigates lack of turned on cameras, attention deficits, background disruptors or personal drawbacks. Becoming informed on the benefits of pragmatic politeness is part of online instructors' training as it yields higher learning gains in their students when involved in online teaching/learning.

Student engagement and instructor engagement are interconnected. One cannot form without the other. Pragmatic politeness strategies enable academic course instructors to preserve students' online face despite the difficulty that a screen poses in communication. Computer mediated communication and language instruction lead to the projection of certain face-related needs that have to be acknowledged and negotiated when online. Positive and negative politeness strategies encourage trainers and academics to mitigate possible conflicts and tense interactions by using linguistic and behavioral strategies that support effective, constructive criticism and inclusive communication. Creating rapports based on mutual interests lies at the basis of student/trainer engagement. Emotional engagement refers to students' emotional reaction to learning (*Online Engagement Framework*, 2018, p.195). An important body of research within the field of motivation enhancement and engagement contends that that "both negative and positive emotions can facilitate activation of attention and engagement" (Sinatra, Heddy and Lombardi, 2015, p.2). Students display emotional reactions when they engage with both content and stakeholders in an educational setting, leading to broadening their interest area, their research interests or their extracurricular networking skills. Emotional engagement often includes "interest, values, and emotions" (Fredericks, Blumefield, & Paris, 2004, p.65). Campbell stated that "Emotion is identified as important to student adjustment to the role of online learner" (Campbell, 2012, p.272), and consequently, online teachers need to become more knowledgeable about ways to manage and enhance it in their students.

A Language Instructor's Reflections

Academic education and motivation enhancement theories focus on the construct of *student engagement* in order to either explain its often times ambivalent meaning and interpretations and/or to argue for investigating this elusive concept further for the benefit of learners and teachers/instructors alike. Student engagement is instructor engagement. One cannot exist without the other as they represent twinned parties of what we have called in this paper *genuine interactions*. Online instruction is riddled with difficulties and challenges because the interface between learners and instructors is mediated by a medium that may lack warmth and the genuine desire to create rapport.

Through student-tailored curricula adapted to the online medium and by fostering collaboration among students who are involved in collaborative problem-solving activities, meaningful rapports are created. Relational/emotional engagement contributes to better academic results and to students' involvement in curricular/extracurricular

activities. Establishing rapport and open communication channels between students, participation in case-study scenarios that imitate economic realities as well as the opportunity of navigating freely and purposefully through learning management system resources lead to a more fruitful academic experience.

Despite the fact that it has consistently proven a difficult construct to define, student engagement is one of the most important criterion that speaks volumes about the quality of a university program and the richness of student academic development and overall success. We have taken a more detailed look at some of the defining features of online student engagement as it is presented in the literature. We have also focused on instructor's role in providing a safe environment for engagement to occur, insisting on both existing theoretical online student engagement frameworks and their corresponding practical applications towards syllabus design and knowledge management strategies in academic teaching and learning. We have argued that pragmatic politeness with its corresponding emphasis on the role of online face/self-worth/self-image may enable course tutors and instructors to include a politeness toolkit in their online teaching and reflection practices as positive/negative politeness strategies improve the quality of interactions and the wellbeing of university instruction stakeholders.

Existing literature and research still lacks sufficient accord regarding what student engagement is and how it influences the content and quality of academic language instruction. Nevertheless, proponents of the Online Student Engagement Framework (2018) have successfully provided us with necessary tools in order to qualify, assess and benefit from student engagement in our online courses. The next step is to apply this framework to different institutional and cultural contexts, to identify its strengths and weaknesses in order to subsequently create opportunities for meaning loaded, user-friendly online policies and practices.

Based on my own experience as a modern language instructor who has made efforts in order to adapt to fully online teaching during the Covid pandemic, I recommend the following course of action for ensuring and developing online student engagement in higher education:

1. Becoming fully acquainted with the LMS (learning management system), the additional learning apps as well as the conference platform used;
2. Showing enthusiasm in both teaching content and students' input;
3. Introducing the topic of student engagement into the virtual classroom as it raises awareness and may lead to a better understanding of its importance;
4. Creating a pre-/during/post class opportunities for students to engage with the provided resources as well as with their peers and instructors;
5. Using various learning apps that may support the learning process;
6. Allowing time and place for reflexivity to take place;

7. Providing opportunities for high-engagement students and low engagement students to provide feedback (this can take place regularly via Google forms for example);

8. Being aware of how important pragmatic politeness strategies are, researching the way positive and negative politeness strategies may influence our students' class input and their overall online face and associated identity and confidence.

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Veronica-Diana Micle (Armasu), PhD. Lecturer at the Department of Modern Languages and Business Communications, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Babeș-Bolyai University. Research interests: Business English, Professional Communication, Intercultural Communication, politeness theory, pragmatics, academic teaching and learning, methodology. (veronica.micle@econ.ubbcluj.ro)

Adapting Lesson Delivery in the Business English Classroom

Oana Alexandra Alexa

Teaching ESP presents its unique set of challenges, as it combines more general ELT issues with some very specific ones. Among the governing principles of teaching at any level are identifying learners' needs, adapting teaching materials, designing comprehensible lessons and choosing relevant assessment methods. The key point to consider, however, is the teacher's ability to adapt to the different learning circumstances. This paper discusses the practical aspects of adapting lesson delivery in the Business English classroom by looking at the everyday interactions with our undergraduate students at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. It will show that while adapting lesson delivery is a continuous process, a new, valuable perspective has been added through the recent switch to online activities, which is definitely worth exploring further.

Adapt; lesson delivery; Business English; online education.

Introduction

Adapting lesson delivery is something that all teachers become aware of sooner rather than later, as they are inevitably confronted with it from day one. In itself, it is a rather loose concept, since it basically describes anything and everything a teacher does in order to make the learning process successful and achieve course objectives, while also making sure that the learners' needs are met. If we narrow our focus to Business English teachers, we notice that the latter gains even more importance, but while it takes many forms, adapting lesson delivery is a never-ending task.

Adapting lesson delivery is actually part of a core set of principles proposed by the TESOL International Association for the exemplary teaching and learning of English as a new language. The latest addition to the *6 Principles* book series, coordinated by Deborah J. Short and published in 2020, focuses on academic and other specific purposes, as co-authors Sherry Blok, Robyn Brinks Sherwood and Evan Frendo discuss the principles and provide relevant examples from the academia, where Business English is commonly taught. All six principles are general enough to be considered by all English teachers, but they can also take on new connotations when applied to teaching ESP, as it will be discussed further on.

The six principles are the following, in the order they are listed by the TESOL International Association:

1. Know your learners.
2. Create conditions for language learning.
3. Design high-quality lessons for language development.
4. Adapt lesson delivery as needed.
5. Monitor and assess student language development.
6. Engage and collaborate within a community of practice (Blok, Lockwood & Frendo, 2020)

Principle number four is the focus of this paper and it is based on the premise that "teachers continually assess as they teach – observing and reflecting on learners' responses to determine whether the students are meeting the learning objectives. If students struggle or are not challenged enough, teachers consider the possible reasons and adjust their lesson" (Blok et al., 2020). Adapting lesson delivery is therefore a rather complex process, which usually involves checking comprehension frequently, adjusting teacher talk (through simplification, wait time, open-ended questioning), modifying tasks and/or study materials to accommodate students' needs and learner response, switching to other forms of input (visual aids, stories, examples, role playing, texts, case studies etc.) and providing scaffolding (material and social support) (Blok et al., 2020). Some of these actions are more straightforward (like adjusting teacher talk) and are performed more or less unconsciously, while others require more conscious effort and/or planning, like modifying tasks, for example.

Ideally, getting to know one's students (specifically their needs and expectations, together with their level of English) before the beginning of the course would make this process easier for both parties, but with large numbers of students and the impossibility of administering placement tests and/or grouping them accordingly, the teacher has no choice but to be flexible. Mixed-ability classes undoubtedly have their advantages, for everyone involved: "there is always a greater choice when dealing with large multi-levelled classes: more opinions to debate, more ideas to share, more points raised. The learning process is more interactive and interesting, at the same time" (Brânzilă, 2019). The teacher, on the other hand, is "forced to build a new toolkit of teaching skills and strategies to cope with such challenging classes and once acquired, this set of methods will serve for future purposes, too" (Brânzilă, 2019). However, this also means that there is even more pressure on the teacher to adjust delivery in real time, so that students with a lower language level are not at a disadvantage.

Practical Aspects of Adapting Lesson Delivery in the Business English Classroom
Keeping in mind that "on the most effective courses, students and teachers work in partnership to build a constructive learning environment which is appropriate to

individual students' professional and personal situations" (Donna, 2007), the Business English teacher will focus on students' work-related needs above all else.

Typically, the initial seminar meeting with my first-year students is spent on gathering as much information as possible about their language background, interests and expectations about the programme they are enrolled in, as well as on setting the scene for the following meetings. I find it important to reassure students who do not feel confident in their language abilities from the beginning, so as to encourage them to participate in the activities to follow which seem the most accessible to them and then gradually tackle those issues that they were not comfortable with initially. In addition, I personally am of the opinion that the process of adapting lesson delivery does not necessarily need to happen completely behind the scenes. There is value in making our students aware of some of the changes we operate in order to accommodate their learning needs, so that they understand why some of the proposed activities will be conducted in a certain way or will be adapted to various circumstances.

Below, I will go into further detail about the implications of adapting lesson delivery for the Business English teacher, based on practical examples and best practices.

In terms of checking student comprehension with a view to adapt lesson delivery accordingly, whenever he/she assigns a task, the teacher needs to: make sure the instructions were clear (by asking students whether they have understood what they have to do and/or letting them know that they can ask for explanations at any time during the activity), be ready to monitor students in the process (so as to provide guidance) and also ensure that the students' answers reflects their correct understanding of the task. The latter can be achieved by asking follow-up questions like "Why is the other answer incorrect?" or "Can you give me an example which illustrates your point?" and if this is done on a regular basis, students learn to look for arguments to support their answer or opinion beforehand, rather than scramble to do that on the spot. Checking comprehension is important both at activity level, but also at the end of each seminar and at key points throughout the semester, so that adjustments can be made accordingly.

Adjusting teacher talk is another important element of lesson delivery adaptation. When they notice confusion or misunderstanding among their students, teachers modify their oral language input to facilitate comprehension and aid language learning, usually through simplification or increasing wait time, but sometimes through temporarily switching to L1. Using the student's first language outside of translation-focused activities is a bit of a controversial topic in my opinion, especially since my students come from a variety of environments where English was taught using different methodological approaches, some relying heavily on the use of L1. It is worth mentioning here that we are experiencing an increasingly high number of foreign students (most of them from the Republic of Moldova, but also Romanian citizens who have completed their studies in Italy, Greece or the UK) who are accustomed to a different education system, teaching

approach and evaluation procedures, including in the case of the English courses. Consequently, I have had students enquire about the possibility of using both Romanian and English during our meetings. As a rule, I prefer to rely on simplification and switching to other forms of input as needed, rather than resort to the use of L1, for two reasons: the expected starting level for our first-year students is B1 (according to the CEFR), which allows for the exclusive use of L2, and I also find it more conducive to learning, as it forces the student to get creative and find other ways to decode teacher talk (by asking for clarification, for example) and encode their own messages (by rephrasing or providing examples to support their theory) in response to the instructions. A technique that I normally use when there is no answer to one of my questions is come up with two or three supporting questions, which gives students the opportunity to understand the implications of the initial inquiry and also allows for alternative answer options; the end goal of speaking activities is usually to encourage learners to express their opinion, whatever that might be, rather than look for a specific answer, so by asking a couple of related questions, the teacher shows that the topic can be approached from different angles. Other times, there is initially no answer to a question because students may feel that their personal opinion or experience is not relevant or worth sharing. By acting as a model and sharing his/her own response first, the instructor can encourage students to do the same, simply by providing a starting point to the conversation.

When it comes to the materials used in the classroom, teaching ESP at university level as opposed to secondary school instruction, for example, often comes with the opportunity to innovate more in terms of syllabus design and choice of course materials, but it also means that the number of students is much larger (the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration in Iași boasts a total of just under eight thousand students) and their background is so diverse that this poses problems to the instructor who is looking for the right methodological approach and some common ground amongst the different specialisations where Business English is included in the curriculum. It has been argued that "the first requirement for any Business English trainer is to be an expert in language teaching; the second requirement is to develop awareness of the needs and concerns of businesspeople and to be flexible enough to respond to those needs" (Ellis & Johnson, 1994). In practice, this means that teachers will only be able to loosely follow coursebooks and, instead, work on personalized study materials whenever possible in order to fulfil their students' learning needs.

A great example of activity that is recommended for Business English classes and can be easily adapted for large groups of mixed-ability students is analysing case studies. Starting from a business-related situation, the teacher can create a host of different activities (from reading-comprehension exercises to listening, speaking and writing tasks). Most importantly, case studies provide ideal opportunities for collaborative learning through groupwork, which I have found is the best way to inject some dynamism

into the seminar while reducing student anxiety towards individual work. At this level, they require limited monitoring, since they are already familiar with the different roles to be assigned within a team and rely on each other for explanations and advice.

An activity that I have introduced recently during my seminars is delivering a short presentation (around two or three minutes per person) on how students use their knowledge of the English language in their day to day lives. Those who are already employed will likely talk about using English at their workplace (which gives me great insight into their learning needs), while others will emphasize the skills they employ when communicating with peers (locally or abroad) and potential employers or their previous experiences with student mobility programmes. This is good speaking practice as well as an excellent starting point for further discussions and personalising tasks.

A significant aspect of adapting lesson delivery to students' level and needs is providing scaffolding, that is the support they need to complete a task, rather than simplifying it to the point that it no longer challenges them to reach the course objectives. Blok, Lockwood and Frendo (2020) have identified two main categories for scaffolds: material support (like learner dictionaries, graphic organisers, structured notes etc.) and social support (like small-group learning, study group, tutoring opportunities etc.). We notice that in terms of social support, collaborative learning activities are the most effective, for the reasons mentioned earlier. It is essential, for student motivation, to provide both support and appropriate feedback (preferably from two sources, the teacher and his/her peers).

Challenges in Adapting Lesson Delivery to Online Education

In 2014, Michelle Miller was wondering whether online learning was here to stay, referring to the increasing number of online courses provided by academic institutions worldwide and the fact that "today's students do typically enter college with the expectation that technology will play some role" (Miller, 2014). Little did we know back then that both the students' expectations and technical skills will be put to the test!

Adapting lesson delivery took on significantly more connotations the moment face-to-face classes were suspended and completely replaced by online education due to the abrupt onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. One and a half years later, in October 2021, online teaching and learning are still the norm for the majority of higher education institutions in Romania due to a significant increase in the number of infections in the last few weeks. Based on last year's remote-learning experience, teachers have encountered some additional challenges which affect some of the lesson delivery solutions that were previously identified.

Groupwork was one of the recommendations which helped with number of issues, from dealing with mixed-level classes to reducing student anxiety and developing collaborative skills. With the switch to online activities only, this kind of activity was

significantly more difficult to organise. Most virtual educational platforms offer the possibility of setting up several chat rooms within the online session so that students can still work in smaller groups and then re-join the whole class to share their results, but this system did not really catch on in my case. Part of the reason was maybe the difficulty in establishing rapport, keeping in mind that the majority of my students did not switch on their webcams and only relied on auditory input for the entirety of the course. We must also keep in mind the fact that the learners who were in their first year of study in the 2020-2021 academic year had never met their colleagues in person and chances are of them not meeting until they graduate. Asking students to work together under these circumstances is extremely difficult, as is establishing teacher-student rapport based solely on virtual meetings.

Even if everyone attending the online classes was able to use all the features provided by the online conferencing platforms (auditory and visual input and output, chatrooms, integrated virtual blackboard, survey tools, feedback and chat options), due to technical or connection issues, images, sound and voice are often distorted, resulting in difficulties when trying to get the message across. Moreover, mini delays in message transmission (due to connection issues or technological limitations) lead to the teacher's inability to properly correct students' pronunciation, for example, as interruptions while they are reading or speaking are particularly difficult in the case of lack of synchronisation.

As a teacher, performing on camera (presuming that the internet connection allows for clear images and fluid movement) poses questions in relation to body language and whether it is properly conveyed virtually (this is especially relevant when providing feedback), how monitoring student activity can effectively occur from a distance or even how sitting in front of the computer versus standing plays a part in establishing virtual rapport.

What essentially had to occur during this trying period was slowing down the pace of the lessons. While their length has remained the same, some time is inevitably spent each class on dealing with technical issues, checking attendance (especially difficult when cameras are off!), making sure that everyone can see/hear/understand etc., which has actually led to a shift (or rather a multiplication) in teaching roles as well. In the words of Michelle Miller, "even in a well-designed online course, students as well as teachers have to work harder to establish a basic understanding of how the course will work" (Miller, 2014). On the bright side, the slower pace has hopefully resulted in clearer and more concise information exchange. Communication channels have multiplied considerably and we are also enjoying unprecedented ease of access and distribution of information and educational materials.

Conclusions

The concept of adapting lesson delivery has likely always been on teaching professionals' minds, often unconsciously. While factors like students' age and language

proficiency level are essential when devising a language course, lesson delivery adaptation mostly takes place in the classroom, during the lesson, and it is based on the direct observation conducted by the teacher. Learners might not even be aware of the changes made to the task or they might be the ones to request certain modifications, so that the lesson objectives are achieved.

With the switch to online education, a process of double adaptation had to take place. Firstly, both teachers and students had to adapt the new way of living and working. Secondly, a new element was added to the list of factors which require adapting lesson delivery on the teacher's part: mediated interaction and its limitations. Checking comprehension, adjusting teacher talk and providing scaffolding now have to be done from a distance and based on unreliable virtual clues or feedback.

To end on a positive note, however, learning is a life-long process and, whether it is done formally or informally, it will continue to happen no matter the circumstances. For students and teachers alike, the education process currently requires flexibility and adaptation to the 'new normal' so, there is no better time than the present to put the most tried-and-true teaching principles to the test.

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Assistant lecturer Oana Alexandra Alexa, Ph.D. She is a member of the Department of Economics and International Relations within the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iași, Romania. Her main areas of interest are: English for Special Purposes, Business English, English for Academic Purposes, cultural studies and intercultural communication. (oana.alexa@uaic.ro)

Students' Self-Assessment: Analyzing Reflections of Group Work

Iuliu Raţiu

This is a brief analysis of student self-assessment work. For students, reflecting on their work is a much-needed skill because it improves their class performance and proves beneficial in the long run when later used in the workforce. For instructors, student reflections of their group work are valuable resources for better assignment design.

Assessment; self-assessment; group work; student reflection.

This essay is informed by my experience teaching Business English courses to first-year students majoring in Business Information Systems, Management, and Business over a period of three years. The courses offered during the fall and the spring semesters are part of the language requirement sequence students need to take for four semesters in order to graduate. In my version of the course, the topics covered in the first two semesters include teamwork and communication, health and safety regulations, rights at work, business hotels and corporate hospitality, relocation and new premises, business expenses and business travel. Most topics are adapted from the Cambridge Business English Certificate Vantage Student textbook. In addition, we address various grammar aspects and professional development issues, such as cover letters, CVs, resumes and job interviews.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the role of student self-assessment of group projects. My intent, as David Boud suggests, is to emphasize the importance of "formalised peer learning" in students' self-assessment of individual and group work and to offer recommendations to instructors willing to improve their students' self-evaluation skills. For students themselves, self-assessment is a much-needed skill they could later use in the workforce, when they could negotiate a wage raise, an end-of-the year bonus, or ask for a promotion.

About 10 years ago I had a three-year stint teaching writing and communication courses at Georgia Tech in the US. Those familiar with the US academic system know that some large university systems use the so-called portfolio to assess student achievement. Thus, a writing or communication portfolio contains the first and final drafts of different

assignments, and most importantly, as Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff argue, a reflection in which students assess their own work, with a focus both on process and product. However, when I started teaching at my current institution, I couldn't implement a portfolio assignment, but I did invite students to reflect on their own work, particularly on group projects, which make up a significant part of their final grade. Even though the students do not have to reflect on their whole work throughout the semester, the individual reflection does allow them to take stock and analyze their own performance against or together with the learning experience of their peers. In designing projects containing a reflective essay, I become aware of the impact we have on the academic future and professional career of our students and want them to work on class assignments which are relevant both to the subject at hand and to the students' own personal and professional lives.

In line with the findings of Forsell et al., in their review of the research in the field of group work assessment, group projects allow students to focus "on social skills and group processes" when they think creatively and critically about college assignments by analyzing the prospective job options in their field. Thus, in my classes, students work diligently on group projects about company structures, relocation offers, and business reopening plans (especially during a pandemic). While the focus differs, the set up of the group projects during the fall and spring semesters is the same: I introduce the topic early in the semester, so students have a head start preparing for it; then, in the second half of the semester, over a period of several weeks, the students work on their projects both during classes and on their own; they then present their findings in front of the class in the last two weeks of the semester; finally, they submit a self-reflection during the finals week. All in all, the group project makes up a significant part of the final grade for the class, ranging from 20% to 40% of their final grade. See Annex 1 for a detailed description of the project.

Thus, working on group projects, students understand the importance of key features relevant to their academic and professional careers (leadership, delegation, work division, know-how) and improve their research, presentation, and social skills (analyze data, reach-out to local businesses, report findings, make new friends). Some students approach this as they would approach working on a start-up, that is they look for immediate gains, with little effort. However, some students put in all the effort and their hard work pays off in the end and they are proud of their work. Those who procrastinate and those work "smart" are eventually outplayed by the hard-workers and none of them are shy about this in their reflections, when they analyze both the process and the product of their work. Thus, those who really focused on the process tend to produce an outstanding final product, while those who cut corners realize they shouldn't have done so when exposed to their hard-working colleagues' final presentations.

Even when they fail occasionally to work together as a cohesive group, for instance, when they work "smart" not hard and rely on someone else's work or when they have conflicting ideas or schedules and their time management suffers, students learn from their mistakes especially when comparing their work to that of the other groups in the class during

group presentations or in their reflections. For instance, this past semester, a group of students asked for permission to move their presentation a week later after witnessing their colleagues' presentations. They felt they could do better, which they eventually did, knowing that losing points for a late presentation was preferable to losing potentially more points for presenting an underdeveloped project. The students' *aha moment* when comparing their work against their peers' is revelatory for the agency they acquire when invited to assess their own work. As a rare instance of acceptable peer pressure, the students realize they are in control of their learning process and often times mention in their reflections that they are better prepared to tackle similar projects in the future.

In the end, self-reflection serves several purposes. On the one hand, students reflect on their and their peers' work, they practice writing and reassess the goals of the assignment on their own; on the other hand, the instructors learn from past mishaps (technical problems, group cohesion, grade management) and tentatively gather material for new research projects and then share their findings with their own peers during conferences and in academic papers. As their testimonials show in Annex 2, at times, students write exactly what the instructor wants to hear, but they also offer constructive criticism, both of their peers and of the assignment itself and suggest ways to improve it. Last, but not least, the reflections address the students' personal and professional goals, which ultimately is the main purpose of assigning such a task.

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Annex 1: Group Project Set Up

Company Structure & Organization

For your group assignment, you will work in a group of four to develop a multimedia artifact (poster, powerpoint, video, app, etc.) and presentation of the structure and organization of a local business. Your project should explore and explain the structure of a local company or propose improvements that would make the local organization more profitable. As part of the project, students have to complete a project contract/agreement

(first progress report), a project prospectus (second progress report), a 10-minute presentation, and a final 1-page individual reflection paper.

Project Agreement: Create and sign a binding agreement that explains the goals you set for your group, the agenda you plan to follow, and the roles you assign to each member. This document counts as the first progress report.

Project Prospectus: Describe in 500 words what you wish to achieve working on this project. Explain in specific terms the structure and organization of the local business of your choice. Address how/if you plan(ned) to contact the business and how/if you consider improving its structure. This document, including a rough draft of the multimedia artifact and an outline of the class presentation, counts as the second progress report.

Group Presentation: Present your findings to the class and answer questions about your work.

Group Project Reflection: Assess in a page of written text your contribution to the group project. Give credit and praise where they are due, but don't be afraid to critique your individual and group performance. If given the option, how would you change the group dynamic to design a better artifact/presentation?

Annex 2: Student Testimonials / Reflections

"Overall, I enjoyed doing this project, and I liked the fact my teammates were chosen randomly, because it gave me a chance to know my colleges better, considering the fact that we are in the first year. I also liked the composition of the project, the fact that it was composed from a written essay, but also a presentation and an artifact. This made the project more interesting and fun. This project was a really good way of learning about a business structure and I would definitely like to do another project in the next semester."

"The concept was a good one [and] it seemed really similar to the one in the first semester. As for the topic of the project I find it useless, if we can't get our hands on real data we can't actually talk about this subject. This is only my opinion and maybe the rest of the group or the class found it really interesting and useful. But because I didn't like the topic I thought about some topics that maybe could be more interesting: companies that give back to society, activists that began a company with success, the way companies helped or worked against the population during wars or economic problems, or which companies would suffer from changes in the industry to be more friendly with the environment."

"When the other teams were presenting their artifact, I noticed that most of the people were literally reading the text from the computer or from the wall. I don't want to say that it is a bad habit, but if I had the chance to change something, in the future I would like students to present it more like a story, with their own words, even if they are not so fancy. Presentations are always a good chance to socialize with people near you in a constructive way, so why aren't we always doing that?"

    "The group project was an interesting learning experience. While working on the relocation plan, I have realized one more time that the impact that we have on the planet's well-being is huge, this is why we have to pay attention to every step and decision we make. This subject is very important for me, and through this project I wanted to raise awareness about the animal cruelty and not only. It is more than a relocation plan and more than an English project, really, it is something that keeps me up at night and brings me to tears."

    "As I sit down to reflect on my time working on this project, I realize how fortunate I was to be given the opportunity to create a reopening plan for a real company as a business major student. It was a new, completely different experience that left an impression on all of us and demonstrated the results of an unusual year studying business administration. I am grateful for this experience because it displayed our ability to remake, build, or adapt to upcoming changes in the global social and economic environment."

Iuliu Rațiu, Ph. D., Associate Lecturer, member of the Department of Modern Languages and Business Communication within the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania). His main areas of interest are nineteenth-century American literature, sustainability studies, and assessment of student work. (iuliu.ratiu@ubbcluj.ro)

Gamification Practice for Online Teaching and Learning

Olga Grădinaru

The online teaching and learning of the past year represented a challenge and an opportunity for teachers and learners of a specialised language. The gap between digital natives and digital immigrants seemed to widen in the first period and gradually narrowed with the help of gamification as a new pedagogical strategy. The presentation focuses on the integration of game elements during and after the course of Business English for the 1st year students at Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. It explores the ways to gamify foreign language learning based on results of students' polling regarding their online learning experience of Business English.

Gamification; online teaching and learning; Business English; gamified activities; digital natives.

Digital gamification has become an integrant part of the online teaching and learning of the past year. It has been a great opportunity for teachers to narrow the gap between digital natives (Prensky, 2001a) and digital immigrants and an exciting way of assessing students' acquisition of vocabulary and notions. Since digital natives prefer receiving information fast from multiple multimedia sources, gamified activities contribute to better learning experience and friendly environment (Prensky, 2001b, p. 6). The so-called "digital game-based learning revolution" (Prensky, 2001b, p. 8) involves processing images, sounds and videos rather than written texts, which is thus better perceived in the learning environment, along with learning strategies that include "fun" and "instant" as keywords.

The objectives of our paper are threefold: to report on the integration of game elements during and after the courses, the ways to gamify foreign language learning and its benefits. Addressing the issue in the Romanian background is both relevant and useful since gamification was scarcely considered as viable means in the teaching and learning process. The paper does not deal with the underdeveloped theoretical foundations of gamification and it does not dwell on the advancement in gamifying education. Alternatively, it focuses on empirical evidence, taking into account the emerging gamified Romanian teaching and learning.

To start with, let us briefly examine gamification conceptually. While there is a multitude of definitions of gamification, we mention several of which the simplest is "the

application of game mechanics in non-game related contexts" (Deterding, Sicart, Nacke, and Nixon, 2011). Moreover, according to Seaborn and Fels, gamification is "a multidisciplinary concept spanning a range of theoretical and empirical knowledge, technological domains and platforms and is driven by an array of practical motivations" (Seaborn & Fels, 2015). In our view, the focus of this definition is the aim – "practical motivations" – in our case, offering digital native students opportunities for multitasking, network creation and interactive contexts in order to enable them to learn easier. Therefore, we suggest that the introduction of gaming techniques proves efficient in teaching and learning environment, especially ESP context.

In this paper we would like to focus more on Dichev and Dicheva's definition of gamification. According to these authors, gamification is "a developing approach for increasing learners' motivation and engagement by incorporating game design elements in educational environments" (Dichev & Dicheva, 2017). Following this definition, we argue that inserting game design elements increases learners' attention, involvement and promotes motivation (Brown 1994). By using the technological language of digital natives, ESP teachers provide an efficient collaboration and play successfully the role of facilitator in the process of (specialised) language acquisition. Moreover, this type of approach facilitates students' insertion on the work market and contributes to a relevant role of the university for present and future needs of this generation.

However, despite the immediate students' excitement, the long-term benefits of gamification in educational contexts are yet to be researched. As Dichev and Dicheva reveal, "the practice of gamifying learning has outpaced researchers' understanding of its mechanisms and methods" (Dichev & Dicheva, 2017, p. 1) There are other aspects to add, among which the limited knowledge of the most efficient, convenient way to gamify in educational environment so that students' excitement would blend with consistent vocabulary and notion learning. In addition, the fast rhythm of gamifying learning practice makes it difficult for the researchers to grasp the mutations and to theorize the entire gamification tendency.

The next pages present our experience in introducing gamified activities during the Business English course, starting with the results of a students' poll. We mention the type of activities and the timing during the course, as well as the objective we were trying to achieve in the teaching and learning process.

A case study: 2ⁿᵈ semester of Business English for the 1ˢᵗ year students at Babeş-Bolyai University

The reasons for including gamification in the teaching and learning process of the first semester include the increase of students' participation, given that their attention span was shorter and their motivation was lower during online courses. Kahoot or wordwall games contributed to healthy competition and created the sense of belonging and co-presence (liminal space).

Moreover, the students were motivated by points, leaderboards and immediate feedback while being involved in gamified activities. We mention that the use of www.nearpod.com contributed to an easier communication and friendlier atmosphere with digital native students. The platform also provides the opportunity for the teacher to have access to students' activity/ results and for the students to access the link or code to the lesson whenever they feel like taking the tests or looking over the lessons throughout the year.

During the first week of the second semester students were asked to write on a collaborate board on www.nearpod.com "What did you enjoy the most during the English course?" 178 students were present and 22 students answered the question simply: "kahoots", while other 50 liked that answer. Other 10 students mentioned "interactive parts, platforms like nearpod, kahoot" or "the interactive games", with 60 likes in total. There were also three more elaborate answers: "the interactions between me and some other students during the group exercises" (liked by three students); "the project where I learned how to analyze a firm" (liked once) and "I enjoy the most the atmosphere during the course and the fact that we do speaking" (liked twice).

The results of this poll prompted us to include gamified activities on a regular basis that would mirror the course objectives: improving the students' general English level (in case of beginners and intermediate learners); facilitating the students' learning process of Business English and forming, developing necessary skills using general English with professional aim by developing linguistic, discursive, strategic and socio-cultural competences.

Whereas during the first semester we used games intuitively, as "breaks" between reading and comprehension or listening and comprehension parts, gradually we developed a scaffolding technique in order to integrate gamification activities better in the lesson design.

After consulting the students about their learning activity and ways to improve it, we included a short-gamified activity on www.nearpod.com at the beginning of every course. The reason for that was to remind them of the previous course vocabulary and/or activities. The included games were matching pairs, fill in the blanks and quizzes. These gamified activities had the role of introducing the students into the learning atmosphere, checking their previous engagement and understanding during the course. This could be seen as a form of formative assessment, as it assesses the students and gives the teacher feedback on the necessity of modifying teaching and learning activities (Black, 1998, p. 140).

In order to introduce new vocabulary or to check the acquired notions and actions another gamified activity was used. The nearpod platform provides the possibility to use videos on certain topics and access to videos from www.youtube.com that enable the learners to check their comprehension. That is done easily with the possibility to insert open ended questions and multiple-choice questions at relevant moments of the video. The

teacher can check the answers directly after the activity with students and has a personal report for students' answers. This activity was meant to prepare the students for a reading and comprehension part or vocabulary exercises and was placed in the middle of the course.

We used Kahoot gamified tests, students' favourite, at the end of a unit, verifying their acquisition of vocabulary. It was perceived as a reward and a fun, yet useful activity. During the kahoot gamified tests, some groups of students talked, shared their impressions, excitement and/or disappointment. While some of them admitted that it was not their type of activity, the others were thrilled to test their knowledge and reactions in order to get a place on the podium (data not shown). The advantage of this activity is that it offers feedback in the end with questions that were answered wrong by most of the students. That offers the opportunity to discuss the matter or to tackle it in the next course so that there would be no unclear notions at the end of the semester.

Other gamified resources used during and after the courses are from the website https://test-english.com/. The mentioned website provides a placement test so that students can start improving their reading, writing, listening and grammar, using resources from a particular category (up to the upper-intermediate level; the last level is B+ user). Students were encouraged to continue their learning process after the courses, attaching the proof on their padlet (https://padlet.com/). They were rewarded for the extra tests taken. This form of optional homework was introduced in the second semester after a quarter of the students asked for homework in order to improve their English. Padlet offers a friendly and creative way to design an activity page and 48 out of 200 students grabbed this opportunity. Some of them developed themed padlets for their passions: architecture and photography, fashion and travelling, cooking and reviewing books and/or films. Others shared memories, wrote diary pages and took as many tests as they saw fit in order to improve.

After the active involvement of students in the course design and use of gamified activities, the conclusion is that the online participation remained quite high in the second semester – around 60%. It was our experience that even in face to face courses, the participation at the second semester courses was lower.

In addition, gamified activities contributed to the creation of a healthy competition and a sense of belonging and co-presence. It may be added that it also triggered students' motivation, but it may be assessed short term only, especially in the light of the fact that they were rewarded based on their class attendance and implication.

In order to assess the gamified course of the second semester we employed three structured questions. The first one – *How would you describe your 2nd semester of Business English?* – was answered by 200 students (Table 1).

understood more	were more involved	could have done more	did their best as before	less involved
62	49	38	25	26

Table 1.

The second question was answered by 188 out of 200 students - *Compared to the 1st semester, you consider you learnt* (Table 2).

better	the same	don't know	no answer	worse
150	38	0	11	0

Table 2.

The third question concerns the teacher's activity and the potential introduction of activities for a future generation - *You would suggest your teacher to* (Table 3)

change nothing	include projects with foreign students as part of the semester activity	no answer	include homework as mandatory	ask for mandatory semester projects to present
112	43	20	11	9

Table 3.

As shown above, our digital gamified course of Business English contributed to maintaining the students' presence rate and involvement throughout the 2nd semester. Moreover, when asked to express any further comments about the course, they wrote appreciative sentences for a friendly learning environment.

Conclusive thoughts

The presented forms of gamified activities of digital ESP courses may be viewed as learner-friendly formative assessments. While there is a distinction between the assessment *for* learning or *of* learning (see Mudure-Iacob, 2020, p. 95), it depends on the place of the gamified activity within the course design and its aim. In both cases, the results offer valuable insight into the efficiency of teacher's teaching and learning activities.

Based on our experience during the second semester of Business English with the 1st year students, we may conclude that gamification contributes to a better presence rate, more involved and motivated audience. In general the gamified activities were well received and eagerly awaited. Nevertheless, future issues related to gamified activities should be explored, along with unclear aspects regarding digital natives' involvement.

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Assistant Lecturer Olga Grădinaru Ph.D. She is a member of the Department of Modern Languages and Business Communication within the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Her main areas of interest are: cultural history, Soviet and post-Soviet studies, film studies, war studies. (olga.gradinaru@econ.ubbcluj.ro)

Spiele im Online-Fremdsprachenunterricht / Playing and Online Foreign Language Teaching

Réka Kovács

The paper proposes to retrace some of the definitions of the term "play" by illustrating how the various interpretations interrelate, overlap and carry further connotations. It also discusses what approaches to playing should be integrated into classroom activities so that they can better respond to the learners' needs and preserve the attributes of the real play, namely enjoyment, detachment, creativity, motivation and freedom. The practical examples provided rest on the above principles and are adapted to online foreign language courses.

Play; definitions and characteristics of play; play and culture; play and development; playing and learning; games in online foreign language courses.

Einleitung

Dem Spielen wird eine betonte Bedeutung in vielen Lebensetappen der menschlichen Entwicklung zugeschrieben. Es erlaubt eine Abtrennung von der Routine, eine Abgrenzung vom Alltag und dadurch eine Zuflucht vor dem Unerwünschten. Es bereitet Vergnügen, bringt Seelenruhe voran, verstärkt das Wohlbefinden und überdies beflügelt es einen zum Erzeugen, zum Schaffen, wobei sich das Erleben vom Kreativen keinen deutlichen, abgezielten oder planmäßigen Bestrebungen unterordnet. Spielen gibt zahlreichen menschlichen Tätigkeiten Antrieb, indem es eine Welt erschafft, die dem Imaginären und dem Märchenhaften freien Lauf lässt, in der alles möglich oder erreichbar sein kann.

In Einklang mit den obigen Überlegungen widmet sich die Arbeit in ihrem ersten Teil der terminologischen Klärung des Begriffes „Spielen", um danach die Anwendung von Spielen im Fremdsprachenunterricht im Allgemeinen und im Online-Fremdsprachenunterricht im Besonderen zu verfolgen. Darüber hinaus wird erörtert, welche Rollen Spiele bei der Förderung von Entspannung und von Unterhaltung in dem virtuellen Raum einnehmen können. Auf diese Weise gewinnt die Darstellung der geeignetsten spielerischen Aktivitäten umso regeres Interesse, wenn man bedenkt, dass

der Online-Unterricht im Vergleich zu den herkömmlichen Stunden veränderte, in manchen Fällen ärmlichere Möglichkeiten anbieten sowie begrenztere Perspektiven eröffnen kann.

Theoretische Grundlagen

Spielen kann aus unterschiedlichen Blickwinkeln interpretiert werden. Die eingehende Auslegung des Phänomens wird einerseits durch die Fülle von Standpunkten und Ansichten erschwert. Andererseits, da viele Wissenschaften ihren Beitrag zur Verdeutlichung des Begriffes geleistet haben, sind in seiner Analyse weitere Auffassungen und Erklärungen zu berücksichtigen (Pellegrini, 2009), die sich ergänzen, sich kreuzen oder sich teilweise überschneiden. Aus diesem Grund werden in dem hiesigen Artikel lediglich die entscheidendsten Ansätze in Bezug aufs Spielen dargestellt.

Grundsätzlich wird Spielen als ein Handeln verstanden, das ohne ernsthaften und sofortigen Zweck vollzogen wird und das über eine stark motivierende Kraft verfügt, sodass es zum größeren Lustgefühl und dadurch zum Erfolgserlebnis führen kann. Mithilfe des Spielens können Fertigkeiten erworben, Kenntnisse angeeignet und Erfahrungen gesammelt werden. Kreativität und Innovation können freigesetzt werden, indem viel Neues und Schöpferisches entsteht, ohne das Erzielen eines deutlichen oder greifbaren Resultates. (Bateson, 2005)

Im Folgenden, um das Phänomen näher zu untersuchen, werden sowohl seine strukturellen wie auch seine funktionellen und kausalen Beschreibungen in Anspruch genommen. Strukturell betrachtet wird Spielen durch Körperbewegungen und zusätzlich durch die wechselhafte und unvollständige Abfolge der spielerischen Elemente gekennzeichnet. Der funktionelle Faktor äußert sich darin, dass Spielen selbst keinen Zweck erfüllt, auch wenn es einem echten Verhalten nahekommt oder mit einem gewissen Handeln zusammenhängt. Deswegen ist für die spielende Person der Zustand, den das Spielen hervorruft, viel wichtiger als dessen Ausgang. Der kausale Charakter ist durch den Kontext, in dem das Spiel vorkommt und durch Motivation wahrzunehmen. In anderen Worten verläuft Spielen in einem sicheren und sorglosen Umfeld und wird von den Teilnehmern, vorwiegend von Kindern, selbst ausgewählt beziehungsweise freiwillig ausgeführt. (Pellegrini, 2009)

Für die Bestimmung des Begriffes beziehungsweise für die Identifizierung des Phänomens hat Burghardt M. Gordon (2011) ein ähnliches Modell ausgearbeitet, gemäß welchem Spielen fünf Kriterien erfüllen soll. In seiner Hinsicht ist Spielen nicht völlig funktionell, das heißt, dass es unter gewissen Umständen Werte und Rollen vertreten kann, auch wenn es zu keinem Ziel führt. Zu dem zweiten Aspekt des Spielens zählen Spontaneität, Freiwilligkeit und die Fähigkeit, Vergnügen zu bereiten. Daneben äußert es sich in Unvollständigkeit, in Übertreibung und ist von veränderten und nachfolgenden Verhaltensweisen begleitet. Die vierte Kategorie besagt, dass Spielen sich in einer

ähnlichen Form wiederholt und nicht zuletzt findet es in einer entspannten, unbesorgten und stressfreien Umgebung statt. (Burghardt, 2011)

Spielen wird zugleich in Verbindung mit Kultur veranschaulicht. Der Kulturhistoriker Johan Huizinga führt in seinem Buch „Homo Ludens" den Ursprung der Kultur aufs Spiel zurück (Huizinga, 2018), betrachtet Spielen als eine Tätigkeit voller Bedeutung (Huizinga, 2018) und versieht es mit den folgenden Attributen. Vorerst ist Spielen eine freie, unabsichtliche Beschäftigung (Andersen, 2009), die aus reiner Freude entsteht. (Huizinga, 2018) Somit hängt es nicht unbedingt mit der Befriedigung der Bedürfnisse und der Lebensnotwendigkeiten zusammen. (Henricks, 2006) In diesem Fall verleiht Huizinga dem Spielen eine kulturelle Rolle, da es imstande ist, Werte auszudrücken, Ideale zu vertreten und Schönes zu schöpfen. Spielen ist außerdem durch räumliche und zeitliche Begrenztheit geprägt und stützt sich letztendlich auf Regeln. Das Vorhandensein der Vorschriften verstärkt nicht nur das Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühl in den Spielteilnehmern, sondern dient auch der Aufbewahrung der durchs Spielen entfaltenden Stimmung. (Huizinga, 2018)

Überdies kann Spielen als Spiegelung der Entwicklungsfortschritte betrachtet werden. (Chazan, 2002) In Anlehnung an die kognitive Spieltheorie von Jean Piaget ist unter Übungs-, Symbol- und Regelspiele zu unterscheiden, wobei diese Spielformen verschiedenen kognitiven Entwicklungsetappen entsprechen. (Heimlich, 2001) Das Übungs- oder das Funktionsspiel gehört zu den frühesten Spielen in der Entwicklung des Kindes und ist durch das Wiederholen von einfachen Tätigkeiten charakterisiert, indem das Kind bei seinem Umgang mit der Außenwelt Lust empfindet. (Stone, 1993) Das Symbolspiel beruht dagegen auf Fantasie und tritt in den 2.-7. Lebensjahren des Kindes auf. (Ganguin, 2010) Anhand des Symbolspieles wird die Wirklichkeit vorgetäuscht und nachgebildet (Grubbauer, 2011), so trägt es einerseits zum Spracherwerb des Kindes (Umek & Fekonja, 2007), andererseits zum Entdecken der Wirklichkeit bei. (Grubbauer, 2011) Das Regelspiel gewinnt im Alter von 7.-11. an Bedeutung (Ganguin, 2010) und bezieht sich auf solche Tätigkeiten, bei denen gewisse Vorschriften befolgt werden (Hauser, 2016). So wird diese Art von Spiel für die Sozialisierung des Kindes unentbehrlich. (Brodkorb, 2003) Zusätzlich hat das sogenannte Konstruktionsspiel eine besondere Rolle, indem es den Übergang vom Spiel zur tatsächlichen Arbeit gestaltet. (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 2017)

Spielen hängt offensichtlich auch mit Lernen zusammen. Es besteht kein Zweifel, dass es einen wesentlichen Beitrag zum Lernen und zur Entwicklung tragen kann. (Moyles, 2015) Jedoch werden im erzieherischen und schulischen Umfeld dem Begriff „Spielen" weitere Facetten zugemessen. Hier stellt sich die Frage, wie die spielerischen Tätigkeiten behandelt beziehungsweise wie sie in den Unterricht eingebaut werden können. In diesem Sinne kann man zwei Richtlinien in Betracht ziehen. Bei der einen wird Spielen von Erwachsenen gesteuert, wobei der Schwerpunkt auf den von der

Lehrkraft für die Lernenden geplanten und ausgearbeiteten spielerischen Tätigkeiten liegt. Bei der zweiten Interpretierung geht man hingegen vom Kind aus und konzentriert sich darauf, was für Bedeutungen Spielen für die Lernenden tragen kann. Dieser letztere Fall, in dem der Eingriff seitens der Lehrer in die spielerischen Tätigkeiten abnimmt, kann sich am besten dem echten, in der ursprünglichen Bedeutung verwendeten Spiel annähern. (Wood, 2010)

Es steht nun fest, dass auf Basis des Begriffes „Spielen" eine Reihe von Theorien und Überlegungen vorhanden sind, die das Phänomen aus unterschiedlichen Ansichtspunkten und in vielen Kontexten ergreifen. Trotz der Abweichungen in den Einstellungen weist Spielen gemeinsame Punkte auf, und zwar, dass es ohne Zwang, ohne bestimmtes Ziel aus dem tiefsten Inneren in den Vordergrund rückt. Es ist eine Quelle der Freude, die Kreativität fördert und die die Spielenden zusammenhält. Aus diesem Grund ist sein Beitrag weder zu dem Fremdsprachenunterricht noch zu dem Online-Fremdsprachenunterricht zu vernachlässigen.

Des Weiteren wird Einblick in die Rollen des Spielens im Fremdsprachenunterricht gewährt, sodass in dem praktischen Teil der Arbeit einzelne Beispiele für spielerische Aktivitäten aufgezählt werden, die auch im Online-Fremdsprachenunterricht standhalten können und die Stunden im virtuellen Raum zu bereichern vermögen.

Praktische Grundlagen

Es ist eine wohlbekannte Tatsache, dass das Erlernen einer Fremdsprache mit vielen Anstrengungen verbunden ist. Studierende stoßen oft auf Schwierigkeiten, fühlen sich unsicher und darüber hinaus wirken ihre Misserfolge entmutigend oder beunruhigend. Mit dem Einsatz von Spielen in den Unterricht können dennoch viele negative Gefühle überwunden werden, da Tätigkeiten in spielerischer Form den Lernenden dazu verhelfen, die wahre Sprache zu erleben. (Wright, Betteridge & Buckby, 2006) Deswegen kann mithilfe der Spiele die Stimmung im Klassenzimmer aufgelockert, Begeisterung erzeugt, Motivation gesteigert und nicht zuletzt Verbundenheit gestärkt werden.

Nun richten wir unser Augenmerk auf den Online-Fremdsprachenunterricht, wobei spielerische Tätigkeiten weitere Rollen übernehmen. Priorität wird an dieser Stelle eher bei der von der Gruppe bestimmten Atmosphäre beziehungsweise bei dem Wohlgefühl der Klassenteilnehmer gesetzt. Neben der Tatsache, dass im virtuellen Raum gewisse Lerninhalte vermittelt werden sollen, stand in unserem Fall noch eine andere wichtige Frage im Fokus, und zwar, inwiefern man Beziehungen zu den Studierenden des ersten Jahrgangs aus dem Nichts heraus aufbauen, pflegen und vertiefen kann. Es ist unnötig zu erwähnen, dass es sich hier um solche Lernenden handelt, die sich wegen der Corona-Krise ausschließlich im Online-Raum trafen und kennenlernten. In voller

Kenntnis dieser Aspekte wurden Spiele und spielerische Elemente in die Wirtschaftsenglischseminare eingegliedert, sodass die Studierenden einander menschlich näherkommen und sich mit den neuen Umständen des Online-Unterrichtes leichter vertraut machen konnten. Gleichzeitig wurde versucht, die reale Stimmung des Präsenzunterrichtes so viel wie möglich wiederzugeben beziehungsweise die virtuelle Umgebung mit Energie, mit Heiterkeit und mit Kreativität zu füllen. Nebenbei sei noch hinzuzufügen, dass es die Kursteilnehmer waren, die sich im Mittelpunkt der spielerischen Aktivitäten befanden, im Gegensatz zu der Lehrkraft, die eine Nebenrolle übernahm und hinter den Kulissen blieb.

Was das Auswählen der spielerischen Tätigkeiten anbelangt, ist zu erwähnen, dass es sich sowohl auf die von dem Lehrer verwendete Literatur als auch auf Fantasie und erfinderische Initiativen gründete. In diesem Punkt werden einige derart Aktivitäten zum Vorschein gebracht, die sich positiver Rückmeldung vonseiten der Lernenden erfreuten.

Zu einer der beliebtesten spielerischen Beschäftigungen gehörte die Erstellung von einem Meme, das die Gefühle und den Seelenzustand der Studierenden widerspiegelte. (Clandfield & Hadfield, 2017) Diese Beschäftigung ging von der Annahme aus, dass die Lernenden Freude an die kreative Anwendung der Technik finden würden und dass sie sich ihrer Gefühle besser bewusst sein könnten. Als eine weitere Anwendung vom Spiel galt eine Tätigkeit, anhand derer die Studierenden zwei Schlagzeilen („Unethisches Handeln hinter tadellosem Management" und „Katze im Präsidentenstuhl") erhielten und die sie in Zeitungsartikel entwickeln sollten. (Clandfield & Hadfield, 2017) Diese Art von Spiel bewegte in erster Linie die Fantasie der Kursteilnehmer und nebenbei eignete sie sich zum Üben von Schreiben beziehungsweise zur Erweiterung des Wortschatzes in Bezug auf das Thema „Management".

Fernerhin werden solche Aktivitäten zur Sprache gebracht, die der bunten Kreativität der Lehrkraft entsprungen sind. Erstens berichten wir über eine einfachere Tätigkeit, die in Posten von alten Fotos bestand, die für die Studierenden von Bedeutung waren und die eine wichtige Etappe in ihrem Leben schilderten. Selbstverständlich sollten auch Erklärungen zu den Bildern geliefert werden, sodass die Teilnehmer miteinander Informationen, Geschichten und Erlebnisse austauschten. Außerdem wurden auch Pantomimen meisterhaft in die Stunden eingeführt, um grammatische Strukturen darzubieten. Die Studierenden haben die Pantomimen willkommen geheißen und haben offensichtlich Spaß an das Erleben der Körperbewegungen gehabt.

Auch die Chatfunktion wurde im Rahmen der virtuellen Stunden völlig ausgenutzt. Nachdem ein Mustersatz angegeben wurde, sollten die Lernenden in einer bestimmten Abfolge weitere Sätze bilden, sodass sich daraus eine Geschichte entspann. Zweifellos lag das spielerische Element darin, dass der Verlauf der Ereignisse geändert werden konnte, worauf wiederum reagiert werden musste. Auf diese Weise sind Witze,

Herausforderungen und Spannungen vorgekommen, mit anderen Worten wurde das Online-Klassenzimmer besonders aktiv belebt.

Bilder wurden auch häufig in die Seminare eingebaut. Zum Unterrichtsthema „Beschwerdebriefe" wurden zum Beispiel den Kursteilnehmern unerwartete und witzige Fotos mit kaputten oder unerwünschten Waren gezeigt. Es hing von der Vorstellungskraft der Gruppe ab, welche Qualitäten sie im Produkt zu verbergen sahen und was für Beschwerdebriefe sie zum Artikel verfassten. Mit einem weiteren Anlass wurden den Lernenden Fotos vorgelegt, die gewisse Fähigkeiten darstellten, die erraten werden sollten. Zusätzlich sollten Kollegen oder Kolleginnen in der Gruppe genannt werden, die über diese Eigenschaften verfügten. Man darf auch nicht unerwähnt lassen, dass sich mittels dieses Spieles den Lernenden die Möglichkeit bot, mit einander interagieren sowie engere Beziehungen zu einander zu knüpfen.

Schließlich ist noch eine andere Aktivität vorzustellen, für die die Unterrichtsteilnehmer großes Interesse gezeigt haben. Wir sprechen über eine Art von Wettbewerb, die virtuell stattfand und wobei die Anwesenden verschiedene Aussagen bezüglich Länder und kultureller Vielfalt mitbekamen. Die Studierenden wurden in Mannschaften eingeteilt und jede Gruppe sollte die richtigen Sätze herausfinden. Falls sie ihre Antworten verfehlten, wurde ihnen eine Strafe auferlegt. Diese Strafe setzte natürlich das spielerische Element voraus, das heißt, dass die Lernenden zum Beispiel einfache Turnbewegungen vollziehen, Pantomimen vorstellen, Liebeserklärungen vorlesen, mit Bällen jonglieren, Grimassen schneiden, Lieder singen oder Tricks vorführen durften. Kurz gefasst ist ein Online-Spielplatz entstanden, auf dem die räumliche Distanz ausgeschlossen und so das Spiel in vollen Zügen genossen wurde.

All dies deutet darauf hin, dass sich der Online-Fremdsprachenunterricht Platz fürs Spielen und für spielerische Aktivitäten reservieren soll. Indem die Lernenden auf der virtuellen Bühne agiert haben, sind sie aktive Teilnehmer der Stunden geworden, denen eine zentrale Rolle zukam, und zwar in Tätigkeiten und Ereignissen mitzubestimmen. Dies ergibt sich schon allein dadurch, dass Spiele Perspektiven eröffneten, um voneinander zu lernen und aufeinander wirken zu können. In dieser Hinsicht setzte die Lehrkraft lediglich den Rahmen für die Entfaltung der Kreativität, der Inspiration und der positiven Gefühle, die Show wurde jedoch von den Studierenden gespielt.

Zusammenfassung

Das Verständnis von Spielen kann dabei helfen, ein breiteres Angebot von spielerischen Aktivitäten in den Online-Fremdsprachenunterricht einzuführen. Unabhängig davon, welche Interpretierung des studierten Begriffes in Betracht genommen wird, kann man sich daran einigen, dass einem das Spielen unendliche Freiheit gewährt, sich kreativ zu äußern und das Fantasievolle zu erleben. Laut Wood & Attfield (2005) enthält Spielen ein Widerspruch in sich dadurch, dass es eine

Distanzierung vor der Wirklichkeit ermöglicht, gleichzeitig aber einen gerade für die Wirklichkeit vorbereitet. (Wood & Attfield, 2005) Ebendarum ist die Rolle des Spielens sowohl im Leben als auch im Unterricht hervorzuheben.

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Assistant Lecturer Kovács Réka, Ph.D. She is a member of the Department of Modern Languages and Business Communication within the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. She has been teaching Business English and Business German courses to graduate and undergraduate students. Her main areas of interest are: culture management, organisational communication and business English teaching. (reka.kovacs@econ.ubbcluj.ro)

Gamified Assessment of Business English: Learning and Testing Business Idioms and Collocations via Digital Escape Rooms

Ioana Mudure-Iacob

Business English teaching and learning requires customised assessment mechanisms, perhaps even more so in the current digital format, as digitally native learners call for a complex array of expectations in terms of language usability. Gamified learning experiences can serve as multifunctional instruments of blending formative assessment and entertainment along learning sequences, engaging learners in an enriching challenge that both motivates them in the pursuit of language skills and grants them autonomy in collaborative tasks. Learners' use of idioms and collocations in the Business English framework can be tailored through digital breakout room tasks, which allow for a mechanism of formative assessment and interactive learning in a creative instructional format. The gamified filter serves the purpose of enabling students to self-test their Business English skills in problem-solving digital scenarios, while at the same time, extending the teachers' assessment role towards a more entertaining format. The opportunities and challenges of having to break out of digital escape rooms, particularly using idioms and specific phrases in vocabulary and speaking-based tasks, can pave the way to more engaging learning methods.

Gamified assessment; digital escape rooms; Business idioms; collaborative learning; autonomy.

1. Introduction

The trajectory from guided learning to autonomous learning of Business English is complex, at times difficult, and quite frequently paved with goals that are hard to achieve. Nowadays learners, belonging to a generation that is digitally native, are more active participants in redesigning both learning needs and teaching process. Particularly, learning and teaching Business English calls for an interactive process that facilitates peer interaction, tech affordances that enhance language use, and contexts in which 21st century skills are paired with language skills. However, to enable such learning scenarios,

a new design of assessment is deemed necessary and, in the context of online learning/teaching, gamification can become an enriching framework for designing more engaging learning sequences.

The shift from onsite to online or hybrid learning caused by the pandemic throughout the recent two academic years has reconfigured learning/teaching in terms of content, strategy, approaches and variety of digital apps. Nonetheless, the numerous digital benefits and tech affordances have enriched the organisation of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) classes, allowing for more accurate formative assessment as a manner of using motivation for engaged and autonomous learning. Moreover, with the array of gamified quizzes as teaching and evaluation instruments, ipsative assessment can become a resourceful formative assessment tool. Progress tracking and boosting motivation via gamified learning structures thus become pillars in the foundation of empowering students to become autonomous learners.

Using the communicative approach and focusing on facilitating Business English (BE) learning through collaborative tasks, most, if not allof the BE classes we have taught consisted of authentic learning and assessment activities. By embedding authentic assessment within the language class, the major benefit is to facilitate critical thinking and encourage development of real-life skills. The recurrent emphasis in terms of vocabulary content teaching was on Business idioms and collocations, whereas formative and ipsative assessment consisted of gamified quizzes, group/pair synchronous work, and digital escape rooms.

While using gamification as a mainstream tool of teaching Business English, the teacher-learner roles were negotiated and adapted to match language learning and real-life skills, on one hand, and to enable a jocular and flexible manner of learning, on the other hand. The manner in which gamification worked as support of assessment and teaching of vocabulary, and particularly idioms in the context of Business English learning, makes the topic of the current paper. Moreover, the paper indicates good practice learning sequences and gamified assessment scenarios for introducing and evaluating Business English students' progress via digital escape rooms.

2. Gaming Teaching and Assessment: Digital Escape Rooms and Idioms paired with Netspeak

The question of whether teaching and assessment need to be under the umbrella of gamification in the context of online instruction is tightly related to the typology of nowadays language learners. Particularly, dealing with learners who are digital natives implies that their digital vernacular calls for an empowerment of students as active participants (content creators even) in online classes. With brains wired for games, the expectations and needs that such learners have can be answered in the manner of designing compatible learning outcomes, namely, using language as a communication tool for networking and for mimicking real-life and workplace contexts.

Moreover, with learning becoming more and more an automated mechanism in online instruction, there is the recurrent risk of the tech dimension taking over the pedagogical and didactic dimensions. In this respect, it is the role of the teacher/assessor to balance and customise these tripartite dimensions so as to build integrated learning ecosystems. Gamification, defined as the incorporation of "game mechanics, dynamics and frameworks to promote desired behaviors" (Lee& Hammer, 2011, p.1)

2.1. Playing with Assessmentin Digital Escape Rooms

The digital framework of assessment for Business English learners brings forward new ways of designing evaluation in such a way as to cater for the needs and capacities of digital native learners. With the numerous affordances provided by digital instruments and with learners' readiness to explore any jocular learning experience, assessment can be easily customised to suit the target learning outcomes. There are significant advantages provided by Learning Management Systems (LMS) and various interactive platforms that support teachers in using ipsative and formative assessment as effective educational tools. Moreover, the digital format allows for a customising of feedback that students get, leading to empowered and autonomous learners.

Firstly, in sketching the framework of gamified assessment, it is mandatory to delineate what formative and, respectively, ipsative assessment represent and how gamification can be applied to such structures. Black and Wiliam (1998) refer to formative assessment as the system of tasks and activities that can modify the manner of teaching according to specific feedback received/provided along the instructional process. Such adaptation is made according to learners' needs, and, in the digital format, with the array of gamified quizzes generating instant leaderboards and individual feedback as points or badges, the identification of issues or challenges that learners may face is made easier.

Being remedial and motivational, as well as informal and learner-friendly, formative assessment may well be used as a proactive instrument that replaces the proctored-testing structure of evaluation with a personalised mechanism of tracking learners' achievement. Not only does it provide an outlook into the future steps to be taken in adjusting content and speed of teaching processes, but it allows for learners to take over the authority role and gain increased responsibility (Mudure-Iacob, 2020, p. 96).

Secondly, digital teaching allows for a more accurate and complex tracking of students' progress in language learning by using ipsative assessment as a monitoring mechanism of learning.

Ipsative assessment compares existing performance with previous performance. Many informal and practical learning experiences are assessed in this way such as sports coaching, music teaching and in computer best. A personal best in athletics

is an ipsative assessment. By contrast, in much academic learning, where assessment is made in relation to external attainment criteria or rubrics, credit is rarely given for how far the learner has advanced since the previous piece of work (Hughes, 2011, p. 355).

With ipsative assessment, as an evaluation tool integrated in formative assessment, teachers can provide more customised feedback, based on accurate and complex comparisons between learners' previous works, indicating progress or lack of progress. It requires discipline and organisation on behalf of the assessor, but the end result generates learner motivation and enhances students to pursue their language learning with more autonomous approaches.

Since the instructional process was online or hybrid throughout the recent academic years, conducting assessment was also subjected to the digital influence. Highly experiential and with strong jocular features, one promising educational instrument is gamified assessment, understood as "gamification in the context of assessment- the process of applying game-based elements to assessment processes, in a deliberate attempt to either make them more appealing, enjoyable, engaging or less onerous to candidates" (Hughes, 2011, p. 359)

Gamified assessment can be organised in numerous ways, from interactive quizzes, to collaborative group and pair work, to game-based learning sequences and digital escape rooms. However, the most inclusive foundation for assessment in a jocular and formative manner remains the use of digital escape rooms. Evolved and adapted from the popular escape rooms, educational (and digital) escape rooms represent "methods requiring learners to participate in collaborative playful activities explicitly designed for domain knowledge acquisition or skill development so that they can accomplish a specific goal by solving puzzles linked to unambiguous learning objectives in a limited amount of time" (Fotaris& Mastoras, 2019, p.237). With an interactive format that allows the embedding of multiple tasks and quizzes, digital escape rooms can be customised to mimic real-life or workplace contexts, adding a resourceful learning dimension of 21st century skills to the aimed language skills under scrutiny.

Combining all language skills in a customised narrative meant to simulate a thematic practice environment, digital escape rooms allow for complex formative and ipsative assessment. Moreover, using such assessment instruments, learners detach from the pressing feeling that their progress in language learning is quantified merely in grades. In fact, such grading systems are replaced with badges, scoreboards and customisable avatars, making assessment very similar to game playing and creating a learning context that enhances motivation and autonomy among participants.

The rules of digital escape rooms share the same criteria: participants need to break out of virtual rooms by seeking digital keys, which can be traced after solving language-based tasks, vocabulary quizzes, crosswords, puzzles, interactive listening and reading activities. Along with these virtual keys, learners obtain clues or hints that allow them to progress from one set of challenges to the ones in the next virtual room.

Equally important, teachers can customise the escape room narrative scenarios and create thematic units that require students to use particular language skills and structures, while, at the same time, enabling them to think critically. Figure 1 indicates a narrative scenario for a digital escape room created for 1st and 2nd year undergraduate students majoring in Business Studies, who were formatively assessed at the end of each semester from the academic year 2020/2021 via digital escape rooms. Each sequence they had to solve focused on assessing language skills, ability to use and recognise business idioms, to prove accurate comprehension of written and audio-video resources and to produce language in speaking tasks. Likewise, this form of evaluation also meant that peer-assessment was conducted, with learners responding to audio-visual recordings (Flipgrid) and sharing learning experiences.
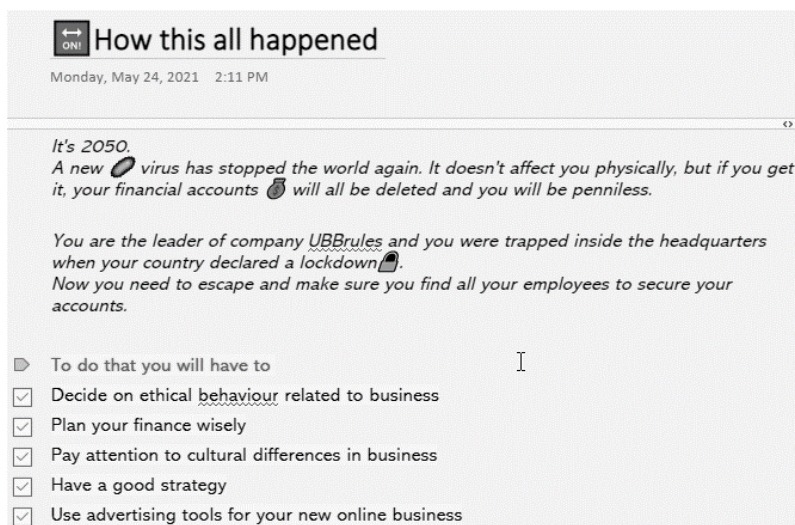
Figure 1. Narrative scenario for *Trapped inside the office* digital escape room

Gamified assessment can thus be integrative, covering a variety of tasks that test all language skills and escape rooms allow for either synchronous work, focusing on pair and group learning, or asynchronous work, enabling learners to become more autonomous and empowered along the way. Likewise, gamified assessment allows for teaching integrated and soft skills together with Business English, enhancing learners' skills in problem-solving, critical thinking and collaboration, whereas the added-value

and outcome of learning is to build networking capacity for future employees in the business field.

2.2. Teaching Business English Idioms in Gamified Scenarios

The focus in terms of teaching Business English vocabulary was to structure instruction around the communicative, task-based, and collaborative approaches. In doing so, students benefited from contextual learning scenarios in which language interaction was the tool for developing communicative skills. Given the feature of Business English as an ESP course with a wide variety of terminology and business-related collocations, the emphasis in terms of teaching vocabulary was on introducing and assessing idioms.

Idioms, or "phraseologisms" (Gries, 2008, p.5), or "fixed expressions" (Carter, 1998, p.112) are defined in the Oxford English Dictionary (2021) as "a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words". Idiomatic competence "empowers learners to use language in socially responsible ways" (Liontas, 2017, p. 8), paving the way for competent learners and for upper-intermediate and advanced levels of language usage. Nonetheless, knowledge and use of idioms is not merely reserved to advanced learners, but it can represent a resourceful manner of studying vocabulary by learners of all levels.

There are various advantages for teaching and learning idioms, stemming from the fact that teachers can enable contextual learning to the facilitation of acquiring operational language by Business English learners. The former refers to the sociocultural dimension attached to idioms, by which learners can grasp cultural cues and features along with their understanding of specific idioms. In doing so, they make use of multicultural awareness and etymological experimentation and there are different tasks that can be organised in this respect, from matching the meaning of a mother tongue idiom to an English idiom, to organising and studying idioms according to thematic elements (colour, business, weather, animal, etc.).

The latter, facilitation of acquiring operational language is a prerequisite of building 21st century skills and it enables learners to use language in specific communicative contexts in order to prove a native command of language. It makes spoken language more genuine and, in the context of using Business English, it shows mastery of language skills and creative speaking skills.

However, there are noteworthy challenges to be mentioned along the idioms teaching process. Firstly, there is reluctance on behalf of students to persevere in learning and using idioms through tasks, perhaps because they find it difficult to find an alternative meaning in their mother tongue inventory of idiomatic expressions. Secondly, the practice of idioms requires repetitive exposure of learners to such vocabulary items and various tasks and activities to enable them to use, recycle and repurpose the idioms in new contexts.

To counterbalance these challenges with the opportunities that idioms provide, we paired Business vocabulary teaching with gamified formative and ipsative assessment and eventually tested learners' progress in sequential tasks along the digital escape rooms. One such strategy was to facilitate authentic learning and, at the same time, approach instruction with the specific manner of communication that the digital native generation uses online. *Features of Netspeak*, a term coined by D. Crystal (2006) as a new electronic medium of communication, were used along the teaching process of Business idioms, by doubling definitions and explanations with digital visual aids (gifs and memes) in an attempt to make learning a more popular act.

Furthermore, the *recurrent use of gamified quizzes* (which were used weekly) such as Kahoot!, Quizizz, Quizlet allowed for an accurate mechanism of tracking learners' progress using badges, leaderboards and sketching thus ipsative assessment records along the semester. The alternative to this gamified learning scenarios was the more traditional set of vocabulary tasks meant to practice and idioms (matching, fill in the blanks, write your own sentences), the two approaches indicating a connection between these different means of teaching and assessing, on one hand, and learners' level of interest in studying idioms, on the other hand.

In addition to the use of Netspeak features, we used *emojis and emoji coded rebuses* to assess receptive language skills, by presenting learners with idioms that were coded as emojis. Their task was to decipher the coded idiom and use it in a sentence of their own. Figure 2 below shows examples of coded idioms that were used during our Business English class with the purpose of enabling learners to use inference while learning idioms. The coded emojis illustrated the following idioms: *time flies, there's no point in crying over spilt milk, kill two birds with one stone, see eye to eye.*

Figure 2. Emoji coded idioms using Netspeak features

Moreover, a major interest was in recycling vocabulary into other tasks that would allow learners to use their productive language skills. The sustainability of these digital resources (emoji coded idioms) was tested and proved effective while organising other assessment activities throughout the digital escape rooms, namely the emoji rebuses. The purpose of emoji rebuses is to use pictograms as shown in Figure 3 below in order to decipher the meaning of words and then put together collocations or idioms. Each

pictogram indicates whether learners need to replace, add or remove letters from the word illustrated as a symbol. The sentence illustrated by the set of pictograms in Figure 3 is *Learn the ropes if you want to get promoted.*

Figure 3. Emoji rebus assessing idioms

Another example of recycling idioms is shown in Figure 4, as part of the gamified assessment sequence, in which students had to unlock idioms based on emoji combinations and then count the words in all the reconstituted idioms in order to get the password.
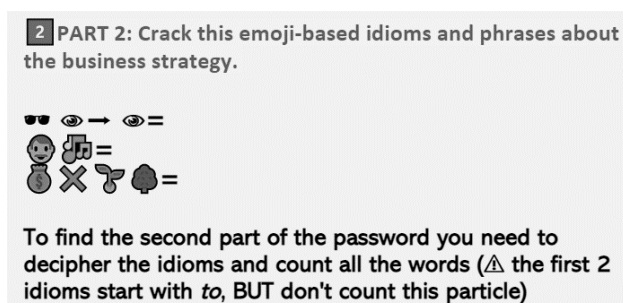
Figure 4. Escape room assessment sequence

The three illustrated idioms in the figure above are: *to see eye to eye, to face the music, money doesn't grow on trees,* and the password was twelve, as the total number of words (except for the word *to*) used in the correct identification of idioms.

Eventually, another teaching strategy that we used to provide sustainability of teaching Business idioms was also embedded in the gamified assessment scenarios of digital escape rooms. This referred to using as many deciphered idioms in an audio-video recording using Flipgrid while explaining the success of advertising in a given set of commercials. By using idioms with productive language skills, learners gained more autonomy in language use and proved comprehension and creativity.

3. Ahead of the game: Assessing Business Vocabulary through the Lens of Gamification

3.1. Compare and contrast: traditional or gamified?

To test the efficiency of the strategies and approaches used for teaching Business vocabulary (Netspeak infused teaching and assessment, gamified quizzes) and for assessing language skills via digital escape rooms we used two instruments of reference. For the first section, we conducted a comparative analysis based on the results that students obtained in two formative assessment sequences. The premise was that learning of idioms in a jocular and gamified manner, which is closer to the needs and features of digital natives, could lead to more effective results of learning. The undergraduate students who were taught using these strategies and approaches consisted of 50 learners in their 1st year of Business studies, split in two groups of the same approximate language level.

Vocabulary teaching of idioms was structured in two modules that were taught along the spring semester of the academic year 2020-2021. Each module consisted of integrating instruction of Business English idioms within the units taught to the two groups of 1st year undergraduate students, followed by formative assessment at the end of each module. The average number of idioms taught per class was 4, leading to a total of 40 idioms taught and learned for each of the two modules.

Module 1, taught to students in the first group, was centered on explicit instruction, by which the teacher explained the meaning of each idiom, provided one or two examples. For deliberate practice, students completed various traditional vocabulary tasks- multiple choice, fill in the blanks, match the idiom to the meaning etc.

Module 2, taught to students in group 2, revolved around Netspeak infused instruction, by which the explanation and definition of each idiom was paired with visual aids such as memes or gifs illustrating the idiom as a way of supporting comprehension. Moreover, learners were asked to find a similar idiom in their native language and compare the two idioms and use them in sentences of their own. Deliberate practice consisted of using emoji codes to guess the idioms, matching tasks using gamified apps such as Wordwall and Quizlet, or making short dialogues starting from idiomatic phrases and sentences coded as emoji rebuses.

Assessment of the two modules was conducted via a quiz applied to each group, using the evaluation platform TestMoz, which allowed for synchronous assessment. The quiz consisted of twenty items, with multiple choice, true/false, fill in the gaps, matching, write your own sentence, and error correction tasks. The maximum number of points that a student could receive for correct completion of tasks was 5, and the results indicated that students in group 1, whose instruction was organised in Module 1, got a 3.2 average grade, whereas students who completed Module 2 obtained a 4.4 average grade. The difference of over 1 point indicates that students who studied and practiced Business English idioms using a gamified framework had better results than those who went

through a traditional learning/teaching format. Paired with the oral feedback provided by students after completing emoji coded tasks and digital escape room challenges, the results verify the initial premise according to which an adaptation of the teaching content to suit the needs of digital native speakers by means of Netspeak influence.

3.2. Learners' perception of digital escape rooms as interactive language learning tools

To verify the impact that gamified assessment via digital escape rooms had upon learners in terms of language learning progress, autonomous learning, and respectively peer-assessment affordances, we administered a questionnaire to undergraduate students (1st and 2nd year of study) enrolled in Business Studies, Bistrița University Extension. From the total of 78 students, 64 of them completed the form, and the same number of students also finished the Digital Escape Room challenge at the end of term. Participants were asked to complete an 11-item questionnaire (with multiple choice, checkbox, open answer options), sent through Google forms, which they completed after finishing the Digital Escape Room challenge.

The leading premises were that collaborative work in gamified formats leads to *active engagement in language learning*, that *peer-assessment can be a valuable tool for enhancing motivation*, and that *gamified assessment boosts self-appreciation* and supports autonomous learning. We will illustrate below representations of students' responses regarding the aspects above-mentioned, referring to a limited number of questions, given the word limit.

Gamified assessment allowed for *interactivity* and the digital escape room challenge that students completed, entitled *Trapped in the office*, could be assigned as a synchronous or asynchronous assessment. Likewise, students were given the possibility to work individually or in teams, but the majority (90%) opted for team work. Respondents also indicated (Figure 5) that they found the task easier to solve when working together as compared to other individual tasks.
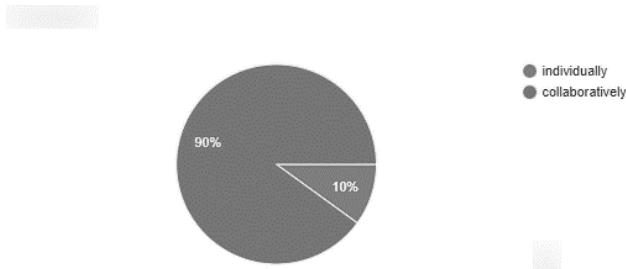
Figure 5. Learning approach for emoji coded idioms

Figure 6 shows the category of vocabulary tasks that learners found most interactive in the digital escape room assessment, with 56.7% of respondents choosing emoji-based idioms and rebus codes as the vocabulary task that enhanced interactive and collaborative work.

Referring to the Digital Escape Room, what vocabulary tasks did you consider most interactive (you enjoyed working with a partner)?

- fill in the blanks
- word formation
- emoji-based idioms and codes
- matching

56.7% 10% 16.7% 16.7%
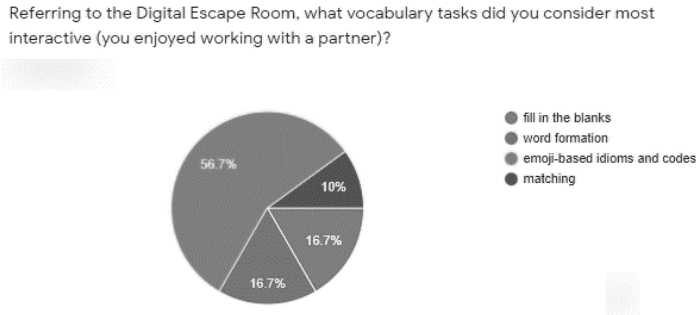
Figure 6. Interactive vocabulary tasks in digital escape rooms

Each virtual room that students had to unlock consisted of a variety of tasks, from listening activities to reading comprehension tasks, different vocabulary tasks and writing and speaking tasks. The preference for idioms and vocabulary tasks assigned as coded emoji rebuses confirms the initial premise that gamified learning and assessment turn students into active and engaged learners.

Regarding the link between enhanced *learner motivation and peer-assessment as outcomes of gamified assessment*, students were asked whether they used as models the audio-video answers provided by their colleagues in the Flipgrid sequence embedded in the digital escape room assessment.

In the Digital Escape Room, one task required a Flipgrid speaking activity (see the image]). Did you watch your colleagues' videos to see an example during and after completing the task?

- Yes
- No

19.4% 80.6%
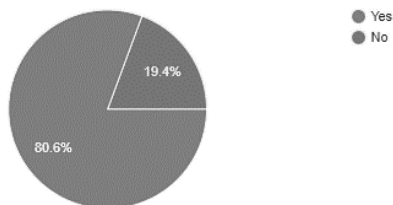
Figure 7. Learning from peers

Figure 7 above shows that more than 80% of respondents sought guidance by watching their peers' videos, especially since part of the task was to comment on the videos created by teams. Peer-assessment is a valuable tool in collaborative learning and,

in a gamified framework, it enables learners to exchange learning experiences, to share methods and approaches and to build micro-communities of language practice.

Furthermore, another aspect under scrutiny was how often students used their language skills throughout gamified assessment scenarios as compared to the use of language within traditional online or onsite classes. Since the digital escape room assessment was conducted asynchronously, students had to communicate permanently with their partners, along with having to use a variety of other skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, negotiation etc.

How much do you consider that Digital Escape Room tasks enabled you to use your English skills more than you would do it in a regular class?
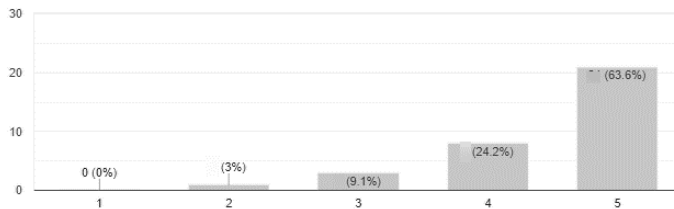
Figure 8. Use of language skills in gamified assessment formats

With 63.6% of respondents claiming that they had to use their language skills more than in a regular class (where they might not speak unless asked to or where they might not be active participants). Motivation to compete and finish the escape room challenge stood as the core principle behind such intensive use of language, digital and 21st century skills, confirming thus the premise that gamified assessment facilitates learning motivation and peer engagement.

Eventually, *to verify learners' perception of digital escape rooms* two particular questions were addressed. The first, *how did you feel when you managed to break out of all the offices and claim your prize?* was meant to test the premise that gamification in assessment leads to boosting learners' self-appreciation.

How did you feel when you managed to break out of all the offices and claim your prize?
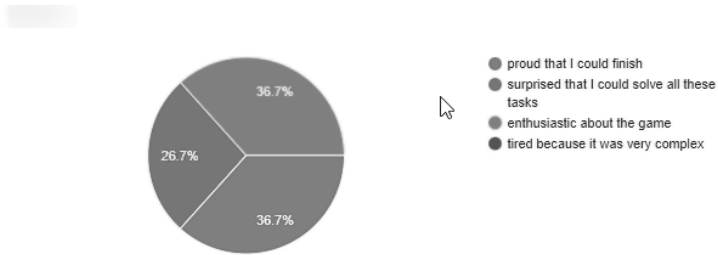
Figure 9. Students' feelings upon completing the digital escape room assessment

All respondents indicated a positive perception of the gamified assessment sequence and identified enthusiasm and pride as the core feelings they associated with completing a very complex and challenging assessment scenario. Moreover, 26.7% of them claimed they were surprised that they could solve all the tasks, which shows that, in some cases, learners underappreciate their language levels and abilities to use language skills in genuine communicative contexts.

The second question design to identify trigger factors for boosting learner engagement was *What stimulated you most in breaking out of the Digital Escape Rooms?* Students gave short answers, of which some are exemplified below:

"The game itself. It was fun to play and my partner helped a lot";

"We had to sort out minor conflicts to reach a decision and break out";

"The idea to find clues and break codes made everything twice as interesting and exciting";

"I competed against my colleagues and I won the first prize. It was super engaging";

"We had to solve a lot of puzzles and break codes, but there were also some old-school vocab tasks, which didn't seem so boring in this case";

"I've already used idioms in my other virtual rooms, so it wasn't so hard.";

"It was comforting to see that everybody did the task, I didn't feel so nervous";

"Speaking is not my strength, but I felt pretty good at idioms, so I made it in the end.";

"It felt as if I needed to win, so the pressure of doing a speaking task was not that big".

From increasing self-esteem to peer-assessment and building collaborative skills, all the factors that determined students to complete the gamified challenge sketch the profile of an autonomous learner. Despite the complex structure and often frustrating

feeling of having to retake some tasks, all students were highly impressed by completing the challenge and could track down the progress they made using ipsative feedback provided throughout the semester. Moreover, in the feedback form students completed after finishing the digital escape room assessment, most of them mentioned they gained autonomy both in learning and in mastery of digital skills, particularly since the majority of tasks were designed using various apps and digital tools (Wordwall, Flipgrid, Padlet, Vocaroo, Kahoot! EdPuzzle).

Conclusions

The strategy of teaching and assessing Business English vocabulary in the framework of gamification has proven to be resourceful, sustainable and motivating at the same time. Assigned as gamified quizzes, embedded in the instructional process with Netspeak influence or assembled into an inclusive and complex digital escape room scenario, assessment shifted from its status as mere evaluation tool to a mechanism that supported autonomous learning.

Moreover, the use of gamification in the teaching and assessment stages of Business English idioms enabled a customisation of instruction that focused on learners' needs and features (emphasizing the Netspeak communication dimension through memes and emojis as digital elements integrated in the teaching scenarios). While adapting and changing contents of teaching to suit the particular needs of Business English learning, the roles that digital teachers play in this context are also subject to change. Particularly, teachers need to build bridges between language knowledge and digital skills, and, at the same time, they have to facilitate and encourage learners' active engagement in the educational process, both as content creators and as peer assessors.

The experimental approach we used focused on gamifying both teaching and assessment of Business English idioms in an attempt to make learning more engaging and interactive, to boost motivation as a consequence of competition in quizzes and escape rooms, and respectively to pave the way for autonomous language learning by empowering students with the proper specialised vocabulary skills, digital and communicative skills. The results from the questionnaire analysis confirmed that gamification is indeed a promising mechanism of structuring assessment and making learning both interactive and more productive for learners who are active participants in an entertaining educational format.

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Assistant professor Ioana Mudure-Iacob PhD. She is a member of the Department of Foreign Specialised Languages within the Faculty of Letters of Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Her main areas of interest are: gamification in teaching and assessment, autonomous learning, digital storytelling in language learning. (ioanajacob@gmail.com)

A factual comparison of foreign (English) language acquisition factors in case of "Cserey-Goga" Technological High School's monolingual and bilingual students during the COVID-19 period

Csilla-Ibolya Sólyom

This paper analyses the impact of online teaching on the process of foreign language – in my case English - acquisition as L2 or L3 and its factors for high school age students from two different language backgrounds. After providing a brief summary of the major language learning factors, transfer in language acquisition, and a short survey of the current Corona (COVID-19) pandemic, I examine the results of the questionnaire applied to two groups of high school students. The available data indicate that perhaps contrary to expectations the COVID-impact aspect was not the dominant element in the students' response. I would highlight the comparison between two major groups of students: monolingual – in our case Romanian mother tongued students, and simultaneous bilingual – Hungarian mother tongued students who have already sequentially acquired the Romanian language as their first foreign language. In regards to the factors, I will briefly analyse motivation, attitude, cognitive style/personality, age, aptitude, teaching techniques and extensive use of digital media in English during the COVID-19 period. Literature suggests that those factors contribute more dominantly to second language acquisition and also present a varied dependence on behaviour towards the language, cognitive ability, and also the way they learn. I will consider the unusual circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, and attempt to define their impacting presence in second and third language acquisition processes.

Language acquisition; bilingualism; multilingualism; transfer; learning factors; digital technologies; digitalised teaching.

Introduction and definitions

Language acquisition is another phrase for learning a language. However, it is sometimes applied for different use and meaning such in second language acquisition

(SLA). When we try to formulate a definition, "the process by which a person learns a language is sometimes called acquisition instead of learning, because some linguists believe that the development of a first language in a child is a special process" (Richard, Platt, & Weber, 1985, p. 3). Ellis and Omaggio explain that acquisition can be broadly defined as the internalization of rules and formulas which are then used to communicate in L2 (Ellis, 1986, p. 292). They further say that it is the "spontaneous process of rule internalization that result from natural language used while learning consists of the development of conscious L2 knowledge through formal study" (Omaggio, 1986, p. 29). In other words, acquisition is unconscious study of a language in natural way and it does not depend on the language teaching. On the other hand, learning is a conscious study through formal instruction such as language classroom learning.

Jack Richards states in the Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics that second language acquisition is, "the process by which people develop proficiency in a second or foreign language" (Richard, Platt, & Weber, 1985, p. 252). Rod Ellis explains that SLA is "a complex process, involving many interrelated factors. It is the product of many factors pertaining to the learner on the one hand and the learning situation on the other" (Ellis, Understanding Second Language Acquisition, 1986, p. 4). In addition to these, Victoria Fromkin explains that SLA is "the acquisition of another language or language after first language acquisition that is under way or completed" (Fromkin, Rodman, & Hyams, 2002, p. 593). To conclude, second (and third) language acquisition (best known as SLA) is a conscious and subconscious study through which a person acquires L2 or additional languages as this study also refers to the acquisition of a third language (L3) in case of one of the groups involved in the research.

Literature review

The scope of research in these areas is often restricted by practical limitations, and studies on L3 acquisition are no exception to this. Most researchers use the populations to which they have access, and L3 learners are more difficult to find than L2 learners. This is the case with my study as well. I have used two 11th grade classes in the school where I am teaching. It is observed that for many, language learning in adulthood is a costly endeavour in both time and effort, especially to reach the highest levels of proficiency, and learning a third language compounds this. This fact immediately restricts the number of L3 learners. The combinations of languages are also generally restricted. A person learning a third language does so for many reasons, but advancing linguistic research is not one of them. The combinations that are found are often the result of geographic and/or educational practicalities, as well as the status of English as the current lingua franca. Consequently, many L3 studies involve English and a major European language, and what has been very rarely seen are studies involving languages that are truly (typologically) unrelated, as it is in our case: L1 Hungarian, L2 Romanian and L3

English. We know of a handful of examples of these: L1 Tuvan/L2 Russian/L3 English (Kulundary & Gabriele, 2012), L1 Polish/L2 French/L3 English (Wrembel, 2014), L1 Arabic/L2 French/L3 English (Hermas, 2010), Basque/Spanish/L3 English (Slabakova & Garcia Mayo, 2015).

A central finding from research on second and third language acquisition is that there are general differences in paths and ultimate attainment among cases of simultaneous bilingualism, childhood second language acquisition, and adult second language acquisition (Montrul, 2004). In conclusion it is reasonable to expect that any differences in the language experience and linguistic systems among these types of bilinguals could influence the acquisition of a third language. Further systematic investigation of their L3 acquisition patterns would warrant more clarity on the issue. This line of research would be complementary to the increasingly prominent body of research on heritage speakers, which in general seeks to go beyond treating age-of-acquisition as a macro-variable, instead seeking a more nuanced look at variables and learning factors relating to the relationship between the L1 and the L2 (or the two L1s).

Major language acquisition factors

Literature and previous research suggest that there are many general factors that influence second language learning such as age, aptitude, intelligence, cognitive style, attitudes, motivation and personality (Ellis, 1986).

Age: In the case of classroom learning adults appear to be better both in syntax and morphology (Snow & Hoefnagel-Höhle, 1978), while adolescents are the best (Fathman, 1975) and they also progress faster. The studies concerning the age factor were summarized by Ellis (1986, p. 107) and Patsy Lightbown who state that the route of SLA is not influenced by the starting age, but there is a relationship between the rate of learning and the age of the learners (Lightbown & Spada, 2002).

Motivation is one of the most important factors in second and third language acquisition. We distinguish two types of motivation (Hamid Al-Ta'ani, 2018) in this case.

a) Integrative motivation: a learner studies a language because he is interested in the people and culture of the target language or in order to communicate with people of another culture who speak it.

b) Instrumental motivation: a learner's goals for learning the second language are functional and useful, for example they need the language to get a better job, to pass tests, to enable them to read foreign newspapers, etc. It has been stated that learners can be influenced by both types of motivation.

Attitudes: Gardner and Lambert have investigated a number of different attitudes (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), which were classified by Stern (Stern, 1983, pp. 376-7) into three types:

1) attitudes towards the community and people who speak L2,

2) attitudes towards learning and language concerned,

3) attitudes towards languages and language learning in general.

Certain personality characteristics and general interest in foreign languages can influence learners in a positive or negative way. It is also important how they feel about learning a particular language in a particular course and from a particular teacher. It is obvious that learners who have positive attitudes learn more, but also learners who learn well acquire positive attitudes.

Intelligence: "The ability to perform well in standard intelligence tests correlates highly with school related second language learning, but is unrelated to the learning of a second language for informal and social functions" (Spolsky, 1989, p. 103). It is assumed that some people are gifted and they learn foreign languages with ease. It was observed that learners acquire a language with different results despite the fact that they are at the same age and are equally motivated.

Learning styles: Learning style is also called cognitive style. It is the particular way in which a learner tries to learn something. In L2 or foreign language learning, different learners may prefer different solutions to learning problems. Some learners may want explanations for grammatical rules (audio learners), some may feel writing down words and sentences helps them to remember (kinaesthetic learners). And others may find they remember things better if they are associated with pictures (visual learners) (Richard, Platt, & Weber, Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics, 1985, p. 45). Ellis mentions that learning style or strategy accounts for how learners accumulate new L2 rules and how they automate existing ones (Ellis, Understanding Second Language Acquisition, 1986, p. 299). Reid identified four learning modalities: visual (seeing), auditory (listening), kinaesthetic (moving) or tactile (touching) (Reid, 1987). Visual learners learn through seeing. They prefer to see a teacher during a lesson, learn by visuals: pictures, wall displays, diagrams, videos. They make notes during lectures and use lists to organize their thoughts. Auditory learners learn through listening. They prefer verbal instructions, like dialogues, discussions and plays, solve problems by talking about them, use rhythm and sound as memory aids. Kinaesthetic learners learn through moving and doing. They learn best when they are active. It is difficult for them to sit still for long periods. Tactile learners learn through touching. They use writing and drawing. They learn well in hands-on activities like projects and demonstrations.

Aptitude: refers to a specific ability a learner has for learning a second language (Ellis, Understanding Second Language Acquisition, 1986, p. 299). Richards (1985, p.

154) explains that aptitude is natural ability to learn a language (Richard, Platt, & Weber, Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics, 1985, p. 154). Further he adds that language aptitude is thought to be a combination of various abilities, such as the ability to identify sound pattern in a new language, the ability to recognize the difference of grammatical functions of words in sentences, etc. Students need aptitude - some specific abilities, which are responsible for learning languages.

Studies conducted by Skehan (Shekan, 1986) were concentrated on the underlying complexity of language aptitude and its relation to first language acquisition and second language learning. He has shown two predictors of language aptitude: "a general language processing capability" and an "ability to use language in a decontextualized way." Skehan's findings show that aptitude consists of abilities identified by earlier researchers and the ability to deal with context-free language, which is connected with learning academic skills and intelligence (Ellis, 1994). It is still not known whether intelligence is a part of attitude or they are separate notions.

Multilingualism and transfer

Contemporary writers on multilingualism claim, like Grosjean, that "half of the world's population, if not more, is bilingual. But the data we would like to have are missing" (Grosjean, 2010, p. 13). However, few bilinguals acquire all their languages in early childhood: Grosjean (p. 178) states that 'Simultaneous bilinguals are less numerous than children who acquire their two languages successively (certainly less than 20% of bilingual children)', though he adds in a footnote (p. 261), "Unfortunately no good statistics exist on this point".

Kellerman (1983) makes psychotypology, the learner's perception of language typology, central to his perspective on transfer, whereby the learner's recognition of congruent forms between the native and target languages either facilitates or interferes with L2 acquisition. He adds the further distinction that "not everything that looks transferable is transferable" (Kellerman, 1995, p. 113). This leads him to develop the concept of transferability: "the probability with which a structure will be transferred relative to other structures in the L1" (p. 117). Kellerman also develops the Transfer to Nowhere Principle (Kellerman, Crosslinguistic influence: Transfer to nowhere?, 1995) as a complement to Anderson's Transfer to Somewhere (Andersen, 1983). Here he addresses not the syntactic features of the L1 but rather, its conceptual organization. While learners are able consciously to identify congruent and noncongruent structures between their L1 and L2 and to judge the degree of markedness of their native language's syntactic and lexical features, Kellerman suggests that they will be less likely to perceive, or even to admit, cross-linguistic conceptual differences and will continue to hold "an unconscious assumption that the way we talk or write about experience is not something that is subject to between-language variation" (p. 141). The result is that instead of adopting the target

language's conceptual perspective and its concomitant linguistic features, L2 learners unconsciously look for L2 linguistic structures that allow them to maintain their L1 perspective, which leads to L2 productions that may be grammatically acceptable but are nevertheless nontarget-like.

Lexical transfers need to be distinguished from inappropriate *conceptual* transfers in L2 performance, or more importantly, from the intermittent conceptual restructuring and conceptual development necessary in the learning of an L2 to be used with the language's native speakers. Language learners tend to link L2 word forms to already established lexical concepts in their L1, but where concepts differ their translation equivalents will not be perfect conceptual equivalents. See, e.g. Wierzbicka on the semantics of *fair, evidence, reasonable*, etc (Wierbicka, 2006)*,* and Pavlenko on *privacy* and *personal space*. As Pavlenko puts it,

> Eventually L2 learners will need to adjust the boundaries of their linguistic
>
> categories, either expanding or narrowing them in accordance with L2 constraints.
>
> Failure to readjust the boundaries appropriately would lead to instances of L1
>
> conceptual transfer. […] In the case of successful restructuring, the boundaries of
>
> the L2 category are modified without changing the boundaries of the
>
> corresponding L1 category. As a result, speakers perform in accordance with the
>
> constraints of each language (Pavlenko, 2009, p. 136).

The question of transfer in L2 and L3 acquisition is an intensely investigated area in recent linguistic studies. Without going too deeply into this particular issue, I would like to introduce a few relevant ideas and discoveries in this complex field of study.

> Theoretical proposals attempting to model the role of linguistic transfer in L3/Ln
>
> acquisition invariably contain two underlying assumptions, namely, (i) that one or
>
> more variables determine when and how transfer will take place (i.e., it is not
>
> random), and (ii) that this combination of variables is indeed weighted, such that
>
> all things being equal one variable will take precedence over the others (Puig-
>
> Mayenko, Gonzalez Alonso, & Rothman, 2018).

According to the same study from Puig-Mayenco, E., González Alonso, J. and Rothman, J., "there are two possibilities with respect to transfer at the onset of L2 acquisition: that it comes from the L1 or that there is no transfer at all—a debate with a long history in SLA studies [e.g., Epstein, Flynn, and Martohardjono, 1996; (Epstein, Flynn, & Martohardiono, 1996) Odlin, 1989; (Odlin, 1989) Schwartz and Sprouse, 1996; (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996) Vainikka and Young-Scholten, 1996; (Vainikka & Young-Scholten, 1996) see Foley and Flynn, 2013, (Foley & Flynn, 2013) for updated review]. The picture in L3/Ln acquisition is somewhat more complex in what pertains to potential sources of transfer, since we need to consider four logical possibilities a priori: (i) there is no transfer; (ii) transfer comes exclusively from the L1; (iii) transfer comes exclusively from the L2; (iv) transfer may come from either language, or from both at the same time, in whole or in parts."

Slabakova examines in one of her articles (Slabakova, 2016) the current hypotheses and models on L3 acquisition: "the privileged L1 transfer hypothesis [Hermas, 2010; (Hermas, Language acquisition as computational resetting: Verb movement in L3 initial state., 2010) Jin, 2009; (Jin, 2009) Na Ranong & Leung, 2009) (Na Ranong & Leung, 2009); the L2 status factor model (L2 status) (Bardel & Falk, 2007; (Bardel & Falk, 2007) Falk & Bardel, 2011 (Falk & Bardel, 2011)]; the cumulative enhancement model (CEM) (Flynn, Foley, & Vinnitskaya, 2004); and the typological primacy model (TPM) [Rothman, 2011, 2015 (Rothman, 2011)]." The author discusses these models in support of her own suggestion: the scalpel model.

The scalpel model explicitly argues that wholesale transfer of one of the previously acquired languages does not happen at the initial stages of acquisition because it is not necessary. It also argues that transfer can be from the L1 or the L2 or both, but it is not only facilitative (Slabakova, 2016).

The purpose of this study
So far, I have assessed the various forms of learning circumstances, some general factors contributing to language acquisition and some introductory aspects about transfer in L2 and L3 acquisition. In the new COVID-19 circumstances, we need to take a second look at all these above-mentioned factors and aspects influencing learning. While probably the underlying learning principles remained the same, teaching methods, classroom setting, teacher-student relationships suffered significant changes. In what follows, through my research carried out in "Cserey-Goga" Technological Highschool, Crasna, Romania, I endeavour to answer some of the following questions: how did the COVID-19-inducted online teaching affect English learning, how much time is invested

in learning English, what are the attitudes toward the language, how can we define the learning catalysts and also the learning inhibitors in the new, changed circumstances, and finally what motivates students to learn English.

I will highlight the comparison between the two major groups of students participating: monolingual – in our case Romanian mother tongued students -, and simultaneous bilingual – Hungarian mother tongued students who have already sequentially acquired the Romanian language as their first foreign language. What makes this study interesting is that the groups of students participating in this research live in the same geographical area and study in the same school, following very similar teaching curriculum and experiencing very similar teaching styles.

The effects of COVID-19

In the "pandemic century" (Honigsbaum, 2020) between the Spanish Flu and the Covid-19 pandemic that struck the world in 2020 other global contagious diseases created major upheavals and caused an enormous amount of suffering and death. The Coronavirus pandemic has spanned the world since the beginning of 2020 and has severely disrupted the normal functioning of the entire education sector. UNESCO statistics (UNESCO, 2020) clearly show the extent of the impact on education: at the beginning of June, when important lockdown measures had already been lifted in many countries, nearly a billion learners worldwide were still affected, i.e., 55.2% of the learners enrolled in all education level. Schools and higher education institutions were still closed in 119 countries.

In the current extreme conditions triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers highlight that the use of online learning in Foreign Language teaching may facilitate the compliance with the planned curriculum and the overcoming of the students' mixed feelings towards the new learning environment or the difficulties encountered (VanOostveen, Desjardins, & Bullock, 2018). For instance, the video-conference was appreciated by FL students and fostered their language skills (Conboy , Ugalde, & Reuber, 2017), but students in other subjects only partially admitted its benefits and also described it as uncomfortable and causing self-consciousness (Eales, Neale, & Carroll, 1999). In recent research findings of Maican and Cocorada in regard to online learning of Foreign Language, they conclude:

> Technologies must be accessible and usable, as they can reduce the stress
>
> connected to learning in a general traumatizing context. The use of breakout
>
> rooms, available in video-conferences, can support the needs for social
>
> relationships and enhance the pleasant atmosphere of FL learning. The use of
>
> online lectures, discussion questions, and email communication with teachers have

been identified as online teaching strategies which engage students and reduce

anxiety, while also increasing knowledge" (Maican & Cocorada, 2021).

The sustainable online learning of foreign languages for the future consequently requests active engagement from both teachers and students, extensive learning opportunities and an enjoyable learning atmosphere, the tackling of liaison problems, as well as the adaptive and purposeful use of various educational resources, including e-learning platforms, in normal and challenging situations.

Veres highlights in her study: "For effective language acquisition, teachers should use a wide range of different activity types in their lessons to cater for individual differences and needs. Researchers consider that 83% of human learning occurs after 'seeing' or 'watching' an object or event, while the rest of 17% happens through other senses like hearing, smelling, touching and tasting" (Veres, 2020). She continues underlining that we tend to store the information six times more when it is presented through visual aids, compared to traditional oral lectures.

Methodology

Participants – The participants of this study were 11th grade students from a bilingual class (26) whose L1 is Hungarian and L2 Romanian, and also 11th grade students from a monolingual class (13) whose L1 is Romanian. The participants' age ranged between 16-17 years old at Crasna's "Cserey-Goga" Technological High School. They were all studying English as a foreign language, part of the curriculum requirements in the school year 2020/2021. All students studied English for 8 years, and were asked 6 questions in a class setting according to the Appendix No. 1. My aim was to collect first-hand information on how the COVID-19 circumstances have affected their foreign language learning progress and to identify the presence of the main factors of language acquisition, and to compare the collected data in the case of both groups of participants.

Limitations of this study

My research was conducted among students aged 16-17, who live in the same geographical setting, go to the same school ("Cserey-Goga" Technological Highschool, Crasna, Romania) and also share the same learning curriculum and teaching circumstances. The major difference is between the learner's L1 and L2. The study could be regarded as significant for several reasons: 1) this learning setting (Hungarian L1 and Romanian L1 students learning together) is representative of the Transylvanian part of Romania; 2) I tried to give a complex picture about learning habits, attitude, L2 and L3 acquisition, problematic issues in learning and motivational factors; 3) my findings can help improve digitalised language teaching and learning during COVID pandemic but it is not limited to it.

Findings and Discussions

Below are the results of the questionnaire applied to the two English learner classes.

1.1. How did the COVID-inducted online teaching affect your English language learning experience? (Write in a few words)

Table no. 1.1

Type of answer	L1 Hungarian – L2 Romanian – L3 English class; 26 students	L1 Romanian – L2 English class; 13 students
Positive answers	8 (30.76%)	5 (38.46%)
Negative answers	11(42.30%)	7 (53.84%)
Neutral answers	7 (26.92%)	1 (7.69%)

My analyses of the data show statistically significant differences as to how COVID-19 circumstances affected language acquisition with the two groups of students. While 57.68 per cent the L1-L2-L3 group says that its effect was either positive or neutral – so it did not represent a significant obstacle in language learning, 46.15 per cent of the L1-L2 group reports the same positive or neutral effect, however 53.84 per cent of this group experienced a negative effect of COVID-19 circumstances. This is more than 11 per cent higher than the result of the L1-L2-L3 group on the same question. The difference will be highlighted in their progress report as well.

1.2. Please, put a plus (+) or a minus (–) in order to indicate your experience with the following aspects of online teaching.

Table no. 1.2

Aspects of online teaching	L1 Hungarian – L2 Romanian – L3 English class; 26 students		L1 Romanian – L2 English class; 13 students	
Type of answer	+	-	+	-
a. the quality of language teaching	13 (50%)	13 (50%)	9 (69.23%)	4 (30.76%)
b. the progress in the acquisition of the language	14 (53.84%)	12 (46.15%)	9 (69.23%)	4 (30.76%)
c. available technology for use	18 (69.23%)	8 (30.76%)	7 (53.84%)	6 (46.15%)

Table nr. 1.2 shows differences on how the online teaching affected the students' learning experience. Half of the L1-L2-L3 group indicate a positive impact on the quality of language teaching while the other half indicates exactly the opposite. Further studies would be advisable in this area in order to discover the reasons behind this sharp divide. Interestingly, more than 69 per cent of the L1-L2 group – more than 19 per cent higher than L1-L2-L3 - of students say that the quality of teaching improved with the employment of digital technology. However, a good 30 per cent indicated that it had a negative effect on it. It is notable that when it comes to progress in language acquisition the L1-L2 group produced exactly the same results as to the quality of teaching, indicating that these two factors in their case are in close correlation. There is also a positive difference shown with the L1-L2-L3 group where almost 54 per cent say that the online circumstances helped them in acquiring the English language. We may discover some close links between this result and the results according to Table no. 2.1.

In terms of the available technology for their use 69 per cent of the L1-L2-L3 students report that it had a positive impact on their learning experience whilst the impact was significantly less with the L1-L2 group, amounting to only 53 per cent. With both groups more than 1/3 of the students see technology as an inhibitor to their language acquisition experience.

2. On what level and how often are you dealing with information in English language? (Coursebook, films in English, readings, social media, other areas of interest: ………………………………. – please underline the ones you used)

Table no. 2.1

Underlined and named areas of interest	L1 Hungarian – L2 Romanian – L3 English class; 26 students	L1 Romanian – L2 English class; 13 students
Coursebook	12 (46.15%)	5 (38.46%)
Films or videos in English	20 (76.92%)	12 (92.30%)
Readings	5 (19.23%)	1 (7.69%)
Social media	22 (84.61%)	4 (30.76%)
Music	2 (7.69%)	-
Video games	10 (38.46%)	-
Vlogs	1 (3.84%)	-

Table 2.1 shows how various learning tools help students in their language acquisition. It is notable the contrast between the two groups of students when it comes to using the coursebook and reading in English. More than 65 per cent of the students

from the L1-L2-L3 group indicate a frequent and useful usage of the coursebook and other materials they read whilst only about 46 per cent of the L1-L3 group indicate the same, showing a difference of 19 per cent between the groups. Without any question, the role of films is overwhelming in their language acquisition process. This is in direct connection with the acquisition of English at that level so they can enjoy watching a film, at the same time using the films as direct patterns of daily life where they can see practical examples in an enjoyable form of the materials taught during their classes. It is also notable that their English teacher introduced watching and analysing movies among her teaching techniques, which proved to be very useful for almost 80 per cent of the L1-L2-L3 group and more than 92 per cent of the L1-L2 group. One of the greatest gaps between the various digital means used by the students is the use of social media. 84.6 per cent of the L1-L2-L3 group is using social media in comparison to the L1-L2 group where this is at only 30.7 per cent. The L1-L2-L3 made mentions of music, video games and vlogs amounting to 49 per cent producing an impressive array of natural and digital learning means, whilst the L1-L2 group did not show any activity in the realm of music, video games and vlogs.

Table no. 2.2

Frequency of dealing with English	L1 Hungarian – L2 Romanian – L3 English class; 26 students	L1 Romanian – L2 English class; 13 students
a. daily	8 (30.76%)	2 (15.38%)
b. at least 3 times a week	15 (57.69%)	7 (53.84%)
c. only during English classes	3 (11.53%)	4 (30.76%)

It is not surprising after the findings related to Table 2.1 that the 88 per cent of the L1-L2-L3 students are dealing with and using English at least 3 times a week. Unlike this group, only 69 per cent of the L1-L2 students doing this. A very important language acquisition factor is the time spent on learning and using the language. The L1-L2-L3 percentage of students using English daily is double the percentage of students from the L1-L2 group. This may have a significant impact on their language acquisition and command. It is also notable that 30.7 per cent of the L1-L2 group use English only during their English class. The same result is much lower for the L1-L2-L3 class, amounting to 11.5 per cent only.

3. My attitude towards English language

Table no. 3.1

Type of attitude	L1 Hungarian – L2 Romanian – L3 English class; 26 students	L1 Romanian – L2 English class; 13 students
a. love	20 (76.92%)	7 (53.84%)
b. hate	0	0
c. neutral	6 (23.07%)	6 (46.15%)

My analyses of data show that none of the students from the two groups hate the English language. There are significant differences between the two groups, however. Close to 77 per cent of the students from the L1-L2-L3 group love English but only about 54 per cent of the students from the L1-L2 group declared the same attitude toward English. It is also notable that the percentage of students who feel neutral to English is double in the L1-L2 group compared to L1-L2-L3, which data may indicate a certain amount of passivity in the process of learning.

4. What helps you the most in acquiring the English language? (multiple answers acceptable)

Table no. 4.1

Helpful areas	L1 Hungarian – L2 Romanian – L3 English class; 26 students	L1 Romanian – L2 English class; 13 students
a. the teaching in the English class	12 (46.15%)	8 (61.53%)
b. The knowledge of another language – specifically which:	Romanian: 9 (34.61%), German: 1 (3.84%)	French: 2 (15.38%) Hungarian: 1 (7.69%)
c. Relationships abroad – where keeping in touch in English	15 (57.69%)	6 (46.15%)
d. Others:	English contents: 1 (3.84%), Films: 11 (42.30%) Internet: 1 (3.84%) Video games: 6 (23.07%) Readings: 1 (3.84%) Podcasts: 1 (3.84%) Social media: 2 (7.69%)	Films: 3 (23.07%)

	Videos:	5 (19.23%)	
	Music:	2 (7.69%)	

Table 4.1 shows the various activities that proved to be most helpful to the students in acquiring the language. The teaching in the class plays a significant role in this process. More than 61.5 per cent of the L1-L2 students see teaching as the chief contributing factor, whilst 46.1 per cent of the L1-L2-L3 group indicates the same, however to this group the main contributing factor is relationships abroad, scoring 57.69 per cent. The same data is 46.1 per cent for the L1-L2 group, and without doubt becomes the second highest score for this group.

The usefulness of the knowledge of another language scores over 38 per cent for L1-L2-L3 and over 23 per cent for L1-L2. This indicates that those who combine the benefits of teaching with the benefits of knowing another language have much better chances to acquire the English language as a foreign language in school.

Among the other contributing elements, a significant score goes to films, 42.3 per cent for L1-L2-L3 and 23 per cent for L1-L2. Analysis of the collected data shows that there is a difference between the technical possibilities of group L1-L2-L3 and L1-L2 and this might be due to the difference in living conditions and internet connection quality. Members of the L1-L2-L3 indicate the further usefulness of Internet, video games, reading, podcasts, social media, videos and music in their English learning experience.

5. What is the most difficult for you in learning English?

Table no. 5.1

Difficult areas	L1 Hungarian – L2 Romanian – L3 English class; 26 students	L1 Romanian – L2 English class; 13 students
a. grammar	22 (84.61%)	11 (84.61%)
b. pronunciation	6 (23.07%)	3 (23.07%)
c. There is no similarity between the languages I speak and English	4 (15.38%)	0

I wanted to receive clear indications of what would be the inhibiting factors of English acquisition for the students I included in this research. The result is very similar with the two groups, surprisingly 84.6 per cent of both groups indicated that grammar would be the most difficult one and 23 per cent said that they have difficulties with pronunciation as well. Since the L1-L2-L3 had most of the students speaking another foreign language, 15.3 per cent of them indicated that there was no similarity between

English and their second language. Further study may be conducted in finding out difficulties with spelling and writing as well.

6. What motivates you to learn English?

Table no. 6.1

Motivational factors	L1 Hungarian – L2 Romanian – L3 English class; 26 students	L1 Romanian – L2 English class; 13 students
a. career	14 (53.84%)	7 (84.61%)
b. study results/grade average at school	7 (26.92%)	4 (30.76%)
c. possibility of communication with foreigners	24 (92.30%)	12 (92.30%)

Table 6.1 presents the main motivational factors for learning English. Group L1-L2 scored very high on the possibility of communicating with foreigners with 92.3 per cent and pursuing a career with 84.6 per cent respectively. While the L1-L2-L3 group scored equally high on the possibility of communicating with foreigners with 92.3 per cent, scored 53.8 per cent on career as motivating factor. With both groups, the study results are a moderate motivation for acquiring the English language at school, the main factors being more relational and practical showing how much relationships matter to this generation.

Conclusions

This paper focused on factors of language acquisitions identified in previous studies involving three unrelated languages: L1 – Hungarian, L2 – Romanian and L3 – English. The Pandemic has had a slight positive effect on the learning experience of the bilingual class students while the monolingual students suffered a slight setback. The same circumstances however had a definite positive effect on the quality of teaching and in their progress of acquiring English with the use of technology.

The role of films is overwhelming in the language acquisition process for this age group. However, only those students enjoy watching English films who have already acquired some English knowledge previously. This shows an unusual correlation between the nonfacilitative and facilitative language learning coefficients. This is complemented with the use of the coursebooks and communication on social media. This approach could emerge as a new deliberate and combined pattern in teaching foreign languages. Students experience the practical benefits of English in their daily life, which contributes to a

positive or at least neutral attitude to the language, eliminating any negative attitude in this respect.

My findings illuminate that the time factor becomes extremely important during the language acquisition process, as the time invested using the foreign language bears the desired outcome especially in relation to keeping in touch with foreigners. The existence of another foreign language, even if it is unrelated to the mother tongue and to English language, contributes a great deal to the learning and usage of the third language. In my study more than a third of the students reported a definite contribution to the learning of English.

When asked about the difficulties of English language acquisition, grammar took the majority of the participants' votes, pointing to the absolute necessity of formal and professional teaching as the main facilitative factor. As long as the educational system continues to use the online teaching method, this study highlighted a major difference between the urban and rural technical conditions in favour of the urban conditions.

This study also highlights a set of motivational factors in language acquisition. It points to a mentality shift of the generation represented here, namely that the relational motive of learning English is predominantly based on the possibility of communicating with foreigners besides the career pursuing option.

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Appendix No. 1.

1.1 How did the COVID-inducted online teaching affect your English language learning experience?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

1.2 Please, put a plus (+) or a minus (–) in order to indicate your experience with the following aspects of online teaching
- a) the quality of language teaching
- b) the progress in the acquisition of the language
- c) Available technology for use

2. On what level and how often are you dealing with information in English language? (Coursebook, movies in English, readings, social media, other areas of interest: …………………………. – please, underline the ones you used)
- a) Daily
- b) At least 3 times a week
- c) Only during English classes

3. My attitude towards English language
- a) I love English because

  ……………………………………………………………………………

- b) I hate English because

  ……………………………………………………………………………

- c) I don't like English nor hate it – to me it is one subject among the many

4. What helps you the most in acquiring the English language? (multiple answers acceptable)
- a) The teaching in the English class
- b) The knowledge of another language – specifically:

  ………………………………………………………….

- c) Relationships abroad, friendships – where keeping in touch in English
- d) Other:

  …………………………………………………………………………..

5. What is the most difficult for you in learning English?
- a) The Grammar – conjugations, verb tenses, order of words in a sentence
- b) Pronunciation
- c) The fact that there is no similarity between the languages I speak and English

6. What motivates you to learn English?
- a) Career prospect
- b) Study results/grade average
- c) The possibility of communicating with foreigners

Csilla-Ibolya Sólyom, English language teacher at "Cserey-Goga" Technological Highschool Crasna, Sălaj, Romania and PhD candidate at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. Main areas of interest: the process of second and third language acquisition, models of language transfers, interaction between languages, teaching languages, translation and interpreting. (csisolyom@gmail.com)

(Applied) Linguistics

OERs Utility and Autonomous Learning in an ESP Context: Learners' Perceptions

Bani Koumachi

The ubiquitous existence as well as the innovative nature of technology in all spheres of life especially in the academic sphere has made Open Educational Resources (OERs) shortcuts to achieve individualized and autonomous learning. This study therefore attempts to investigate the students' perceptions of OERs utility, and use for autonomy in an ESP context, Master students of Strategic and Organizational Management at the faculty of Economics and Management, Kénitra Morocco as a case in point. The participants were selected purposefully and a questionnaire was used to collect data for analysis and interpretation. The results revealed that the participants had the tendency to use a lot of different OERs given their being millennials; they consider OERs as inescapable material that helps achieve autonomy in learning, and they have high esteem on their academic merits. Finally, there is paucity of research and empirical evidence on the use of a wide range of OERs in ESP instruction in the Moroccan academic context. The results of the present study can inform ESP practitioners, curriculum developers, teachers, and students.

OERs, ESP, Autonomy, Utility, students' perceptions.

1. Introduction

Irrespective of the fact that open educational resources (OERs) are not placed higher on the Moroccan professors' agenda, yet, their importance is very decisive. Obviously, this type of material has come to replace the traditional textbook designed at the tertiary level years ago as it was the case that professors penalize their students for failing to buy or bring their predesigned/composed booklets. However, the focus on OERs nowadays, has taken another turn, and after having been a support of educational practices by asking students to help themselves with whatever digital material they find online, they have become principal sources for professors themselves and promoters of quality and innovative teaching and learning.

In the same vein, given the importance of OERs in the educational life of both teachers and students, many initiatives were launched (Miao, Mishra, & McGreal, 2016). In Ehlers (2011), Stacey (2010) states that several publicly-funded foundations supported OERs initiatives worldwide, and the effort was invested on the creation and publication of OERs. An even more encouraging initiative is that which was launched against the

expensiveness of hardcover textbooks and writers were subsidized with the objective to convert these textbooks into appropriate OERs. This initiative, a unique of its kind and its likes, is relevant for low-income university students and targets more specifically open access institutions. This is very significant when students find themselves free of the obligations of buying a paper-based textbook and utilizing a free of charge e-form of the same document and even collect gratis material to read around the document's contents. OERs and open access are of great assistance to Moroccans coming from precarious areas and attending open access institutions as at least they feel they are equal to others who are well-off to buy educational material and pay for their fees.

This research has been carried out at the Faculty of Economics and Management, university Ibn Tofail, Kénitra, Morocco. It attempts to glean a sample of the Organizational and strategic Management Master ESP students' perceptions of the utility of use of OERs as well as their perceptions of the potential usefulness of these OERs in enhancing their learning autonomy as graduate level students.

The newly created Faculty of economics and Management has been offering classes of English for different vocations using English as a medium of instruction. Conversely, OERs-based teaching is new since it has never been used in previous courses or as a delivery mode. What adds to the flavor of using an OERs - delivery mode is the COVID - 19 situation/ lockdown where students had the opportunity to get online all the knowledge related to their field of specialty.

2. Review of the Literature

Given the ubiquity of technology in all fields of life especially in the educational context, conventional education methods of teaching and learning are no longer appropriate for the learner's current immersion in technology. Kumaravadivelu's (2003) idea "beyond method" is applicable only in its being converted to include the connectivist way of getting multimodal type of knowledge through OERs. Therefore, technology-enabled learning and teaching (TELT) is to be the rule for the present and for the future of this generations of learners.

It is no longer a secret that the contemporary education structures are unable to account for the learners' needs as the number of the new digital natives who 'breathe' and fantastically manipulate technology is getting larger. The fundamental problem of traditional education where learners are to limit themselves to the pedagogical guidelines of the institutions they study in is the attractiveness and imposition of OERs on learners' orientation insofar as learning is concerned (Liyoshi & Vijay-Kumar, 2008 as cited in Sandanayake, 2019). Consequently, students and institutions have found themselves obliged under OERs availability and the Covid-19 pandemic conditions to change their teaching and learning behavior as well as their attitudes and practices. In our situation therefore, the focus shall not be on issues such as on elements of creation, use, sharing

andreuse of OERs for learners or institutions, but the focus shall be on the shift from a phase in which the preliminary effort is on having open access to these resources and appropriate them, to a phase in which the main goal is to embed OERs into learning and teaching practices.

2.1 History and Definition of OERs

The emergence of OERs has signaled the eclipse of an era where traditional learning and teaching was done under the sway and authority of the expensive hardcover textbook. The appearance of this type of material has had a great influence on cost as well as effort. The 2002 UNESCO forum on the Impact of Open Courseware for Higher Education in Developing Countries as well as the advent of MIT's OpenCourseWare project gave birth to the term OERs (Huang, Liu,Tlili, & Koper, 2020). The history of OERs is much older if one goes back further and considers the developments of the Learning Objects in the 1990s (Duval, Sharples, & Sutherland, 2017). From then on, the OERs movement has become the natural continuation of a movement seeking the promotion and development of reusable learning objects (Saum, 2007, as referenced in Inglis, 2013, p. 514). Yet, since the goal of the learning objects movement coincides with that of the OERs movement, lowering the cost of courseware and encouraging reuse, preparing shared reusable metadata/repositories, the focus shall be on OERs shift (Moore, 2013).

The premise of the OERs movement, according to Weller, De los Arcos, McAndrew, and Pitt (2018), is a comparatively simpler one, and has remained fundamentally unaffected since the initial MIT project: creating a mix of open contents and educational content freely available and free of charge with an open license for anyone to use and under some licenses to re-mix, reuse, reshape, and redistribute. Two thousand and five was the year when the Moroccan government adopted a national ICT strategy to make Internet available in all public schools with the objective to help up skill teachers as well as learners. This initiative made of Morocco a leading African country in the OERs movement for the improvement of pedagogical content as well as methodology (Zaatri, Margoum, Bendaoud, Laaziz El Malti, Burgos, & Berrada, 2020). Lately, luckily and under the lockdown of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Moroccan educational authorities made it easier for students to get access to different OERs especially for higher educational level. The Moroccan government was able to get around the *Simulating COVID-19 impacts on learning and schooling outcomes* program that predicted a loss of schooling time and a serious effect on the Moroccan effective learning outcome for all levels (Morocco, 2020). The World Bank simulations estimate the learning crisis, but the lockdown was backed by educational measures taken timely through schooling programs on national TV channels as well as educational websites designed specifically for this purpose as attested by the World Bank, 2020 that "The Ministry of Education was proactive in taking steps to minimize learning loss during the crisis" (Morocco, 2020).

OERs as a term is defined by Piedra, Chicaiza, Atenas, Lopez-Vargas, & Tovar (as cited in Jemni, Kinshuk, & Khribi, 2016) as "teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and repurposing by others" (p. 289). These OERs include full courses, course material, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge (as outlined by Okonwo, 2012 and mentioned in Thanuskodi, 2020, p. 30). This gives an unblemished definition of OERs, however for the practitioners this is unclear as to practice, as OERs hare overlap with any online resource, regardless of license.

2.2. OERs and Learning Autonomy

Autonomy is one of the concepts that permeate all fields of life. Specifically, in the literature of language teaching and learning, learner autonomy has become the buzzword in the last decades (Lamb & Reinders, 2008). Moreover, autonomy has been misunderstood for self-instruction and self-access learning (Schwienhorst, 2012). Holec (1981), who coined the term, states that learner autonomy is to have, and to hold responsibility for one's own learning process (as cited in Eisenmann, 2019, p. 195).

> It is also to have and to hold, the responsibility for all decisions concerning all aspects of this learning; i.e.: determining the objectives; defining the contents and progressions; selecting methods and techniques to be used; monitoring the procedure of acquisition properly speaking (rhythm, time, place, etc.); evaluating what has been acquired (Holec, 1991 as referenced in Stojković, 2018, p. 37).

The hallmark of Holec's definition is that learning autonomy is not innate but a capacity that needs the nurturing of caregivers. It is in this sense different from heteronomy where the pedagogical decision-making process in the specialty of someone else (usually the teacher or the institution) but not the learner himself/herself. In this case, the learner is not autonomous but undergoes the imposition of external agents. In fact, learner autonomy is also poles apart from anomy where nobody supports the learner in any way. In the same vein, learning autonomy, for (Schwienhorst, 2012), is a pedagogical concept which is "the capacity of the learner, and a goal that we as teachers and learners should constantly work towards" (p. 11). The core of learning autonomy for this scholar is decision-making which has been lost for "spoon-feeding" and teacher dependency. Following the same line of reasoning as the two previous scholars, Dam (1990) defines leaner autonomy as learner's willingness and capacity to control ones learning process.

That is, the learner becoming self-directed as he/she takes full control of the steps in his/her learning process from setting goals to implementing them (as mentioned in Pachler, Field, & Barnes, 2009).

For Beaven, Comas-Quinn, and Sawhill (2013), learner autonomy involves five stages: stage one is the stage where objectives are determined by the learner through the use of his/her procedural knowledge in accordance with his/her specific needs. In stage two, the learner defines content and progress of contents, OERs in case of independent e-learning, for implementation in line with both context and linguistic forms. Furthermore, in phase three, the learner selects methods and techniques to be used. As for stage four, the learner monitors the procedures of learning by deciding on the 'when' and the 'where' the learning should take place. Stage five, the learner becomes qualifies to judge and evaluates his learning outcome against the predetermined pedagogical objectives (pp. 207-208).

This study attempts to investigate the students' perceptions of OERs utility, and use for autonomy in an ESP context, master and undergraduate students of Strategic and Organizational Management at the faculty of Economics and Management, Kénitra Morocco as a case study. The specific objectives of the study to better understand the above-stated problem are:

1. To identify students' OERs perception dimensions.

2. To determine the level of awareness amongst students of the University of Ibn Tofail regarding OERs.

3. To ascertain the students' OERs use and Learning autonomy dimension.

To translate the above objectives, the following research hypotheses were set forth:

Research Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between the mean of the five dimensions of the OER perceptions survey and the mean of the OERS and Learner Autonomy items dimension.

Research Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between the mean of the five dimensions of the OERs perceptions survey and the demographics (age, delivery mode, and major).

3. Methodology

The purpose of this study is to analyze factors that contribute to students' perceptions of modules using OERs instead of traditional paper-based textbooks. Specifically, there are five types of covariables: the first three variables tested were the course discipline, age, and course delivery mode; the other two types of variables are in forms of clusters, the first of which was measured as mean scores of six OERs perception dimensions: motivation to learn, quality of learning experience, value of OERs, cognitive learning, affective learning, and course quality. The second cluster of items deals with the OERs and Learning autonomy dimension which were tested as mean scores of five items.

3.1. Research Design

The blueprint for this piece of research is of a quantitative non-experimental correlational nature. It identifies its logical structure by focusing on the research participants, type of data and how it was collected and other components. It is quantitative in the sense that it tries to explain phenomena or test a theory. It is non-experimental as it characterizes phenomena and describes variables and their relationships (associations in our case). These relationships are tested with no control or manipulation of any variable whatsoever (Rovai, Baker, & Ponton, 2014). Finally, it is correlational in that it examines the association between existing non-manipulated variables of the study drawn from the same groups under study.

3.2. Sample and Sampling procedure

The sample was a convenient type of sampling which was drawn from the school of Economics and Management in Kénitra as the researcher, working there as a part-timer, was in charge of teaching Strategic and organizational management course to the respective trainings (Professional B.A, Master of Organizational and Strategic Management (Formation Continue), and Master of Organizational and Strategic Management (Formation Initiale). Potential participants (N=118) were enrolled in their corresponding trainings at a large, open enrollment/access University (Ibn Tofail University) across two semesters, Fall 2021. They were enrolled in at least one course that used OERs exclusively – with no textbook requirement – and were asked to complete a survey about their perceptions of OERs utility. Students in these courses, which I was in charge of, were assigned free-to-access or ancillary resources in form of OERs and a course that was delivered as a flipped-model mode/classroom. The professor provided a study guide highlighting the learning objectives, assigned materials, and key instructions that encourage students to review the content prior to lecture. The respondents were sent a Google Form version of the OERs perceptions survey. There were 68 who fully completed the OERs perceptions surveys. The survey response rate was 57, 62%.

3.3. Data Collection Tool

The researcher developed an OERs perceptions survey that was administered to (N=118) students attending the school of Economics and Management in Kénitra affiliated to Ibn Tofail University. This data collection instrument includes 5-point Likert-scale measure that can be statistically analyzed to determine correlations among the co-variables of the present study. Specifically, a 36-item online survey was administered to gather data from students enrolled in a course that used exclusively OERs in the fall semester of 2021– with no textbook requirement. There was a 57,62% response rate with 68 completed surveys. Moreover, for more research instrumentation validity, the OERs perceptions survey questions adopted were developed based on previous perceptions pilot research conducted by the same researcher that included input from students about

question clarity and content. The pilot group was taken from students in Ecole Nationale de Commerce et de Gestion (ENCG), Kénitra who study the same module and have the criterion of using one module at least using OERs. Changes and refurbishes were done based on feedback obtained from this pilot group.

The OERs perceptions survey items were divided into two clusters and three demographic descriptors. The first cluster was measured as mean scores of six OERs perception dimensions: motivation to learn, quality of learning experience, value of OERs, cognitive learning, affective learning, and course quality. The second cluster of items deals with OERs and Learner autonomy dimension which were tested as a mean score of five items. However, for the demographics, the data collection tool asked participants to state their age, major, and delivery mode of the course.

4. Results and Data Analysis

This study attempts to investigate the students' perceptions of OERs utility, and use for learning autonomy in an ESP context. It tries as well to determine the level of awareness amongst students of Ibn Tofail University regarding OERs with 68 participants who fully completed the OERs perceptions surveys with a survey response rate of 57, 62%.

The internal consistency of the tool chosen describes the extent to which all the items in it measure the same concept or construct and hence connected to the inter-relatedness of the items within the tool. For this purpose, one major tool was used to test for the consistency of the items and questions in the data collection instrument as well as the reliability of the tool used herein, Cronbach alpha coefficient. The interpretation of the reliability estimate obtained from a test that has a reliability of 0.80, rounded from .78 is that there is 0.36 error variance (random error) in the scores ($0.80 \times 0.80 = 0.64$; $1.00 - 0.64 = 0.36$) using GPower 3.1 software, as a measurement error. It is of note here that the error 0.36 is minimal and the estimate of reliability is suggestive of higher consistency. Additionally, from our example, we can conclude that since Cronbach's alpha is 0.80 (rounded from .785), our scale with this specific sample indicates a high level of internal consistency.

4.1. Descriptive Statistics Analysis of the Data

There were three demographic characteristics used in this study: age, major, and delivery mode of the course. As to the major of the participants, the two masters involved in the study scored almost equal percentages of response rates (MOSM/FI, N= 14, 23.5% and MOSM/FC, N=18, 26.5% respectively); however, the professional B.A constitutes around half (N=31 50.0%) of the respondents. This is justified on the ground that the B.A is an oversized class. Concerning the age segments to which the participants belong, the majority's ages vary between 20 and 24. As far as the last demographic, the participants had to choose between three options: online only/web-based, on-campus/face-to-face (N=3, 4.4%), and off-campus/face-to-face (N=4, 5.9%). It seems that the widely held opinion is that of online only/web-based mode with (N=60, 87.9%).

Beside the demographic variables whose role will be decisive in in drawing the main correlations of the present study, the survey contains also various dimensions for each of the of two clusters. First, the mean was calculated for each of the six dimensions of OERS learning cluster and subsequently for the OERs and learner autonomy cluster with five dimensions. For this purpose, a 5-point Likert-type scale was used as a measure of perception in response to questions 1-37 with strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, neither agree nor disagree (undecided or neutral) = 3, disagree = 2, and strongly disagree = 1.

Table 1. *Motivation to Learn Dimension*

	1. I like to learn things that are challenging.	2. I am able to complete my homework on time.	3. I enjoy working on my assignments.	4. I enjoy learning in an environment that incorporates OERs.	5. I would describe using OERs as interesting.	6. I like the learning environment where OERs are used.
N Valid	68	68	68	68	68	68
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	4.143	4.175	3.698	4.397	4.365	4.413
Std. Deviation	.7590	.8140	.8159	.6849	.7026	.7102
Sum	261.0	263.0	233.0	277.0	275.0	278.0

The motivation to learn dimension was measured using six items (#1-6) included in the OERs perceptions survey. The six items related to the students' perception of their motivation to learn are reported as motivation to learn item means presented in Table 1 above. The motivation to learn dimension item means were all around M=4.00 or more, indicating that students are motivated to learn. The highest motivation to learn item mean of M=4.141 supports students' motivation to learn as a result of students' ability to complete homework on time. The scale mean for the motivation to learn dimension was M=4.198.

Table 2. *Quality of Learning Dimension*

	7. OERs make me feel more engaged with my learning.	8. If given a choice, I prefer learning using OERs.	9. OERs directly improve the quality of my learning experience in any course.	10. There is a match between the OERs content and specific learning objectives of the courses I take in this program.	11. If given a choice, I prefer learning using a textbook.
N Valid	68	68	68	68	68
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	4.270	3.857	3.337	3.968	1.778
Std. Deviation	.9017	1.0451	.9480	.8793	1.1701
Sum	269.0	243.0	243.0	250.0	238.0

The quality of learning dimension was measured using five items (#7-11) in the OERS perceptions survey. The five items related to the students' perception of the quality of the learning environment in the course that use OERs are reported as quality of learning dimension item means presented in Table 2 above. All quality of learning dimension items received a positive rating of M=3.85 or more. A preference for learning with a textbook was rated lowest (a reverse-scored item of M=1.778), while a preference for learning with OERs was rated higher (M=3.77), indicating that students had a more positive preference for learning with OERs. The scale mean for the quality of learning dimension was M=3.43.

Table 3. *Value of Open Educational Resources (OERs) Dimension*

	12. I think this course is of less value to me because anyone can access the materials.	13. OERs are not as good as purchased textbooks.	14. Textbooks help me understand topics better than OERs.	15. I believe I can learn more through OERs than through a textbook.	16. OERs help me understand topics better than textbooks.	17. OERs do not offer any advantages to me.
N Valid	68	68	68	68	68	68
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	2.032	2.794	2.905	3.159	3.413	1.698
Std. Deviation	1.0621	1.3697	1.2916	.9706	1.0102	.4275
Sum	128.0	176.0	183.0	199.0	215.0	107.0

The six items (#12-17) related to the students' perception of the value of OERs in the course that used OERs are reported as value of OERs dimension item means presented in Table 3. The value of OERs dimension items were rated ranging from M=1.69 to M=3.41. The item that received the highest rating was the students' perception that OERs help them understand material better than traditional textbooks(M=3.41). The scale mean of the value of OERs dimension was M=2.09.

Table 4. *Cognitive Learning Dimension*

	18. I can organize course material into a logical structure.	19. I cannot produce an outline of the topics covered in this course for future project.	20. I can intelligently critique the OERs used in this program.
N Valid	68	68	68
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	3.542	2.444	3.286
Std. Deviation	.9308	.9466	.9743
Sum	222.0	154.0	207.0

The fourth dimension was the cognitive learning dimension that was measured using three items (#18-20) included in the OERs perceptions survey. The three items

related to the student's perception of their level of cognitive learning in the course that used OERs are reported as cognitive learning dimension item means presented in Table 4. The cognitive dimension items were all rated M=2.44 or higher. The item rated highest (M=3.52) indicated students perceived the course that used OERs had structure. The scale mean for the cognitive dimension was M=3.08.

Table 5. *Affective Learning Dimension*

		I have changed my attitudes about studies as a result of the use of OERs.	I feel more self-reliant as a result of the use of OERs.	I feel I am a more sophisticated thinker as a result of the use of OERs.
N	Valid	68	68	68
Missing		0	0	0
Mean		3.556	3.952	3.714
Std. Deviation		1.0592	.9406	1.1134
Sum		224.0	249.0	234.0

As to the fifth dimension, the affective learning dimension, it was gauged using three items (#21-23) included in the OERs perceptions survey. The three items related to the students' perception of their level of affective learning in the course that used OERs are reported as affective learning dimension item means presented in Table 5. All affective learning dimension items had more or less similar means of M=3.50 or higher. The highest affective learning mean (M=3.95) indicated that students had a greater sense of self-reliance as a result of their use of OERs. The scale mean for the affective learning dimension was M=3.73.

Table 6. *Course Quality Dimension*

		24. I would like to take more courses that use OERs. (course quality).	25. I would recommend a course that uses OERs to others (course quality).	26. Overall learning experience with the use of OERs was positive (course quality).	27. Overall quality of the OERs content of this course was excellent (course quality).
N	Valid	68	68	68	68
Missing		0	0	0	0
Mean		3.825	3.825	4.016	3.698
Std. Deviation		.9077	.9425	.8889	1.9094
Sum		241.0	241.0	253.0	233.0

The course quality dimension is the last dimension. It was measured using four items in the OERs perceptions survey. The four items related to the student's perception of the quality of the course that used OERs are reported as course quality dimension item means presented in Table 6. All of the course quality dimension item means were M=3.69 or greater. The highest rated course quality dimension (M=4.01) indicated that the

students perceived an overall positive learning experience in the course that used OERs. The scale mean for the course quality dimension was M=3.83.

Table 7. *OERs and Learner Autonomy*

	28. I determine my learning objectives according to my specific needs related to specific OERs that I use.	29. I can evaluate to what extent my learning results using OERs meet the initial pedagogical objectives I established.	30. I define content and progression of the OERs I use according to the contexts in which I will have to communicate.	31. I am able to decide on the techniques and methods of using OERs in my learning process.	32. I can take personal decisions on when to study and how much time I will dedicate to the use of OERs in my studies. I can therefore decide on my learning takes place.
N Valid	68	68	68	68	68
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.857	3.730	3.638	3.952	4.000
Std. Deviation	.9133	.8837	.7997	.8506	1.0318
Sum	243.0	235.0	232.0	249.0	252.0

The five items related to the student's perception of their autonomy while using OERs as reported in Table 7 above. All of the OERs and Learner autonomy dimension item means were M=3.68 or greater. The highest rated (M=4.00) indicated that they can take full responsibility of their studies in the course that used OERs. The scale mean for this dimension was M=3.84.

4.2 Inferential Statistics Analysis of the Data

The research design adopted for the present piece of research is of a quantitative non-experimental correlational nature, the main purpose of which is uncovering the perceptions of some Moroccan students of modules not using any textbook and relying more on OERs in an ESP context. For this purpose and for the practical objectives advanced therefore, three research hypotheses were advanced to confirm or disconfirm:

RH 1: There is a significant relationship between the mean of the five dimensions of the OERs perceptions survey and the mean of the OERS and Learner Autonomy items dimension. RH 2: There is a significant relationship between the mean of the five dimensions of the OERs perceptions survey and the demographics (age, delivery mode, and major).

Table 8. *Correlation between Perception of OERs Learning Dimension and OERs and Learner Autonomy dimension*

			35. OERs Learning Autonomy dimension	OERs Learning Dimension
Spearman's Rho	**35. OERs Learner Autonomy dimension**	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.655**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	68	68
	Perception of OERs Learning Dimension	Correlation Coefficient	.655**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	68	68

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

Insofar as the monotonic relationship, the Spearman rank-order correlation, between the two first covariables is concerned, the results indicated a statistically significant, moderate and positive correlational relationship (*rho* =.655**, *N*=68, *p*=.0000) between the means of the five dimensions of the OERs perceptions survey and that of the OERS and Learner Autonomy items dimension. From our 'two-tailed' prediction of the relationship, it would be necessary to reject the null hypothesis that there is no association at (*p*=0.00).

However, the study found different relationships in terms of direction and strength between the means of the five dimensions of the OERs perceptions survey and those of the demographics (age, delivery mode, and major).

Table 9. *Correlation of **Age** and Perception of OERs Learning Dimensions and OERs Learner Autonomy Dimension*

			34. Please state your age on your last Birthday?	OERs and Learner Autonomy dimension	Perception of OERs Learning Dimension
Spearman's rho	**34. Please state your age on your last Birthday?**	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,093	,123
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,467	,338
		N	68	68	68
	OERs and Learner Autonomy dimension	Correlation Coefficient	,093	1,000	,655**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,467	.	,000
		N	68	68	68
	Perception of OERs Learning Dimension	Correlation Coefficient	,123	,655**	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,338	,000	.
		N	68	68	68

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

For the first association of this series, age and perception of OERs learning dimension, the results are presented in this matrix above such that it presents the Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient, its significance value and the sample size that the calculation is based on. A Spearman rank-order correlation was run to determine the relationship between age and OERs Learning dimensions (see Table 9). In this

example, we can see that the Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient is ($rho= .123$), and that it is statistically not significant at ($p > .005$). The correlation between age and OERs Learning dimensions is not statistically significant at ($rho =.123$, $N=68$, $p>0.05$); there seems to be no dependent relationship between the correlated variables. From our 'two-tailed' prediction of the relationship therefore, it would be necessary to accept the null hypothesis that no association exists between the aforementioned covariables.

The same nonparametric measure used previously, Spearman rank-order correlation, was also run to determine the association that might exist between age and OERs learner autonomy dimension (see Table 9). It is clear from the results ($rho =.093$, $N=68$, $p>0.05$) that the weak relationship between the two covariables is not at all statistically significant ($p > .005$). This result adds up to the one found earlier which revealed that age does not correlate both with the OERs learning dimensions and OERs learner autonomy dimension. From our 'two-tailed' prediction of the relationship, it would be necessary to accept the null hypothesis that stipulates that there is no existing association between the above-mentioned covariables.

Table 10. *Correlation of **Major** and Perception of OERs Learning Dimension and OERs Learner Autonomy Dimension*

			OERs and Learner Autonomy dimension	Perception of OERs Learning Dimension	33. Which Master/B.A do you belong to?
Spearman's rho	**OERs and Learner Autonomy Dimension**	**Correlation Coefficient**	1,000	,655**	,594
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,000	,000
		N	68	68	68
	Perception of OERs Learning Dimension	**Correlation Coefficient**	,655**	1,000	.354
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	.	.000
		N	68	68	68
	33. Which Master/B. A training do you belong to?	**Correlation Coefficient**	-,094	.354	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,464	,000	.
		N	68	68	68

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

The correlation matrix generated above is the result of running a Spearman rank-order correlation to determine the relationship between the students' major and perception of OERs learning dimension. The correlation between the two variables, with 68 respondents reacting to both the question and the dimension, is statistically significant at ($rho =.354**$, $N=68$, $p =.000$). This indicates a very weak positive correlation between the students' major and perception of OERs learning dimension and that we could conclude that it would be necessary to maintain the research hypothesis that there is association between the variables at ($p = 0.00$).

The significant Spearman correlation coefficient value of -.094 confirms that there is a weak positive correlation between the two variables: Major and OERs learner autonomy dimension. Nevertheless, this monotonic correlation between the two variables shows the relationship is statistically significant at (rho =.594, N=68, p =.000). In this sense, the null hypothesis, H_0, that stipulates that there is no monotonic correlation in the population against the alternative hypothesis, H_a, is rejected and we can safely conclude that the students' major is associated with OERs learner.

Table 11. *Correlation of **Delivery Mode** and Perception of OERs Learning Dimension and OERs Learner Autonomy Dimension*

			Perception of OERs Learning Dimension	OERs and Learner Autonomy dimension	36. Indicate the delivery mode of the course that uses OERs during this semester?
Spearman's rho	Perception of OERs Learning Dimension	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,655**	,066
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,000	,008
		N	68	68	68
	OERs and Learner Autonomy dimension	Correlation Coefficient	,655**	1,000	,617
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	.	,000
		N	68	68	68
	36. Indicate the delivery mode of the course that uses OERs during this semester?	Correlation Coefficient	,066	,617	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,008	,000	.
		N	68	68	68

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

A Spearman rank-order correlation was run to determine the relationship between students' delivery mode and their perception of OERs learning dimensions. Table 11 above indicates that a Spearman rank-order correlation value of (rho=.066, N=68, p=.000) shows that the association between students' Delivery Mode and Perception of OERs learning dimension is a positive moderate one. The obtained cut edge alpha value (p=.001), is greater than .005, so the relationship is statistically significant and the H_0 is rejected. Thus, we have very strong evidence to believe that H_a should be maintained, and that it could be safely concluded that students' Delivery Mode and their Perception of OERs learning dimension are related.

Furthermore, a Spearman's rank order correlation was run to determine the monotonic relationship between delivery mode and OERs learner autonomy dimension. There was a very weak, negative monotonic correlation between the two variables (rho =.617, N= 68, p=.000). Since SPSS reports the p-value for this test as being (p=.409), we can say that we have very strong evidence to reject H_a and to decide that there is no statistically significant association between the two variables. That is, we have evidence that the two variables are not monotonically correlated in the population.

5. Discussion

This study was designed to examine two types of monotonic association. The first relationship is between the mean of the five dimensions of the OERs perception survey and the mean of the OERs and Learner Autonomy items dimension, whereas the second is between the mean of the five dimensions of the OERs perception survey and age, delivery mode, and major as demographic variables. Three classes of the school of Economics and Management affiliated to Ibn Tofail University in Kénitra, Morocco were used in the present study. Consent of 68 participants was taken and their willingness to participate in the study was guaranteed.

The descriptive statistics findings indicated that the overall perception of OERs survey was positive in terms of the students' motivation to learn and the ability to complete homework on time (M=4.141), their preference for learning with OERs (M=3.94), their perception of the value of OERs as opposed to traditional textbooks use (M=3.41), the cognitive dimension on whether the OERs course has structure with a mean of (M=3.08), the affective learning dimension (M=3.73) which indicated that students had a greater sense of self-reliance as a result of their use of OERs, the course quality dimension (M=4.01) which showed that the students perceived an overall positive learning experience in the course that used OER, and the OERs and Learner autonomy dimension where they can take full responsibility of their studies in the course that used OERs.

As to the inferential statistics results, a Spearman rank-order correlation was adopted to uncover the perceptions of a sample of Moroccan students of modules using no textbook and relying more on OERs in an ESP context. The purpose is to study the monotonic association between the OERs perception survey and the mean of the OERs and Learner Autonomy items dimension as well as the correlation between the OERs perception survey and some demographics included age, delivery mode, and major by trying to confirm or disconfirm the two advanced hypotheses (see page 5).

The results have shown therefore that the correlation between the mean of the five dimensions of the OERs perception survey and the mean of the OERs and Learner Autonomy items dimension was statistically significant, moderate and positive (*rho* =.655** N= 68, *p*=.0000). Thus, it could be safely concluded that the null hypothesis that there is no relationship is rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis, and that the more positive the students' perception towards the OERs in course use, the more autonomous they feel in dealing with the pedagogical material being taught.

This is suggestive of the fact that our ESP students feel autonomous in their use of OERs as opposed to when they were dependent on the textbook; additionally, their positive perception of the OERs use seems to boost their autonomy especially that the context, COVID-19 pandemic conditions, had also its positive effect. This is a confounding variable that, fortunately, boosted positively the results of the study; however, other results might be gleaned in a COVID-19 free-context. As a result, the first

research hypothesis is confirmed as there found to be an association between the variables under study.

Nevertheless, the Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient for the variable age and the two other variables: OERs learner autonomy dimension and the perception of OERs Learning dimension was positive, very weak and not statistically significant (*rho*=.123, *N*=63, *p*>0.05) and (*rho*=.093, *N*=63, *p*>0.05) respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that there is no relationship whatsoever between the two variables is maintained and that the research hypothesis is rejected proving that OERs Learner Autonomy Dimension and the perception are not dependent on age.

Moreover, unlike the age factor, the major factor seems to correlate with the two variables, OERs Learner Autonomy Dimension and the perception of OERs Learning dimension. The association was both positive, moderate, weak and statistically significant (*rho* =.594, *N*=63, *p* =.000; *rho* =.354**, *N*=63, *p* =.000) respectively. We can conclude then that major goes hand in hand with both positive perception of the course using that type of material and the students' autonomy in the use of the same material as opposed to the traditional textbook.

As to the last demographic in the second hypothesis relationships, a Spearman rank-order correlation was run to determine the relationship between students' delivery mode and both the perception of OERs learning and OERs learner autonomy dimensions. The association was weak, positive and statistically significant ((*rho* =.066, *n*=63, *p*=.000; *rho*=.617, *N*=63, *p*=.000) correspondingly. It should be concluded then that the null hypothesis that the there is no association between the delivery mode and the other two main variables is rejected in favor of the research one. That is, the chosen only online web-based delivery mode corresponds with the utility of OERs use. Moreover, the delivery mode opted for seems to enhance both the positive perception of the material, OERs preferred as well as the autonomy that the students enjoy while using this material.

6. Conclusion

In conformity with the purpose of the study, the perception of OERs survey was developed, and validity and reliability analyses were conducted. After it was analyzed for its validity and reliability, the survey was implemented with students adopting OERs in a course instead of a traditional textbook. The relevant literature was also reviewed and used in the development of this survey. The validity and reliability analyses confirmed that the survey, which comprised 36 items with a 5-point Likert-type scale, was valid and reliable. The scale has an internal consistency coefficient of $\alpha = 0.80$.

The purpose of the present study therefore was to investigate the students' perceptions of OERs utility and use for autonomy in an ESP context with Master students of Strategic and Organizational Management at the faculty of Economics and

Management, Kénitra Morocco as a chosen sample. The result of the data analysis revealed that the sample of students had very positive and encouraging perceptions of the use of OERs in the course they had without any consultation of traditional textbook or booklets. It is noteworthy here also that the correlations drawn between the perception of OERs use and OERs learner autonomy, between these two variables and delivery mode and major were positive and highly statistically significant; however, the association between the perception of OERs use and OERs learner autonomy variables and age were weak, positive and not statistically significant. The results provide enough evidence to confirm the two advanced hypotheses with the exception of part of the second one regarding the age factor. Therefore, we could generally conclude that given the positive attitudes of the students under study towards the use and utility of OERs, the delivery mode chosen, only online web-based, their major, the autonomy is boosted and the feeling of decision-making is enhanced as well.

These results corroborate other findings in the literature. Hori, Ono, Kobayashi, Yamaji, Kita and Yamada, (2015), for instance in a study they conducted, stated that the tendency to use OERs could indicate that autonomous learning occurred. What's more, other studies go hand in hand with the findings of the present study such as Firat's (2016) study where the objective was to measure the e-learning autonomy of distance education students. In this study, it was found that the autonomy of the participants using OERs in this learning environment was found to be high. Always on the same positive line of research, Cappellini (2013) asserts that he agrees with McAndrew, Scanlon, and Clow (2010) arguing that OERs are a part of a substantial educational experience that contributes to learning autonomy or "learning to learn" of learners and prepares them for continual learning. He even stated with an assertive tone that only learners who are already autonomous will take advantage of the open education movement. Nonetheless, these results differ from that of Hartnett, George and Dron (2011) whose study revealed that students are not intrinsically motivated in such online environments even with the of free material. Same opposing results were found by Winitzky-Stephens and Pickavance (2017). The two scholars adopted multilevel models that examined three measures of student success and the results demonstrated that there were no significant differences between courses using OERs and traditional textbooks for continuing students, and a small benefit for new students.

A limitation of this study may be that the variable measuring age, which did not correlate with the main variables of the study, was measured in age ranges. This does not allow to distinguish between students who have more experience with tertiary life with more years at the university as opposed to those who had a short life at the same place. The date of the enrollment might affect and interfere with the age segments chosen and thus with the results of the study. For any future venue, research may choose to re-study the same variables but with more emphasis on selection of age based on enrollment year.

An additional limitation in the study is that the respondents were chosen purposefully with all what such a non-probabilistic sampling frame might have as deficiencies. Future research could opt for a probabilistic random selection of the sample so as to raise the probability of overgeneralizing to other settings and population. One final limitation has to do with the research design used as a more experimental study could be adopted and more scientific rigor would be guaranteed.

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Bani KOUMACHI is an associate professor at school of Languages, Letters, and Arts, Ibn Tofail University Kénitra, Morocco. He got his Doctorat National from Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah, Fes Sais, Morocco. He is the author of many articles in applied linguistics and communication. Professor Koumachi's research and writing interests include but not limited to intercultural communication, organizational communication, ICTs, ESP, knowledge management, research methodology and educational statistics, and applied linguistics issues.
(Bbani.koumachi@uit.ac.ma)

Dissenting voices: the organization of closings in conflict talk. Some evidence from Romanian

Diana Hornoiu

This paper analyzes episodes of conflict talk within the framework of conversation analysis with a view to establishing the sequential organization of terminal exchanges in Romanian conversational discourse. The analysis of the Romanian empirical data shows that terminal exchanges serve as mechanisms for displaying dominance or consensus.

Closing; adjacency; turn-taking; sequencing; conflict talk.

1. Terminological clarifications

Conflict talk is recognized as a distinctive speech activity by participants and observers. Empirical research has documented episodes of conflict talk as having recognizable beginnings and endings and as performing a range of social functions (Labov, 1972; Eisenberg & Garvey, 1981, Schiffrin, 1984). In verbal conflict, while taking successive turns at talk, participants oppose their utterances and the actions performed in delivering those utterances. This opposition can be expressed either directly or indirectly by means of various linguistic, paralinguistic and kinesic cues. An episode of conflict talk ends when the oppositional turns cease and participants take up other (speech) activities. Within a speech act theoretic account, these opposing utterances make up a single disagreement act.

Researchers from outside of the speech act theoretic perspective argue that conflict talk has a broader scope than a single disagreement act. Schiffrin (1984), for example, views episodes of talk characterized by sustained disagreement as competition for interactionally negotiable goods, whether this is on the surface level or on the underlying action level. Goodwin (1990) conceptualizes conflict talk as an activity along the lines of Goffman's (1967) situated activity system and Gumperz's (1982) sociolinguistic notion of a speech event.

Another factor in delineating the scope of analysis is the distinction between interpersonal and organizational episodes of conflict talk[1]. This distinction parallels another distinction between conversational or everyday argument and institutional conflict talk. However, there are contexts where the type and practices of conflict talk are not distinctly institutional, although the settings themselves may be functionally specific, e.g., schools, mediation sessions. Still another distinction relates to conflict talk itself, as opposed to conflict management or resolution of conflict episodes.

For the purposes of this paper, following Grimshaw (1990), I will use the term *conflict talk* in a broadest sense to capture the central idea that participants take alternative positions on the same issue without implying any restriction to a single speech act or a single turn sequence or a single topic of contention.

The paper addresses the sequential organization of conversational turns involved in bringing episodes of verbal conflict to an end. The number of participants involved in conflict talk may vary from two to more than two. The focus here will be on two-participant episodes of conflict talk, with some concern with ways a third party may become involved.

Conflict vs. consensus

A characteristic feature of conflict talk is that participants overtly display an awareness of and focus on the fact that consensus on a particular topic has broken down. Consensus is a necessary prerequisite for successful verbal interaction. When consensus breaks down, interaction based on cooperation and stability can be at stake. However, in some contexts, an episode of conflict can be used as an expression of sociability (Schiffrin, 1984).

Two kinds of consensus have been identified in the literature as being closely related to the termination of verbal conflicts. First, there is consensus on aspects of the social world. Examples of consensus falling in this first category include agreement on such things as the meaning of words, the truth of certain facts, the existence of certain rights, the existence of feelings and so on. Disagreement on such matters can lead to conflict talk. The second type of consensus is agreement on the speech activity that participants engage in. Participants in the interaction require a sense of "what we are doing here with words" in order to contribute appropriate turns at speaking. During episodes of conflict talk, participants have reached consensus on the speech activity they are engaged in, but there is a displayed lack of consensus on some aspect of the social world. The agreement on the speech activity makes it possible for the interaction to

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[1] Episodes of organizational conflict talk are further complicated by issues of representation and constitute a particular subset of the conflict literature. Some argue that this dichotomy is debatable and simplistic (Kolb & Putnam, 1992). However, this debate is outside the scope of this paper.

continue while participants address the lack of consensus on other matters (Eisenberg & Garvey, 1981; Grimshaw, 1990).

The episode of conflict talk may lead to consensus on the problematic aspect of the social world which is the source of the trouble. Once such consensus is established, the conflict-speech activity usually ends. While the management of consensus is crucial to the organization of closings in conflict talk, there is another layer of meaning which is equally relevant, which falls within the logic of winning and losing.

An episode of conflict talk can continue only as long as participants tacitly agree to engage in conflict. Participants may terminate the conflict speech-activity without achieving a consensus on the aspect of the social world which is the source of the conflict. Thus, the minimal requirement for the termination of episodes of conflict talk is a consensus on shifting the speech activity. In general, such a consensus is achieved with the emergence of a dominant party or by negotiating consensus on contested issues. Apart from shifting the speech activity, there are other ways of bringing verbal conflicts to an end. Thus, the next section addresses some of the conversational mechanisms used to close episodes of conflict talk.

The terminal exchange

The issue of how verbal conflicts are closed is related to the issue of how discourse units, in general, are brought to completion. In what follows, I will show how a two-slot sequential mechanism used in other discourse units applies to closing verbal conflicts as well.

Schegloff and Sacks (1973) examined the closing problem for the single conversation discourse unit. They point out that the organization of closing is an issue for other discourse units as well (1973, p. 292). Aspects of their analysis can be applied to the closing of verbal-conflict discourse unit. A key aspect of the closing issue for a conversation is the *terminal exchange*, such as an exchange of good-byes (Schegloff & Sacks 1973, p. 295). In the terminal exchange, the first slot of the adjacency pair implicitly presupposes that the conversation should end. In the second slot the other speaker shows "that he understood what a prior speaker aimed at, and he is willing to go along with that" (Schegloff & Sacks 1973, p. 297). Thus, a terminal exchange displays a consensus regarding termination and it allows leave-taking to occur without unexpected interpretation. The terminal exchange is used by participants to coordinate the closing of verbal conflicts.

The terminal exchange takes **two basic** formats in conflict talk. Both formats have a **two-slot structure**, i.e. they make up an adjacency pair. They can close an episode of conflict talk when they are applied. Both formats occur after at least one oppositional turn has occurred. One displays a **dominant/submissive** relationship between participants. The other displays a **consensus** on a compromise between participants.

The submission terminal exchange

In the submission terminal exchange, the first slot is an *oppositional move*, whereas the second one is an *assent*. The term assent is used in the literature to refer to either *agreement* or *compliance*. The function of the assent move, which generally follows the opponent's oppositional turn, is to signal submission by marking acceptance of the validity of the oppositional attack. It has been pointed out in the literature that the assentor assumes a subordinate position regarding the dispute. The submission terminal exchange evinces some of the characteristics of other-repair which follows disagreement (Goodwin, 1983; Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977).

The compromise terminal exchange

Within the compromise terminal exchange, the first slot is a *concession offering*, while the second slot is *acceptance* of the offering (Vuchinich, 1990). In other words, this sequence displays the participant's agreeing to the central issue after his or her prior disagreement. At this point it should be pointed out that the basic format of both the submission terminal exchange and the compromise terminal exchange is that of an adjacency pair. With regard to the compromise terminal exchange, this basic format can be expanded to include multiple concession offerings. Since a concession may not be accepted immediately, it can still serve as a pre-closing which signals that current speaker is ready to initiate closing a conflict (Schegloff & Sacks, 1983). In terms of the preferred *vs*. dispreferred distinction, concessions include reluctance markers indicating their dispreferred nature.

It is important to distinguish concessions from other types of partially agreeing pre-sequences of conflict talk. A crucial feature of concessions, in this regard, is speakers' gradual move towards concession. Abrupt and completely unexpected position shifts can be regarded by the interlocutors as an inability to defend their opinion.

In what follows I will focus on how these terminal exchanges are employed in closing episodes of naturally-occurring conflict talk in Romanian conversational discourse. The analysis of the Romanian empirical data show my informants to display a preference for the following five termination formats: submission where one participant accepts the other's position, dominant party intervention where the disputants submit to a third party, compromise where one participant offers a concession which is then accepted, stand-off in which there is no submission or compromise, and withdrawal, either from the verbal conflict or physically from the environment (Vuchinich,1990; Dersley & Wootton, 2001).

2. Methodology and data collection

The excerpts analyzed in this paper illustrate episodes of Romanian family conflict talk at dinner time. They have been taken from an **original corpus** of 10 hours of

naturally-occurring conversations which I recorded in Constanta metropolitan area and which known as Constanta corpus (Hornoiu, 2016).

The sample of informants included 24 people between the ages of 13 and 64. In compiling the corpus, a constant and fundamental concern was to avoid, as much as possible, the limitations and constraints inherent in the sociolinguistic interview when the interviewer is present. Therefore I chose not to be present while my informants were engaged in conversation hoping that the constraints stemming from the informants' knowledge of being observed could be alleviated (Labov, 1972).

All the speakers in my sample provided information on their social background and granted permission for the data to be used for linguistic analysis (Tagliamonte, 2006). Throughout the process, my informants were free to edit and delete material as they wished. By handing over control of the recording process in this way, I managed to develop a relationship with my informants based on mutual trust which, over a period of time, made it easy for them to ignore the recording equipment. All the names were fictionalized to protect the informants' identity.

The transcription of the recorded conversations was performed according to the transcription conventions used in the Conversation Analysis, using a notation system that provides sufficient details for a thorough analysis.

3. The analysis of the data

As shown in the previous section, verbal conflict is conceptualized as a sequential, interactional process triggered by an action which participants in conversation may construe as arguable. Conflict talk is thus made up of "chained" (Goffman 1971) disagreement sequences. Approaching verbal conflict from a conversation-analytic perspective places the analytic focus on the sequential organization of talk-in-interaction. In this section, I will focus on excerpts from my data. I will examine how the termination of episodes of conflict talk is interactionally and sequentially achieved by the participants in Romanian naturally-occurring conversational discourse.

Submission

As described above, conflict resolution may be achieved when one participant gives in and accepts the opponent's position. The submission terminal exchange accomplishes this kind of closing. The submission may be verbal or non-verbal.

Excerpt (1) illustrates indirect verbal submission occurring during a minor argument between two teenage sisters.

Excerpt 1
1. Maria: ah ai lăsat geamul mașinii deschis
         ah you left the window down on the car

2. Dana: uh uh

    uh uh

3. Maria: ba da, l-ai lăsat

    yes you did

4. Dana: am- am deschis ușa și am închis geamul și a scârțâit și am crezut că l-am închis

    I- I opened the door and rolled it up and it squeaked and I thought it was shut

5.   când l-am închis a scârțâit.

    when I rolled it up it squeaked

6. Maria: e foarte greu să-l închizi, nu-i așa?

    really hard to shut it isn't it?

7. Dana: mhm da

    yeah

The issue in excerpt 1 is whether or not Dana left the car window open. In line 2, Dana denies that she did. In line 4, however, she gives an excuse for why she "she thought it was shut". Her turn in line 4 implicitly conveys that she may have had, in fact, left the window open. By conveying this implicit piece of information, Dana is giving in or assenting to Maria's oppositional accusation. However, her submission is indirect rather than overtly stated. In line 7, Dana submits to Maria with the assenting *mhm da* ("yeah") and the verbal conflict is brought to an end.

    The submission signal may also be given nonverbally. In the following excerpt father and son disagree on whether or not the latter should eat his peas.

Excerpt 2

1. Father: mănâncă mazărea aia, e bună

    chow down on them peas they're good

2. Son: uh uh

    uh uh

3. Father: <u>ba da</u>

    yes they are

4. Son: nu-mi place

    I just don't like them

5. Father: ei, e în farfurie, o mănânci

    well they are on your plate you eat them

6. Son: uh uh

    uh uh

7. Father: MĂNÂNCĂ (6) sau te duci în camera ta dacă ai terminat

    EAT or you'll go back to your room if you're done

(15)
(Son begins eating food and cutting meat)
8. Father: taie-o ca lumea
      cut it right

By eating after the father's directive and threat in line 7 the son submits nonverbally.

Dominant third-party intervention

    There is one particular pattern of submission which requires special attention. An episode of on-going conflict talk involving two participants can be brought to an end by a third party. Usually this third party has some power over the participants. Within this pattern, neither of the opposing parties submits to the other. Instead both submit to a third party. It turns out that, with great regularity, the third party's turn is a directive which opposes the conflict speech activity. For example, in the family setting, an important variable in how family disputes come to a close is power or affect. Thus, in my data, the most predominant form of third-party intervention in the family disputes was parental. This pattern is illustrated in excerpt (3), where mother breaks up a dispute between her son (age 18) and daughter (age 22).

Excerpt 3
1. Mother: ar fi frumos dacă aş fuma în faţa voastră?
      would it be ill manners if I smoked in front of you all
2. Father: exact. în timp ce mâncăm
right. while we're eatin'
(2.6)
3. Son: ştii ce cred eu despre asta
      you know how I feel about that
(4.0)
4. Daughter: ((to mother)): mda, are multe de comentat
      well he's got a lot to say
(1.2)
5. Mother: pur şi simplu nu-i place ca oamenii să fumeze în preajma lui
      he just doesn't like people smokin' around him
6. Son ((to daughter)): DESPRE CE VORBEŞTI? (1.7)
      what are you talkin' about?
7.   despre ce vorbeşti?
      what are you talking' about?
8. Daughter: huh?
      huh?

9. Son: despre ce vorbești?
       what are you talkin' about?
10. Daughter: păi, prietenii tăi și așa
       well your friends and everything
11. Son: [ei nu fumează în preajma meu
       they don't smoke around me
12. Mother: [IOANA VA ROG (3.0)
       Ioana please
13.   nelu, ne aduci o tartă cu căpșune mâine?
       nelu would you bring us a strawberry tart tomorrow?
14. Father: dacă au
       if they got any

In line 12 the mother delivers her turn in overlap her son's turn (line 11) addressing both her daughter and son. Mother's high pitch and intonation contour convey to the children a message equivalent to "you both stop quarreling". The mother pauses then for 3 seconds, the children are silent and the mother introduces a new topic in line 13. The children submitted to the mother's oppositional directive to stop the conflict.

Compromise

The excerpts analyzed so far illustrate a type of consensus achieved through dominance. Another strategy for accomplishing consensus which closes off verbal conflict is *the negotiation of a compromise*. The crucial move in this kind of negotiation is the **concession**. In a concession a participant makes an offer that is between the opposing positions that define the dispute. By making a concession, one does not concede to the other position, but rather establishes some middle ground which moves towards the other position but still opposes it. A concession can be a conflict resolution: it proposes a compromise position between the two opposing positions. If the concession offered is accepted by the opponent the conflict can be brought to an end. The most basic *compromise terminal exchange* has two slots, displaying an adjacency-pair format:

- concession offering
- assent, which accepts the offering

As with any other type of adjacency-pair sequence, this basic two-slot structure may be expanded to include multiple concessions. Moreover, the second slot may be absent and acceptance may be tacit.

What is of particular interest in compromise terminations is that none of the participants loses face. This feature is even more apparent when both opponents make

concessions. However, even when only one participant makes a concession, face loss is minimized as long as the concession is self-initiated and not externally imposed. Concessions become face-threatening when they are imposed by others.

One can detect a functional similarity between a concession and a pre-closing (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973) since a concession signals that one party is ready to close the episode of conflict talk, though unwilling to submit. The opponent party may accept the concession, reject it or offer a counter-concession. The episode of conflict talk ends when a concession, or set of concessions, is accepted through assent. The acceptance may be verbal or non-verbal and can be implicit under some circumstances.

Excerpt (4) illustrates a concession offering. The husband is explaining to the dinner guests why they might not be able to watch a certain television channel after dinner. In line 3, his wife disputes his explanation. She disputes the husband's claim that the same comedy series was at the same time on the two channels. In line 6 the husband offers a concession, arguing that they were at the same time but only for a while and then went off. This turn does not submit to the wife's position but does mitigate the husband's position and moves it toward the wife's. The wife does not overtly accept the concession but does not oppose her husband's turn in line 6 either. Given that she opposed him twice before (lines 3 and 5), and given the husband's concession in line 6, and given that she does not oppose him after the concession, it can be assumed that she accepted the concession as a basis for closing the conflict. This example shows that a concession can be much more than a pre-closing is. This excerpt shows the concession to be the only overt move needed to close the conflict.

Excerpt 4
1. Husband: și în seara aceea prima tv și kanal D transmiteau același serial de comedie
        and on that evening prima tv and kanal D were both broadcasting the same
        comedy series
2. și au șters kanal D, fiin'că aia ah- frecvența aia ()
        and they just obliterated kanal D because that ah- that ah- frequency (   )
3. Wife: tu- nu transmiteau același serial
        you- they weren't broadcasting the same series
4. Husband: ba da
        they were
5. Wife: [nu conform programului tv
        not according to the tv guide
6. Husband: [pentru o vreme pentru o vreme
        for a while for a while
7.   dar apoi a dispărut (1.0) nu știu s-ar putea să-l putem urmărim s-ar putea să nu

but then it went off (1.0) I don't know we might be able to watch it or we might not

The negotiation of a compromise can be more extended involving multiple concessions and the participation of a third party. Moreover, concessions can be indirect. In the following example a mother and daughter disagree on whether the meat is "dry" or "delicious".

Excerpt 5
1. Ana: carnea este uscată
       the meat is dry
2. Mother: nu este. este delicioasă
       no, it isn't. it's delicious
3. Irina: nu este uscată, este doar [(   )
       it's not dry it's just
4. Mother: [pune niște sos de ciuperci
       put some mushroom sauce on it
5. Irina: n-am zis că e ...
       I didn't say it is-
6. Ana: nu este uscată, e doar tare
       it's not dry it's just hard
7. Irina: e bună totuși
       it's good though

The oppositional turns are established by the mother and Ana in lines 1 and 2. The third party (Irina) offers a compromise in line 3. The mother interrupts this turn with an indirect concession in line 4. She suggests that Ana should put some mushroom sauce, leaving thus open the possibility that the meat could be dry without the sauce. In line 6 Ana concedes that the meat is not dry but she does not submit to the mother's position (i.e. "the meat is delicious") by adding that "it's hard". At this point both initial opponents have made concessions, though neither has overtly accepted the other's position. The third party (Irina) fills in the concession acceptance slot in line 7. The turn "it's good though", in line 7, signals acceptance of the mother's position with the assessment down-graded from "delicious" to "good". The use of *though* allows Irina's turn (line 7) to accept Ana's assessment of the meat as hard while simultaneously accepting the mother's down-graded assessment – the meat is good even though it is hard.

In excerpt (5), the mother and Ana did not arrive at a total consensus about the meat. But by both offering concessions and with the third party mediating they use the compromise format to end the dispute.

Stand-off

Another strategy participants can employ in order to close an episode of conflict talk is by avoiding the second slot in a terminal exchange. In these cases participants continue to maintain opposing positions, with neither submitting nor initiating a compromise until topic-change is achieved or until the opponents withdraw from participation. A third party may be involved in shifting the topic and speech activity. This kind of closing the episode of conflict is called a **stand-off** (Dersley & Wootton, 2001).

A characteristic feature of a stand-off is that any efforts to induce the opponent into submission or to strike a compromise fail. A stand-off has a particular kind of dynamic. In an episode of conflict talk, a crucial feature of the terminal exchange is that it requires the participation of at least two parties. There is not unilateral terminal exchange. Most oppositional turns are constructed so that the next turn can open up a submissive response. When participants repeatedly avoid a submissive response, oppositional moves can become redundant, more aggravated or mitigated, as the conflict develops. At some point the participants realize that neither submission nor compromise is possible. Thus, they generally seek an opportunity to terminate a conflict that is not getting anywhere. At the same time, however, neither party is willing to make a submission move. A third party may provide an opportunity to change the topic under discussions or an opponent may construct a turn which changes the activity but does not submit.

In excerpt (6), a husband and wife argue about what the husband previously told the wife about which direction is east. There are two adult dinner guests – a male (Radu) and a female. The family dog, Scotty, is lying on the floor near the table.

Excerpt 6
1. Wife: ei bine, mi-ai spus că asta e estul
      well you told me that this was east
2. Husband: n-am spus asta
      I never said that
3. ăsta este vestul
      that's west
4. Wife: ba da ai spus
      yes you did
5. Husband: nu, niciodată
      no I never
6. Wife: săptămâna trecută
      last week
7. Husband ((to guests)): are un simț al orientării groaznic
      she has a terrible sense of direction

8. Wife: te-am întrebat dacă trenurile mergeau spre nord și sud sau est și vest

   I asked you whether the trains went- ran north and south or east and west

9. Husband: asa și ce am spus?

   okay and what did I say?

10. Wife: est-vest

    east-west

11. Husband: așa e

    right

12. Wife: apoi am spus că încerc să aflu dacă () am dreptate

    then I said I was tryin' to figure out if (   ) was right

13. și apoi te-am întrebat ce direcție era

    and then I asked you what direction that was

14. și în cele din urmă am decis că soarele răsare aici

    and we finally decided the sun comes up over here

15. deci era est

    so this was east

16. Husband: nu nu nu nu

    no no no no

17. Wife: pentru că am- e vestul și ai spus că soarele răsare aici

    'cuz I- its west and you said the sun comes up over here

18. Husband: no

    no

19. Wife: ba da, îmi amintesc asta foarte bine

    yeah, I remember that very clearly

20. Female dinner guest ((to the dog in the room)): Scotty cuțu

    Scotty doggy

21. îmi pare rău îmi mănânc toată plăcinta

    I eat all my pie sorry

22. și Radu și-a mâncat plăcinta

    Radu ate his pie too

23. Wife: a fost bună plăcinta

    it was a good pie

24. Female dinner guest: uh huh

    uh huh

In lines 8-15 the opponents attempt clarification of the disputed points. These efforts break down and the conflict overtly restarts in line 16. It should be pointed out that the assents in lines 9 and 11 do not follow an oppositional turn and consequently they are not second slots in the submission terminal exchange. In lines 21 and 22, the dinner guest

provides an opportunity to change the speech activity which the wife takes advantage of in line 23. The conflict closes with no submission or compromise.

Withdrawal

Conflict termination may occur if one opponent withdraws from interaction or physically leaves the area. Withdrawal may occur when an opponent becomes too upset to continue the episode of conflict talk. However, in some cases withdrawal can be used as a strategic move to discredit one's opponent.

In excerpt (7), a couple, husband and wife, argue about where to move their place of residence.

Excerpt 7

1. Husband: de ce să dau o mie de euro pe metru pătrat ca să construiesc una când pot
   why pay one thousand euros a square foot to build one when I can

2. s-o cumpăr cu mai puțin de opt sute deja construită și să nu-mi mai bat capul?
   buy it for less than eight hundred already built and not have that trouble?

3. Wife: pentru că nu este suficient de mare este ceea ce- noi- ce ar trebui să fac să arunc mobila?
   cause it ain't big enough is what. we- what am I supposed to do. give away furniture?

4. Husband: casa aia este aproape la fel de mare ca asta
   that house is almost as big as this house

5. Wife: ALEX NU ARE NICI BIROU, nici sufragerie
   Alex it got no study in it, no dinin' room

6. Husband: ei, chiar că nu-i ah, nu
   now that ain't really ah no-

7. nu e nici o problemă să punem o [( )
   no trouble to put up a

8. Wife: [pentru mine e o mare problemă
   that's a lot of trouble to me

9. nu discut
   I ain't arguing

10. Husband: ba nu, nu este
    no it ain't

11. nu este nici o afurisită de problemă pentru tine, fiin'că nu vei bate niciun cui (2.0)
    it ain't no damn trouble to you cause you ain't gonna drive a nail in it (2.0)

12. asta-i acum cum poa' să fie o problemă pentru tine?
    now how can it trouble for you?

13. va fi acolo când te muți

     it'll be there when you move in

(4.0)

14. Wife: dacă numai așa poți vorbi cu mine înjurând, atunci [( )

     if that's the only way you can talk to me is cursing then

15. Husband: [NU :::::

     no

16. ah: îți spuneam doar cum stau lucrurile

     ah:- just tellin' you the facts

17. Wife: nici măcar nu vreau să mai vorbesc despre asta

     I don't even wanna talk about it.

(6.0)

18. Daughter: stă să plouă

     it looks like it's gonna rain

(12.5)

19. Daughter: mama, cât e ceasu'?

     Mom, what time is it?

20. Wife: patru jumate

     four thirty

(27.5)

In line 9, the wife makes the first move to close the conflict (*nu discut* "I ain't arguin"). The husband takes another oppositional turn (line 10) so the wife retaliates by justifying her withdrawal on the basis of the husband's cursing. The husband opposes that move so the wife makes another withdrawal statement (line 17). This time the husband does not continue the attack and the conflict closes. In this excerpt, the wife makes it sure that her withdrawal is not interpreted as submission by insisting on getting in the last word and by blaming her withdrawal on her husband's offensive words.

Withdrawal may not be so clearly set up or justified in advance. In excerpt (8), the wife withdraws by not answering a question addressed to her. This episode of conflict talk is about putting pepper on corn plants in the family garden in order to prevent wild animals from eating the corn. Previously in the discourse, the mother had said she would put some pepper the corn. However, she didn't do it and the quarrel is about whether or not she had time to do it. She makes her withdrawal noticeable by ignoring the husband's question directed to her in line 8. Her withdrawal is emphasized by the twelve-second pause which she uses strategically as a terminal pause to mark the end of a discourse unit.

Excerpt 8

1. Husband: ai pus ăla acolo ah piper pe porumbul ăla?
     did you put that there ah pepper on that corn?
2. Wife: nu, nu am avut timp de când am ajuns acasă
     nope I didn't have time since I got home
3. Husband: nu ai avut timp
     didn't have time
4. mă așteptam să nu ai
     I didn't think you would
5. Wife: păi, te-ai așteptat tu vreodată să am timp?
     well when did you ever expect me to have time?
6. Husband: pe dracu, puteai să-l pui aseară
     well hell you could have done it last evening
7. Wife: am avut treabă până la miezul nopții
     I'd been up till about midnight
8. Husband: ce?
     what?
(12.0)

4. Conclusions

This paper addressed terminal exchanges employed in closing episodes of interpersonal naturally occurring conflict talk. The excerpts analyzed in this paper illustrate episodes of Romanian family conflict talk at. They have been taken from an **original corpus** of 10 hours of naturally-occurring conversations which I recorded in Constanta metropolitan area and which known as Constanta corpus (Hornoiu, 2016).

The analysis of the Romanian data identified and illustrated five main termination formats which occur with great regularity in my corpus: submission where one participant accepts the other's position, dominant party intervention where the opposing participants submit to a third party, compromise where one participant offers a concession which is then accepted, stand-off in which there is no submission or compromise, and withdrawal, either from the verbal conflict or physically from the environment.

Terminal exchanges in conflict talk take a two-sequence format. However, the use of two closing formats, i.e. stand-offs and withdrawals, show that an episode of conflict talk can be closed even when the second slot in the terminal exchange is missing. Despite this absence, the terminal exchange structure is still involved because submission slots are systematically avoided. Although getting the last word does not win the conflict, it is nevertheless used strategically to signal one hasn't given in or submitted.

Of the five termination formats analysed, the most common one in my data was the *standoff*. Apparently the reason why the standoff seems to be the preferred strategy

in closing an episode of conflict talk is it allows for closure without loss of face. On the other hand, in the specific context of family dispute, face may not always be the most significant factor. Two other factors may be, at least, equally relevant: power and affect. Thus, my data show that the most predominant form of third party intervention in the family disputes is parental.

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Professor Diana Hornoiu Ph.D. She is a member of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures and Communication Sciences within the Faculty of Letters, "Ovidius" University of Constanta, Romania. Her main areas of interest are: pragmatics, conversation analysis, sociolinguistics, morphology. (dianahornoiu @gmail.com)

Alternating between domestication and foreignization in academic translation

Žana Gavrilović

The research in this paper is focused on two translational strategies, domestication and foreignization and on the exploration of their application among the BA students in translation courses. Domestication represents a translational strategy of predominantly cultural elements that implies the departure of translated text from the source language culture, while foreignization subsumes the retention of as much of the source language cultural information as possible. Venuti (cf. 1995, 2000) sees the dichotomy between the two strategies as the ideological one, and strongly argues that the foreignization should be the prevalent strategy over domestication, for the purpose of the target language cultural concepts perseverance. The research was conducted among the third year BA students dealing with literary type of text and the results are strongly indicative of the relation among the predominant strategy used and the students' cross-cultural awareness. The conclusion points out to the necessity of raising the awareness of a proper navigation among different cultures, not only within the student population but also in academic environment and society in general.

Foreignization; domestication; translation; culture; cross-cultural awareness.

Introduction

This paper is envisioned as to point to different contextual situations where the students may have opted for one of the two possible strategies, and to the necessity of raising the awareness of the properness of specific choice of one of them. The topic of this paper is related to a highly complex cognitive, metacognitive, linguistic and extra-linguistic phenomenon of translation. It implies the incorporation of all the knowledge acquired through a foreign language and native language learning and its application in mediation between the *source language* and the *target language*. It represents a multidimensional process, inevitably including the man and aiming at achieving the highest degree of both structural and semantic equivalence between a source language and a target language (cf. Catford, 1965; Nida 1979; Ivir, 1978; Ordurari 2007).

The research in this paper revolves around the literary translation in academic environment. The further embellishment of the translated item needs to be performed in terms of its adaptation to the audience (the third party), stylistically and socio-linguistically. In that sense, the translated units are seen as a mode of trans cultural communication. In some of the most prominent cultural studies (cf. Graedler, 2000; Harvey, 2003), language is seen as a part of cultural heritage, which in its totality incorporates territory, language, folklore and people. Therefore, language itself is seen as a means of cultural mediation, which can be realized not only linguistically, but extra-linguistically as well. Nevertheless, the reference to culture-specific items in translation is not the only part of the research in this paper, even though no language can be understood out of the concept of corresponding culture.

Hatim and Mason (1997) make a distinction between 'the ideology of translating' and 'the translation of ideology'. Whereas the former refers to the basic orientation chosen by the translator operating within a social and cultural context (the choice, for example, between Venuti's *domesticating* and *foreignizing* translation), in the translation of ideology they examine the extent of mediation supplied by a translator of sensitive texts. The idea that determined the concept of this paper is to investigate the more dominant of the two strategies used among the students.

Sample and methodology

The research was conducted within literary text translation, as a complex process implying not only the restructuring of source language elements into the target language, but also including the third party, the utilizers of translation (listeners and/or readers) and the creation of literary and artistic effect.

The research comprised two university courses and one literary source. The courses are *Contemporary English Language 5 (C1)* and its part related to English – Serbian translation of literary text, and *Theory of Translation (3rd year of English)*, while the relevant source of the corpus is the collection of stories *The Pulse*, by Julian Barnes. The sampling was carried out from the literary translation by 92 students (3rd year undergraduates, English Department and Chinese and English Department). The methods used were convenience sampling method, contrastive analysis method, text analysis method, structural and semantic modelling, textual analysis and synthesis.

The initial hypothesis in this paper is that the students, especially with culture specific terms, opted for foreignization whenever possible, and its sub-strategies such as *literal translation* and *original form retention*, instead of *transcription* of proper nouns. These strategies were utilized even if the retention of the original form rendered the culture specific terms 'translationally unresolved', which possibly contributed to the deviation from the faightfulness of the text. Some of the most particular examples of the most commonly used strategy of the two will ensue in the following lines.

The analysis and discussion

The relevant illustration and exemplification of the opting between domestication and foreignization is divided in three segments. The first one tackles the incorrect restructuring of a grammatical unit, the second one the students' choices in the restructuring of proper nouns and the third one, which is considered the most relevant and illustrative from the point of the opting between domestication and foreignization is related to the adaptation and restructuring of culture specific items.

The analysis begins with the first type of contextual situation and is illustrative in the translational restructuring of verbs in the predicate when it comes to tense differentiation:

*…Calum __explained__ how you **looked for** a small declivity in the sand, **poured** a little salt in it, then **waited** for the razor clam to shoot up a few inches from its lair.*

The excerpt represents a part of the explanation of how clams are harvested. What is evident from the verb phrase in all the predicates in the excerpt is that they are all expressed in simple past, formally. However, the contextual situation might be subsumed under the grammatical rule of back-formation, according to which all the verbs after a reporting verb in indirect speech, regardless of how many of them there are in a sentence, should be formally moved one tense backward. Essentially, they might not express the situations in the past, but very often in present temporal sector and they do so here, within the non-referential use of simple past. Not all students recognized the necessity for the application of the rule of back-formation, but would rather leave in translation all the verbs after the reporting one in the past forms, even though such a rule is non-existent in Serbian. Even though the term naming the strategy does not primarily refer to grammatical misconceptions in restructuring, it can be stated here that opting for the retention of the rule of back-formation here might be subsumed as foreignization.

Another contextual situation illustrative of the specific strategy choice is the adaptation of some proper nouns from English. According to orthographical standard, there are two strategies to adapt a proper noun from English to Serbian: a) *transcription*, or adjusting of the spelling of a proper noun according to phonological value of a target language (domestication) or, b) *original form retention*, which could be subsumed under foreignization. Most of the students opted for the latter strategy, intuitively 'feeling' that such a choice would keep them on safe ground. They avoided transcription in most of the cases in *The Pulse*, since the sparse transcriptional references left them no choice but to rely on a standard solution. However, not many of them would dare to guess or offer their own transcription of at least some of the proper nouns. Some of the typical examples from the corpus are: *Traigh Eias, Traigh Mhor, The Island of Orosay, Beinn Mahartainn, Eriskay (Eric's Isle), Carcassonne*. Another issue is adding the case ending if the original

form is retained in translation. Serbian being a synthetic language, the separate case ending for each of the seven cases in singular (and seven in plural) makes it even more difficult to provide the orthographically acceptable form of the proper noun. The standard orthography suggests that the case endings are added without a hyphen.

The most versatile context where the students' options for domestication and foreignization are most clearly evident is the culture specific items occurrence. In order to restructure a culture specific item from a foreign language, it is first and foremost important to understand the idea behind the form in which it is expressed. There are several strategies available for restructuring of such contextual elements: *offering a structure of equivalent meaning in target language, paraphrasing the essence of the item* or *retaining of the original form, with an annotated explanation*. The recommendable option, whenever possible, certainly is the replacement of the item with an item in target language, with the same or very close reference. The following examples will elucidate the phenomenon a lot, example a) being the first among them:

a) *'You are as reliable as a Polish builder.'*

The reference here is to workers from Poland coming to the Western countries (England among them) to earn a living. The wider context here would explain the author's irony on the girl's punctuality, even in situations when this virtue is not that much favorable. However, there is a specific phrase in Serbian carrying quite the same meaning, so there is no need to retain the allusion to Poland here, but to Switzerland and its watch: *Поуздана си као швајцарски сат. (You are as reliable as a Swiss watch)*. Another option here is to neutralize the culture specific item by paraphrasing it: *Баш си поуздана. (You are so reliable).* The literal translation or retention of the original allusion to Poland would not make much sense in Serbian, so foreignization is not a proper option here, since it would imply a total deviation of the faithfulness of the sentential semantic structure.

Another similar example follows:

b) *An Antipodean.*

This phrase metaphorically relates to people of Australia, the continent being at the outskirts of the world map compared to England. The term also carries a derogatory note, so to fit it in Serbian naturally, it is first and foremost important to understand all these levels of its meaning. The only proper option here is domestication, within the national term *Аустралијанац*. In this way any unneccessary misinterpretation is avoided. The retention of the original term *Антиподијан or Антипод* would not make much sense in Serbian. However, some of the answers were foreignized in the restructuring.

The following culture specific item is:

c) *'Regan advertised Chesterfields, didn't he? Or was it Lucky Strike?*

The allusion here is on the type of cigarettes that Ronald Regan, the former American president, advertised and probably used. Although the older population is familiar with these types of cigarettes, for the younger generations (the students among them) it might be somewhat tricky to decide on what *Chesterfields* and *Lucky Strike* refer to. The first step to be taken in the restructuring of these items is, therefore, to decode the reference to specific types of cigarettes. Retaining the original form, the common noun *цигарете* might be added before or after the names, so as to make it completely clear in translation what the reference is. Most of the students opted for foreignization, however, without any reference to what the nouns denote. An even trickier situation can be recognized in the following example:

d) *The Humphrey Bogart thing and the stamp?*

The whole sentence refers to the famous movie Casablanca, the smoking movie *par excellence*. The authorities wanted to put the above-mentioned actor on a stamp and he was smoking in the photo from the movie, so they airbrushed it out, in case people were sticking a stamp on a letter and saw him smoking and suddenly thought it was a good idea. It was the period when heavy smoking was considered semi-legal and not so acceptable. The most proper strategy in translation of this item would be paraphrasing within domestication, perhaps with the additional explanation of the reference in a footnote, and foreignization was the predominant students' option.

The following example further reveals the complexity of culture specific items restructuring:

e) *'Oh, I think it's best to have a Zen approach to that sort of thing.'*

In order to transfer the meaning to the target language (here, Serbian), the first step is to understand what *Zen approach* essentially means. The phrase refers to a meditation technique rooted in Buddhist psychology, whose goal is to regulate attention, with the focus inward. The whole point in having such an approach would be to keep one's composure and inner peace. Once understood, the idea within the above-mentioned sentence could either be paraphrased or retained in original. If foreignized, the idea behind the phrase would need to be additionally explained in a footnote. If domesticized, it could be paraphrased so as to avoid the term *Zen* in translation. In most cases, the students opted for the original form retention. The students mostly opted for foreignization here.

An interesting culture specific item restructuring might be recognized in yet another example:

f) *Gallic flamboyance*

If the adjective Gallic here were retained in translation, most of the audience might not understand what it actually refers to. Again, in order to foreignize, one would need to provide an additional information on what Gallic actually refers to. The adjective is related to Gallic Roman Empire that was established in 3rd century and was independent at the time. It occupied territories around the Mediterranean strip, so the reference here might be on the flamboyant nature of the terrain and its people, their temperament and ways of living. The retention of the original form of the adjective in translation again would not make much sense for the audience; a better choice would be to intensify the notion of *flamboyance* by introducing, for instance, the term *southern*. Some of the given answers to this culture specific challenge were to completely avoid the item in restructuring.

Conclusions

This paper was envisioned as a brief reflection on the options that the students make/have when it comes to translational strategies of domestication and foreignization. Some of the most common contextual situations in literary text translation were tackled, such as the restructuring of a grammatical unit, the restructuring of proper nouns and the restructuring of culture specific items.

The restructuring of grammatical units is correct whenever the grammatical categories are transferred in a grammatically correct manner, and the non recognition of certain grammar rules, such as the non-existent back formation in Serbian in the example discussed in this paper, might render the translated item deprived of the proper semantic structure. As a remedy, a proper focus needs to be put on further acquisition of grammar rules in both English and Serbian. Foreignization is favorable with sentence structures whenever possible (given that the ideal situation in translation is achieving as highly as possible a degree of both formal and semantic equivalence), however, not at the detriment of grammatical accuracy. Another contextual situation where opting for foreignization was prevalent is the restructuring of the proper nouns. Even though it is on of the standard options according to orthography in Serbian, an encouragement of the students to offer their own transcriptional suggestions while restructuring the source language proper nouns might be introduced as well.

Finally, the restructuring of culture specific items represents a particular challenge in literary text translation. It needs to be carried out after a proper comprehension of the units in the source language and with respect to the third party (the readers), their cultural and educational background. Even though opting for foreignization might be a good choice in such contextual situations, it quite often carries the risk of depriving culture specific items and their original forms (or their minor formal adaptations in the target language) of the proper culture specific reference that they exhibit in the source language.

On the other side, paraphrasing within domestication is welcome, yet it often breaks the principle of language economy and therefore needs to be carried out skillfully. The initial hypothesis has proved to be valid, since a great majority of students opted for foreignization and its sub-strategies whenever possible, even in the restructuring of grammatically relevant sentential elements.

It can further be concluded that the option between foreignization and domestication is idiosyncratic, i.e. it depends on the translator to decide on the most appropriate strategy, which is not an easy task to do. This choice is furthermore dependent on the genre in which translation takes place. For instance, in prose, where a concise and formulaic verse is favorable, very little space could be left for paraphrasing, while the most favorable option would be foreignization, but with additional references in the form of annotation. It is worth mentioning in the end that raising cross-cultural awareness needs a strategic development (Gavrilović, 2020), as an empowerment to successful navigation among different cultures. The awareness needs to be raised not only within the student population but also in the academic environment and society in general.

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Lecturer Žana Gavrilović, Ph.D. She is a member of the Department of English within the Faculty of Philosophy of University of East Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Her main areas of interest are: English and Serbian syntax, morpho-syntax, translation studies, inter/cross/transcultural communication. (zana.gavrilovic@ff.ues.rs.ba)

Moroccan Linguistic Variation: An Overview

Inass Announi

This paper gives an overview of the linguistic variation in Morocco, which is characterized by complexity and diversity. The first section introduces a macro-perspective view of linguistic variation. It outlines all the languages used in Morocco and the relationship between them in terms of use and function. This section also concludes two outcomes of this multilingualism context, which are language maintenance and standardization. Second, we give a micro-perspective outlook of linguistic variation. That is, we highlight the phonological, morphological, lexical, and syntactic variation within the sub-dialects of Moroccan Arabic (see section 2). The section also mentions the gender variation in Morocco. The final section presents the linguistic variation in the social perspective (i.e., within social classes, speech communities, and social networks) in the Moroccan context.

Linguistic Variation; Multilingualism; Regional Variation; Social Variation.

Introduction

Language is central in knowing our society (e.g., Labov, 1966; Saussure, 1916). Moreover, language cannot exist without variables. Indeed, and according to Bayley (2013), "an understanding of language requires an understanding of variable" (p. 11). Linguistic variation, to Reppen et al. (2002, p. VII), is "highly systematic," clarifying that systematicity means that "speakers of a language make choices in pronunciation, morphology, word choice, and grammar depending on a number of non-linguistic factors," and adding that "these factors include the speaker's purpose in communication, the relationship between speaker and hearer, the production circumstances, and various demographic affiliations that a speaker can have".

Our primary purpose in this paper is to identify the linguistic variation in Morocco. The article is organized as follows: The first section deals with introducing the varieties in Morocco. It also mentions two consequences of having linguistic diversity. These are language maintenance (see 1.2.) and standardization (see 1.3.). The second section sketches variation in space level (i.e., geographical varieties of Moroccan Arabic), which is marked by differences in phonology, lexis, and syntax. The section is concluded with a mention of gender variation in the Moroccan context. The final section deals with variation in social level, mainly social class, social network, and speech community.

1. Linguistic Variation: A Macro-Perspective

This section deals with the varieties that exist in Morocco and the consequence of the interaction between them in terms of language maintenance and standardization.

1.1. The Varieties Used in Morocco: the Issue of Multilingualism

One needs to present the varieties that exist in Morocco as a first glimpse of linguistic variation. The sociolinguistic situation in Morocco in terms of varieties is characterized by diversity and complexity and, arguably, conflict. At first glance, we find that the varieties that exist in Morocco are Classical Arabic (henceforth CA), Standard Arabic (henceforth SA), Moroccan Arabic (henceforth MA), Tamazight, French, and Spanish, noting that English also started to gain significance (see Figure 1 below):
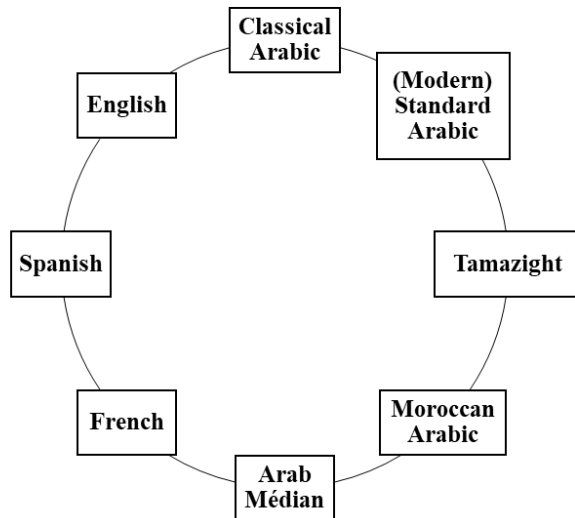
Figure 1: Varieties Used in Morocco

Let us look at CA, SA, and Modern Standard Arabic (henceforth MSA) and see the differences between them. CA is the language of the revealed scripture,the Quran, and is viewed as "an immutable linguistic phenomenon fixed for all time" (Holes, 2004, p. 4). MSA is "the modern descendent of Classical Arabic, unchanged in the essentials of its syntax but very much changed, and still changing, in its vocabulary and phraseology," which is used as a formal discourse such as in television, political speeches, official announcements, and education (Holes, 2004, p. 5). Said (2014) confirms that the laymen think Classical Arabic and Standard Arabic are interchangeable and the same language. In reality, they are, linguistically speaking, different in terms of morphology, phonology, and lexicon. However, Kamusella (2017, p. 125) contends that "it is usually (Western) linguists who classify the Classical Arabic of this holy book and Modern Standard Arabic as separate

varieties or languages." A difference between SA and MSA is that the former is directly derived from CA (Kamusella, 2017). Daniel and Ball (2009) claim that MSA refers only to the dialect spoken in Egypt and the Middle East. MSA or SA is the first official language in Morocco. It is used in schools for teaching all the subjects, except for the foreign languages, from the first year to the last year of high school (Falchetta, 2019, p. 63). MSA is also used at the university level for most human sciences (Falchetta, 2019, p. 63).

MA (also known as 'Dariʒa') is the most used variety [1] in Morocco (Daniel & Ball, 2009). In addition to MA, one needs to mention a hybrid between (M)SA and MA, called L'Arabe Médian (Youssi, 1986; see also Boukous, 1995) or Educated Spoken Arabic (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 1994, p. 85).

Amazigh, an Afro-Asiatic language, is another official language in Morocco. There are three varieties of Amazigh spoken in Morocco: Tashalhyt in the south or the Souss region, Tamazight in the centre or the High Atlas Mountains, and Tarifit in the north or the Rif mountains (Sirles, 1985). At the educational level, both Amazigh and English have a minor role where the former is recently introduced in primary schools and the latter used in public non-university courses (Falchetta, 2019, p. 63). More specifically, although all the Amazigh varieties are oral languages, there is a written system called Tifinagh. We note that English [2] is also employed in high school and is required to obtain the national Baccalaureate degree. As for the relationship between Amazigh and MA, both of them are spoken by native Moroccans. Although both existed together for 1200 years, MAis the lingua franca at the national level because "one cannot speak of a single colloquial Moroccan Amazighvariety" (Benítez et al., 2013, p. 16, as cited in Falchetta, 2019, p. 63), which results in only 26% of the population that speaks Amazigh and 92% that speaks Moroccan Arabic (High Commission for Planning, 2014). Nevertheless, both Berbers and Arabs live in harmony due to the shared Islamic identity; this made it easier for Berbers to have a positive attitude towards Arabic even if they maintained their native language and traditions (Aqil, 2019, p. 27).

Furthermore, Said (2014) claims that French is the only foreign language witha prestigious status and elevated as a second language in Morocco (para. 5). When it comes to the use of this language in the education sector, it is summarized as follows:

The second most important language of education is French, whichis mainly

employed in the teaching *of* French from the second year of primary school to the

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[1] It should be noted that sociolinguists do not use language and dialect since the latter has a negative connotation (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 1994, p. 69). Instead, they use standard variety and non-standard variety, respectively (Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 35). For example, SA is the standard variety because it possesses literature and MA is a non-standard variety (non-standardized) (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 1994, p. 68).

[2] For more on the emergence of English in the already complex linguistic context (i.e., the existence of Arabic, French, Amazigh, and Spanish) and the issue of linguistic diversity or conflict, see Kachoub, 2020.

highschool diploma, although many private schools offer entirely French

programmes for families whocan afford private education for their children; like

at university (public and private), courses in the Faculties of Sciences, Economy

and (partly) Law are in French, which notably causes great performance unbalance

between university students with public- and private-school backgrounds.

(Falchetta, 2019, p. 63).

Moreover, French competes with MSA when it comes to the working sector where the former is more 'profitable' since it gives access to a much wider range of jobs, with French being used in the private sector and MSA in the public, especially the educational one[3] (Falchetta, 2019, p. 63). The competition between French and MSA being the face of the educational system does not have to do mainly with language issues. That is, "for some, it is about choosing loyalties or about having an eye to the future. It is about whether to focus on culture, tradition and religious identity by turning to the East or on economic and political progress by turning to the West" (Daniel & Ball, 2010, p. 132). Moreover, this competition creates a linguistic disconnect within the Moroccan context; in other words, the Arabized secondary education and the use of French in higher education creates a linguistic gap (Bourdereau, 2006). Note, however, that nowadays, the discussion is leaning more towards the use of French in teaching science and technology in secondary education, while French in higher education is still the same when it comes to science and technology. Nowadays, there is a discussion of competition between English and French. Examples of the emergence of English and its competition with French in the institutional sphere can be summarized in the following points: the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research issued a formal decree in 2014, which required that all applicants for the position of university professors to demonstrate proficiency in English and issued a "ministerial note [that] mandate that graduate students in somefields show proficiency in English upon completing their doctoral degree" (Kachoub, 2020, p. 126).The aim is for Moroccans to have access to the most recent

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[3] For more on the relationship between the educational system and multilingualism in Morocco, see Daniel and Ball (2010). Note that the Moroccan government had attempted to tackle this issue from language policy perspective. The Educational Charter, released in 2000, tried to address the following issues: (1) the acknowledgement of Arabic, Amazigh, and foreign languages such as French, (2) Amazigh is part of Moroccan cultural inheritance and identity and used in the educational sector, (3) French is still used to diversify the teaching of science and technology, among other things(Daniel & Ball, 2010, pp. 131-132).See also Marley, 2005 who tackled teachers' and student's attitudes towards Arabic, French, and Amazigh in the educational sphere as well as issues in relation to language competence and usage, attitudes towards the teaching science and technology in French, foreign language teaching in primary schools, the teaching of Amazigh in relevant areas, Arabization, among others (see also Aqil, 2019;Daniel and Ball, 2009; Ennaji, 2002, 2005).

research findings and bettering the international ranking of Moroccan universities. Moreover, Ennaji (2005, p. 160) reported that the questionnaire saw 45% preferring English as a foreign language while33% preferred French.[4]

Spanish was introduced to Morocco in the 17th century which has still affected MA in terms of the lexicon (e.g., /karrusa/ 'kart', /simana/ 'week', and /rweda/ 'wheel') (Said, 2014, para. 8). Spanish is used in both administration and education in the areas colonized by Spain (Falchetta, 2019, p. 63).

With the appearance of Ferguson's (1959) pioneer work on Diglossia, which is about how two varieties can be distinct but related and their functions occur in complementary distribution. In the Moroccan context, this means that Arabic and MA both constitute a diglossic situation, where the former is considered to be a High or H variety (i.e., used in formal contexts) and the latter to be low or L variety (i.e., used in informal contexts) (see Figure 2):
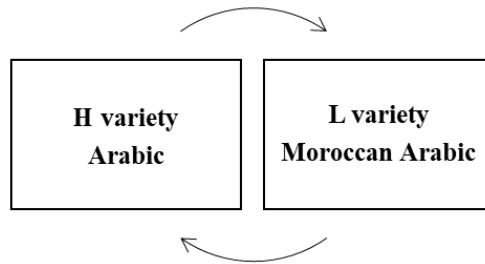

H variety Arabic

L variety Moroccan Arabic

Figure 2: Ferguson's (1959) Perspective

This classification, however, does not encompass all the varieties but merely showcases a special relationship between two varieties in Morocco in terms of their mutuallyexclusive functions in Moroccan society. Note that if we consider the existence of a third variety, which was called Educated Spoken Arabic or Middle Moroccan Arabic (Boukous, 1995; Youssi, 1995), then this would constitute a triglossic situation (Youssi, 1995; see Chekayri, 2006 who investigates whether Morocco has a diglossic or triglossic situation):[5]

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[4] For more on linguistic rivalry between the varieties in Morocco, see Redouane, 2016, who describes different linguistic rivalries in Morocco (i.e., SA vs. French; SA vs. Amazigh; SA vs. MA; and French vs. English) (see also Zouhir, 2013).

[5] The linguistic variation in Morocco becomes more complex if we have to consider whether "the diglossic continuum should be analysed (whether as a series of intermediate levels or as a tripartite scale, or just as code-switching)" (Falchetta, 2019, p. 57). That is, are the two or three varieties independent speech usages or a result of a mere act of code-switching? If we add French to the act of code switching that happens in the Moroccan linguistic speech, then this makes the sociolinguistic situation even more complex and ambiguouslyunidentified. Falchetta (2019) gives insights on the matter. One reported is the fact that "what had been defined as 'code' or 'variety'-switching by previous works may be considered as variation within ʿāmmiyya [Moroccan or Colloquial Arabic], rather than a move towards 'fuṣḥā' [Standard Arabic]" (Haeri, 1996, as cited in Falchetta, 2019, p. 58). In looking at the relation between standard and non-standard variety, he concludes that "scholars
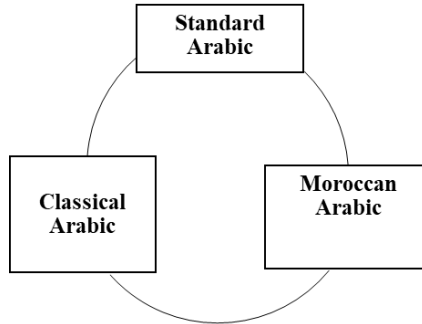
Figure 3: Moroccan's Triglossic Situation.

Ennaji (2005) mentions a triglossic situation that encompasses SA, CA, and MA. This means that Morocco can even host a quadriglossic situation if we also include Educated Spoken Arabic (Ennaji, 2001):
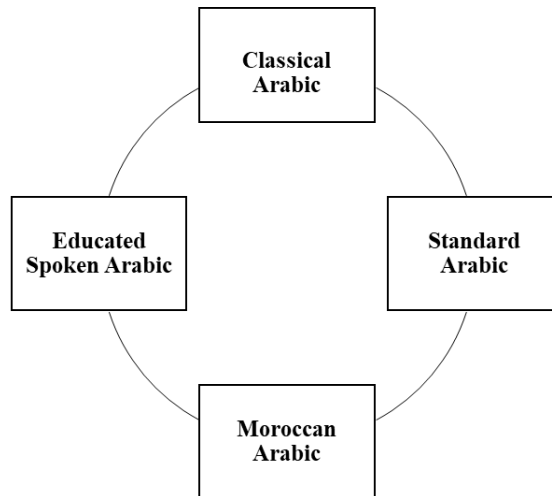
Figure 4: Morocco's Quadriglossic Situation

The Moroccan linguistic situation can also be divided into two categories (Aqil, 2019; Boukous, 2009): The first category involves MA and Amazigh. This category reflects social and symbolic capital. The second category includes French, SA, and English. This category demonstrates institutional languages with strong social capital. The competition

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came to generally (although not unanimously) agree that fuṣḥā had little influence on linguistic variation in colloquial Arabic, and that "the key to successfully analysing such variation was treating it as dialect contact" (Falchetta, 2019, p. 60).

or power struggle lies inside the category itself and between the categories. Notice how Spanish is not mentioned, showing how it holds a weaker social capital than the other varieties.

When it comes to the first languages spoken in Morocco, we find five as summarized in the following table below (taken from Daniel & Ball, 2009, p. 125):
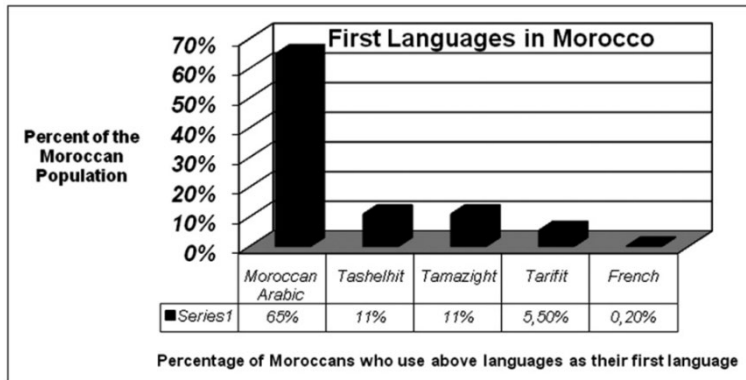

Figure 5: First Languages in Morocco

The first languages spoken in Morocco are MA, Tashelhyt, Tamazight, Tarifit, and French. As we can see from the Figure above, MA is Morocco's most spoken mother tongue.

The following two subsections describe two consequences of this linguistic variation (i.e., when the sociolinguistic situation is described as diverse and complex).

1.2. Language Maintenance

Language maintenance is one consequence of linguistic variation. According to Davies and Elder (2004), language maintenance is summarized in the following lines:

[It is] used to describe a situation in which a speaker, a group of speakers, or a

speech community continue to use their language in some or all spheres of life

despite competition with the dominant or majority language to become the

main/sole language in these spheres. (p. 719).

According to Said (2014), French "had existed in Morocco before the French colonization from 1912 to 1956, it started to gain its status as a second language during the protectorate era" (para. 5). According to Said (2014), after the independence from France in 1956, "the State tried to give the Arabic language its previously elevated status

through Arabization and modernization" (para. 7). This is, indeed, an attempt to maintain SA as the prestigious language against French. Ennaji (2005, p. 2) further confirms this idea by claiming that "Moroccan political parties, pressure groups, and cultural associations have been eager to maintain and revitalize their linguistic and cultural heritage."He also adds that "their incessant efforts are geared towards linguistic and cultural awareness, which reflects their eagerness to maintain cultural identity" (Ennaji, 2005, p. 2). He exemplifies that "Standard Arabic has been revived through the Arabization process, which has led to the strengthening of the Muslim faith and the revival of Islamic convictions" (Ennaji, 2005, p. 2). Indeed, Arabization is a perfect example of language maintenance, a process by which Morocco "sought to restore the role and place of Arabic following the French Protectorate and thus eradicate French from official life, whilst the vernaculars – Dialectical (Moroccan) Arabic and Tamazight (Berber) – were simply ignored" (Marley, 2004, p. 25). This process is considered "the cultural counterpart of political and economic independence" (Marley, 2005, p. 1488).

Language maintenance refers to SA in Morocco, but the same thing can apply to the Berber variety.[6]Indeed, Ennaji (2005) stresses that "Berber cultural associations, on their part, have increased in number; their objective is to revitalize the Berber language through its recognition as an official language and through its standardization and introduction in schools" (p. 2) (for more on Amazigh and the issue of its maintenance or what the author calls 'devitalization,' see Kabel, 2018; see also Ait Taleb & Elghazi, 2021; El Kirat, 2008). According to Hoffman (2006, p. 146), "language maintenance efforts in Morocco are linked to an ethnic revitalization whose central activities have been to remove the stigma of speaking Tamazight, push for state recognition of Amazigh heritage and Tamazight language, and increase the presence of both in public domains." There are many factors, which contribute to language maintenance, as reported by Abdelhadi (2017). These are the following:

(1) The use of language in language domains such as home, family, and friends.

(2) The use of language in a geographically concentrated area.

(3) Length of stay arrival as a factor for language maintenance.

(4) Geographical proximity (see Jamai, 2008 for the Moroccan context).

(5) Other factors include exogamy, endogamy, ethnic identity (see Albirini, 2016 for the Arabic context), family role, the status of Arabic, positive language attitudes, emotional attachment to the community language as a sense of identity, institutional support, media, education, and religion.

Once we look at all the factors, we can form an initial judgement on to what extent SA and Berber are in the process of language maintenance or language shift (see also Boumans & Ruiter, 2002 on language maintenance of Moroccan Arabic in the perspective of European diaspora).

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[6] Berber and Amazigh are used interchangeably; however, 'Berber' covers varieties spoken inside and outside of Morocco (e.g., Algeria) (Boukous, 1995).

As we can see, language maintenance is an essential concept in the linguistic variation where a variety, SA and Berber, claims its status in the society and resists language change. According to Calvet (1998, p. 40), Morocco is a case of a multilingual society with minority dominant languages where "the languages that are statistically dominant are in fact languages that are politically and culturally subordinate."

1.3. Standardization

The second consequence of linguistic variation is standardization in Morocco. Here, we refer to the standardization of SA and Amazigh. According to Ennaji and Sadiqi (1994), standardization is "once a dialect has been accorded the status of official language" (p. 69). SA is an official language because it has been:

(a) codified by standardizing its phonology, morphology, syntax, spelling, and vocabulary (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 1994, p. 69) or what Haugen (1972) calls 'minimal variation in form' (p. 931),

(b) Elaborated, which means it is "introduced in the various social domains…it is taught in schools and universities and is used by the mass media and the administration" (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 1994, p. 69) or what Haugen (1972) calls 'maximal variation in function' (p. 931).

(c) Standard Arabic is both selected and accepted by society (Haugen, 1972, p. 933).

Ennaji and Sadiqi (1994) add that a Standard language must be "accepted by the citizens as a symbol of their national pride and identity" (p. 69).

As for Amazigh, Boukous (2011) gives comprehensive challenges and solutions to the standardization of the Amazigh language:

The change of status that would raise the status of Amazigh from that of a vernacular variety to that of a national or official language pertains to the domain of governance and the outcome of power relations in the political field. Let us wager that this issue will comply with the spirit of democracy and the philosophy of the social contract. (Boukous, 2011, p. 229).

Boukous (2011) says that one of the main challenges of standardization of Amazigh is presenting it as an 'ideal language': "A language without a sociolinguistic reality and without historical letters of reference, Amazigh functions as a vernacular which is handicapped by orality and confined mainly to a rural domain undergoing advanced economic, social and cultural disintegration" (p. 230).

Other challenges mentioned by Boukous (2011) are having low mutual intelligibility between the varieties of Amazigh, having the function of a vernacular (social usefulness and social prestige), and having many powerful competitive languages in terms of power (pp. 230-231). Ennaji (2005) also mentions three obstacles to the codification of Amazigh: (1) it is only a spoken dialect, (2) choosing an appropriate written script, and (3) its official status as a regional variety. Falchetta (2019, p. 62) states

that it is not specified whether Arabic or Amazigh are officially recognized to be used in public domains such as administration and education[7] (for more on the standardization of Amazigh, see Bouhjar, 2008; Boukous, 2014; Colon, 2018).

This section focused on three aspects of linguistic variation in Morocco: the varieties in Morocco, which contextualizes this paper, language maintenance, and standardization.

2. Regional Variation: A Micro-Perspective

This section deals with regional variation. It describes the regional sub-dialects of MA in terms of phonology, morphology, lexis, and syntax. It also looks at gender variation in Morocco.

2.1. Regional Varieties or Subdialects in Morocco

Variation also happens at the regional level. Regional variety characterizes each area; that is, the variety is "indicated by geographical distance and natural barriers like mountains, rivers, and forests" (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 1994, pp. 78-79). One needs to present the regional varieties in Morocco before embarking on the phonological, lexical, and syntactic variation among them (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 1994, p. 78). Ennaji (2005) follows two approaches when dividing MA: In the historical perspective, it can be divided into non-Bedouin dialect, the Bedouin variety, and the Andalusian-Arabic variety (pp. 58-59) while, in the modern sense, MA can be divided into Urban 'mdini' and rural 'ʕrubi' varieties (see El-Himer, 2015; Messaoudi, 2003; see also Ech-charfi & Azzouzi, 2017 for more on the variables that come into play when it comes to the rural/urban opposition).
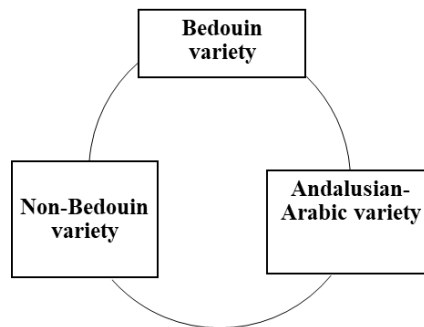
Figure 6: Regional Varieties from a Historical Perspective

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[7] Nowadays, there is discussion on the standardization of MA due to the expansion of its use (e.g., in press, radio, and television just like French and SA) and its re-assertion in the discourse as a national language (for more, see Aabi & Aabi, 2018; Srhir, 2012).
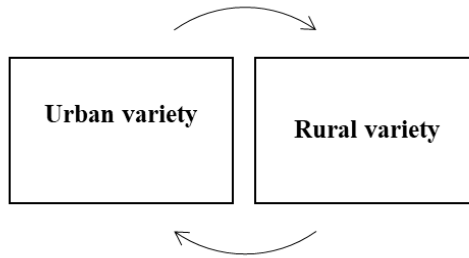
Figure 7: Regional varieties from a Modern Perspective

Ennaji (2005) subdivides MA into different regional varieties: a) Northern dialects spoken in Tangiers, Tetouan, Larache, and other northern cities, b) the Fassi variety spoken in Fes, c) the Moroccan dialect of Rabat and Casablanca, d) the Marrakshi and Agadiri dialects influenced by Tashalhyt Amazigh, and e) the Hassani dialect used in the southern Saharan regions (p. 59).
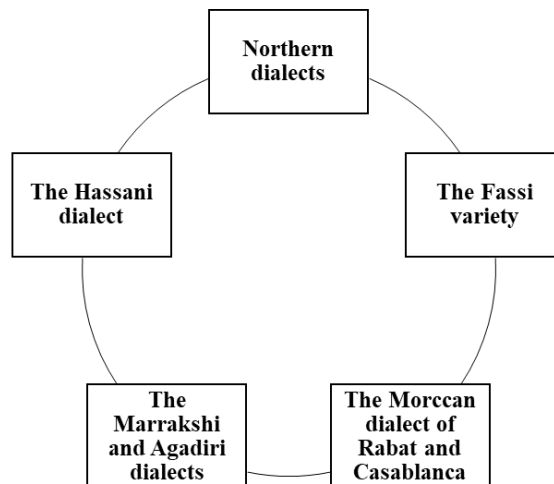

Figure 8: Ennaji's (2005) Perspective on Regional Varieties

Unlike Ennaji, Boukous (1998) believes that MA is sub-divided into the Urban variety, the Mountain variety 'ʒəbli,' the Bedouin variety, and the Hassani variety (pp. 5-30).
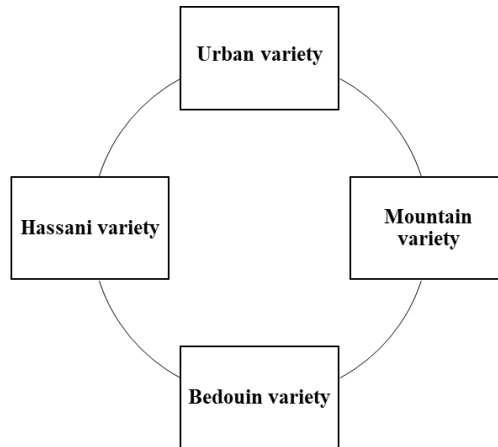
Figure 9: Boukous' (1998) Perspective on Regional Varieties

Regional varieties are mostly named after their city; for example, Casawi variety in Casablanca, Fassi variety in Fes, and Hassani variety in Western Sahara. Although most classifications lean toward a geographical perspective, Boukous (1979) classifies MAaccording to ethnic origin: city Arabic, mountain Arabic, and Bedouin Arabic.As for Heath (2002), he divides MA dialects into three groups. These are northern-type varieties, central-type varieties, and Saharan-type varieties.

2.2. Variation At a Structural Level

MA, according to Ennaji (2005), "has a regular phonology, a simple morphology, an abundant lexicon, and a great variety of styles" (p. 60). Regional varieties can differ in terms of phonology. For example, the phoneme /q/ is a major regional marker in Morocco (Ennaji, 2005, p. 60). Let us look at Figure 10 below:

/q/ is realized as:		
Voiced velar stop [g]	glottal stop [ʔ]	emphatic glottal stop

Figure 10: Regional Variation at a Phonological Level

According to Ennaji (2005), three main regional varieties realizes /q/ differently: (a) it is realized as a voiced velar stop [g], notably in the urban dialect of Casablanca, parts of southern speech in areas of Settat, Béni Mellal, and Marrakesh; (b) it is realized

as a glottal stop [ʔ] in most northern dialects like Tétouan and Tangiers; (c) it is realized as emphatic glottal stop in the dialect of Fes as well as some northern sub-varieties (p. 60). Hachimi (2005, 2007) discusses the social meanings assigned to the three sounds by the Moroccan speakers (i.e., the speech of Casablanca residents of Fassi origin); we mention some of the meaning given: [g]makes the speaker have positive qualities such as belonging to the community and being like the other (i.e., belonging to the community of Casablanca) and considered as 'rural' in other lexemes.[q] in /qal/ *said* is perceived as 'effeminate' if the speech comes from male speakers. As for [ʔ], it is seen as a traditional cultural prestige, which is a feature of the city of Fes and is used by old female speakers. Moumine (1990) reports that [q] is more prestigious than [g] due to higher classes preferring the former. Benthami (2007) says that there is a relationship between age and the use of [q] and [g]. While the latter is used by older people, illiterate teenagers of 13 to 15 years old (and their families) in Rabat, use both [q] and [g].

An important phonetic variation observed in the Moroccan context is the use of affrication (i.e., palato-alveolar and palato-dental affrication) (Falchetta, 2019). These phonetic features are also assigned social features. For example, the alveo-palatal affricate is perceived to be used by young people or the masculine type (Barontini & Ziamari, 2013). Ennaji (2013) presents phonological and morphological variation, which distinguishes the region of Casablanca from other regional varieties. He describes the following linguistic features:

(1) Diphthongization: /lila/ *night* in MA becomes /laila/ *night* in Casablanca variety.

(2) Metathesis: /zəʕma/ *I mean* in MA becomes /zəmʕa/ *I mean* in Casablanca variety.

(3) The /q/ variants: The Casablanca variety uses [g].

(4) The double process of assimilation-deletion: /bənti/ *my daughter* in MA becomes /bet-ti/ *my daughter* in Casablanca variety.

(5) The neutralization of masculine feminine: the male is addressed as if he were a female (i.e., the use of the feminine marker; e.g., /ntina bqa hna/ *you stay here* where 'ntina' has the feminine inflection -ina).

Another phonological variation we find is in the northwestern region of Morocco when it comes to the use of /ḍ/, which has the two variants [ḍ] and [ṭ]. While rural people use the former, the latter is mainly used by the people of Tetouan and Tangier from different educational levels; for example, they would say /ṭaħkət ʕlija/ instead of /ḍaħkət ʕlija/ *she laughed at me* (cf. Vicente 2000) (for more on phonological variation, see Sayahi, 2005; Vicente& Naciri-Azzouz, 2018).

When it comes to lexis, Falchetta (2019) discusses the alternation between /dwa/ and /hdər/ *talk* where Casablanca male speakers use the former more, although he admits that more data needs to be collected to conclude the point; as for /hdər/, it is used mainly by Tmara young people while /dwa/, in Temara, is used in specific semantic and pragmatic contexts and has a rural-speech connotation. Ennaji (2013) also lists some lexical items known to be used mainly by Casablanca people. For example, in MA, we

find words like/gləs/ *sit*, but Casablanca variety uses /brək/ *sit*. We observe that this is not always clear-cut; indeed, the terms 'solely' used in Casablanca may be found in other regions and may serve other pragmatic purposes. For example, a person might say /brək/ *sit* since they perceive it as 'tougher' than the usual MA lexical item, or they may use it to add an element of humour (see also Naciri-Azzouz, 2019 who investigates Arabic kinship terms variation in the rural-urban context of North-Western Morocco).We also find variation in terms of one word. For example, the genitive lexical marker has four variants: /ntaʕ/, /d/, djal/, and /mtaʕ/ (Boumans, 2005). As native speakers, we attest for another fifth variant: /mdjal/, spoken from the region of Sale.

An example of regional variation in syntax can be found in the post-verbal negation particle /ʃi/, /ʃ/, and /ʃaj/, whose distribution is geographically motivated (Loutfi, 2019).Hachimi (2018) also investigates the sociolinguistic variation of the gender marker in the second person singular within Casablanca, whose goal is to "to examine the interaction between linguistic and extralinguistic explanatory factors in morphosyntactic contact and change" (p. 62). She investigates two main concepts: (1) simplification, which is the idea that speakers, especially those who move to a new place, will tend to use the most unmarked linguistic feature when met in contact situations and (2) salience, which is "the prominence or the degree of availability to speakers' awareness that a linguistic form has in relation to other forms" (Hachimi, 2018, p. 63). One of her significant conclusions is that "that minority linguistic forms are not simply abandoned in favourof their widespread and dominant linguistic counterparts," (Hachimi, 2018, p. 86), which shows how morphosyntactic variation and people's adoption of linguistic features as a result of language contact is not as straightforward as one thinks. She adds that while one expects that factors that affect morphosyntactic variation in relation to language contact and change, such as ideologies of correctness and alignment with SA, will be the relevant conclusion in the case of the MA urban context, but it is not the case since there are speakers who adopt linguistic features similar to Standard Arabic and others that do not. [8]

Another example of syntactic variation is that of word order. Moroccans are presented with different ways to re-order the sentence. Although English uses SVO, MA has many possibilities. SVO and VSO can be used interchangeably, while OVS and OSV are the least used and are applied in situations of topicalization (Announi, 2021) (for more, see Kaplan, 2017, pp. 46-53who investigates the syntactic variation of possession in Moroccan Arabic; [9]see also Maas & Prochazka, 2012 for a general overview of regional variation in the Moroccan context).

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[8] Sometimes Moroccan speakers would use more than one language in one linguistic setting. Indeed, code switching can be considered another form of linguistic variation. For more on code switching in the Moroccan context in relation to syntax, see Aabi (1999) and Benchiba (2008) (see Post, 2015 on the relationship between code-switching and other social factors such as sex;Fahmi, 2018).

[9]The regional variation is not confined within phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexis. Indeed, we also find discourse marking variation at the regional level (for more, see Laaboudi, 2021).

2.3. Gender Variation in Morocco

When it comes to gender variation, Ennaji and Sadiqi (1994) stress the idea that "a speaker's language – reflects whether that speaker is male or female" (p. 80).

The linguistic variation among men and women in Morocco is mostly in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 1994, p. 80). Ennaji and Sadiqi (1994) state that Moroccan females are more likely to produce tag questions and exclamations as appointed by these examples: (a) /jak?/'isn't it?', (b) /wili!/'interjection of surprise', and (c) /ms lxir/'good evening' (Ennaji& Sadiqi, 1994, p. 80). According to Ennaji (2005, p. 59), the use of tag questions "refer to the idea thatMoroccan women are indirect in their speech; hence they use polite formsmore than men."Moroccan rural women do not refer to their husbands' first name as seen in these examples: (a) /huwa/'he/him', /raʒli/'my husband', (c) /mul ddar/ 'owner of the house', and (c) /bu drari/'the children's father' (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 1994, p. 81). Moreover, there is also a lexical variation within the gender dimension. While men use the new forms /l-qəṣ/ *eating*, women use the word /makla/ *eating* (Ennaji, 2005, p. 59). Women are more likely to use diminutives such as /ṭwiwəl/ *tall* instead of /ṭwil/ *tall*, associated with 'feminine language' (Ennaji, 2005, p. 59). There is also phonological variation at the gender level. For example, in northern Morocco, women are more likely to use [ʔ] while males are more likely to use [q] (Moscoso, 2003).Ennaji and Sadiqi (1994) generally believe that "women's speech may be looked upon as old-fashioned but clean because it is usually devoid of taboo words and vulgar or debased forms of language" (p. 81).

Boumediane (2021) investigated the issue of plurilingualism and interculturality within women's associations in Rabat, Morocco. She found that there is a linguistic variation at the gender level in relation to communication. Some of her findings and reviews are as follows:

(1) Women use more personal pronouns, adverbs of intensity, and negation.

(2) Men prefer impersonal pronouns and exclamations.

(3) Women with a 'socio-emotional' tendency prefer personal conversations on intimate topics, are more talkative, and are more polite than men.

(4) The discourse of men focuses on the 'communicative aspect of the message' while the discourse of women focuses on the 'meta-communicative and interpersonal' aspect.

(5) Men seek impart information whilst women use the latter in order to create bonds of solidarity.

(6) Women have a richer range of emotional terms, more deictic speech, and more implicit style than men.

Notice that Boumendiane (2021) and Ennaji & Sadiqi (1994) disagree on whether the male or female is more likely to use exclamation. This may mean that the results are inconclusive, and there needs to be a more thorough investigation on the variables that come into play when it comes to the use of exclamations (e.g., perhaps this is more a

geographical explanation than a gender one). The fifth point above is also not straightforward. For example, Kharraki (2001) found that, in the domain of bargaining, men tended to be more polite and used more solidarity devices than women. This reinforces the idea that more in-depth work must be done and more factors should be (re) considered.

This section dealt with contextualizing regional varieties in Morocco, the phonological, lexical, and syntactic variation among them, and, finally, the gender variation in Morocco.

3. Social Variation in the Moroccan Perspective

The section will deal with variation in social level, mainly social class, social network, and speech community.

Let us first discuss social class and its effect on language variation. According to Crawford and Newcomb (2013), from language to parenting, we can see the tuning of one's social class (p. 11). Crawford and Newcomb (2013) believe that class is more about the performance of a specific culture: "In Morocco – class is performed in culturally specific ways. – social class shapes cultural expression in Morocco" (p. 12). Therefore, social class' first effect is expressing one's culture through language, stressing that each class has its own culture. Language, then, would have different linguistic variations due to social class.

This leads us to an interesting point: to seek acceptance and status elevation, do Moroccans lean towards using Standard features (i.e., Standard Arabic) or non-Standard features (i.e., Moroccan Arabic)? Let us look at the following quote, which has some surprising observations:

> Both the diglossic and the variationist frameworks agreed on the fact that some
>
> social variables (particularly social class and education) were directly related to an
>
> increased use of standard features, and therefore that the standard variety (*fuṣḥā* in
>
> the case of Arabic) would inevitably be the target of accommodation for speakers
>
> seeking social acceptance and status elevation. However, the fact that speakers in
>
> many Arab communities were actually accommodating *from* standard *to* non-
>
> standard features implied that they did so to avoid stigmatization: so, in this case,
>
> speaking more "standard"/*fuṣḥā* appeared to threaten rather than help in one's
>
> pursue of prestige and acceptance. (Falchetta, 2019, p. 59).

This is not surprising once we find that the Moroccan working class uses MA in most cases. Again, when it comes to variation in the social class context, it can occur primarily in terms of variety usage and lexis. When it comes to which variety is used by each social class, Ennaji and Sadiqi (1994) state that the upper class either uses French or Educated Spoken Arabic while the working class uses MA in most cases (p. 80). The upper class had a bilingual upbringing that had to include French because the latter was a reflection of social and professional success (Marley, 2004).[10]

When it comes to lexis, upper class use words such as (a) /sijara/'car', (b) /maqha/'café', (c) /ʒawla/'walk', and (d) /ddira:sa/ 'studies' whilst the working class usesthese words instead: (a) /ṭumubil/'car', (b) /lqahwa/ 'café', (c) /dura/'walk', and (d) /lqraja/'studies' respectively (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 1994, p. 86).

It should be noted that linguistic innovation is another form of language change created by each social class (Ennaji & Sadiqi, 1994, p. 80). Indeed, each social class in Morocco canmake words specific to their needs and mainly cannot be used, at first, by other classes. Ennaji and Sadiqi (1994) state the following on the matter:

In the case of linguistic innovation, if the new word is, for example, invented in the upper-class group, that word will either never reach the lower class, or it may reach it last. The opposite is also true: if an innovation originates in the lowest social class, then the innovation may not affect the speech of the upper-class people at all, or it may reach them late. To put it differently, innovation follows a social hierarchy. (p. 80).

Second, and when it comes to the social network, it can be defined as "an abstract mechanism that denotes the social relationships an individual contracts with other individuals in a society," adding that "the character of a social network is defined by the contact patterns between its members (How many members know each other and how well do they know each other?)," and insisting that "these patterns then construct different types of network structures which can reveal an individual's integration into a network" ("Language and Social Networks," n.d.). Indeed, the social network is an example of how variation is not only found among different social classes, genders, and regions, but variation could also occur within one group ("Language and Social Networks," n.d.).It should be noted that "the more an individual

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[10] One might think that there is a close correlation between social class and code switching; however, according to Ennaji (2005), code switching is related to the factor of education more than social class. For example, schooled working class people may speak French in urban areas.

is integrated into a social network, the more (s)he will adhere linguistically to the existing norms and values of this network ("Language and Social Networks," n.d.). We could explain why the linguistic variation among males and females in Morocco is different because of belonging to various social networks (for more on social network and its relation to language, see Dewey, Belnap, & Hillstrom, 2013).

Finally, and when it comes to the speech community, it is defined by Hymes (1977) as:

> A speech community is defined, then, tautologically but radically, as a community
>
> sharing knowledge of rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech. Such
>
> sharing comprises knowledge of at least one form of speech and knowledge of its
>
> patterns of use. (p. 51).

According to Ennaji and Sadiqi (1994), this definition is vague. It needs to be reduced to what Gumperz (1962) calls linguistic community, a group of people who share a specific form of speech (p. 73). Using this definition, Ennaji and Sadiqi (1994) saythe following on the Moroccan situation in the speech community:

> The Moroccan linguistic community is part of the Maghreb language community
>
> which is itself part of the Arab language community. It is important to note in this
>
> respect that every large language community is characterized by striking
>
> differences of dialect and accent. The Arab language community which covers the
>
> Arab world is a good instance of this sort of language variation. (p. 73).

Ennaji and Sadiqi (1994), indeed, talk about how a large linguistic community that encompasses the Arab world, in general, will have dialectal and accent variation (p. 73). When it comes to dialectal variation, we see that the Arab linguistic community includes Moroccan Arabic, Palestinian Arabic, Egyptian Arabic, and Iraqi Arabic, to name but a few (ibid). As for the accent, for example, 'beauty' is pronounced as /ʒamal/ in Moroccan Arabic whileit is pronounced as /dʒama:l/ in Iraqi Arabic and pronounced as /gama:l/ in Egyptian Arabic (ibid). A final example could be referred to how Moroccan or Algerian Arabic has the word /ʕlaš/ or /ʕlah/ 'why'. In contrast, Egyptian Arabic and Gulf Arab have /lih/ and /liš/ respectively (ibid). We can see how the Moroccan linguistic

community can be embedded within a larger community (i.e., Arab linguistic community) and characterize a distinctive linguistic variation. [11]

Conclusion

This paper dealt with the different characterizations of linguistic variation that exist in Morocco. The first part dealt with an introduction to the varieties in Morocco, language maintenance (an example of resistance to language change) and the standardization process in the Moroccan situation (an example of language change). The second part dealt with an introduction to the regional varieties in Morocco, the phonological, lexical, and syntactic variation among them, and the gender variation in the Moroccan situation. The final section dealt with the linguistic variation at the social level, covering social class, social network, and speech community. As we can see, one cannot study language without studying its different manifestations that occur in regions, social class, gender, and other forms of linguistic variations. Indeed, language is variable. We conclude that linguistic diversity can sometimes create tension and resistance, as we see with different competition between different varieties in Morocco.

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[11] For a comprehensive exploration of the issue of multilingualism in Morocco, see Gravel 1979 who investigates language attitudes, language performance, linguistic variation in sex and social class, diglossic relationship between Classical Arabic and Moroccan Arabic, among other things. Some of his conclusions is that (1) Moroccan Arabic as the lingua franca of every day speech will remain stable, (2) the increase use of a higher form of Standard Moroccan Arabic (i.e., the one we mentioned earlier as Educated Spoken Arabic or Middle Moroccan Arabic) by the educated and higher socioeconomic classes, (3) Arabization in a steady and slow progress, (4) French as an unofficial de- facto prestige, and (5) Amazigh in decline if new programs that reflect a change in attitudes are not implemented.

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Inass Announi is a doctoral student at the Faculty of Languages, Letters and Arts in Ibn Tofail University, Morocco. Her main areas of interest are: syntax, generative grammar, Moroccan Arabic, Arabic grammar, and sociolinguistics. (inass.announi@uit.ac.ma)

Syntactic Transfer: Evidence from the Interlanguage of Moroccan Learners of English

Mohamed Smirkou*

The aim of this study is to observe the development of syntactic knowledge among Moroccan learners of English. Learning the target structure often invokes a direct transfer of the mother tongue patterns. In language learning, when learners encounter difficulties in generating certain structures of the target language, they likely resort to L1 to generate sentences. This is evidence that Universal Grammar is involved in second language acquisition and that leaners' L1 constitutes the initial state of language development. Working on this assumption, this study explores the syntactic errors among Moroccan EFL learners in writing within the framework of Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis. It analyzes the sources of making this type of errors. The data collection instrument is a questionnaire administered to teachers. Forty Moroccan EFL teachers participated in the study. To increase generalizability, the participants belong to different Moroccan secondary high schools. The overall findings of the study, first, reveal that there are two common types or categories of syntactic errors: word order and subject repetition. Second, one of the commonest sources of making these syntactic errors by Moroccan EFL learners is the negative transfer from Moroccan Arabic into the English language. This paper winds up with some pedagogical implications and remedies by promoting syntactic awareness in reducing learners' syntactic errors.

Syntax; error analysis; interlanguage; language transfer; syntactic awareness.

1. Introduction

Recently, there is a consensus among Moroccan instructors of English language that most students do not speak and/or write accurately. Most of the teachers have one common concern which is that students make errors. They admit that learners have difficulty in English syntactic level. This calls for exploring this type of errors to promote the processes of teaching grammar, and syntax in particular, which in turn would develop learners' language accuracy. This analysis will be quite different as it will be carried out

with the purpose of supplementing some proposed solutions (remedial procedures) to promote learners' syntactic awareness.

The field of second language (L2) learning is broad and has been a fertile field of research. In recent years, applied linguists have been much concerned with language learnability trying to observe and explain learning processes and handle difficulties that learners encounter. Language learnability is characterized by trial-and-error wherein learners hypothesize, err, and correct. This study explores learners' errors as one of the problems faced in L2 learning processes. The main aim of the present study is to analyse the "interlanguage" of Moroccan EFL learners in order to explore the sources of the errors. Specifically, it concerns solely the syntactic errors made by Moroccan EFL learners. It identifies and analyses the reason(s) of making the syntactic errors among Moroccan learners of English.

It is well established in the literature that learners face some difficulties while learning any language. Among these difficulties is the lack of syntactic competence. This paper aims to explore the main sources of Moroccan EFL learners' syntactic errors and to assess the effectiveness of deductive teaching on minimizing learners' syntactic errors.

This study derives its significance from the importance of errors and the objectives that it seeks. Investigating these syntactic errors could provide Moroccan EFL teachers with valuable insights into the language learning processes. Once the causes of committing such errors are identified, it will be possible to provide the remedial procedures. As this study focuses mainly on the phenomenon of interlanguage interference between Moroccan Arabic (MA) and English language, conducting such a study may help the EFL teachers become more familiar with the concept of interlingual interference, the contrast between the two languages, and how the effect of the mother tongue on the foreign language learning.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Errors in Second Language Acquisition

Second Language Acquisition (SLA/L2) is a subdiscipline of applied linguistics. In its broad sense, SLA refers to the acquisition[2] of any language after the mother tongue (L1). L1 is acquired by every normal child before the age of puberty (Klein, 1986). The conditions (e.g. context, amount of time available, age, motivation and attitude) of L1 are different from the acquisition of L2. SLA is an umbrella term that comprises natural acquisition and artificial acquisition (Ellis, 1986); i.e., it can take place outside and inside the classroom.

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[2] Krashen (1981) distinguishes between "Acquisition" and "Learning": "acquisition" refers to acquiring language (mostly L1) in natural environment, whereas "learning" is related to any language (usually, L2 or FL) learnt in an artificial or classroom environment) (cited in Ellis, 1986). In the present paper acquisition and learning are used interchangeably (synonyms).

The terms "learning" and "acquisition" are often used synonymously. However, some applied linguists maintain a contrast between them: learning invokes a conscious process and explicit study of rules, often involving an instructor who guides the process of learning (Ellis, 1986), while acquisition, which results from exposure to comprehensible input, denotes a spontaneous process of patterns internalization. In this study, the terms acquisition and learning are used as synonymous.

Despite the fundamental differences between L1 acquisition and L2 learning, the latter can highly exploit from the former through generalizing the characteristics and the approaches of the L1 acquisition as the learning of L2 or FL reactivates the learners' mechanisms of their native language acquisition.

2.2. Contrastive Analysis vs. Error Analysis

The interest in comparative linguistics, i.e., contrasting two (or more) languages, led to the emergence of two approaches of language learning analyses: the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) and Error Analysis (EA). These two approaches focus mainly on the language produced by learners.

2.2.1. Contrastive analysis

CAH set forth to predict language learning difficulties by comparing learners L1 and L2 linguistic structures. It originates in Whorf (1941). It is mainly associated with Lado's work "Linguistics across Cultures" (1957). Generally speaking, CAH is based on the following assumptions:

i. the difficulties in language learning are mainly a result of L1 interference/ language transfer.
ii. these difficulties are predicted by CA.
iii. designing teaching materials can rely on CA to avoid or, at least, reduce the effects of interference.

Contrastive Analysis, as broadly defined, refers to a systematic comparison of specific linguistic characteristics of languages (Els et al., 1984). It has been used as a tool (a) in comparative historical linguistics to establish language genealogy, (b) in typological linguistics to create language taxonomies, and (c) in translation theory to investigate problems of equivalence to create bilingual dictionaries. Theo Van Els, et al. (1984) expand the objectives of CA. These objectives are (a) providing insights into the similarities and differences between languages, (b) explaining and predicting problems in L2 learning, and (c) developing course materials for language teaching.

In the beginning, CA was an area of pedagogical orientation as it was developed for practical purposes: to teach second language efficiently (Ellis, 1986). In this regard, Lado (1957) posits that "the teacher who compares between the foreign language and the

mother-tongue of the learners will identify the problems and be capable of showing them (problems) to the learners (students)" (cited in Ellis, 1986). Lado suggests that both the native language and the target language should be compared to detect their similarities and differences in terms of phonology, syntax, and morphology, along with their culture. A comparative analysis of two languages follows the steps bellow:

i. Briefly describing the two languages,

ii. Selecting specific areas/items of two languages for a detail-oriented comparison,

iii. Comparing and identifying the similarities and differences,

iv. Predicting areas that are likely to cause errors,

v. Testing these predictions.

By the mid and late of 1970s, CA was subjected to criticism. The inadequacy of CA can be summarised, as stated by Corder (1978), in three main limitations. First, difficulties and errors are not solely traceable to the negative transfer of the native language, which must lead to looking for other explanations. Second, what is predicted to cause difficulty is not so in practice as its theoretical aspects are distinct from its applied ones. Third, the doubtful validity comes as a result of the theoretical problems of making comparisons of two languages.

2.2.2. Error analysis

The inadequacy of CAH in explaining particular types of errors leads to the emergence of a new approach: *error analysis*. EA was developed by Corder (1967). It was a turning point in the field of SLA. That era was characterised by establishing a new aspect of teaching and learning. Error Analysis is "…an evaluative technique or procedure of teaching and learning" (Ennaji and Sadiqi, 1994).

Corder (1967) is the first who claims that errors are not only traceable to L1 interference. Instead of considering errors as "flaws" that must be eradicated, Corder (1967) defines errors as signs of learning (Ennaji and Sadiqi, 1994). For learners themselves, errors are 'indispensable' as making errors is a strategy to learn. With Corder (1974), errors are best "not regarded as the persistence of old habits, but rather signs that the learner is investigating the systems of the new language". Saporta (1966) clarifies this claim by stating that errors are not a mark of interference, but they are techniques and procedures used by the learner (cited in Corder, 1974). Similarly, Gass and Selinker (1994) define errors as "red flags" that substantiate the learners' linguistic knowledge of target language.

EA serves didactic purposes as the study of errors gives facts, explanations and details that can be useful in the process of teaching, particularly for the sake of correcting errors (Ellis, 1986). Ellis believes that EA is "… a procedure used by both researchers

and teachers. It involves collecting samples of learner language, identifying the errors in the samples, describing these errors, classifying them according to their hypothesized causes, and evaluating their seriousness" (Ellis, 1986).

The study of errors is significant in three ways. Errors (1) indicate the students' progress to the teacher, (2) explain how the language is acquired/ learned and the strategies used, and (3) are sources for learners to learn from.

2.3. General overview about errors

2.3.1. The notion of error: errors versus mistakes

Errors are one of the most significant issues in second language learning. The notion of error is distinguished from the notion of the mistakes/lapses. Corder (1981) distinguished "between those errors which are the product of chance circumstance and those which reveal the learner's underlying knowledge of the language to date". The first type refers to a mistake, whereas the second type is an error. For the sake of clarity, each concept will be tackled separately.

Brown (1987) defines errors as an observable deviation made by a learner who has not mastered yet the rules of the target language. In this respect, he points out that "an error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of learner". They are errors of competence that reflect the students' gaps in knowledge of language patterns as they refer to learners' competence. Dulay and Burt (1972) refer to errors as *goofs* "for which no blame is implied". Being unrecognizable by the learners, errors cannot be self-corrected.

Mistakes/lapses, on the other hand, are made by children acquiring their mother tongue and learners of second or foreign language. A mistake refers to a performance error; it is a failure of using a known system correctly. It is due to the neurophysiological breakdown or imperfection in the processes of encoding and articulating speech. Unlike errors, mistakes are self-corrected as the learner is capable of recognizing them. Consequently, mistakes are not a problem of knowing but of application. Mistakes are described by Corder as *performance phenomena* since the knowledge is already learnt. Mistakes/lapses are a result of performance variables, for example, fatigue, lack of attention, hunger, shyness, stress, etc.

2.3.2. Errors typology

Errors typology is a significant information in the understanding of learners' errors. Errors are generally classified into four categories: "errors of omission, addition, substitution and word order" (Corder, 1978). The first type, omission errors, refers to the absence of an item that must be present in a well-formed utterance. For example, the sentence *She reading a novel* is ungrammatical due to the omission of the copula be.

The second type, addition errors, denotes the presence of certain item(s) that should not appear in a grammatical sentence. An example is the addition of unnecessary elements such as the overgeneralization of the inflectional morpheme +s of plural or +ed of the past tense as in: *informations and *thinked. The third type, substitution errors, refers to "the use of wrong form of the morpheme or structure" (Dulay et al, 1982). Substitution errors are categorized into: (i) regularity wherein an irregular marker supersedes regular one, (ii) arch-forms wherein learner generate a plural form instead of its singular, such as *one phenomena is... instead of one phenomenon is..., and (iii) alternating forms wherein some forms are used as alternatives, such as *this boys, *those man. The fourth type, mis-ordering errors, occur when an utterance is generated in an ungrammatical order. For example, Moroccan speakers might generate *ate John the apple relying on their mother tongue order (VSO).

2.3.3. Sources of errors

2.3.3.1. Interlingual (interference) transfer

Interlingual errors are traceable to negative transfer of the mother tongue norms into the target language. Richards (1974) defines it as "the use of elements from one language while speaking another and may be found at the level of pronunciation, morphology, syntax, vocabulary, and meaning". The early stages of learning a second language are characterised by negative transfer as learners have not yet been familiar with the linguistic knowledge of the target language. For instance, a Moroccan speaker learning English may produce *wrote Omar a letter, instead of the correct form Omar wrote a letter, influenced by L1 word order (VSO), kteb ʕumar bRa.

2.3.3.2. Intralingual (developmental) transfer

Intralingual transfer or overgeneralization is "a process that occurs as the second language learner acts within the target language generalizing a particular rule or item in the second language … beyond legitimate bounds" (Brown, 1987). Children acquiring the native language can also make errors due to overgeneralization of rules. For instance, a child or a learner, at a particular stage of learning English, may overgeneralize the rule of the inflectional morpheme of the past tense to irregular verbs as in *swimed and *goed.

2.3.3.3. Context of learning

Context, also termed by Richards (1971) "false concepts" and by Stenson (1974) "induced errors", refers to the environment where learning takes place such as "classroom situation" wherein the teacher or the textbook can cause errors. Learners "often make errors because of misleading explanation from of the teacher, faulty presentation of a

structure or word in textbook, or even because of a pattern that was rotely memorised in a drill but not properly contextualised" (Brown, 1987).

2.3.3.4. Strategies of communication

Strategies of communication are techniques exploited by learners to overcome the difficulties that impede them from communicating thoughts. Errors are made as a result of this source due to the lack of appropriate means of the target language to express a particular idea. While communicating, learners recourse to the available means for conveying a message.

Brown (1979) lists four broad communication strategies. (1) The strategy of avoidance is subcategorized into different strategies: "syntactic, lexical and phonological avoidance and topic avoidance". (2) "Prefabricated patterns" is a communication procedure that is based on memorizing some particular phrases or sentences at the beginning of a language learning experience, even without knowing the elements of the phrase or sentence. It is usually used by tourists. These phrases or sentences can be found in bilingual books and dictionaries which contain phrases/sentences for different settings and situations such as "Where is the police officer?", "I do not understand you", "How much does this cost?" etc. The third strategy is (3) The "appeal to authority"; it is used when one lacks the knowledge of words, phrases, or/and structures to communicate. The learner uses this strategy to ask for a phrase or a word such as "how do you say...". Lastly, (4) the "language switch" refers to switching from the mother-tongue, a word or a phrase, in order to transport one's idea.

Selinker (1972) approaches the sources of errors differently. He considers errors due to five cognitive processes: (1) language transfer, (2) transfer of training, (3) strategies of learning, (4) strategies of communication, and (5) overgeneralization (cited in Richards 1974). Specifically, (1) language transfer is the fossilisable items, rules, and patterns which are a result of the native language. (2) Transfer of training is the fossilization which is a result of identifiable items in training procedures. (3) Strategies of learning are the result of identifiable approach by the learners to the material to be learnt. (4) Strategies of communication are caused by an identifiable approach by the learners used for communicating with natives. The last one is (5) overgeneralization in which a learner overgeneralizes the target language rules.

2.4. The syntactic contrast between Moroccan Arabic (MA) and English

Languages are characterized by similarities and differences. These similarities and differences appear at the level of lexicon, grammar, or phonology. MA system, therefore, differs from English language system in terms of certain features. The first syntactic difference is the distinct sentence structure (word order) of the two languages. English is characterized as SVO language (in affirmative sentences) such as *John likes pizza*, whereas MA is known by VSO language, for example, *kla ʕali təfaħa* (Ali ate the apple)

and the SVO structure is also permissible in MA; it is acceptable to say *ʕali kla təfaħa* (Ali ate the apple). In MA, both word orders are permissible, as illustrated before. Another major difference is that MA allows a sentence with no subject. A null pronominal sentence is permissible in MA as in *mʃaw* (they left), while it is not in English language.

Unlike English language, MA is also characterized by the occurrence of nominal sentence. This grammatical feature lies in the existence of independent verbless sentences which is not the case in English (Ennaji and Sadiqi, 1994) as shown below:

Table 1: Nominal sentences in MA

MA	literal translation	correct form
1. hija ʔustada	*she teacher	she is a teacher
2. hija f lqiSm (independent verbless sentence)	*she in the classroom	she is in the classroom

These independent verbless sentences are ungrammatical in English language. The verb is mandatory in the English language system.

Negation is another major distinctive feature between MA and English language. Negation in MA is formulated by the addition of two morphemes: discontinuous *ma... ʃ* or continuous *maʃi* as in *xalid ma-xajf-ʃ* (Khalid is not afraid) and *ʕali maʃi f DDar* (Ali is not at home), respectively. By contrast, negation in English is constructed by the insertion of the word "not" after the auxiliary.

MA and English language differ in formulating interrogative sentences. In English, the formulation of questions is usually made up through auxiliary inversion. On the contrary, the construction of questions in MA does not involve inversion; it is presented through rising intonation which is accompanied by the initial interrogative *waʃ* (whether) (Ennaji and Sadiqi, 1994).

The placement of the adjectives also differs between the two language systems. In MA, adjectives are usually preceded by the nouns they modify as in: [xalid xda DDar ʒdida] (*Khalid bought a house new). In English, on the other hand, adjectives usually appear before nouns, for example, *Ali lives in a **large** house*. These are the major distinctive features among other features.

2.5. Previous studies

Rich research has been conducted in learning English in a second or foreign language context. Studying learners' errors, indeed, is essential to be carried out as it provides insightful information about how a language is learned. In the Moroccan context, Trimasse (2016) studies the acquisition of the English article system by Moroccan EFL learners. Her study reveals that proficiency level has an effect on transfer errors made in article usage. Likewise, Dulay and Burt (1974) explore the errors made by Spanish-speak children. This study finds that 85% of errors are intralingual (developmental) errors

adopted by the learner as a procedure to develop their accuracy, but interlingual errors were not significantly found.

Smirkou and Smirkou (2018) examine the sources of copula omission among Moroccan learners of English. The study's findings reveal that Moroccan learners of English make this type of syntactic errors more frequently in situations where MA does not require the use of the copula, namely the present tense, progressive aspect, and passivization. According to the authors, the main source of this error is the negative transfer from MA into English.

Another seminal work is that of Jmila (2015) that investigates the development of syntax among Moroccan learners by testing the relevance of universal grammar in L2. In her investigation, Jmila provides evidence from the linguistic behavior of Moroccan learners of English that instantiated how universal grammar (UG) principles shape the processes of acquiring a second language. The findings reveal that learners transfer the prior existing knowledge to the target language, which implies indirect access to UG.

In other context of Arabic varieties, Hashim (1997) examined the English syntactic errors by Arabic speaking learners. According to its findings, the most common syntactic errors categories are: verbal errors (use of tense, phase, aspect, voice, verb formation, concord, finite/non-finite verbs); relative clauses (interlingual and intralingual errors, structural misrepresentation, simplification); adverbial clauses (comparison, purpose, concession, manner); sentence structure; articles (definite and indefinite); prepositions (deletion, substitution, redundancy); and conjunctions. He finds that the most common source of these errors is the influence of the native language, and that in processing English syntactic structures, Arabic speakers adopt certain strategies similar to those of first-language learners, including simplification and overgeneralization.

Similarly, Alhaysony (2012) studies female Arabic-speaking EFL students in the University of Ha'il. The results showed that learners make a number of errors in the use of the articles, particularly omission errors. It also claims that these errors are attributed to interlingual and intralingual transfer.

Another major study was conducted by Brown (1994), which found out that intralingual errors overtook interlingual errors and he concluded that overgeneralization of a target language causes a considerable number of errors.

Within the same framework, Huang (2001) examined grammatical errors made by English majors of a Taiwanese university. The findings find six common errors: (1) verb (2) noun (3) spelling (4) article (5) preposition and (6) word choice. These errors were due to overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, simplification, incomplete application of rules and L1 negative transfer. Huang claims that 55% of errors are related to the usage.

Hemabati Ngangbam (2016) examined the English syntactic problems persistent in the written performance of freshmen English language class of Mutah University. The study's results indicate performance problems committed were due to mother – tongue

interference, misuse sentence fragment, overuse, lack of grammatical knowledge, formation and developmental errors.

P. Usha and Noora Abdul Kader (2016) study the syntactic and morphological error analysis in English language among secondary school students of Kerala. The results of the study revealed that concord in auxiliaries, SVO pattern, articles, prepositions and tenses are the major types of syntactic errors, whereas affixation and compound related errors, failure to use the marker (-er) and conversion related errors are the major types of morphological errors. Intralingual and interlingual interference, method of teaching and teacher factors are the major causes of errors as revealed from the perception of teachers.

Hence, these different findings indicate that there is no agreement found in these studies. The debatable nature of the issue under investigation makes errors a controversial field of study. The present study undoubtedly benefits from these previous studies.

3. Methodology

3.1. Operational definition

Syntactic errors will be targeted from a limited perspective. They are approached as the sentences which do not conform to the English syntactic rules that govern the formation of sentences. In other words, they refer to the production of syntactic ill-formed sentences, such as, word mis-order, subject repetition, double negation, etc. Syntactic errors are assessed by an online questionnaire administered to Moroccan EFL teachers. Based on their responses, the reasons of making the syntactic errors' occurrence will be identified and analysed.

3.2. Research questions

In order to meet the research objectives, the following questions need to be answered:
1. Do Moroccan EFL learners make syntactic errors in writing?
2. Among syntactic errors, which ones are more frequently made by students?
3. What is the source behind producing syntactic errors?
4. Does the deductive teaching method minimize generating syntactic erroneous forms?

3.3. Research hypotheses

1. Moroccan EFL learners generate syntactic errors as a result of interlingual transfer.
2. Deductive teaching will minimize generating syntactic errors.

3.4. Research design

The research design adopted in collecting the data is both quantitative and qualitative. The former is used to quantify how frequent certain syntactic errors occur,

while the second is employed to explore the reasons or sources of this type of errors. It is worthy pointing that the data is not numerical in nature; only one research question related to frequency is described as one of the quantitative data in the present paper. In an attempt to generate an exploratory descriptive research, nominal data is gathered through a questionnaire delivered to EFL teachers. This quantitative method (teachers' questionnaire) is based on close-ended questions in which yes/no notation is used to record the responses of EFL teachers. To generate further data, samples of students' syntactic errors are provided by teachers. After analysing the data, the results are presented in percentages using Microsoft Office Excel.

3.5. Participants

The population of this study is that of Moroccan EFL teachers. The population number is 40 participants belonging to several Moroccan secondary high schools. The informants differ in terms of age, gender, and experience. 55% of the participants are males, whereas 45% are females.

3.6. Instruments

In order to answer the research questions, a corpus of relevant data needs to be collected through relevant instruments. The present paper has opted for the questionnaire.

Considering the exploratory nature of this study, the questionnaire is the major instrument used. The questionnaire aims to provide data from EFL teachers about the syntactic errors. It generally consists of two sections, which in turn include sub sections. The questionnaire is considered as an effective instrument for data collection; questionnaires "…are structured instruments for the collection of data which translate research hypotheses into questions" (Richterich and Chancerel, 1980). It is noteworthy to mention that the targeted participants of the questionnaire are mainly teachers. Hence, it tends to generate responses from teachers using open and close ended questions.

3.7. The description of the questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of three main sections. The first section deals with the personal information of the participants namely age, gender, and the participants' teaching experience. The second section includes a set of close-ended questions. They stress on the frequency of occurrence of syntactic errors. The third section investigates the sources of making these syntactic errors, targets the participants' treatment of these errors, and requires from the participants to mention some examples of students' syntactic errors.

In the present study, teachers are chosen as participants for they are regarded as a reliable source for data collection. The objectives of the present research questions can only be answered by teachers as they are at the heart of the learning process; they observe, explain and correct. This widens their familiarity with making errors. Therefore, they are a source that can provide this paper with validity and reliability.

4. Research findings presentation

4.1. Statistical data analysis

The overall findings of the data collected from the teachers' questionnaire are represented in relation to the research questions and hypotheses.

4.1.1. Research question 1: Do Moroccan EFL learners make syntactic errors?

The figure below provides an answer to the first research question of the present study. It seeks to demonstrate whether Moroccan EFL learners make this type of errors or not. Teachers are asked to tick one of the question item labels: syntactic errors or vocabulary errors, and the findings are as follows:
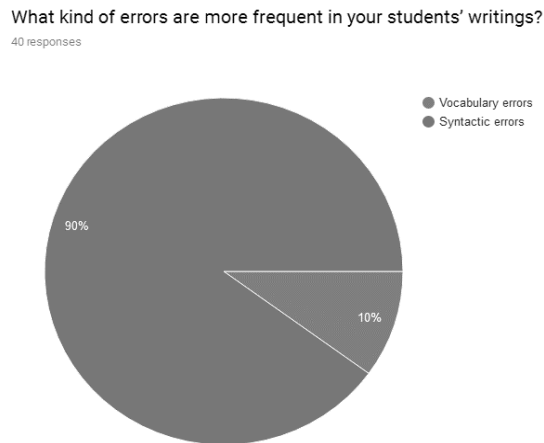

Figure 1: The results regarding teachers' responses to whether Moroccan EFL learners make syntactic errors

As in the diagram above, the vast majority of teachers' responses, 36 out of 40 responses, claim that Moroccan EFL learners make syntactic errors in writing. In other words, most of the informants assert that this type of errors is commonly made in the Moroccan EFL context in writing. Statistically, 90% shows that the responses are consistent. However, only 10% of teachers' responses entail that vocabulary errors are the most frequent errors made.

4.1.2. Research question 2: Among syntactic errors, which ones are more frequently made by students?

As a response to the second research question, teachers claim that word order and subject repetition are the most frequent types of syntactic errors made by Moroccan EFL learners. This result is shown in figure 2.

Among syntactic errors, which ones are more frequently made by students
(please order from "most frequent" (1) to "least frequent" (4):

40 responses

- Tenses
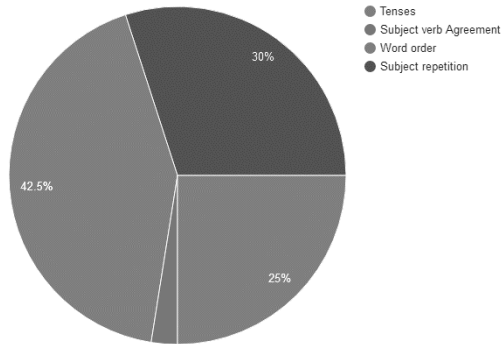- Subject verb Agreement
- Word order
- Subject repetition

Figure 2: The results regarding teachers' responses to the types of syntactic errors

The diagram above instantiates that word order is the commonest type of syntactic errors that Moroccan learners make. It presents 42.5% among other types, followed by subject repetition 30%, tenses 25%, and subject-verb agreement 2.5%, respectively.

4.1.3. Research question 3: What is the source behind producing syntactic errors?
The following figure is a compilation of the teachers' responses to the sources behind making syntactic errors. Their responses diversified in terms of the sources of this type of errors.

According to you, what are the sources of syntactic errors (you can tick more than one answer)

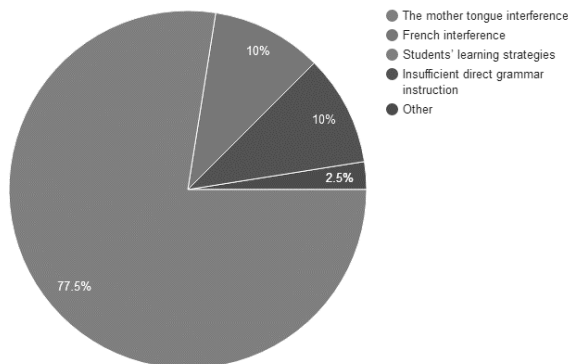40 responses

- The mother tongue interference
- French interference
- Students' learning strategies
- Insufficient direct grammar instruction
- Other

Figure 3: The results regarding teachers' responses to the sources behind making syntactic errors

The findings in diagram (3) show a huge significant difference in the sources of producing syntactic errors: while 77.5% of teachers declare that the learners' mother tongue interference is the primary source, only 10% out of 100% points out that both French interference and insufficient direct grammar instruction are the reasons. Besides, 2.5% (one informant) of responses adds overgeneralization as another reason.

4.1.4. Research question 4: Does the deductive teaching method minimize making errors in generating syntactic erroneous forms?

The figure 4 comprises teachers' responses to the question: *Do you think more direct grammar instruction will help learners avoid syntactic errors?* Apparently, the majority of the teachers view that direct grammar instruction (deductive method) helps learners avoid making syntactic errors.

Do you think more direct grammar instruction will help learners avoid syntactic errors?

40 responses

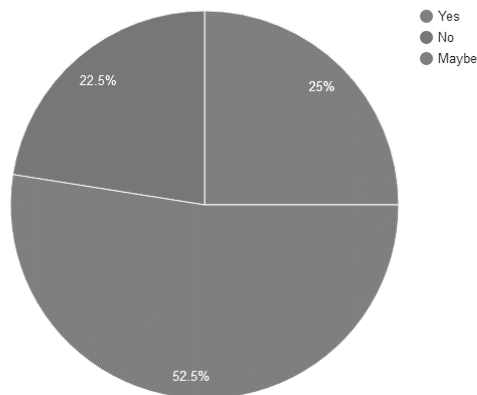- Yes
- No
- Maybe

25%
22.5%
52.5%

Figure 4: The results regarding teachers' responses to whether direct grammar instruction helps learners avoid syntactic errors

The diagram displays that more than the half of the informants (52.5%) argue that direct grammar instruction helps learners avoid making syntactic errors. 22.5% of the participants, on the other hand, declare the opposite. While 25% of teachers hold neutral opinion towards the effectiveness of the direct grammar instruction in reducing students' syntactic errors.

5. Research findings discussion

This discussion goes over the results of this study and offers a detailed explanation in the light of the present research questions and the related literature. It discusses its findings in relation to the research hypotheses so as to either reject or support them.

5.1. Moroccan EFL learners and syntactic errors

This section discusses the research question: *Do Moroccan EFL learners make syntactic errors in writing?* It testifies the presence of this type of errors in the Moroccan EFL context. Eventually, there might be some unpublished studies on the syntactic errors among Moroccan EFL learners that have been conducted. Fortunately, few studies are carried out in the Arab world.

As previously mentioned, Hemabati Ngangbam (2016) examines the English syntactic problems in the written performance of freshmen English language class of Mutah University. Within the same framework, P. Usha and Noora Abdul Kader (2016) study the syntactic and morphological error analysis in English language among secondary school students of Kerala. Further, Hashim H. (1997) examines the English syntactic errors made by Arabic speaking learners. Importantly, the findings of these studies reveal that making syntactic errors is widely present in EFL contexts.

The results of the current study, interestingly, accommodate the above studies' findings. The questionnaire's findings have revealed that syntactic errors are the commonest problematic aspects in learning English language. The vast majority of informants (EFL teachers) assert that this type of errors is commonly made in the Moroccan EFL context in writing. The reasons behind producing this type of errors will be subsequently discussed.

5.2. Analysis of syntactic errors samples

This section addresses the second question: *Among syntactic errors, which ones are more frequently made by students?* Word order and subject repetition are the two commonest types of errors that the findings of this study revealed. The discussion will restrict itself to these two types of syntactic errors.

5.2.1. Word order

Based on the analysis of the syntactic errors' samples provided by the teachers, word order errors are found to be the commonest errors among Moroccan EFL learners. This type of errors can be divided into four categories or subtypes: sentence structure (SVO), noun-adjective misordering, adverb-verb misordering, and copula omission (nominal sentence).

5.2.1.1. Sentence structure

As explained earlier, English and MA differ with regard to sentence structure word order. For example, MA has VSO as its basic structure and allows for other structures including OVS and VOS, while English is characterized as SVO as its basic structure (in affirmative sentences) such as *John likes pizza*. Thus, because of the differences between the two languages, the EFL students' L1 seems to have an impact on their L2. Consider the following examples[3]:

(1)

a. *Bought Mohamed an umbrella as it was raining heavily. VSO

b. *Bought an umbrella Mohamed as it was raining heavily. VOS

c. Mohamed bought an umbrella as it was raining heavily. The correct form.

(2)

a. *Prepares my mother cake every week. VSO

b. *Prepares cake my mother every week. VOS

c. My mother prepares cake every week. The correct form.

In MA, both word orders VSO and VOS are permissible. However, they are ill-formed in English language. The production of these ungrammatical forms shows the reliance of Moroccan learners on their L1 syntactic system. Thus, it could be stated that this type of errors is a result of L1 transfer. We shall discuss the sources of errors in details in the coming section.

5.2.1.2. Noun-adjective misordering

Noun-adjective is another noticeable word order error among Moroccan EFL learners. English language differs from MA in placing these two elements. In English, the adjective appears before the noun, whereas it comes after the noun in MA. Thus, this negative transfer is attributable to contrast between the two systems. This is shown in following examples, generated from teachers' responses:

(3)

a. *I saw the boy intelligent.
   I saw the intelligent boy.

b. *Girl beautiful.
   Beautiful girl.

c. *Match football.
   Football match

---

[3] These examples are taken from the samples mentioned by the teachers.

d.*T-shirt white.
    White t-shirt.

These are instances of *negative transfer* as adjectives in English precede the noun; whereas Arabic word order is Noun and then Adjective.

5.2.1.3. Adverb-verb misordering

Moroccan learners also make some errors at the level of adverb placement. The discussion here will be restricted to adverbs of frequency, as they were the commonest category students err in. Consider the examples in (4) and (5), provided by the teachers:

(4)
a.*I never am late.
    I am never late.

b.*My father always is right.
    My father is always right.

(5)
a.*Fatima plays never football, she does not like it.
    Fatima never plays football; she does not like it.

b.*My brother bought me never a gift on my birthday.
    My brother never bought me a gift on my birthday.

Unlike other types of adverbs, in English, adverbs of frequency come after the verb *be* (4). However, they appear before other lexical verbs (5) such as *paly, drive, bring*, etc. The type of errors above does not reflect the Moroccan Arabic structure. Thus, it could refer to performance error.

5.2.1.4. Copula omission

Moroccan EFL learners omit *be* in contexts where MA does not require the use of the copula particularly simple present, progressive aspect, and passivization, consider the examples in (6), (7), and (8), respectively:

(6)*Her father nice.
    Her father is nice.

(7)*My father working on village now.
    My father is working on village now.

(8)*My parents born in countryside.

   My parents were born in countryside.

A close inspection shows that these samples violate the grammatical structure (SVO) of English. In other words, there is no independent verbless sentence in English. Therefore, this structure is traceable to the negative transfer of the learners' mother tongue. That is to say, this structure is grammatical in MA, but its literal equivalent is ungrammatical in English.

5.2.2. Subject repetition

This type of errors involves the repetition in a pronominal form of the subject NP in non-embedded declarative sentences:

(9)*The computer it can arrange your work better.

   The computer can arrange your work better.

(10)*My holiday it was perfect.

    My holiday was perfect.

The type of errors in (9) above reflects the structure of MA and, therefore, is a result of L1 transfer. Consider the following examples in MA:

(11) muħaməd j-qDar j-ʒi.

   Mohamed-he-can-he-come.

   Mohamed can come.

(12) faTima t-qDar t-ʒi.

    Fatima-she-can-she-come.

    Fatima can come.

j and *t* carry the same number and gender of the subject Mohamed and Fatima, respectively. Hence, subject repetition is due to the MA transfer.

5.3. The sources of syntactic errors

This section attempts to answer the third research question of this study: *What is the source behind producing syntactic errors?* To achieve this objective, these errors have been identified, described, classified and explicated through examining the samples of utterances provided by the teachers in the questionnaire as well as analysing the teachers' responses to the question item that targets the sources. The process of identifying and describing errors is a concern of linguistic, whereas the explanation is a psychological

matter. In other words, the identification of errors leads to their description which paves the path for explication.

According to the previous research that has been carried out on the issue under investigation, the main reason behind producing syntactic errors is revealed to be the negative transfer from the native language into the second or foreign language. For instance, Hashim (1997) studied the English syntactic errors by Arabic speaking learners. The findings revealed that the common source of these errors is the influence of the native language. Similarly, Ngangbam (2016) examines the English syntactic problems persistent in the written performance of freshmen English language class of Mutah University. The study's results indicate performance problems committed were due to mother tongue interference. P. Usha and Noora Abdul Kader (2016) study the syntactic and morphological errors in English language among secondary school students of Kerala. Intralingual and interlingual interference are the major causes of errors.

These research findings, interestingly, confirm the first research hypothesis*: Moroccan EFL learners generate syntactic errors as a result of the interlingual transfer; they are traceable to the interference of the learners' L1 syntactic rules*, and, hence, proves it to be correct. As mentioned earlier, 77.5% of informants declare that the learners' mother tongue interference is the primary source

5.4. Syntactic errors and direct grammar instruction

This section discusses the last research question: *Does the deductive teaching method minimize making errors in generating syntactic erroneous forms?* As indicated earlier, more than the of the informants (52.5%) report that direct grammar instruction helps learners avoid making syntactic errors. This claim can be justified by the advantages of deductive teaching method. For example, it goes straight to the point, and therefore it is time saving. Students can grasp the rules more simply and quickly. It also respects the intelligence of many students and acknowledges the role of cognitive processes in language acquisition. Some students learn more when they are conscious, i.e. they are analysing language rules. This teaching method, also, minimizes the probability of hypothesizing the wrong rule. These research findings confirm the second research hypothesis, *deductive teaching minimizes generating syntactic errors*.

6. Conclusion and pedagogical implications

This study attempts to investigate one of the problematic grammatical aspects namely the syntactic errors. It, particularly, explores the sources of making syntactic errors among Moroccan EFL learners in writing. The present study's findings reveal that making syntactic errors is a common type of errors among Moroccan EFL context. It indicates that Moroccan EFL learners make syntactic errors in linguistic situations where MA and English language differ. It shows that producing syntactic errors is attributable to the negative

transfer and direct, deductive teaching method, grammar instruction helps learners avoid them. The results of this study also denote that word order and subject repetition are the commonest types of errors among Moroccan learners. The study reveals that direct grammar instruction (deductive teaching method) helps students avoid syntactic errors.

The conclusions drawn from this paper mainly reveal that Moroccan EFL learners negatively transfer the norms of MA into the English system. This being said, much attention should be paid, generally, by Moroccan EFL teachers to raise learners' awareness of the similarities and the differences between MA and English. Teaching students the differences and similarities between the two languages could enhance their learning development. In this regard, Lado (1957) argues that "the teacher who compares between the foreign language and the mother-tongue of the learners will identify the problems and be capable of showing them (problems) to the learners (students)" (cited in Ellis, 1986).

The differences would familiarize them with those problematic linguistic environments that have no equivalent in MA or differ in their formulation. These, therefore, could minimize the frequency of occurrence, at least. More practically, students can be given some examples of such errors as a way to enlarge their familiarity and awareness of the syntactic errors so as to avoid this type of errors in writing. In doing so, EFL teachers should have sufficient knowledge about the systems of both the students' L1 and the target language.

Further, knowing the differences and similarities between the two languages in question can help design teaching materials with no L1 interference. The most efficient teaching materials "…are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner" (Fries, 1945, cited in Ennaji and Sadiqi, 1994). In producing teaching materials, syllabus designers can better apply this assumption by conducting a scientific and thorough comparison of the languages in questions.

Pedagogically, the findings of this study contribute to language learning and teaching, particularly writing skill. Since the syntactic errors in writing among Moroccan EFL learners is a result of the L1 interference, teachers' methods and teaching materials can make use of contrastive analysis as the difficulties between the two languages can be predicted by CA.

The result of this study proposes promoting syntactic awareness in EFL classroom as one way of reducing learners' syntactic errors. Syntactic awareness refers to the ability to manipulate and monitor the relationships among words in a sentence in order to understand while reading, composing orally, or in writing. Instructional activities practices that promote this ability include *sentence scramble, sentence elaboration, Kernel sentence elaboration, sentence combining,* and *sentence deconstruction.*

In sentence scramble, students arrange words to form a sentence. Students arrange words into a complete sentence that follows correct English grammar. Sentence

elaboration is another activity that helps students use and manipulate a growing number of words in sentences. The activity starts with a simple subject. Then, a series of questions activity using question words (*who, what, where, why, which, how)* is asked to prompt students to expand and elaborate a sentence. In Kernel Sentence Elaboration, which helps students use more words and use more complex sentence structure, the teacher gives a sentence which starts with a simple sentence that has a noun and a verb. Students are asked to gradually add to and elaborate the sentence. Sentence combining is another activity for helping students produce more syntactically accurate sentences. In this activity, students practise combining sentences, manipulating and rearranging words in sentences, expanding sentences, and clarifying sentence meaning. In sentence deconstruction, students are given a long sentence with phrases and clauses, and they are required to deconstruct it into simple, short sentences.

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Mohamed Smirkou is a Ph.D researcher in the field of L2 phonology learnability at Ibn Tofail University, Kenitra, Moroccco. He is a teacher of English at the Moroccan National Ministry of Education. Smirkou obtained a bachelor's degree in *Linguistics*, a bachelor's degree in *Applied Linguistics and Language Pedagogy,* and a master's in *TEFL*. His areas of specialty are language universals, phonology, L2 phonology acquisition, TEFL, and L2 acquisition of syntax. (mohamed.smirkou@uit.ac.ma)

The Contribution of Note-taking Strategies to Reading Comprehension among Moroccan EFL Learners

Guebba Boutaina

This study aims at assessing the effect of note-taking on Moroccan EFL learners' reading comprehension. Particularly, it investigates the effect of the mapping method on Moroccan EFL learners' reading comprehension. This research is conducted using one major data collection instrument: the questionnaire. The total number of the respondents is 108. The participants of this study are semester-one students belonging to Ibn Tofail University. The findings indicate that note-taking has a positive impact on reading comprehension. Thus, it helps learners better understand and retain information.

EFL learners; note-taking; reading comprehension; the mapping method.

Introduction

Reading is a complex activity that involves an interaction of readers' linguistic and world knowledge. During the process of reading, readers make use of their situational, linguistic, and background knowledge. Readers interact with the text by using variant strategies including note- taking. To better understand texts, readers employ note-taking which is a process that promotes attaining and retaining the reading content (Dunkel, 1988, p. 278). Reading comprehension, on the other hand, is a fluent process of linking information from the text and the existing schemata to grasp meaning (Nunan, 2003).

A wide body of literature has asserted the efficacy of note-taking on reading comprehension. Nwokoreze (1990), O'Malley and Channot (1995), among others, have pinpointed that learners reach the highest level of comprehension during note-taking process. The latter has been claimed to have two functions: the facilitation of learning and information review. Put differently, note-taking increases learners' alertness and focus, fosters their critical thinking, helps store information, and enables learners to recognize text' structures.

Various note-taking strategies have proven their benefits on reading comprehension. The previous studies have focused on the outlining and the Cornell note-

taking methods. Nevertheless, this study investigates the effect of the mapping method, in particular, on Moroccan EFL learners' reading comprehension.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Reading skill

Reading is an interactive process between a reader and a text (Carrel, 1987). By definition, reading refers to the ability to receive messages through the medium of written words (Morris, 1965). Reading as a process involves the construction of meaning of the parts of a text and between the text and its readers. In this vein, Widdowson (1979) claims that reading is "the process of getting linguistic information via print, an attractive one, and a useful corrective to more restricted approaches" (as cited in Alderson and Urquhart, 1984, p. xxv). Reading also enhances L2 learners' productive skills (Krashen, 1985). In other words, meaning is constructed through the interaction between a reader's background knowledge and what is presented in the text (context). Meaning is not constructed by the literal recognition of words used in a text.

A similar point of view is held by Goodman (1988) who pinpoints that reading involves an interaction between thought and language. It entails that, while reading, learners hypothesize ideas, guess and predict events, and check whether their preliminary established hypotheses are true or false.

Not only does reading include knowledge of the language; namely, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics, but it also involves knowledge of the world. These two major factors contribute to the comprehension of texts. In this vein, Smith (1973) has argued that "reading is an act of communication in which information is transferred from a transmitter to a receiver" (p. 2). Furthermore, reading is a cognitive process that involves decoding symbols to conduct meaning. This follows that:

> The more we read, the more we are able to read…every time a reader meets a new word, something new is likely to be learned about the identification and meaning of words…learning to read is not a process of building up a repertoire of specific skills, which makes all kind of reading possible, instead, experience increases the ability to read different kinds of texts (Smith, 1973 as cited in Lawrence & Elbown, 2004, p.3).

Reading is a constructive activity. It is, therefore, characterized by purpose, selection, anticipation and comprehension (Smith, 1973, p. 3). First, reading is purposeful as people read for a reason; to find information or to enjoy a story. Aimless reading brings nothing to the reading. Second, reading is selective. During reading, readers read what is relevant to their interests, needs, and purposes. Third, reading is anticipatory. Taking into account that readers already know what type of reading text they need, reading becomes anticipated as purposes define expectations. Last, reading is based on comprehension simply because understanding a text is the basis of any reading act.

2.2. Reading and comprehension

Understanding or comprehension is the basis for reading and for learning to read (Smith, 1973, p. 7). Comprehension is the process by which aspects as knowledge, intentions, and expectations are internalized in reading. Anderson and Pearson (1984) have defined reading comprehension according to the interaction existing between new and old information. That is, how the reader's schema has stored the procedures of interpreting new information.

Comprehension requires readers to go beyond the information presented. Readers should go beyond text lines and the explicit to what is meant between lines. Landwehr (1994) claims that language comprehension equips readers with techniques to read between the lines and understand the implicit meaning based on their prior knowledge. This harks back to critical thinking which is a means to activate or construct schema. Critical thinking provides an explanation for activating existing schemata and for constructing new ones by contrasting ideas, involving in reflective thinking, and evaluating the reading material (Ruggiero, 1984; Norris & Phillips, 1987). This is also supported by Beck (1989) who claims that "there is no reading without reasoning" (p. 677). It is, hereby, a cognitive process to decode, interpret, evaluate and construct meaning.

The reader's schemata or their prior knowledge is one of the most prominent aspects of reading comprehension. According to Goodman (1973), reading as a process is a *psycholinguistic guessing game*. This is related to the notion of the anticipatory feature of reading as discussed earlier in this section. During this game, the reader actively engages in making hypotheses about the writer's intended message (as cited in Mackay et al, 1979, p. 6). Not only does effective reading cater for the identification of all text elements, but also results from the reader's ability to generate the right guesses about the meaning of unfamiliar ideas and words in the text.

Texts are known for being characterized by indeterminacies which requires an active interpretation from the part of readers. As an interactive process, readers interact with the text using their mental processes at different levels. Pekker (1998) has defined reading comprehension as a meaning-making process that involves an interaction between the reader and the text. In other words, readers employ their mental activities to understand a text. Accordingly, the reader can "produce a reasonable hypothesis about the text he is going to

read by making use of resources that he has such as common sense, general knowledge, and experience, which he already has*"* (Nuttal, as cited in Pekker, 1998, p. 242).

Vocabulary is also a significant factor in the reading process. Harmon *et al*. (2010) have claimed that students' limited understanding of a text is usually due to their lack of vocabulary. Consequently, readers do not fully understand texts. Another influential factor in reading comprehension is the structure of the text. Texts can be analyzed in terms of two levels: the micro propositional level and the macro propositional level. As far as the first level is concerned, the analysis of the text focuses how the sentences cohere and are organized within a text (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). The macro propositional level, on the other hand, targets the relationship of the ideas that are represented in texts.

Another prominent factor in reading comprehension is background knowledge. Understanding a text is relative. Differently put, understanding a text depends on readers' cultural background. This enables readers to incorporate their pre-existing knowledge into the text. This means that readers belonging to different backgrounds will have different interpretations of the same text.

2.3. Skimming and Scanning

Skimming is defined as "reading quickly and getting the gist of a passage" (Scrivener, 2005, p. 185). Readers do not attempt to read every word of the passage; rather, they adopt a speed reading "that allows them to find topics, main ideas, overall them, basic structure, etc." (Scrivener, 2005, p. 185). An example of skimming is when a teacher asks their students to read the first and the last lines of a paragraph to guess the main idea of the text.

Scanning, on the other hand, refers to "fast reading for specific individual pieces of information" (p. 185) including names, addresses, facts, numbers, dates, etc. A relevant instance of scanning is when a teacher asks students to read the text and look for specific information such as a date, a number, or a name.

2.4. Approaches to reading

The bottom-up approach was the basis of the vast majority of reading schemes (Cambourne 1979, as cited in Nunan 1991, p. 64). The main view of the bottom-up approach is that "reading is basically a matter of decoding series of written symbols into their aural equivalents (Nunan, 1991, P.65). Cambourne (1979) has illustrated this process as follows:

Figure 1: Bottom-up approach demonstration

Print → *every letter discriminated* → *phonemes and graphemes matched* → *pronunciation* → *meaning*

As shown above, the reader starts with the small units of the prints: letters. Then, the transfer of the information is exhibited to a decoder which in turn converts the letters into systematic phonemes. Letters then are recognized as words. Then, the word is uttered. During

this process, the reader continues processing words in the same way to the end. Finally, readers proceed to apply the syntactic and semantic rules to assign meaning to a sentence. However, this approach did not exempt from criticism. The processing of every letter in a text would slow the reading because it makes meaning difficult to retain. This phonics approach makes it difficult for readers to assign a phonemic value to the vowel sequences of words. A good example is the word "read" whose phonemic value is still ambiguous unless recognizing whether it refers to the present or the past (Nunan, 1991, p.66).

This criticism has led to the emergence of a new approach which is called "the top-down" or "the psycholinguistic approach" to reading. This approach assumes the reader as the center or the heart of the reading process rather than the text. Cambourne (1979) has illustrated this model as:

Figure 2: Top-down illustration

Past experience, language, intuition and expectations ⟶ *selective aspects of print* ⟶ *Meaning* ⟶
Sound, pronunciation if necessary

Unlike the bottom-up approach which emphasizes the decoding of form, the top-down approach focuses on the reconstruction of meaning. This process of reading is based on the interaction between the reader and the text. During this interaction, readers make "use of knowledge of the subject, knowledge of and expectation about how language works, motivation, interest and attitudes towards the content of the text" (Nunan, 1991, p. 66). Instead of decoding each symbol, the reader hypothesizes assumptions about text elements and then goes through the text to testify the validity of his/her hypothesis. In the same context, Oller (1979) has pinpointed the importance of linking knowledge of linguistic forms and knowledge of the world. This linking makes discourse processing easier. Thus, the more readers are able to predict the sequence of linguistic elements in a text, the less complex reading is processed.

This model has also been criticized for different reasons. Stanovich (1980), for instance, has claimed that the generation of hypotheses about texts is time-consuming. In this light, he has proposed another model which he names *interactive compensatory model*. This model suggests "that readers process texts by utilizing information provided simultaneously from several different sources, and that they compensate for deficiencies at one level by drawing on knowledge at other levels" (p. 67). The interactive model allows deficiencies at one level that are compensated for at another. In other words, a high level process can compensate for the lower one. For instance, readers with poor knowledge of graphics can compensate for such a gap by using other knowledge sources namely semantic or syntactic knowledge.

2.5. Intensive and extensive reading

Reading has two major purposes: reading for information and reading for entertainment or pleasure (Greller, 1981, p. 4). Intensive reading involves a close and careful reading of a text in order to understand as many details presented in the text as possible. Intensive reading widens readers' vocabulary (Waring,1997; Paran, 2003; Stahl, 2003; Simmons, 2011; Yang dai, & Gao, 2012). It emphasizes following a text: doing exercises, answering questions, ordering sentences, and looking for antonyms or synonyms of specific words. This approach helps learners of a language develop their knowledge about grammar, vocabulary, and syntax.

Extensive reading, on the other hand, is about fluency in reading for pleasure and entertainment with no intention to fully understand text details. In spite of not understanding some words, the process of reading keeps going in extensive reading. Scrivener (2005) pinpoints the powerful impact extensive reading has on language learning: "the more someone reads, the more they pick up items of vocabulary and grammar from the text, often without realizing it, and this widening language knowledge seems to increase their overall linguistic confidence" (p.188).

2.6. Schema Theory and Reading

Schema theory refers to a theory that explains the way through which readers use their prior knowledge to comprehend a text (Rumelhart, 1980). The term "schema" is first coined by Barlett (1932) in psychology referring to "an active organization of past reactions or experiences" (p.201). In reading, the term schema was introduced by scholars such as Carrell (1871) and Hudson (1982) in an attempt to discuss the importance of background knowledge in reading comprehension.

Schema theory is based on the assumption that a text does not carry meaning itself. Rather, prints or texts help readers by providing direction to how they should construct meaning using their own prior acquired knowledge. In this context, Anderson (1977) has pointed that understanding a text is an interactive process between the text itself and readers' background knowledge: "every act of comprehension involves one's knowledge of the world as well" (p.369). Accordingly, Anderson (1994) has defined comprehension in relation to schema. Thus, he has claimed that comprehension involves activation or construction of a schema that enables to provide a coherent explanation of objects and events mentioned in a text (p.473).

Similarly, Nunan (1991) has defined schema theory in terms of inter-related patterns: "these are constructed from our previous experience of the experiential world and guide us as we make sense of new experience" (p.68). Moreover, schema theory has been interpreted from an applied linguistic perspective by Widdowson (1983). According to him, schema theory contains two levels of knowledge; a systematic level and a schematic level (as cited in Nunan, 1991, p.68). While the systematic level contains

phonology, morphology, and syntax of a language, the schematic level includes readers' background knowledge.

Importantly, schema theory is related to some extent to Goodman's *psycholinguistic guessing game* as they both make the reader the center of the reading process. This process of interaction in reading is also known as Reader-Response theory. The latter assumes that readers react differently to different prints or texts. Thus, readers interact dynamically with texts. In this context, Valencia et al., (1989: 58) states that meaning is built by bringing old and new information. This process is described as "fluid; it varies from one reading situation to another [in terms of] motivation, interest, culture, task, setting, and text" (Park, 2005, pp: 25-26).

2.7. The Definition of Note-Taking

Note-taking is a complex activity that includes comprehension, selection of information, and written production processes (Piolat, Olive, &Kellogg, 2005, p. 291). That is, note-taking is a completed action that requires an understanding of lecture and content. Accordingly, Dewitt (2007) considers that note-taking is a little piece of information about content to be retained in mind. Thus, taking notes allows processing information of context in the readers' mind. As a result, readers can take notes by writing what they have understood using their own words. Thus, Recall of information is more effective when readers make use of their writing and thinking skills at the same time.

According to Piolat, Olive and Kellogg, (2005), note-taking is a completed action extracted from mental behaviours. This activity involves understanding of aural input, identification of important information, storing and saving it. Noticeably, memory plays an important role in this practice. Fajardo (1996) denotes that note-taking is a complex activity that embraces reading and listening while reading, summarizing, and writing.

Note-taking can be analyzed as a critical action which increases learning. Nguyen (2006) assumes that taking notes is important for recovering what has been seen or heard. It is an influential study skill that performs as a form of learning by helping readers to comprehend and remember what they have covered while reading. Thus, this leads to develop their academic achievement. When taking notes, readers note down essential facts and conclusions but not details.

Moreover, Makay, et al., (2009) define note-taking as a practice that involves the registration of information internalized from different sources. In other words, note-taking is the usage of writing or registration of key points of a text.

2.8. Note-Taking and Reading Comprehension

Most learners take notes of main ideas to assist understanding. As mentioned earlier, reading comprehension is a reactive mental process between the linguistic knowledge of a reader and knowledge of the world. During reading, the reader builds

many interpretations of the text that are important for understanding. Field (2002, p. 25) states that these representations contain the surface code (the correct word of a text), the text code (central ideas show the meaning of the text), and the mental models (the method that information acts in the mind).

Reading for understanding is one of the main purposes of reading. However, there are some obstacles to successful comprehension. As Gerston, Williams, and Baker (2001) pinpoint "… many of them arise in the strategic processing of text. For example, students may not possess appropriate strategies for problem situations or they may not know when to use strategy they, in fact, do possess" (p.280). According to White (1996), note-taking is one of these strategies. It is thought to improve learning written and oral materials. It is a helpful technique to study content and develop language skills and study tasks.

In this vein, Kobayshi (2005) states that taking notes is an essential instrument that helps comprehension building. Simply put, when readers are reading about a given topic, they try to understand the exact meaning of a word which is one of the essentials in reading. Expanding thoughts results from reviewing notes.

2.9. Previous Studies

Previous studies have focused on the effect of note-taking on reading and listening comprehension. Bahrami and Nosratzadeh (2017) have evaluated how note-taking of forty Persian EFL learners has contributed in increasing their comprehension and attention in reading and listening to classroom materials and content. The adopted test in this study is a text that consists of four passages through which readers take notes.

Likewise, Rahmani and Sadghi (2001) examined the effect of note-taking using graphic organizers on Iranian EFL learners' comprehension and retention of information. The study findings have shown that the participants have acted meaningfully with texts by taking notes. The latter has helped them better memorize important keywords and recognize relationships between main ideas.

A similar study is conducted by Al-Ashkar (2014). The participants are over 301 students from A-Najah National University. The study reveals that the majority of students agree on the effectiveness of using note-taking during a lecture by a score of 95.6%. Other studies including Bligh (200), Kiewra (1991), and Bohayet.al, (2011) have reached the same results. Thus, the majority of the studies have proved the efficacy of note-taking in reading comprehension.

3. Methodology

The present study is based on one major hypothesis which states that note-taking has a positive effect on Moroccan EFL S1 university learners' reading comprehension.

3.1. Research questions

This study tends to answer the following questions:

1.Do S1 university learners take notes while reading?

2.Are they able to recognize their notes after reading?

3.Do they use the mapping method while taking notes?

4.Is there any significant relationship between reading comprehension and note-taking?

3.2. Research objectives

The present study has two major objectives:

1. To investigate whether S1university learners use the mapping method when taking notes.

2. To explore the effect of note-taking on their reading comprehension.

3.3. Significance of the study

This paper derives its significance from three facts. First, it explores the relationship between reading comprehension and note-taking. Second, it tends to better understand the way by which S1 university learners take notes. Third, it aims at raising awareness of the significance of taking notes throughout the process of reading.

3.4. Defining concepts

The present study is based on two main concepts; reading and note-taking. By definition: "reading is an active means of information processing, it is both a contributor to and a determinant of cognitive abilities" (Pumfrey, 1985, p. 1). Note-taking, on the other hand, is a skill that is used by readers to write down necessary information and save it for later use. It is a permanent record or an external memory (Benton, et.al.,1993). This study seeks to define the relation between note-taking and reading comprehension.

3.5. Research Design

This research is quantitative in nature. Thus, ordinal data is collected using a questionnaire to generalize responses from the participants. The questionnaire adopts both open-ended and close-ended questions. The results will be calculated and analyzed using Excel.

3.6. Population

The targeted population of the present study is Moroccan EFL S1 university learners. The study follows a random selection of the participants which will help in generalizing the finding. The total number of the participants is 108. As for their gender, it is noticed that females represent the biggest part by 58,5%, while males only form 37,8%.

3.7. Instruments

The present study is based on one instrument which is the questionnaire. The latter is divided into two sections. The first section targets the personal information of the participants, including gender and age. The second part addresses the correlation between note-taking and reading comprehension. The questionnaire items are ten in number. The questions range from yes/ no questions to multiple-choice questions (MCQ). In the questionnaire, the participants are required to mark their responses. The questionnaire was administered virtually by sharing it on Social Media including Facebook groups and Gmail accounts. The responses were collected in three days. Social Media has made the task of collecting data quite achievable.

4. Representation of data results and Findings discussion

After analyzing the data collected from the questionnaire through running descriptive statistics, the main findings are presented in the figures below. Figure 1 shows whether the participants take notes while reading.
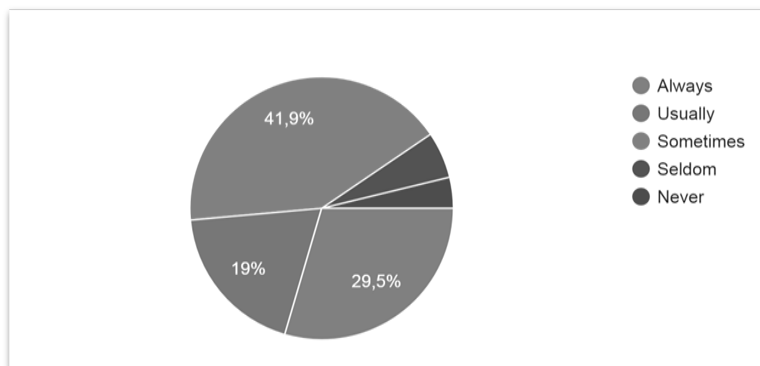

Figure 1: I take notes while reading

Figure 1 above shows that more than 41% of learners sometimes take notes while reading, whereas 29, 2% always take notes while reading. While18.9% usually take notes during this process, 5.7% rarely take notes when exposed to a reading text. Last, only 3.8% of the participants do not take notes.

Figure 2 indicates the participants' ability to paraphrase and understand their notes.
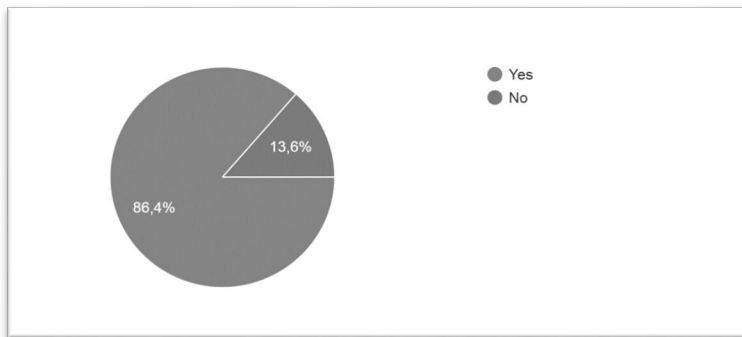
Figure 2: I write down what I understand from the text in my own words

Figure 2 shows that more than 86% claim that they write down what they understand from the text in their own words, whereas 13.6% admit that they do not.

Figure 3 implies the significance of taking notes in understanding texts while reading.
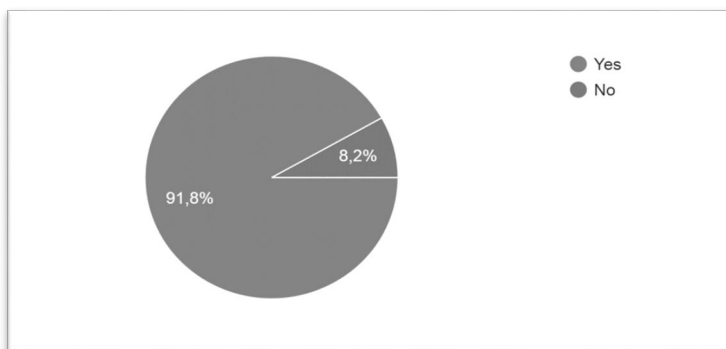

Figure 3: Taking notes helps me better understand a reading text

Surprisingly, only 8.2% of the participants claim that note-taking does not help them understand a reading text. The majority of S1 students have acknowledged that note-taking has a positive effect on reading comprehension (91.8%).

Figure 4 entails the effect of note-taking on vocabulary memorization.
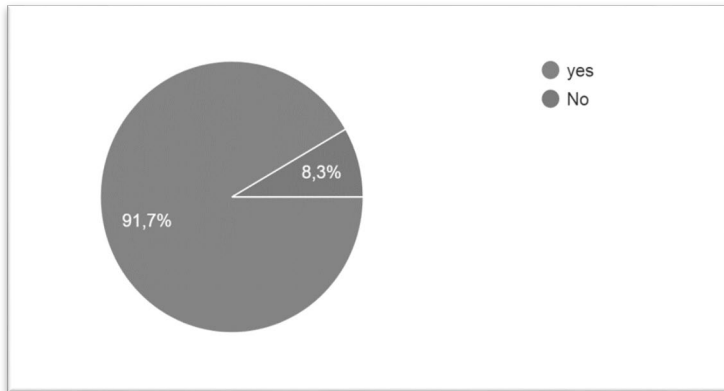
Figure 4: Taking notes enables me to easily memorize vocabulary

As seen in figure 4, taking notes enables 91.7% of the students to better and faster memorize vocabulary, while 8.3% claim that it is not the case.

Figure 5 illustrates the various benefits note-taking has on reading comprehension.
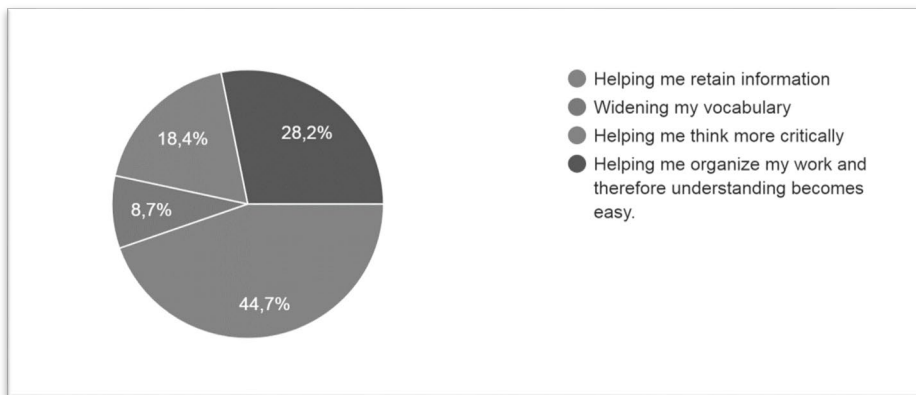
Figure 5: Note-taking improves my reading by

This diagram shows that more than 44% believe that note-taking helps them retain information while 28.2% claim that note-taking helps them organize their work and therefore they understand texts easily. 18.4% states that note-taking helps them think more critically while reading. Then comes the last score (8.7%) which shows that note-taking improves students' reading comprehension as it widens their vocabulary.

Discussion

The findings have revealed that there is a positive relationship between note-taking and reading comprehension. The majority of S1 students have agreed about the fact that note-taking; the mapping method, in particular, enables them to better understand the reading texts. Noticeably, the majority of the participants are females as they present 55.5% of the responses. This score can highly affect the results as females are known for their organization and neatness of work. As for age, it has been shown that the majority of the participants range between seventeen and twenty years old. This category has claimed that they all take notes while reading.

Remarkably, the majority with 29.5% of the participants have claimed that they sometimes take notes. This fact shows their awareness of the importance of keeping track of their readings. The minority forms a percentage of 3.8% of students who do not take notes. Fortunately, the percentage is not frightening as it only presents a small category of learners who are not aware of the significance of taking notes while reading. Another important factor in reading is learners' ability to understand what they write. The majority of students with 86.4% acknowledge that they are able to write what they have understood from the text in their own words. Writing in their own words is a proof that they understand the messages that the reading text implies.

Regarding the relationship between note-taking and reading comprehension, the vast majority with 91.8% has agreed that note-taking helps them better understand the reading text, retain information, and memorize words. This signifies that the hypothesis established at the preliminary stages of this research is correct, and therefore the results support the present study's hypothesis.

Concerning the note-taking strategy or method that is most used by S1IbnTofail University students, the majority with 62.7% have claimed that they use the mapping method to take notes, whereas only 37.3% claim that they use others. This signifies that the mapping method has proved its efficacy in helping learners internalize information.

Last but not least, all the participants have agreed that note-taking helps them improve their reading by different ways including retaining information, widening vocabulary, thinking critically and organizing work. This variety of the benefits of note-taking shows that reading comprehension as a complex process cannot be done separately. Rather, such strategies enable learners to have a clear comprehension of texts.

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Boutaina Guebba is a doctoral researcher in the field of applied linguistics. She is a member of the Department of English studies within the Faculty of Arts and Languages of IbnTofail University, Kenitra, Morocco. She is a teacher of English. Guebba obtained a Bachelor degree in Linguistics, a Bachelor degree in Applied Linguistics and Language Pedagogy, and master in TEFL. Her main areas of interest are: applied linguistics, social-emotional learning, E-learning, ICT, and teacher education development. (boutaina.guebba@hotmail.fr)

Amazigh Language Morphology: Examples from Tashlhiyt in Ayt Hdidou

Said Oussou

The present paper describes the morphology of one of the richest languages, in terms of its morphology at least. In essence, the paper is an attempt to analyze some morphological processes pertaining to Tashlhiyt as one of the varieties of the Amazigh language spoken in Morocco. Specifically, in this article, categories such as nouns, verbs and adjectives are dealt with. At the level of nouns, aspects of number, gender and state are described. Within the verb category, number and gender are analyzed. Finally, the adjective category includes also number, gender as well as comparative and superlative aspects. Along with the discussions on these three categories, several practical examples are provided after each category from Tashlhiyt together with a gloss in English. One of the focal points that the present article emphasizes is the nonconcatenative type of morphology that Tashlhiyt enjoys to a great extent, which thus makes it morphologically rich and complex.

Adjectives; construct state; derivation; morphology; nonconcatenative morphology; nouns, Tashlhiyt; verbs.

Introduction

Research on the Amazigh language linguistics has proliferated in the last few decades. Its morphology has been discussed adopting different approaches: a synchronic approach to a given variety, a comparative synchronic approach, and a diachronic approach (Bensoukas, 2005). Although a number of studies have been carried out on this language (Abdelmassih, 1971; Bensoukas, 2005, 2012; Bentolila, 1981; Kossman, 2009, 2012a, 2012b, 2013, 2014; Ridouane, 2014, among others), Tashlhiyt, especially as spoken in the region of Ayt Hdidou, to the best of my knowledge, has never been studied before, which lends significance and novelty to the present research article. The term 'Tashlhiyt', pronounced as /taʃlнijt/, refers to both a variety of the Amazigh language and a female speaker of the dialect, and /aʃlнij/ is used to refer to a male speaker. The present research is thus concerned with Tashlhiyt exclusively of other Amazigh varieties such as Tarifyt or Tamazight, all of which are spoken in different regions of Morocco.

Given that the morphology of Tashlhiyt can not be described including all aspects in the present research article, I have decided to choose three main components to focus on: nouns, verbs and adjectives. Just like other languages, Tashlhiyt has plural and

singular notions, though manifested in different ways in languages. Although languages have this in common, not all languages share, say, the gender aspect. In English, for example, the adjective does not have to agree with the noun or verb in terms of gender or number, which is contrary to Tashlhiyt. Moreover, another feature that distinguishes Tashlhiyt from other languages or varieties is the concept of nonconcatenative morphology whereby nouns, for instance, do not involve the addition of overt affixes, thereby forming the plural with processes such as reduplication and infixation. Therefore, this article is divided into three main sections. The first one deals with nouns, analyzing them in terms of number, gender and construct or free state. The second section concerns the verb and its features including number and gender as well. Finally, the adjective is discussed through number, gender, comparative and superlative aspects. Practical examples are provided after each category's features as the discussion flows.

1. Nouns

Number

Nouns in Tashlhiyt morphology are divided into countable and uncountable. Countable nouns are morphologically subject to change. That is, an addition of prefixes, suffixes, circumfixes is involved when forming plural nouns. However, the Amazigh morphology is said to be highly nonconcatenative (Abdelmassih, 2011; Arcodia, 2016; Dell & Francois, 1992; Lahrouchi, 2010), involving processes of reduplication, infixation, superafixation, and ablaut (McCarthy, 1981). Thus, generally exhibiting itself as a nonconcatenative process , nominal morphology is displayed in the way nouns are pluralized as shown in the following:

Base	Derived Plural	Gloss
Awtul	iwtal	"wild rabbits"
Amalu	imula	"shadows"
Asklu	isk^{w}la	"trees"
Aqmu	iq^{w}ma	"faces"
Aɣbalu	iɣbula	"springs"
Ahitur	ihitar	"sheep skin"
Ahizon	ihizan	"lames"
Asrdun	isrdan	"mules"
Agru	ig^{w}ra	"frogs"
Ahanu	ihuna	"big rooms"
Anjdi	injda	"travelers"

These are just few examples given only to show how Tashlhiyt enjoys this kind of morphology. As has been shown above, the examples bear no affixes at all, but, instead, the

nouns are internally pluralized, resulting in what is also known as 'broken plurals'. Mainly, vowels are the ones to which some changes happen; the vowel {a-} at the beginning of the words changes to the vowel {-i}. In some nouns, three vowels are changed; "aghbalu" (spring), a singular noun, becomes "ighbula" (springs), as its plural form.

In addition to the nonconcatenative morphology, pluralizing nouns involves a variety of additions and changes in the singular nouns. Some nouns involve the changing of the first vowel {a-} into {-i} and the addition of {-n} as a suffix, which is the most common process, as in 'Amaziɣ' whose plural is 'imaziɣən', meaning 'Amazigh people'. Moreover, another process is carried by changing the entire form of the word; tixsi (sheep, singular) becomes ulli (sheep, plural). Others involve both the change of the initial {a-} into {i-} and the penultimate sound {-u-} into {-a-}, as in aʕbbud to its plural form 'iʕbbad' (bellies).

Some nouns involve the addition and/or the change of only the last suffix, namely nouns beginning with {i-}; for such nouns to be pluralized, the initial vowel does not change at all, but they involve the addition of the suffixes {-awn},{-iwn} and {-an}. The following is a detailed account of all the processes involved:

Nouns whose initial {a-} is changed to {i-} along with the addition of the suffix {-n}:

Singular	Plural	Gloss
Amaziɣ	imaziɣən	"Amazigh people"
Aduʃu	iduʃan	"sandals"
Alɣʷəm	ilɣʷman	"camels"
Ahuliy	ihuliyn	"rams"
Abrid	ibrdan	"roads"
Ajnwiy	ijnwiyn	"knives"
Ayis	iysan	"horses"
Afullus	ifullusn	"cocks"

Ennaji and Sadiqi (2004) state that where there is a two-consonant cluster, the second consonant of this cluster is *lax* in the singular case, and *tense* in the plural. The following are some examples of this process:

Singular	Plural	Gloss
Asif	isaffən	"rivers"
Afus	ifassən	"hands"
Afud	ifaddən	"knees"
Targʷa	tirggʷin	"water canals"

Nouns that involve the changing of the initial {a-} into {i-} and the final {-u} into {-a}:

Singular	Plural	Gloss
Axbu	ixʷba	"holes"
Aqmu	iqʷəma	"faces"
Aqbu	iqʷəba	"woods"
Agru	igʷra	"frogs"
Asklu	iskʷla	"trees"

Nouns that involve the changing of the entire form of the words:

Singular	Plural	Gloss
Tixsi	ulli	"sheep"
Lʕil	iʃirran	"boys"
Tafunast	izgarr	"cows"
Tidd	allən	"eyes"

Nouns that involve the changing of the initial {a-} into {i-} and the penultimate {-u-} into {-a-}:

Singular	Plural	Gloss
Aʕbbud	Iʕbbad	"bellies"
Aqbbuʃ	iqʷbbaʃ	"woods"
Aqidur	iqʷudar	"pyjamas"
Aʕlbun	Iʕlban	"foxes"
Amʕdur	imʕdar	"fool people"

Nouns that involve no change of the initial {i-} but simply suffixing {-awn}, {-wn}, and {-an}:

Singular	Plural	Gloss
Ixəf	Ixfawn	"heads"
Imi	imawn	"mouths"
Ignna	ignwan	"skies"
Iydi	iydan	"dogs"
Ifləw	iflwan	"doors"
Id	idan	"nights"
Isli	islan	"grooms"
Islli	islliwn	"stones"
Izm	izmawn	"lions"

Nouns that involve no change of the initial {a-} but simply suffixing {-n}:

Singular	Plural	Gloss
Aʃbab	aʃbabn	"eyelashes"
Attas	attasn	"buckets"
Alluz	alluzn	"almonds"
Aʃʃad	aʃʃadn	"tree branch"
Albriq	albriqn	"coffee pots"
Aqʷrab	aqʷrabn	"purses"

Nouns that involve the changing of the initial {a-} into {i-} and doubling the last consonant

Singular	Plural	Gloss
Amɣar	imɣarr	"old men"
Adar	idarr	"feet"
Askar	iskarr	"finger nails"
Aqʷnin	iqʷninn	"rabbits"
Abttan	ibttann	"skins"
Aznnar	iznnarr	"cloaks"

The above examples have shown that the formation of plurals in Tashlhiyt nouns involves a variety of processes, which is indicative of the complex nature of its morphology. Another aspect of morphology to be discussed is related to the gender of nouns.

Gender

Unlike the case in some languages, Tashlhiyt nouns are highly inflected to gender. That is to say, there are both masculine and feminine nouns. In order to derive feminine from masculine nouns, an addition of the prefix {t-}, usually followed by the vowel {a}, and the suffix {-t} is involved. This is as far as singular nouns are concerned. Plural nouns, on the other hand, also involve the addition of the prefix {t-}, usually followed by the vowel {i}, and the suffix {-in}. The examples below clearly show how feminine singular nouns are derived from masculine singular nouns:

Masculine	Gloss	Feminine	Gloss
Amaziɣ	"Amazigh man"	tamaziɣt	"Amazigh woman"
aʕrrim	"young man"	taʕrrimt	"young woman"
Aɣyul	"donkey"	taɣyult	"ass"
Asrdun	"mule"	tasrdunt	"female mule"

Afullus	"cock"	tafullust	"hen"
Amˤddər	"mad man"	tamˤddərt	"mad woman"

The gender aspect further influences the size of the words. That is, it indicates how small something is with respect to some nouns, as in:

Masculine	Gloss	Feminine	Gloss
Afus	"hand"	tafust	"small hand"
Aqmu	"face"	taqmut	"small face"
Aylzim	"axe"	taylzimt	"small axe"
Igər	"field"	tigərt	"small field"

Some nouns do not have their gender counterparts at all, as in:

Noun	Gloss
aɣu	"milk"
targʷa	"water canal"
taɣatt	"goat"
tixsi	"sheep"
asif	"river"

Having dealt with number and gender aspects of the nominal morphology, what follows is a discussion of another important aspect related to the notion of state in nouns.

State: Free and Construct

Another feature in Amazigh morphology in general is related to the concept of *state* within which two types can be distinguished: the free and the construct (Ennaji, 2001; Guerssel, 1992). The distinction is said to be syntactically determined (Guerssel, 1992); whereas the free state occurs when nouns are isolated from sentences, the construct state is manifested through its occurrence within the sentence, thereby taking different forms. The examples from Tashlhiyt are as follows:

Free State	*Construct State*	*Gloss*
tifirst	tfirst	'pear'
tislit	tslit	'bride'
tafullust	tfullust	'hen'

The above examples show that nouns that are preceded by some prepositions take on the construct state. *Tifirst* in 'aman n tfirst' (pear's water) and *tajllabiyt n tslit* (the bride's

djellaba) are some contexts where CS applies for the nouns. Below, the CS is discussed in details:

The construct state is accomplished by means of genitives, as in:

a. tafunast n   uryaz   b. idammn n ufullus
   cow of man   blood of cock
   (the man's cow)   (the cock's blood)

The examples in *a* and *b* clearly show that the prefix {u-} is attached to the base when it is singular. However, when the noun is plural, the prefix {i-} is attached to the noun, as in:

c. tafunast n irizn   d. idammn n ifullusn
   cow of men   blood of cocks
   (the men's cow)   (the cocks' blood)

When the noun is feminine as in *e* below, the prefix {ta-} is partially changed in that the vowel "a" is left out, as in the noun "thanut" which is derived from the base "tahanut" (room). The feminine plural nouns, on the other hand, receive another type of change, namely the noun "tihuna" (rooms), for example, which is the plural form of "tahanut", changes into "thuna", as in *f*:

e. tisura n thanut   f. tisura n thuna
   keys of room   keys of rooms
   (the room's keys)   (the rooms' keys)

Nouns are also subject to construct state when they function as the direct object of a sentence. That is, the prefix {w-} attaches to the base. However, not all nouns behaving as direct objects take such a prefix, as in:

g. ighrs uryaz i whuliy   h. iwt uryaz lʕil ns
    slaughtered man ram   hit man son his
    (the man slaughtered the ram)   (the man hit his son)

As is clearly shown, the direct object "ahuliy" in *g* is inflected to the construct state, and hence yields the noun "whuliy". In *h*, however, the noun "lʕil" is not inflected. That is, no prefix attaches to it, and so it stays as it is, which makes it in the free state.

Another case where construct state occurs is the case of object prepositions, though this rule is not universal, as in:

k. izla Ali tisura g wbrid
    lost Ali keys in road
    (Ali lost the keys in the road)

l. idda Ali s taddart
    went Ali to home
    (Ali went home)

The example in *k* shows that the object preposition "abrid" has become "wbrid", while "taddart" in *l*, although it is also the object preposition of the sentence, it is not in the construct state.

Now that the noun category has been analyzed from different aspects of number, gender and state (free and construct), the following section is devoted to verbal analysis, discussing it mainly through two dominant aspects which are number and gender.

2. Verbs
Number and Gender

Abdelmassih (2011) argues that all the Amazigh verbs are inflected with not only number but also gender. The verbs are very much inflected when they are used within sentences. The verbal morphology has been described as the complex aspect in Amazigh morphology given the irregularity of its system (Kossman, 2008). The verb "krz", for example, is dealt with in the following examples:

Infinitive (krz)	Gloss
a. Krzɣ	"I ploughed"
b. Tkrzd	"you ploughed"
c. Tkrz	"she ploughed"
d. Ikrz	"he ploughed"
e. Nkrz	we ploughed"
f. Krzn	"they (masculine) ploughed"
g. Krznt	"they (feminine) ploughed"

The example above shows that the verbs in Tashlhiyt morphology are inflected to a great extent. As has been shown, the verb "krz" is inflected with not only number but also with gender throughout all the pronouns. That is, prefixes and/or suffixes attach to the base.

Moreover, Tashlhiyt verbs show distance in themselves without even using any expression denoting it. In other words, the suffixes {-d} and {-n} when attached to the verb stems indicate difference with regard to distance. The first suffix denotes "proximity", whereas the second one indicates "remoteness". That is, when the suffixes attach to the base "ddu" (go), changes fall on it, thereby yielding various meanings: "idda" (he went), "iddad" (he came) and "iddann:" (he went there). One, however, must not generalize the suffixes; the suffix {-n} also attaches to the verb mentioned earlier, but the case in this respect is not as is already stated about this suffix in that the verb "ddan" (they

went), although the same suffix attaches to the stem, it is only as such just because it is inflected with the third person plural. Thus, the nonconcatenative morphology mentioned above applies highly to verbs as well (Bensoukas, 2012). Consider the following:

Verb stem	Inflected V	Gloss
Ssn	(ur ssin-x)	*know* (I do not know)
gn	(ur igin)	*sleep* (he did not sleep)
Af	(yufa-t)	*find* (he found it)
Gnu	(igʷna)	*sew* (he sew)

In these examples, the negation of the verbs has a pre-final vowel due to either change or vowel epenthesis. Notice also that in the negation process, a pre-verbal particle *ur* is added, a negative particle without which expressing negation would be impossible.

Generally, verbs can be either basic (also called unaugmented stems) or derived (Sadiqi & Ennaji, 2004). Considering the former type, they do not involve the addition of affixes, as in:

Basic verb stems

a.jbəd	"hold"		tʃ	"eat"
jməʕ	"collect"		anf	"open"
qjjəm	"bite"		ut	"beat"

Derived verb stems

Unlike the basic verb stems, derived verbs are augmented and complex stems. Augmented because they involve adding some elements to the base, and they are complex in the sense that the forms derived from these stems produce a rather different meaning conveyed by the original stem. The following examples illustrate this process:

b. bədd	"stand up"	s-bədd	"make it stand up"
kʃəm	"enter"	ʃəkʃəm	"make it enter"
fəɣ	"go out"	ss-ufɣ	"make it go out"

In addition to derived verb stems, there are also derived verbal nouns. That is to say, some verb stems may act as nouns when there are some affixes added to them, thereby changing the grammatical category but not the meaning. This is explained through the following examples:

c. bbəy	"cut"	ubuy	"*the act of* cutting something"
gʷəz	"go down"	uguz	"… *of* going down"
ʕəz	"break"	tiʕzi	"… *of* breaking something"

In these examples, ubuy, uguz, and tiʕzi are verbal nouns derived from their corresponding verb stems. In addition to verbal nouns, a number of verbal adjectives derive from verb stems. The verbal adjectives (V. Adj) are different from verbal nouns (V.N.) in two ways; syntactically, they function like adjectives modifying nouns. On the semantic level, they refer to the same meaning which is normally conveyed by adjectives (Sadiqi & Ennaji, 2004). The following examples illustrate this further:

d. azn	"send"	amazan	"the messenger"
hlu	"be nice"	imhli	"the good man"
kəs	"graze sheep"	amksa	"the shepherd"

Having dealt with nouns and verbs, another aspect to which many morphological changes apply is adjectives. The following section will therefore deal with this aspect and will analyze the types of processes involved in forming adjectives and how the latter component is affected depending on the nature of nouns preceding it.

3. Adjectives

Number and Gender

Adjectives, like nouns and verbs, are inflected with number and gender. That is, the adjective has to agree with both the number and gender of the noun it modifies (Alderete, Jebour, Kachoub & Wilbee, 2015). For example, the adjective "ahizun" (lame) is a masculine singular adjective, and the masculine plural adjective involves internal changes, namely the initial vowel {a-} is changed into {i-}. Thus, the adjective in its plural form would be "ihizan" (lames). In order to form a feminine adjective, some affixes are attached to it. That is, the circumfix {t-t} attaches to the adjectives. An example would be "tahizunt" (a woman who is a lame), and, for the plural form, the suffix "t" is omitted, adding {-an} at the end of the word to form the adjective "tihizan" (women who are lames).

Moreover, the adjectives of color are also very much inflected with number and gender as illustrated in the following examples:

a. tlla ghors tfunast tabrʃant
   has he cow black
   (he has a black cow)

b. llant ghors tfunasin tibrʃanin
   has he cows black
   (he has black cows)

c. illa ghors uzgr abrʃan
   has he bull black
   (he has a black bull)

d. llan ghors izgrawn ibrʃan:
   has he bulls black
   (he has black bulls)

The examples above show various forms that the adjective can take in different contexts. The sentences in *a* and *b* contain the adjective having the same gender, but with a different form due to the *number* feature with which the adjective is inflected. That is, the word "tabrʃant" in the first sentence is a feminine adjective denoting singularity as it modifies the singular noun "tfunast", which is derived from the base "tafunast. In the second sentence, the form of the adjectives changes into "tibrʃanin" as the noun "tfunasin", derived from "tifunasin", is plural.

 Moreover, the gender category influences largely the adjectives. The sentences in *c* and *d* are the counterparts of the previous sentences. In more concrete terms, adjectives have to agree with the nouns they modify. That is, since the noun "uzgr", derived from the base "azgr" is a singular masculine noun, the adjective modifying it has to be singular masculine as well, and the same thing applies for the plural forms as illustrated above.

Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

Another point to be discussed is that the adjectives are divided into two types, which are 'comparative adjectives' and 'superlative adjectives'. The former is used to compare between two people or two things (Alderete et al., 2015), whereas the latter is used to compare one to three or more. The following examples show the comparative type:

e. yuf azgr tafunast   f. tuf tfunast tafullust
   better bull cow   better cow hen
   (the bull is better than the cow)   (the cow is better than the hen)

The examples obviously show how the adjective is not only inflected with the use of comparison, but also with gender. That is, the adjective 'yuf' shows the higher status that 'azgr' enjoys over 'tafunast'. The adjective 'tuf' functions the same as the previous one but with a distinction in the form as the adjective denotes femininity. Other adjectives are used adding the word "khf" (than), as in:

g. ifrh Ahmed khf Ali   h. tfrh Fatima khf Hadda
   happy Ahmed than Ali   happy Fatima than Hadda
   (Ahmed is happier than Ali)   (Fatima is happier than Hadda)

There is also another type of use depending on what type of comparison one wishes to apply. Here, the word "zund" (as…as) is used. For example "ihla wsrdun nk zund winw" (your mule is as good as mine).

The superlative type accomplishes another use of adjectives. That is, when someone wants to compare one to many, they should use the following forms:

i. kyyin tghzzifd ghifsn 9bal   *or*   kyin ayd ighzzifn diksen"

  you tall than them very   *or*   you the one tall among them"

  (you are very tall 'than them')   *or*   (you are the tallest among them)

Both the two expressions mean in English "you are the tallest". The adjective is neutral here; neither feminine nor masculine. Instead, it is the pronoun that indicates the type of the adjective: "kyyin" is a second person singular masculine pronoun followed by a neutral adjective "tghzzifd". The same thing applies for the second singular feminine pronoun "kmmin", but, of course, the vast majority of the adjectives are subject to change in terms of both number and gender.

Conclusion

Tashlhiyt morphology is indeed very rich. This is manifested in its many changes applied to the bulk majority of words when we derive other forms of similar and different meanings. The present article analyzed three major Tashlhiyt categories: noun, verb and adjective. Nouns have been discussed in terms of number, gender and state. This category involves a number of processes applied to pluralize and derive feminine nouns. I have also discussed that verbal nouns can be derived from verb stems through verbs undergoing certain changes that in many cases are not governed by any rule. As for the diversity and richness of the adjective category, it can be concluded that it is also one of the major areas where complex changes occur to it to agree with the noun it modifies, both in terms of gender and number.

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Said Oussou is a Ph.D. student at the Department of English studies within the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences of Moulay Ismail University, Meknes, Morocco. He also works as a part-time teacher in the same Department. He has participated, moderated sessions and helped organize a number of national and international conferences and is an author of some publications related to his field of interest. In 2017 he studied one semester abroad on an Erasmus scholarship in an exchange between the home University of Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah, Fes, Morocco and the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. His main areas of interest are: Amazigh language and culture, morphology, language learner autonomy, second language writing, and learning strategies. (sa.oussou@edu.umi.ac.ma)

Le statut phonologique des voyelles longues en kirundi (bantou, JD62) / The phonological status of long vowels in Kirundi (Bantu, JD62)

Epimaque Nshimirimana, Audace Mbonyingingo

The current state of the description of Kirundi shows that there are different ways of considering long vowels in this Bantu language. On the one hand, long vowels are predictable in specific combinations; on the other hand, they are long by nature and play an oppositive function. This article aims to determine the phonological nature of long vowels in Kirundi. According to an interpretation of the vowel length based on the mora concept, different switching tests show that the long vowels of Kirundi with a oppositive function are full-fledged phonemes. The combination of tone with vowel's length proves that the long vowels function exactly like their short ones. Thus, instead of having five short vowels (/i/, /u/, /e/, /o/, /a/) only, the Kirundi language adds to these their long counterparts (/ii/, /uu/, /ee/, /oo/, /aa/).

Kirundi; long vowel; mora; tone; tonal modulation.

Introduction

Dans les descriptions de certaines langues bantoues proches du kirundi, il est clairement établi que les voyelles longues sont des phonèmes au même titre que les voyelles brèves. C'est notamment le cas du kinyarwanda (Shimamungu, 1998), du giha (Harjula, 2004) et du mashi (Bashi Murhi-Orhakube, 2012) où chacune des cinq voyelles brèves (/i/, /u/, /e/, /o/, /a/) a une voyelle longue phonémique qui lui correspond (/ii/, /uu/, /ee/, /oo/, /aa/).

A côté des voyelles longues à statut phonémique, « il peut exister des différences de longueur non pertinentes, au conditionnement divers » (Creisseils, 1989, p. 36). De ce fait, dans les langues mentionnées ci-haut, « la longueur vocalique ou bien implique une différence

de sens, ou bien est induite par des conditions phonologiques particulières » (Bashi Murhi-Orhakube, 2012, p. 27). Par conséquent, seules les voyelles longues à fonction distinctive sont des phonèmes, toutes les autres voyelles longues sont contextuelles.

En kirundi (bantoue, JD62), les voyelles longues se comportent phonologiquement comme celles des autres langues bantoues déjà citées. En effet, d'une part, l'opposition entre les voyelles brèves et les voyelles longues « se remarque tant en lexique qu'en grammaire, elle implique une différence de signification » (Ntahokaja, 1994, p. 27). D'autre part, un certain nombre de contextes phonologiques prévisibles est à la base des voyelles longues.

Au regard de ce qui précède, l'on dirait que le statut phonologique des voyelles longues en kirundi est bien déterminé. Loin de là, la question reste encore non tranchée vu les positions des uns et des autres. A travers les descriptions phonologiques du système vocalique du kirundi, l'on s'aperçoit vite de deux tendances parmi les linguistes. D'un côté, il y a ceux qui présentent un système vocalique du kirundi à dix voyelles dont cinq sont brèves et cinq autres longues, sans plus de détails. Cette tendance est représentée par Meeussen (1959), Rodegem (1967), Ndayishinguje (1978), Ntahombaye (1983) et Zorc & Nibagwire (2007).

L'autre tendance est représentée par Ndayiragije (1981), Bigangara (1982), Ntahokaja (1994) et Cristini (2000). Ceux-ci ne se prononcent pas clairement sur le statut phonémique des voyelles longues distinctives et réduisent le système vocalique du kirundi à cinq voyelles brèves /i/, /u/, /e/, /o/ et /a/. Pour eux, les voyelles longues ne sont pas des phonèmes à part entière ; elles s'interprètent comme des voyelles brèves (élément phonématique) auxquelles s'ajoutent la durée (trait prosodique).

En mettant en parallèle ces deux tendances, l'on comprend vite où réside la problématique des voyelles longues en kirundi. En effet, « le désavantage de ce procédé, celui d'avoir dix voyelles, au lieu d'avoir cinq voyelles et un épiphonème de quantité, est purement théorique » (Meeussen, 1959, p. 9). L'on est ainsi confronté aux deux questions suivantes : (i) les voyelles longues ont-elles le statut de phonèmes à part entière ? ou bien (ii) les voyelles longues sont-elles des voyelles brèves auxquelles s'ajoutent occasionnellement une durée (trait suprasegmental) ? Ce double questionnement nous amène à formuler une question de recherche unique suivante : quel est le statut phonologique des voyelles longues en kirundi vu les considérations divergentes actuelles à ce sujet ?

Pour répondre à cette question, nous partons du principe selon lequel « il n'y aura donc aucun sens en linguistique qui ne soit impliqué formellement dans le message phonique ; à chaque différence de sens correspond nécessairement une différence de forme quelque part dans le message » (Martinet, 1970, p. 35). Ce principe nous conduit à formuler les deux hypothèses suivantes : (i) la différence de forme entre deux voyelles de même degré d'aperture et de même lieu d'articulation leur confère le statut de voyelles phonémiques différentes lorsque cette différence formelle entraîne un changement de

sens ; (ii) la différence de tonalité sur des voyelles longues de même forme confère à celles-ci le statut phonémique à part entière lorsque cette variation de tonalité entraîne un changement de sens. Ces deux hypothèses ne peuvent être confirmées ou infirmées sans une démarche méthodologique appropriée.

1. Démarche méthodologique

La démarche méthodologique que nous adoptons est de type structuraliste, elle s'inspire des vues de Martinet (1970) sur la description phonologique d'une langue particulière. De manière très simple, « la linguistique fonctionnelle dégage les unités linguistiques dans les énoncés, en se fondant sur les différences de forme qui, dans un même contexte, correspondent à des différences de sens » (Builles, 1998, p. 108). De cette méthodologie, nous retenons quatre éléments importants à savoir (i) la recherche des paires minimales, (ii) l'opération de commutation, (iii) l'interprétation de la longueur vocalique et (iv) l'interprétation des tons modulés.

En phonologie de surface, « la recherche de paires minimales est la procédure la plus évidente dans la perspective d'une analyse de la pertinence des distinctions phoniques » (Creissels, 1989, p. 8). En d'autres termes, « pour dégager les productions phoniques qui ont une fonction distinctive, on recherche des paires minimales » (Builles, 1998, p. 189). Par conséquent, l'analyse des paires minimales nous conduit à reconnaître les éléments phoniques pertinents non prédictibles en fonction de l'environnement phonique.

Pour dégager les différents segments vocaliques longs, nous ferons recours à l'opération de commutation. En effet, celle-ci permet de mettre en évidence les différents rapports d'oppositions (ou rapports paradigmatiques) entre les phonèmes. Ainsi, les différents phonèmes identifiés ont des fonctions distinctives « lorsqu'ils contribuent à identifier, en un point de la chaîne parlée, un signe par opposition à tous les autres signes qui auraient pu figurer au même point si le message avait été différent » (Martinet, 1970, p. 61).

Du fait que le kirundi est une langue tonale, l'étude du statut phonologique des voyelles longues ne pourra pas être efficace si nous ignorons à la fois l'interprétation de la durée et de la modulation tonale. Ici nous envisageons la longueur des segments et les tons modulés par rapport à la notion de more. D'une part, nous considérons que « a mora […] is a unit of phonological length ; thus, a long vowel consists of two moras » (Anyanwu, 2008, p. 192). Dans le même sens, « l'étude des systèmes phonologiques révèle qu'un segment long se comporte souvent comme deux segments brefs en ce qui concerne les règles phonologiques qui font intervenir le nombre de segments (d'où la formule « 1 longue = 2 brèves ») » (Clements, 2004, p. 171).

D'autre part, nous nous inscrivons dans la ligne de ceux qui considèrent le ton modulé comme une combinaison de deux tons ponctuels de hauteurs différentes dont chacun a une more comme support. Ainsi, « on a parfois intérêt […] à considérer un ton mélodique simple comme une succession de deux tons ponctuels : un ton montant

s'analysant en un ton bas suivi d'un ton haut, un ton descendant en un ton haut suivi d'un ton bas » (Martinet, 1970, p. 61). Dans ce cas, chacun des segments caractérisés par un des tons ponctuels successifs est une more.

Ce point de vue que nous adoptons au sujet des voyelles longues et des tons modulés nous permet de distinguer clairement la tonalité et la longueur vocalique. De plus, ce type d'analyse rend possible un certain nombre de tests de commutation appliqués aux différentes paires minimales retenues dans cette étude. Plus précisément, nous appliquons les quatre tests de commutation suivants : (i) opposition de type bref/long sans tons ; (ii) opposition de type bref/long avec tons ; (iii) opposition de voyelles longues différentes sans tons et (iv) opposition de voyelles longues identiques porteuses de tons différents.

Cette démarche méthodologique sera essentiellement appliquée à des lexèmes verbo-nominaux à savoir les infinitifs non dérivés en kirundi. Ce choix est dicté par deux raisons principales. D'un côté, les infinitifs ont une structure simple et stable ce qui permet d'isoler les radicaux facilement. En effet, tous les infinitifs en kirundi sont constitués d'un préfixe *ku-* (ou son allomorphe *gu-*), d'un radical et d'une voyelle finale *-a.* D'un autre côté, les infinitifs en kirundi sont porteurs du ton lexical ce qui rend facile l'identification et l'analyse des paires minimales parfaites.

Pour mener une analyse phonologique rigoureuse des voyelles longues en kirundi, notre attention sera focalisée sur les voyelles longues intérieures au radical. Ces voyelles sont retenues du fait qu'elles sont situées en dehors des différentes variations morphophonologiques. La source de nos exemples de paires minimales est le dictionnaire bilingue kirundi-français de Rodegem (1970). Celui-ci est retenu du fait qu'il est considéré comme le plus riche en informations et le plus détaillé par rapport aux autres dictionnaires portant sur le kirundi connus jusqu'ici.

2. Voyelles longues prévisibles

Dans les différents travaux de description du kirundi déjà disponibles, nous recensons trois contextes de combinaison de phonèmes dans lesquels la longueur vocalique est prévisible. Dans les différents cas où une telle longueur vocalique est susceptible d'apparaître à l'intérieur d'un mot donné, Ndayiragije (1981) indique que le mot en question doit être constitué de trois syllabes au moins. Ainsi, la longueur vocalique peut apparaître dans n'importe quelle position du mot sauf en positions initiale et finale du mot.

Le premier cas de longueur vocalique prévisible est le résultat de la coalescence vocalique. Un tel cas s'observe en frontière morphologique lorsque deux voyelles successives et appartenant à deux morphèmes différents sont en contact immédiat. Pour cela, à chaque contact immédiat de deux voyelles à l'intérieur d'un même mot, soit l'une des deux voyelles se transforme en une semi-voyelle (1), soit il se produit une fusion des deux voyelles (2). Dans ce dernier cas, la voyelle ouverte /a/ suivie d'une autre voyelle

/i/, /u/, /e/, /o/ ou /a/ peut fusionner avec celle-ci pour donner naissance à une voyelle longue (Ntahokaja, 1994).

(1) voyelle + voyelle > semi-voyelle + voyelle

/a/ + /a/ > [ja] : *yaagiiye* /a-a-a-gi-ye/ 'il est parti'
/u/ + /e/ > [we] : *ubwéenge* /u-bu-énge/ 'intelligence'

(2) voyelle + voyelle > voyelle longue

/a/ + /i/ > [i:] : *bariibuka* /ba-ra-ibuk-a/ 'ils se rappellent'
/a/ + /i/ > [e:] : *heejuru* /ha-ijuru/ 'au-dessus'
/a/ + /u/ > [u:] : *buugaye* /ba-a-ugar-ye/ 'ils ont fermé'
/a/ + /e/ > [e:] : *beemeye* /ba-a-emer-ye/ 'ils ont accepté'
/a/ + /o/ > [o:] : *boongeye* /ba-onger-ye/ 'ils ajoutent'
/a/ + /a/ > [a:] : *baavuze* /ba-a-vug-ye/ 'ils ont dit'

Le deuxième cas de voyelles longues prévisibles se produit également à l'intérieur d'un mot. A la différence du cas précédent, l'apparition de la voyelle longue ne se produit pas nécessairement en frontière morphologique, il suffit que les conditions soient réunies dans n'importe quelle position interne du mot. En effet, comme le signale Cristini (2000), en dehors des positions initiale et finale de mot, la longueur vocalique est généralement automatique lorsque la voyelle précède une séquence de Nasale + Consonne (3) du moment qu'elle est précédée par une consonne. La longueur est également automatique lorsqu'une voyelle est intégrée dans le schème de type Consonne + semi-voyelle + voyelle et qu'elle est suivie par une autre syllabe devant obligatoirement commencer par une consonne (4).

(3) Voyelle non initiale + complexe nasale-consonne-voyelle

umuuntu /u-mu-ntu/ 'une personne'
urugeendo /u-ru-geend-o/ 'un voyage'

(4) Complexe consonne-semi-voyelle-voyelle + autre syllabe

kugwiira /ku-gwiir-a/ 'être nombreux'
gufyaata 'ku-fyaat-a/ 'écraser, aplatir'

Contrairement aux deux cas précédents, le dernier cas qui donne lieu à une voyelle longue prévisible se produit à la frontière de deux mots différents mais non à l'intérieur d'un même mot. Il s'agit d'une forme d'élision dont le résultat est une voyelle longue. Dans ce cas, l'on parle du phénomène d'induction défini comme « le phénomène qui provoque l'allongement d'une voyelle initiale ou finale, quand le terme premier rencontre un terme second qui a le ton haut antérieur » Cristini, 2000, p. 9). Rodegem (1967) précise qu'il y a deux types d'induction dont l'une se produit avec une séquence de voyelles et l'autre avec une séquence à complexe à nasale. A son tour, Ntahokaja (1994) fait l'inventaire des situations dans lesquelles se manifeste le phénomène d'induction notamment après des constituants particuliers comme le pronom connectif « -a », les conjonctions de coordination « na » et « nka », la conjonction de subordination « kó », les prépositions « murí » et « kurí », etc. C'est le cas par exemple en (5) où la conjonction de coordination « nka » perd sa voyelle finale au profit de la voyelle initiale du mot « inká » 'vache' qui s'allonge en prenant un ton haut sur la première more.

(5) Induction après la conjonction de coordination « nka »

Utaambuka nk(a) inká > utaambuka **nk'íi**nká 'Tu marches comme une vache'

Au regard de ces différentes situations dans lesquelles se manifeste la voyelle longue prévisible, la littérature sur la question montre que cette voyelle longue n'a pas de fonction distinctive. Elle est imposée par le type de combinaison des phonèmes en présence. En effet, la voyelle longue dont il est question dans ce paragraphe ne permet pas de construire une paire minimale de mots dont la différence de sens serait matérialisée par une différence de forme fondée sur la présence/absence de la voyelle longue.

Une autre observation à faire au sujet de la voyelle longue prévisible est que celle-ci peut porter une tonalité. Dans ce cas, le ton peut se trouver sur la première ou la deuxième more de la voyelle longue et permet de distinguer les sens de deux mots de forme phonémique identique comme dans l'exemple (6). De même, en cas de voyelle longue issue du phénomène de contraction vocalique, le ton peut également se placer sur la première ou la deuxième more de la voyelle longue et avoir une fonction grammaticale en distinguant des formes verbales conjuguées à des modes et/ou temps différents comme en (7).

(6) Absence/présence de tons à fonction lexicale sur les voyelles longues prévisibles

*umus**aa**mbi* 'une vielle natte' versus *umus**áá**mbi* 'une grue couronnée'
*gu-h**uu**mb-a* 'glaner du bois de construction' versus *gu-h**úu**mb-a* 'mentir'

(7) Tons à fonction grammaticale sur les voyelles longues

baavuga /ba-a-vug-a/ 'ils disaient (aujourd'hui)'
baávuga /ba-á-vug-a/ 'ils disaient (avant aujourd'hui)'
báavuga /bá-a-vug-a/ 'alors qu'ils disaient'

En comparant les voyelles longues des exemples (6) et (7), elles ne sont pas les mêmes. En (6), la voyelle longue est interne au radical du mot et est imposée par le complexe nasal qui suit tandis qu'en (7) la voyelle longue est le résultat d'une contraction de deux voyelles appartenant à deux morphèmes différents. Le point commun entre toutes ces voyelles longues est que, lorsqu'elles portent un ton haut, c'est celui-ci qui joue la fonction distinctive. En (7), l'absence du ton haut sur toutes les mores de la voyelle longue indique que le verbe *baavuga* est conjugué au passé récent (ou passé d'aujourd'hui) de l'indicatif, le ton haut attesté sur la deuxième more de la voyelle longue de *baávuga* indique que le verbe est au passé éloigné (ou passé d'avant aujourd'hui) de l'indicatif tandis que le ton haut porté par la première more de la forme *báavuga* permet de conjuguer le verbe au mode conjonctif. Celui-ci est marqué par un ton haut sur le préfixe verbal sujet (Ntahokaja, 1994) ; il est utilisé dans les propositions subordonnées non relatives pour exprimer des nuances de temps, de condition, de concession, etc. (Cristini, 2000).

3. La fonction distinctive des voyelles longues en kirundi

La visualisation de la fonction distinctive dont il est question ici consiste à dégager et à regrouper les différentes paires minimales en fonction du type de test de commutation pris en compte. Pour chaque test, chaque paire minimale permet de mettre en évidence les éléments phoniques susceptibles d'occuper le même environnement. Sous chaque test visualisé en (8), (9), (10), (11) et (12), les différentes formes vocaliques en commutation sont indiquées avant chaque sous-regroupement de paires minimales.

3.1 Oppositions de type bref/long sans tons
(8) a. **a/aa**
gu-hag-a 'gonfler, avoir un haut-le-cœur' / *gu-haag-a* 'être rassasié'
gu-kak-a 'croître rapidement' / *gu-kaak-a* 'déchirer, mettre en lambeaux'
gu-kab-a 'se dessécher' / *gu-kaab-a* 'troquer, interchanger'
ku-yag-a 'fondre' / *ku-yaag-a* 'dialoguer, se parler'
gu-tak-a 'crier vers, supplier' / *gu-taak-a* 'orner'
gu-tar-a 'rôtir, griller' / *gu-taar-a* 'aller au loin, chercher partout'
gu-sab-a 'prier' / *gu-saab-a* 'éclater'

b. **u/uu**

ku-vur-a 'coaguler' / *ku-vuur-a* 'soigner un malade'

ku-gum-a 'être dur ou solide' / *ku-guum-a* 'voltiger'

gu-hub-a 'se tromper' / *gu-huub-a* 'se ratatiner'

gu-hum-a 'être aveugle' / *gu-huum-a* 'souffler, hurler'

gu-sur-a 'péter' / *gu-suur-a* 'guetter, épier, inspecter'

ku-vum-a 'maudire' / *ku-vuum-a* 'ravir, rafler, arracher violemment'

gu-sum-a 's'approvisionner' / *gu-suum-a* 'bourdonner'

c. **e/ee**

gu-hem-a 'ironiser' / *gu-heem-a* 'respirer'

gu-ses-a 'creuser, gratter' / *gu-sees-a* 'verser, répandre'

gu-seg-a 'maigrir' / *gu-seeg-a* 'mendier'

ku-rek-a 'cesser, interrompre' / *ku-reek-a* 'suspendre un seau pour recueillir de l'eau'

ku-mem-a 'être farineux' / *ku-meem-a* 'être crevassé'

d. **i/ii**

ku-barir-a 'espérer' / *ku-bariir-a* 'coudre'

gu-sib-a 'laisser à l'abandon' / *gu-siib-a* 's'abstenir, se priver'

gu-shim-a 'enfoncer ses griffes dans' / *gu-shiim-a* 'être content, apprécier, estimer'

gu-súbir-a 'retourner' / *gu-súbiir-a* 'reprendre'

ku-gish-a 'amener les vaches en transhumance' / *ku-giish-a* 'perdre sa fortune'

e. **o/oo**

ku-roongor-a 'prendre femme' / *ku-roongoor-a* 'guider, conduire'

gu-tot-a 'être détrempé' / *gu-toot-a* 'importuner'

ku-bob-a 'être frais' / *ku-boob-a* 'supplier'

ku-bog-a 'déposer, placer' / *ku-boog-a* 'rejeter le lait maternel'

gu-sogot-a 'préparer le tabac' / *gu-sogoot-a* 'percer de part en part'

ku-gob-a 'se mettre sous le pis d'une vache et traire'/*ku-goob-a* 'se recourber, se tordre'

En observant ces différentes paires minimales présentées en (8a-e), nous constatons que chaque voyelle brève a une voyelle longue qui lui correspond. De plus, l'opposition bref/long est pertinente, c'est-à-dire que la commutation entre une voyelle brève et une voyelle longue est responsable du changement de sens. Ce test montre ainsi que les voyelles longues /ii/, /uu/, /ee/, /oo/, /aa/ ont une fonction distinctive lorsqu'elles commutent avec les voyelles brèves /i/, /u/, /e/, /o/, /a/.

3.2 Oppositions de type bref/long avec tons

(9) a. **á/áa**

gu-tát-a 'guetter' / *gu-táat-a* 'se quereller'

ku-dág-a 'lier fortement, garrotter' / *ku-dáag-a* 'marcher lentement, se dandiner'

b. **ú/úu**

gu-cúr-a 'forger' / *gu-cúur-a* 'ramener sa femme'

gu-túr-a 'pousser et faire entendre un bruit' / *gu-túur-a* 'deposer sa charge'

gu-kúk-a 'curer la kraal' / *gu-kúuk-a* 'sortir de l'eau'

ku-búr-a 'manquer de' / *ku-búur-a* 'avertir, prévenir'

gu-húr-a 'être impulsif' / *gu-húur-a* 'rencontrer'

ku-bútir-a 'avaler du poison' / *ku-búutir-a* 's'effondre'

gu-kúr-a 'grandir en âge' / *gu-kúur-a* 'enlever'

c. **é/ée**

gu-hér-a 'finir, s'achever' / *gu-héer-a* 'récompenser'

gu-kék-a 'découper en morceau' / *gu-kéek-a* 'soupçonner, se douter de'

ku-nén-a 'être indifférent, négliger' / *ku-néen-a* 'dédaigner'

d. **í/ii**

ku-bík-a 'chanter comme un coq' / *ku-bíik-a* 'déposer, épargner'

gu-shír-a 'mettre' / *gu-shíir-a* 'remettre à'

En analysant les différentes paires minimales présentées sous ce test de commutation en (9a-d), trois éléments méritent d'être soulignés. Premièrement, la plupart des voyelles brèves opposables à leurs correspondantes longues sont porteuses des tons hauts. Deuxièmement, dans les limites de notre corpus, aucune paire minimale attestant l'opposition ó/óo n'a été relevée. Troisièmement, chaque fois qu'il y a une opposition entre des voyelles brèves et des voyelles longues avec un ton haut, il y a un changement de sens. Ceci est une preuve que le trait distinctif n'est pas la tonalité mais plutôt la longueur de la voyelle.

3.3 Opposition entre voyelles longues de forme identique et à tons différents

(10) a. **uu/úu**

gu-pfuuh-a 'renâcler, soupirer' / *gu-pfúuh-a* 'être ébréché, s'émousser'

gu-huum-a 'souffler, exhaler un cri, rugir' / *gu-húum-a* 'devenir méchant, importuner'

b. **ee/ée**
ku-deeg-a 'lier, attacher, garrotter' / *ku-déeg-a* 'branler'

L'observation attentive de ces quelques paires minimales données en (10a-b) montre que les voyelles longues sont porteuses de tons. Dans ce cas, la différence de sens n'est pas due à la longueur vocalique, elle est due à la différence tonale. Ainsi, ces quelques paires minimales attestent que les voyelles longues se comportent comme des voyelles brèves vis-à-vis de la tonalité.

3.4 Opposition de voyelles longues différentes

3.4.1 Sans tons
(11) a. **ee/oo**
gu-heek-a 'porter au dos' / *gu-hook-a* 'diminuer de volume'

b. **aa/oo**
gu-saab-a 'éclater' / *gu-soob-a* 'pisser'

c. **aa/uu**
gu-haah-a 'acheter des vivres' / *gu-huuh-a* 'souffler sur'

d. **oo/uu**
gu-toom-a 'être trop cuit' / *gu-tuum-a* 'voler en poussière'

En analysant ces différentes paires minimales proposées en (11a-d), nous nous rendons compte que la différence de voyelles longues entraîne la différence de sens. De plus, dans notre corpus, nous constatons qu'il y a une absence totale de paire minimale où la voyelle longue /ii/ est en opposition avec une quelconque autre voyelle longue.

3.4.2 Avec tons
(12) a. **íi/úu**
gu-cíir-a 'cracher' / *gu-cúur-a* 'rentrer le bétail'

b. **íi/áa**
gu-síiz-a 'retourner la terre' / *gu-sáaz-a* 'vieillir'

c. **áa/óo**
gu-sáaz-a 'vieillir' / *gu-sóoz-a* 'pagayer'

En observant ces quelques paires minimales présentées en (12a-c), notre constat est que l'opposition entre deux voyelles longues différentes porteuses de tons hauts entraîne un changement de sens. Aussi constatons-nous l'absence de paires minimales qui matérialiseraient la commutation entre la voyelle longue porteuse d'un ton /ée/ avec une quelconque autre voyelle longue.

4. Discussion et résultats

Le bref aperçu sur les voyelles longues prévisibles présenté antérieurement révèle que celles-ci sont des voyelles phonétiques. En effet, il s'agit des éléments phoniques de la chaîne parlée immédiatement apparentes après une série de modifications subies par les phonèmes en combinaison. Cela n'est pas le cas pour les voyelles longues non prévisibles examinées du fait qu'elles ne résultent d'aucun phénomène morphophonologique.

Après une analyse des différentes paires minimales où interviennent des voyelles longues à fonction distinctive, le premier résultat est que les voyelles longues sont opposables à leurs contreparties brèves. Les voyelles longues sont également opposables entre elles. Dans les deux cas, la différence de forme des voyelles implique une différence de sens. Cela est un argument valable pour considérer les voyelles longues comme des phonèmes à part entière. Ainsi, notre première hypothèse est confirmée.

Si l'on considère chaque test de commutation indépendamment des autres, l'on serait tenté de mettre en cause la validité de cette première hypothèse. La raison en serait le fait que certaines oppositions (ó/óo, ii/íi, oo/óo, aa/áa, ii opposé à toute autre voyelle longue, ée opposé à toute autre voyelle longue porteuse de ton) sont absentes là où elles devaient apparaître. Cette inquiétude n'est plus fondée lorsque l'on rapproche les éléments des différents tests les uns des autres. Ainsi par exemple, /óo/ est opposable à /áa/ (voir *gu-sóoz-a* 'pagayer' / *gu-sáaz-a* 'vieillir' en (12c)) ; /íi/ est opposable à /áa/ (voir *gu-síiz-a* 'retourner la terre' / *gu-sáaz-a* 'vieillir' en (12b)) ; /ii/ est opposable à /i/ (voir *gu-sib-a* 'laisser à l'abandon' / *gu-siib-a* 's'abstenir, se priver' en (8d)) ; /ée/ est opposable à /é/ (voir *gu-hér-a* 'finir' / *gu-héer-a* 'récompenser' en (9c)).

L'argument discuté ci-haut ne suffit pas pour convaincre ceux qui considèrent les voyelles longues comme des voyelles brèves auxquelles s'ajoute la durée. C'est l'analyse des quelques oppositions entre voyelles longues de même forme et de tonalité différente qui vient rendre les choses plus claires. En effet, si l'on considère que la longueur vocalique est un trait suprasegmental, l'on est vite confronté à la question suivante : comment interpréter la durée associée au ton haut dans le cas des voyelles longues à ton haut ? Cette interrogation trouve sa raison d'être dans le fait qu'une voyelle longue avec un ton haut s'interpréterait comme une voyelle brève porteuse de deux traits prosodiques, la longueur et le ton haut.

Dans son étude sur les tons des langues de l'Afrique de l'Est, Philippson (1991) montre que le kirundi fait typologiquement partie des langues dont la pénultième syllabe n'est marquée par la mise en valeur ni de la longueur ni de la tonalité distinctive. Pour une langue ainsi caractérisée, il serait inconcevable d'avoir à la fois, sur une même voyelle, deux unités prosodiques de nature différente. Ainsi, dans un contexte lexical différent, si la même voyelle longue en kirundi peut porter deux tons différents avec changement de sens (voir uu/úu dans *gu-huum-a* 'souffler, exhaler un cri, rugir' versus *gu-húum-a* 'devenir méchant, importuner' en (10a) ; ee/ée dans *ku-deeg-a* 'lier, attacher, garrotter' versus *ku-déeg-a* 'branler' en (10b)) c'est une preuve que la longueur vocalique est une partie intégrante de la voyelle phonologique.

De plus, l'association de la longueur vocalique et de la tonalité sur une voyelle en kirundi ne peut même pas être interprétée comme un ton modulé. En effet, « les tons modulés peuvent toujours se décrire en termes de phonologie de surface comme des tons complexes résultant de l'association à un segment syllabique unique d'une séquence de deux unités tonales élémentaires » (Creissels, 1989, p. 182). En d'autres termes, sur une syllabe donnée « le changement mélodique résulte de la juxtaposition de deux tons ponctuels dans une même syllabe » (Nimbona, 2014, p. 56). A son tour, Rialland (1998, p. 408) explique que « les langues africaines, si elles sont tonales, ne paraissent comporter que des tons ponctuels, c'est-à-dire caractérisés par une hauteur et non par un mouvement mélodique ». Ceci signifie que les modulations mélodiques attestées dans les langues africaines, y compris le kirundi, sont phonétiques mais elles ne correspondent pas à des unités phonologiques.

En conséquence, il n'y a pas lieu de considérer la longueur vocalique et la modulation tonale comme relevant de la même nature. En kirundi, comme nous l'avons déjà souligné, « la combinaison des deux [c'est-à-dire le ton haut et le ton bas] sur la même voyelle, quand elle est longue, produit respectivement un ton haut-bas, c'est-à-dire descendant, et le ton bas-haut ou ton montant » (Ntahokaja, 1994, p. 29). L'unité phonologique porteuse de la modulation tonale n'est plus une more ; la durée de sa réalisation est trop supérieure à celle d'une more de par les caractéristiques acoustiques des voyelles mises en évidence par Ndayiragije (1981). La modulation tonale est donc de nature phonétique alors que la longueur vocalique à fonction distinctive est phonologique.

Sur le plan tonal, de par nos différentes paires minimales présentées, il n'y a qu'un seul ton haut sur la première more de la voyelle longue. C'est ce ton qui est responsable du changement de sens dans une paire minimale où le ton haut s'oppose à son absence sur une voyelle longue. Lorsqu'il est attesté, ce ton haut contraste avec son absence sur la deuxième more de la voyelle longue.

Au point de vue suprasegmental, le kirundi est une langue tonale à un ton haut à valeur phonologique. En effet, comme l'indique Rialland (1998), on peut compter comme une langue à un ton les nombreuses langues où un ton haut ne contraste pas avec un ton bas

en une opposition binaire, mais où il s'oppose à une absence de ton, dans une opposition qui est donc privative. En d'autres termes, « le kirundi, comme les autres langues de la même typologie […], possède un seul niveau de hauteur distinctif (le ton H) ; le ton bas est attribué par défaut aux syllabes atones au niveau de surface » (Nimbona, 2014, p. 67).

De ce fait, une voyelle longue avec un ton haut ne saurait s'interpréter comme une voyelle brève porteuse de deux traits suprasegmentaux (la durée et le ton haut). Il devient donc clair que les voyelles longues en kirundi sont des phonèmes à part entière, elles ont une fonction distinctive. Elles peuvent également porter des tons à la manière des voyelles brèves comme cela est illustré par des paires minimales présentées pour matérialiser les oppositions bref/long avec ton, les oppositions de voyelles longues de forme identique avec des tons différents et les oppositions de voyelles longues différentes avec ton. Ainsi, notre deuxième hypothèse est également confirmée et ceci constitue notre deuxième résultat.

Conclusion

Notre analyse a essentiellement porté sur des paires minimales dans lesquelles les voyelles longues étaient dans notre ligne de mire. Par la technique de commutation, les voyelles longues intérieures au radical ont été systématiquement opposées à leurs contreparties brèves. Les voyelles longues ont été également opposées entre elles accompagnées ou non du ton haut. Dans tous les cas, la moindre substitution de la voyelle longue considérée par une autre voyelle entrainait chaque fois un changement de sens.

Grâce à la démarche structuraliste s'appuyant sur la notion de more, nous avons pu montrer que les voyelles longues sont des voyelles phonologiques à part entière. Trois arguments ont été mis en évidence pour démontrer la fonction distinctive des voyelles longues en kirundi : (i) les voyelles longues s'opposent systématiquement à leurs contreparties brèves ; (ii) les voyelles longues de lieu d'articulation et/ou d'aperture différents s'opposent entre elles ; (iii) les voyelles longues sont porteuses de tons à fonction lexicale à la manière des voyelles brèves.

Par conséquent, sur le plan du système vocalique, le kirundi compte les dix voyelles suivantes : /i/, /ii/, /u/, /uu/, /e/, /ee/, /o/, /oo/, /a/ et /aa/. Autrement dit, en kirundi, les voyelles longues ont un statut phonologique c'est-à-dire que les voyelles longues sont des phonèmes segmentaux. La longueur de la voyelle n'est pas analysable séparément, c'est une partie intégrante de la voyelle. Ainsi, une étude portant sur les implications pratiques de ce statut phonologique des voyelles longues dans l'orthographe du kirundi serait intéressante.

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Lecturer Epimaque Nshimirimana, PhD in Language Sciences is a member of the Department of Kirundi-Kiswahili within the Institute for Applied Pedagogy of the University of Burundi, Bujumbura, Burundi. He has been teaching General Linguistics (1st year), Kirundi Phonetics and Phonology (1st year), Kirundi Morphology (2nd year), Kirundi and Kiswahili Contrastive Grammar (3rd year) and Linguistics Applied to French Teaching (Master's 1st year). His main areas of interest are: Bantu languages description, Contrastive Linguistics and Linguistic Typology. (nshimeppy77@gmail.com)

Lecturer Audace Mbonyingingo, PhD in Literature is a member of the English Department within the Institute for Applied Pedagogy of the University of Burundi, Bujumbura, Burundi. He has been teaching Literary Linguistics (1st year), Introduction to Literary Genres (1st year), Afro-Caribbean Literature (2nd year), Teaching Simulations and Teaching Practices (3rd year). His main areas of interest are: Comparative literature and Post-colonial literature, Gender studies, Culture, Leadership and Globalisation. (mbonyesifa@yahoo.fr)

Cortesia nella corrispondenza elettronica nell'ambito accademico. Un confronto tra le lingue italiana e polacca / Politeness in electronic correspondence in academic environment. A comparison between Italian and Polish

Monika Prysok

In the era of the Internet, and even more so due to the global emergency situation created by the Covid-19 pandemic, communication between students and university professors has been dominated by electronic mail. Academic e-mails tend to oscillate between two extremes: absolute formality on one side and a language very close to informal speech on the other. The present study compares electronic correspondence in Italian and Polish in order to individuate the most characteristic forms for each language and to establish their degree of politeness. When assessing the degree of (im)politeness, both negative and positive politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson) are taken into account. The data was collected in on-line questionnaires distributed among Polish and Italian university students. The analysis examines opening and closing phrases, signatures as well as examples of requests made by students in different possible scenarios. On average, Polish appear to be much more polite in opening and closing greetings, but in the main body of an e-mail they often use more direct forms. In Italian, typically spoken greetings such as *Buongiorno* (Good morning) are more frequent, but requests apply numerous negative politeness strategies. Although some principles of politeness are present in both languages, politeness remains a culture-specific phenomenon.

Politeness; electronic mail; Italian; Polish; language of the e-mails.

Introduzione

La cortesia (*politeness*) è un ampio argomento nell'ambito della Pragmatica. Potrebbe essere definita come formulazione degli enunciati linguistici in modo tale che essi contribuiscano alla formazione di buone relazioni sociali tra i partecipanti dello scambio (Terkourafi, 2009). I primi lavori a riguado si focalizzavano per lo più sulla cultura Anglo-Sassona e la maggior parte dei linguisti concordava sul fatto che questi principi di cortesia fossero universali. Tuttavia, alcuni linguisti provenienti da culture diverse, tra cui Wierzbicka (1985), fanno notare che la cortesia può essere specifica e cambiare da una cultura all'altra.

Negli anni 70, Robin Lakoff(1973) ha proposto il principio di cortesia costituito da tre massime *Non imporre*, *Concedi delle alternative,* e *Metti l'altro a suo agio*. I suoi seguenti lavori illustrano la relazione tra le caratteristiche linguistiche quali il modo, i verbi modali, la negazione, diversi tempi verbali, e il grado di cortesia che essi trasmettono. Per esempio, gli interrogativi sono considerati più cortesi dei dichiarativi, mentre gli imperativi sembrano i più scortesi (Tanaka & Kawade, 1982). Qualche anno dopo, Brown e Levinson (1978) introducono la nozione di *faccia*, tratta dal lavoro di Goffman dall'ambito della psicologia, e lo identificano come un principio universale che sta al di sotto dell'espressione di cortesia di tutte le lingue. I linguisti ne distinguono due aspetti: la faccia positiva, che è il desiderio di essere accettato e dà un senso di comunità e sociabilità, e la faccia negativa, che viene associata con l'indipendenza, privacy, e la libertà di scelta. La prima può essere espressa attraverso gli appellativi della seconda persona singolare "tu", il lessico informale o i diminutivi, la seconda è caratteristica per un livello più alto di indirettezza e formalità, frequenti interrogativi e il modo condizionale (Terkourafi, 2009). Infine, Leech (1983) misura la cortesia in termini di costi e benefici (in cui l'opzione più cortese implica il massimo costo per parlante, e/o il massimo beneficio per l'ascoltatore), livello di opzionalità previsto e grado di indirettezza dell'espressione usata.

La cortesia può sembrare una grande parola, ma in realtà ci circonda in ogni momento della vita, anche quando diciamo *Buongiorno* o *Salve*. Assume una notevole importanza nell'ambito accademico. Di particolare interesse potrebbe essere la corrispondenza telematica tra studenti e docenti universitari, siccome possiede una doppia natura sia nel mezzo sia nel modo in cui viene percepita dagli utenti. In un messaggio spesso si possono trovare sia l'abuso di formule di cortesia tipiche dello scritto (come *La ringrazio in anticipo* e *cordiali saluti*) sia elementi della lingua parlata (*Buongiorno!*), da una parte la forma di cortesia *Lei* e la maiuscola reverenziale,dall'altra l'eccessivo avvicinamento a toni informali e familiari (*Mi faccia sapere, buon lavoro*) (Rossi, 2011). Marcjanik (2013) fa notare che non esiste un vero e proprio modello di una e-mail, per alcuni quella è come una lettera tradizionale, con tutta la formalità, per altri è un mezzo di comunicazione diretta e immediata, paragonabile ad una chiamata telefonica.

La presente ricerca ha lo scopo di applicare i principi della teoria di cortesia nell'analisi del linguaggio accademico sull'esempio della corrispondenza elettronica tra gli studenti e i docenti universitari. Si mettono a confronto due gruppi di studenti: italiani e polacchi e si individuano le formulazioni linguistiche più ricorrenti e le forme più tipiche per ciascuna lingua per stabilirne il grado di cortesia.

Metodologia

La ricerca consisteva in una raccolta di questionari on-line, di tipo misto, con domande aperte e semi-chiuse. I soggetti sono stati 25 studenti universitari italiani e 25 studenti universitari polacchi ambosessi di età compresa fra 18 e 28 anni.

La prima parte del questionario era una simulazione di tre situazioni dell'ambito accademico in cui agli studenti è stato chiesto di formulare una o due frasi che avrebbero scritto in una e-mail. Gli scenari sono:

• scrivi la frase che useresti per fissare un appuntamento con il relatore per discutere i dubbi riguardanti la tesi

• scrivi la frase che useresti per chiedere al docente che conosci bene informazioni sulla modalità d'esame

• scrivi la frase che useresti per chiedere al docente che NON conosci le indicazioni sulla bibliografia esame/libri di testo

Successivamente, le domande chiuse riguardavano formule di apertura e chiusura e le firme in situazioni diverse per esaminare se il grado di confidenza potesse influenzare il grado di cortesia o produrre un cambiamento nella strategia adottata (p. es. una transizione da cortesia negativa a positiva). I soggetti sono stati pregati di indicare le formule che usano nella corrispondenza con un nuovo professore, con il proprio relatore, con un/a docente giovane e con un/a docente che conoscevano bene. Le risposte contenevano esempi di espressioni con vari livelli di cortesia. Inoltre, era possibile aggiungere una propria versione.

Analisi dei risultati

Nella seguente parte si analizzano le formule di apertura e chiusura e le principali differenze tra gli studenti italiani e polacchi. La forma più ricorrente nella corrispondenza con un docente che non si conosce di persona in italiano è *Gentile + titolo di studio + cognome* o *Egregio + titolo di studio + cognome* (che insieme costituiscono 60% delle risposte), mentre in polacco è molto più tipico usare solo *Gentile + (Signor/a) + titolo di studio* (76%), dove *Signor/a* corrisponde alla forma di cortesia Lei. È anche molto interessante notare che mentre in italiano compaiono anche forme meno formali, tipiche del parlato, come *Buongiorno/Buonasera* (12%), *Buongiorno professore/professoressa* (4%), o persino *Salve* (4%), in polacco nella prima e-mail, quando non si conosce il

destinatario, si usa obbligatoriamente la formula *Szanowny/a... (Gentile),* seguendo la teoria che è meglio essere troppo cortesi piuttosto che mancare in rispetto.

Figura 1:Quale formula di apertura useresti con un nuovo professore che NON conosci? IT PL
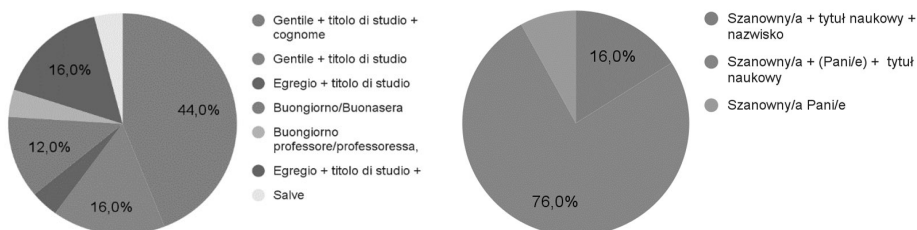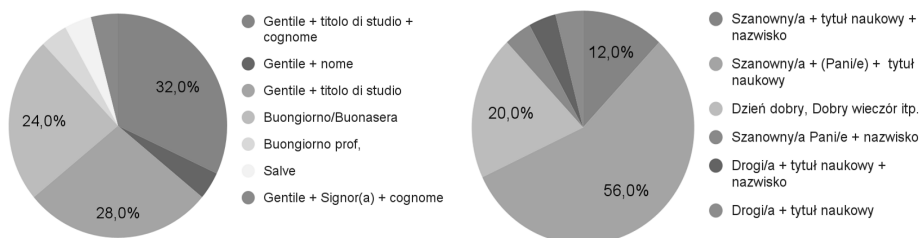

Figura 2: Quale formula di apertura useresti con il tuo relatore/la tua relatrice? IT PL

Cambiando un po' lo scenario ed esaminando la corrispondenza con il proprio relatore – quindi presumibilmente un docente con cui gli studenti hanno un certo grado di confidenza – si può notare un aumento delle formule tipiche del parlato sia in italiano (*Buongiorno/buonasera*– 24%, *Buongiorno prof*. – 4%, *Salve*– 4 %) sia in polacco (20%).

In una mail ad un docente giovane si possono notare in entrambe le lingue frequenti formule tipiche del parlato come *Buongiorno*. Per l'italiano è cosi anche per i professori che si conosce da tanto tempo, infatti *Buongiorno* e *Salve* costituiscono più della metà delle risposte (52%), in polacco invece rimane ancora preferibile la formula *Szanowny/a...* (72%).

L'ultima differenza molto significativa riguardante le formule di apertura è che in polacco 24 su 25 rispondenti hanno dichiarato di seguire fedelmente il titolo di studio esatto, mentre 100% degli italiani opta per *Professore* a prescindere dal titolo.

Nella parte riguardante le formule di chiusura è interessante notare la differenza tra la corrispondenza con un nuovo docente, e quella con uno che si conosce da anni. Nel primo caso in polacco dominano formule assai formali, *Z wyrazami szacunku* e *Z poważaniem* traducibili con *distinti saluti* (84%). Vi sono solo due casi di formula

informale *Pozdrawiam* e uno di *La ringrazio in anticipo*. In italiano, la maggior parte dei rispondenti opta per *Cordiali saluti* (56%), seguiti da *Distinti saluti* (16%) e *Cordialmente* (12%). Una persona ha anche usato una formula tipica del parlato - *Buona giornata,* e solo due rispondenti hanno optato per il formale *Le porgo i miei più distinti saluti.*

Le formule di chiusura nella corrispondenza con un docente che si conosce da molti anni illustrano un crescente grado di familiarità. Infatti, in italiano scompare del tutto la fomula *distinti saluti*. La maggior parte degli studenti sceglie tra *Cordiali saluti* (36%), *Cordialmente* (28%), o *Un cordiale saluto* (28%). In polacco invece, si nota la tendenza verso il polo informale con *Pozdrawiam* (28%) e *Serdecznie pozdrawiam* (16%). Rimane però più forte la opzione formale - le due espressioni insieme costituiscono 56 % delle risposte.

Nella sezione delle firme si possono notare notevoli differenze tra le tendenze tipiche per la lingua italiana e per la lingua polacca. Per esempio, in polacco il modo più tipico è firmare la mail con *Nome, cognome, corso e anno di studi* (ed eventualmente *gruppo*). Si vede in modo evidente nel caso di professore nuovo (80%), ma la percentuale rimane notevole anche negli altri scenari, con eccezione della mail al proprio relatore dove ci si limita tipicamente a *Nome e cognome* (76%). In italiano invece, nel caso del nuovo professore, solitamente ci si firma con *Nome e cognome* (56%). La seconda formulazione più tipica è *Nome, cognome, corso di studi, anno distudi, matricola* (28%). *Nome e cognome* prevalgono in tutti gli scenari, ma si notano anche solo *Nome* (8% con relatore e perfino 28% con un docente che si conosce da tanto tempo) e l'uso delle sigla.

La seguente parte contiene un'analisi delle formulazioni linguistiche più tipiche per fare le richieste. Si verranno ad esaminare le differenze e le similitudini nell'utilizzo di appellativi e alcuni tempi e modi verbali.

Sia in italiano sia in polacco tutti gli esempi contengono forme di terza persona singolare *Lei, Suo,* (in polacco *Pan/Pani*) che nella maggioranza dei casi sono scritte con la maiuscola reverenziale, per esempio:

> Avrei dei dubbi riguardanti la tesi e mi sarebbe utile poterne discutere con **Lei,** se possibile.Gentile Prof. Rossi, **le** scrivo per via di alcuni dubbi che mi sono sorti riguardo la mia tesi su [argomento]. Vorrei cortesemente chieder**le** se sarebbe possibile concordare un colloquio.

> Czy byłaby możliwość skonsultowania się z **Panią** w tym tygodniu? 'Ci sarebbe la possibilità di consultarLa questa settimana?'

Sia in italiano sia in polacco si notano tantissimi esempi di verbi al condizionale, tra cui il più frequente *Vorrei*, p. es.

Vorrei quindi chiedere la sua disponibilità per un appuntamento in modo da discutere alcuni aspetti legati alla tesi.

Vorrei, se possibile, fissare un appuntamento per discutere con Lei alcuni dubbi che mi sono sorti riguardo la tesi...

vorrei prendere appuntamento per chiarire alcuni dubbi riguardanti la tesi.

Chciałabym się dowiedzieć czy dany egzamin będzie w formie ustnej czy pisemnej.
'Vorrei sapere se l'esame si terrà in forma orale o scritta'
Chciałabym zapytać czy mógłby Pan udostępnić mi wymaganą bibliografię.
'Vorrei chiedere se (Lei) potesse indicarmi la bibliografia'

In alcuni casi viene aggiunta anche l'altra parte del periodo ipotetico sotto la forma di *se possibile.* In altri, il condizionale viene sostituito con il cosiddetto imperfetto di cortesia, che introduce un'interrogativa indiretta.

[...] e **volevo** chiederle quando posso venire nel suo ufficio per parlare di dubbi sulla mia tesi.

Avrei alcuni dubbi riguardo la mia tesi e **volevo** quindi chiederle se era possibile discuterne a voce

mi scusi per il disturbo, **volevo** chiederle alcune cose riguardo la modalità d'esame.

Chciałam spytać, czy...
'Volevo chiedere se...'
Chciałam zapytać, jaki zakres materiału obowiązuje nas na egzaminie?
'Volevo chiedere quale fosse la bibliografia indicata per l'esame

Nell'ultimo dei sopracitati esempi italiani è estremamente interessante vedere che la richiesta è introdotta dopo un "cuscino" di atto-supporto. Prima di fare la richiesta la studentessa si scusa per il disturbo (riconoscendo il costo per interlocutore). Negli altri esempi si può notare un altro atto linguistico – quello di ringraziamento.

Le scrivo per chiederle dei chiarimenti a proposito della modalità d'esame, **grazie**
La ringrazio in anticipo

Z góry dziękuję za odpowiedź i pozdrawiam XYZ.
'La ringrazio in anticipo e La saluto. XYZ'

Siccome l'azione che stiamo chiedendo non è ancora stata svolta non esiste la condizione di felicità per i ringraziamenti. In alcuni casi il destinatario potrebbe inferire che siamo sicuri che soddisferà la nostra richiesta è quindi ritenerla scortese in quanto non offre opzioni/alternative.

Un'altra caratteristica importante riguarda l'uso delle richieste indirette sotto la forma di domanda, tra cui:

Potrebbe accordarmi un appuntamento per vederli insieme?
Mi potrebbe dare qualche indicazione sulla modalità dell'esame?
Potrebbe cortesemente indicarmi la bibliografia d'esame alla quale fare riferimento per sostenere l'esame del corso da Lei tenuto?
Sarebbe possibile fissare un incontro per chiarire le modalità d'esame relativo alla prova di "Clinica e principi della riabilitazione respiratoria"?

Czy byłaby możliwość skonsultowania się z Panią w tym tygodniu?
'Sarebbe possibile fissare un ricevimento con Lei la settimana prossima?'
Czy mógłbym przyjść na Pana/Pani najbliższe konsultacje w celu skonsultowaniu się w sprawie mojej pracy dyplomowej?
'Potrei venire al Suo prossimo ricevimento per discutere i dubbi riguardanti la mia tesi?'

In entrambe le lingue viene utilizzato il modo condizionale. Tuttavia è interessante notare che negli esempi italiani il focus è sul destinatario (*Potrebbe...?*), mentre in quelli polacchi sul mittente (*Potrei..?*)

Un altro aspetto peculiare della corrispondenza in italiano è l'utilizzo dell'avverbio *cortesemente* che mostra in modo esplicito il desiderio di essere gentili. Infatti, appare in 13 delle 75 risposte aperte. L'unico esempio polacco di un possibile equivalente è un aggettivo *uprzejma* 'cortese (f.)' che colloca con *prośba* – una cortese richiesta appare 5 volte.

Vorrei **cortesemente** chiederle se sarebbe possibile..
Potrebbe **cortesemente** indicarmi la bibliografia d'esame [...]?

Szanowna Pani/ Panie piszę z **uprzejmą** prośbą…
'Gentile X Le scrivo con una cortese richiesta…'

Alla luce della doppia natura della corrispondenza elettronica, l'ultimo punto di quest'analisi esaminerà le forme tipiche del parlato. Sia in italiano sia in polacco sono presenti saluti iniziali (*Buongiorno, Ciao*) e le domande dirette.

Ciao, <u>nom</u> capisco che libri bisogna usare
Scusi, come si svolgerà l'esame?
Salve prof, potrebbe dirmi come si svolgerà esame?
La ringrazio in anticipo e Le auguro **buona giornata**
Buona giornata *come formula di chiusura*

Mam wątpliwości odnośnie swojej pracy i potrzebuję pomocy
'Ho dei dubbi riguardanti la mia tesi e ho bisogno di aiuto'
Witam, w związku z…
'**Salve,** in riferimento a…'
Dxien dobry. W jakiej formie odbędzie się egzamin?
'Buongiorno. In quale modalità si terrà l'esame?'
Czy orientuje się Pani w jakiej formie odbędzie się egzamin?
'**Sa per** caso come si terrà l'esame?'
Czy orientuje się Pan/Pani w jakiej formie odbywa się egzamin z (przedmiot), ustnej czy pisemnej? '**Sa per caso** in quale modalità si terrà l'esame, scritta o orale?'

Mentre in italiano gli elementi del parlato si limitano alle formule di apertura e chiusura, le domande dirette sono molto più frequenti nelle risposte polacche, il che potrebbe confermare la tesi sulla cultura basata sulla cortesia positiva. Tuttavia, i messaggi in tutte e due le lingue sono piene di contrasti: in polacco è interessante notare il contrasto tra la formule di apertura e chiusura abbastanza formali e il contenuto molto "diretto", mentre in italiano accade l'opposto: molto informale *Salve Prof.* viene seguito dal modo condizionale e interrogative indirette.

Conclusioni

Le definizioni dei concetti chiave presentati nella Introduzione, tra cui cortesia positiva e negativa, indirettezza, considerazione di costi e benefici sono state successivamente adottate nell'analisi degli esempi di e-mail dell'ambito accademico raccolti attraverso questionari on-line.

L'analisi ha individuato alcune caratteristiche della cortesia negativa tra cui l'utilizzo della terza persona sing. Lei, condizionale/imperfetto di cortesia, richieste indirette espresse da interrogative e interrogative indirette che sono comuni per entrambe le lingue. Altre convenzioni sono specifiche per ogni lingua, il che è visibile per esempio nelle differenze tra le formule di apertura e chiusura, e nelle firme.

Non è possibile stabilire quale delle due lingue sia più cortese, in quanto la cortesia è relativa e specifica per ogni cultura. Il polacco sembra più formale (e quindi presumibilmente più cortese) nelle formule di apertura e chiusura, però il contenuto è spesso più diretto rispetto a quello italiano: si nota soprattutto il lessico informale e domande dirette nel corpo della e-mail. Nell'italiano invece sono più comuni forme del parlato (*Buongiorno/Buonasera, Buona giornata!*) ed elementi informali come abbreviazioni nei convenevoli iniziali e finali, ma le richieste sono formulate in modo indiretto, con l'uso di condizionale e spesso sotto forma di una domanda che offre alternative all'interlocutore.

Per questioni di tempo limitato la ricerca è stata svolta su un campione ridotto e potrebbe non essere rappresentativa di tutte le tendenze ricorrenti. Le possibili future

ricerche potrebbero riguardare studenti di diverse facoltà (non solo di studi linguistici) oppure aggiungere altre nazionalità.

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Appendice

Questionario italiano: https://forms.gle/ZP9N2iA9vsdospp46

Questionario polacco: https://forms.gle/Vtxzgmk5WHS5wyvn7

Indice delle figure

Monika Prysok is a PhD student at the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland. Her main areas of interest are Pragmatics, Cognitive Linguistics with special attention to the Theory of Conceptual Metaphor, Translation Studies and Corpus Linguistics. (monika.prysok@us.edu.pl)

Book Review

Sergiu-Eugen Zagan, *Le français des affaires décortiqué II* (Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca: 2021) / Sergiu-Eugen Zagan, *In-depth Business French II* (Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca: 2021)

Letiția Ilea

The paper analyzes the recent Sergiu Zagan's business French manual.

Business French; management; business travels; recruitment.

Faisant suite au manuel *Le français des affaires décortiqué I*, publié en 2011 chez Galaxia Gutenberg, le présent ouvrage, *Le français des affaires décortiqué II*, paru chez la prestigieuse maison d'édition clujoise Presa Universitară Clujeană, est un outil indispensable pour les étudiants en première année de la Faculté des Sciences Économiques, aussi bien que pour toute personne désireuse d'approfondir ses connaissances dans le domaine du français des affaires.

L'ouvrage est structuré en quatre volets, qui correspondent aux chapitres étudiés en première année par les étudiants en économie : *Management, Voyages d'affaires, Recrutement* et *Présentations d'affaires*.

Chacune de ces unités a à peu près la même structure : après une présentation de notions théoriques choisies avec soin et appartenant à des sources bibliographiques très récentes, suivent des exercices qui font appel non seulement aux connaissances économiques et de langue française des étudiants, mais aussi à leur capacité d'analyse et

de synthèse et à leur créativité. Par les types d'exercices qu'il propose, Sergiu-Eugen Zagan guide pas à pas les apprenants, de sorte qu'à la fin de chaque unité ils seront capables de répondre à des questions de finesse. Nous en donnons un seul exemple, appartenant à la première unité, *Management* : après la présentation des notions théoriques liées au domaine du management et après avoir proposé des exercices qui visent à fixer ces notions, l'auteur pose une question concernant la différence entre « manager » et « leader ». L'étudiant répondra facilement à cette question, s'il a dument parcouru les explications et les exercices proposés par Sergiu-Eugen Zagan.

Chaque unité comporte des exercices d'association, des exercices à trous et des exercices avec « Vrai ou Faux » ; ceux-ci préparent l'étudiant en vue de l'épreuve de « Compréhension » de l'examen de Langue française d'affaires, examen que tous les étudiants de la Faculté des Sciences Économiques doivent soutenir à la fin de la deuxième année d'études. Il y a aussi des exercices qui visent à renforcer les connaissances d'écriture des étudiants, en vue de l'épreuve de « Production écrite » du même examen. Les tests que l'auteur propose à la fin de chaque unité sont eux aussi un bon outil pour la préparation en vue de l'examen de compétence linguistique de la fin de la deuxième année d'études.

Les exercices que Sergiu-Eugen Zagan propose dans cet ouvrage sont présentés d'une manière graduelle, du simple au complexe, ce qui aide à l'acquisition des nouvelles connaissances sur une base solide.

Sergiu-Eugen Zagan évite avec succès le piège dans lequel tombent la majorité des auteurs de manuels : celui d'ennuyer leur public. On sent que l'auteur aime créer ce genre d'exercices, on sent qu'il aime faire des recherches bibliographiques pour présenter aux étudiants ce qu'il y a de plus récent et de plus attractif. On *parcourt Le Français des affaires décortiqué II* avec plaisir et avec profit. Les notions théoriques que l'auteur présente dans son récent ouvrage aident non seulement à l'acquisition des connaissances de français des affaires, mais sont aussi un complément des connaissances théoriques que les étudiants acquièrent dans leurs cours spécialisés d'économie.

La bibliographie de l'ouvrage couvre tout ce qu'il y a de plus récent dans chacun des domaines que l'auteur s'est proposé d'explorer et de présenter aux étudiants.

Somme toute, *Le français des affaires décortiqué II* de Sergiu-Eugen Zagan devrait absolument faire partie de la bibliothèque de tout apprenant du français des affaires. C'est un instrument de travail indispensable pour cette catégorie de public.

Associate Professor Letiția Ilea, Ph.D. She is a member of the Department of Modern Languages and Business Communication within the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. She has been teaching Business French and Business English courses to the 1st and 2nd year students and the MA course Business Communication (French). Ms Ilea is an acclaimed poet, a well-known author of several volumes of poetry and translation, published in Romania, France and Spain. She has been awarded thirteen literary prizes for her contributions, both as a poet and a translator, in Romania and in France. Her areas of interest are: French literature, business communication, translation studies, poetry. (letitia.ilea@econ.ubbcluj.ro)