THE 2ND MALAYSIAN ASSOCIATION OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

MAALIC 2021 PROCEEDINGS

8-10 SEPTEMBER 2021

THEME: Applied Linguistics Research and Practices in a VUCA World: Embracing Digitalisation, Challenges and New Norms

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Malaysian Association of Applied Linguistics



The 2nd Malaysian Association of Applied Linguistics International Conference (MAALIC) 2021 Proceedings

Theme:

Applied Linguistics Research and Practices in a VUCA World: Embracing Digitalisation, Challenges and New Norms.

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ISBN: 978-967-26614



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Preface

THE 2ND MALAYSIAN ASSOCIATION OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE (MAALIC 2021)

The conference which was organised from the 8th to 10th September 2021 with the theme "Applied Linguistics Research and Practices in a VUCA World: Embracing Digitalisation, Challenges and New Norms" has four objectives as follows:

- 1. To bring together leading scholars, academicians and researchers to exchange research experiences and findings.
- 2. To provide an interdisciplinary platform to present and discuss latest research results, trends, concerns and advances.
- 3. To provide the opportunity to build networks with experts or academics within the same field.
- 4. To discuss the challenges in a VUCA world.

The conference aimed to explore how SDG 4: Quality Education could play a catalytic role to achieve the objectives of the other SDGs. Specifically, what is the role of applied linguistics, as part of the greater quality education agenda, in addressing the issues of poverty, hunger, lack of inclusivity, inequality? How does or could applied linguistics promote good health and well-being, responsible consumption, care for life on land, and under water and greater gender equality? How could the field of applied linguistics advocate peace, justice and strong institutions and encourage cooperation to strengthen partnerships to achieve the SDGs? These are some of the areas which were deliberated upon in the conference.

Language and linguistics play central roles in our daily lives. It could build or destroy a family, a community or a nation. Thus, it was the aim of the conference to showcase how applied linguistics and its sub-fields interpret the events which unravel in our VUCA world, as well as share insights on how applied linguistics can be used as a tool to provide solutions for a more sustainable world. It is hoped that the conference has managed to provide a platform for a lively exchange of ideas on how language and communication in a multiplicity of languages and settings can help us brave the current bleak global landscape to move forward confidently to embrace new norms.



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"I DON'T KNOW HOW TO SAY IT": THE ROLE OF MULTIMODAL RESOURCES IN MEANING NEGOTIATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper proposes that studying the use of spoken language, gaze, and hand gestures as multimodal resources among speakers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds can shed light on how multilingual interlocutors jointly work together in meaning negotiation when they are having difficulty progressing a conversation. Using a multimodal conversation analytic approach, this study examines video-recorded interactions of university students from different first language backgrounds at a dinner table communicating in English as it is the most common language that multilingual students resort to when speaking with someone who has a different language background. This study provides a unique insight into the stages where interlocutors encounter difficulty producing a word in English, and then moves on to how interlocutors use multimodal resources (spoken language, gaze and hand gestures) to construct a joint solution in the process of meaning negotiation. More specifically, this study demonstrates how multimodal analysis of interactional difficulties among multilingual interlocutors can broaden our understanding of the roles of multimodal resources as a multilingual interactional strategy in which interlocutors collaboratively use the resources to describe, represent, and negotiate the meaning of the word searched-for and jointly attempt for a solution to reach an understanding.

Keywords: Multimodal conversation analysis; multimodal resources; meaning negotiation; joint solution; interactional difficulties

INTRODUCTION

With the increasing accessibility of multimedia technology in recent years, there has been a growing interest in using multimodal approaches in conversation analysis studies (henceforth CA), which allows researchers to closely examine how spoken language, gesture, gaze, and body movement play the role as interactional resources in face-to-face interaction (Streeck et al., 2011; Mortensen, 2012; Mondada, 2019). The use of video technology has allowed researchers to investigate how various multimodal resources (spoken language, gaze, and gestures) are synchronised, coordinated, and mutually inform one another (Mondada, 2019).

The significance of multimodality in the CA has also begun to emerge in studies investigating interactional practices among multilingual speakers (Kimura 2020; Matsumoto, 2018). Multimodal CA has allowed researchers to closely examine how multimodal resources are



intertwined in multilingual interaction and in the meaning-making process (see e.g. Matsumoto & Canagarajah, 2020; Abdullah & Sahar, 2020).

The current study aims to investigate the role of multimodal resources in interactional difficulties (e.g., word searches) among international university students from various linguacultural backgrounds communicating in English at a dinner table. Word searches are instances in interaction when a speaker's turn is temporarily paused due to difficulty in searching for suitable linguistics items in formulating the talk (Schegloff et al., 1977). Although several empirical CA studies have examined multimodal resources in second language face-to-face interaction (e.g., Greer, 2013; Markee & Kunitz, 2013) there have been few studies that investigate the role of multimodal resources in meaning negotiation in word searches between interlocutors with different first languages and cultural backgrounds.

OBJECTIVE

The study focuses on the analysis of multimodal resources in situations where interactional difficulties occur, such as word-searching (Matsumoto & Canagarajah, 2020), and this paper attempts to explain how this social ordered structure is achieved in interaction through micro-analyses of naturally occurring conversation. Furthermore, the study seeks to comprehend the complex ways in which multilingual speakers use spoken language, gaze, and hand gestures as interactional resources for a joint construction in meaning negotiation to reach an understanding, and, in particular, how multilingual speakers achieve communicative success when interacting with someone from a different first language and cultural background (Firth 1996; Kaur, 2020). Thus, the study's objective is to investigate how multilingual speakers use multimodal resources to negotiate meaning when encounter with interactional difficulties.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Using a multimodal CA approach (Mortensen, 2012; Mondada, 2019), this study is aimed at investigating how multilingual interlocutors collaborate in negotiating meaning in word searches using multimodal resources (spoken language, gaze, and hand gestures). The setting for this study is a mundane conversation between international university students in a non-educational setting.

The data collection consists of approximately eight hours of video recorded data sets of dinner conversations between groups of friends, with different first language and cultural backgrounds, who use English as a medium of communication. There are 44 occurrences of interactional difficulties involving searching for words activity identified in the data. This paper examines a subset of a larger data set that depicts casual conversation among a group of female students who were having dinner together; Ann (from Vietnam), Mus (from Malaysia), and Lea (from Kazakhstan) - the names used in this paper are pseudonyms, and participation in this study was voluntary. The data was transcribed using CA transcription conventions (Jefferson, 2004) and annotated multimodally (see Sert, 2017).



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher attempts to demonstrate how meaning negotiation in interactional difficulty is collaboratively accomplished multimodally among interlocutors from different linguacultural backgrounds. The extract below depicts a stage when Ann is having difficulty forming a word in English and expresses her difficulty in word-searching as 'how-to-say-it?'. The discussion then shifts to how interlocutors use spoken language, gaze, and hand gestures to construct a joint solution during the meaning negotiation process.

Prior to the extract below, Lea discusses her brother's college experience living in a room with six other students, and Ann joins the conversation to express her surprise for the number of occupants in the room. However, when Ann takes her turn to describe the type of beds in the room in line 1, she begins to struggle with her utterances by elongating words and speaking in a softer voice (e.g. line 1-5), silence, and hand gestures (e.g. raising her hand upwards and downwards, line 4) that indicate the onset of word-searching. Following that, Lea joins the search activity by making similar hand gestures and moving it in an upward and downward motion to visually describe the bed in an attempt to assist Ann, and Lea most likely does not know the correct word item as well (see figure 1). Ann then shifts her gaze to Mus and resumes her word search, expressing her difficulty by saying, "I don't know how to say it?" (line 7). In line 8, Lea performs a recurring hand movement (see figure 2), while Mus maintains her gaze on Lea's and Ann's hand movements that correspond synchronously with their utterances, "two level" (e.g. line13-14, figure 2). Following that, Mus proposed a possible solution to the word-searched for (e.g. double decker, line 18) Ann then shows her acceptance for Mus' candidate solution.

```
1
     ANN:
             I think semi- I think they give-
2
     LEA:
             like-
3
             (0.3)
             +ANN raises her hands upwards
4
             single:: the::(0.4) °>kind of known as<° semi:: +
     ANN:
             +LEA moves hand upwards & downwards (Fig 1)
             +MUS gazes at LEA's hand gestures (Fig 1)
                             +ANN moves hand gestures downwards & upwards. (Fig 1)
5
              (0.4)
             +ANN keeps hand gestures upwards
```

FIGURE 1





6	MUS:	mm:: +MUS frowns while gazes at ANN
7	ANN:	be:d? >I don't know< how to say it (.) like- +ANN shifts gazes towards MUS
8	LEA:	be:ds +LEA moves her hands upwards & downwards
9		(0.4)
10	ANN:	yah [like- like-
11	LEA:	[ya:h ya:h
12		(0.2)
13	LEA:	<pre>they have two like- (.) two levels +LEA makes finger gestures (Fig 2)</pre>

FIGURE 2



14	ANN:	like two levels
		+ANN and LEA continues with their hand gestures
15	:	(0.5)
		+MUS nods head
16	MUS:	mm:: (0.3) oka:y
		+MUS keeps nodding head
17	ANN:	what is it ca:ll (0.2) se- call semi:: + °be:d°
		+Both ANN and MUS gaze at each other
18	MUS:	er:: (.) [double decke:r?
19	ANN:	[forgo:t
20		(0.2)
21	ANN:	a double <u>deck</u> e:r maybe
22	MUS:	maybe
23	MUS:	[°haha°]
24	ANN:	[maybe] I think it's double decker
25	MUS:	↑mm ↓hm
		+MUS nods head

It is worth noting that the communication process is not limited to verbal language, as each interlocutors appears to observe other interlocutors' responses from how they describe and represent multimodal resources that are made relevant in the attempt to negotiate meaning for a possible word searched-for (e.g. double-decker bed). For instance, Ann and Lea synchronously demonstrate similar hand gestures to visually describe the bed (e.g., figure 1 & figure 2) possibly to align their understanding and the use of multimodal resources provide shared knowledge for Mus to collaborate in the meaning negotiation process.



CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

This study contributes to our understanding of how multilingual speakers who do not share the same first language, achieve communicative success and are creative language users in multilingual interaction (Firth 1996; Kaur, 2020). Furthermore, understanding how language and communication work requires understanding the joint construction of meaning in interactions among multilingual participants (Canagarajah & Wurr, 2011). This study has shed light on how interlocutors use multimodal resources (spoken language, gaze, and hand gestures) to construct a joint solution during the meaning negotiation process (Matsumoto & Canagarajah, 2020). This study suggests that the process of meaning negotiation is fundamentally multimodal (Streeck et al., 2011), and limiting it to spoken language would limit investigation into the multifaceted reality of English as a lingua franca/ multilingual interaction and second language interaction (Firth, 1996; Matsumoto & Canagarajah, 2020, Kaur 2020; Kimura, 2020).

To summarise, the advancement of video recording technology as a research tool has become an increasingly important tool in CA studies, allowing for detailed observations of complex multimodal resources running simultaneously (Streeck et al., 2011; Mortensen, 2012). The micro-analytic examination of multimodal resources among speakers with different linguacultural backgrounds can capture and reveal the complex coordination of interactional details, such as in the meaning negotiation process during interactional trouble (Matsumoto & Canagarajah, 2020). Therefore, multimodal CA appears to be one of the most effective approaches for analysing the interplay of language and multimodal resources in various interactional contexts, such as in multilingual settings (Kimura, 2020).

Transcript Conventions		
(0.5)	pause	
[]	overlap marker	
	lengthening sound	
↑	high pitch	
?	rising intonation	
°word°	soft utterance	
UPPER CASEloud voice		
()	unclear word	
word	stressed syllable / word emphasis	
+	notes on the start of gaze, gestures etc. movement	



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A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF US-CHINA CORONAVIRUS BLAME GAME IN NEWS HEADLINES

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the representations of the US-China Coronavirus Blame Game. The corpus includes 167 news headlines collected from CNN, Fox News and China Daily. Fowler and Kress's Critical Linguistics, van Dijk's Ideological Square and Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach were employed as a framework. The findings indicated that China is positively portrayed by China Daily as a victim scapegoated by the US for their incompetence, and negatively represented by Fox News as the culprit who played the victim card. The Trump administration is positively portrayed by Fox News as a victim of the Chinese government's mishandling and a legitimate castigator, and negatively depicted by China Daily and by CNN as a negligent administration and malignant blamer. The polorised representations reveal that Fox News implicitly supports Republican Party and protects Trump's image by shifting the blame to China. CNN leans towards the Democratic Party and damages Trump's standing by highlighting his inability. The two US media agencies reported the blame game in divergent manners for the parties they respectively support to win the 2020 presidential election. China Daily defends against the US's accusations to ensure political stability at home. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that headlines are always polarised due to adversarial ideological standpoints and political slants coupled with motives for achieving agendas. They are marred with ideological manifestations of 'reality' without merely providing readers with a full account of reality to manipulate public opinion, to shape readers' attitudes, and to achieve certain political agendas.

Keywords: US-China blame game; COVID-19; headlines; CDA; transitivity; lexis;

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19, a novel infectious respiratory disease, was first recognised in December 2019 in China. The rampant spread of the disease has caused catastrophic damage to the lives and livelihoods in the US and China. Without bonding the two powers together to deal with the crisis, the relations between these two countries have been dramatically strained due to the mutual blame for the outbreak (Al-Afnan, 2020). The intensifying conflicts between the US and China seized global media attention and have been extensively reported by both Western and China media agencies (Dynel, 2021). Ideally, the role of the media is to provide factual information without bias. In fact, news is often framed in



favour of or against a particular group of people, political parties, or countries to manipulate the audiences' political attitudes, values as well as ideologies (Osisanwo & Iyoha, 2020). To ascertain the media manipulation, numerous studies have been conducted to investigate the dichotomy between media outlets operated by two countries in terms of the portrayal of the same events, especially the US and China primarily selected due to their different political systems (He & Zhou, 2015), the different roles the media play (Krumbein, 2015) and the destabilising bilateral diplomatic relations (Peng, 2004). The western media representations of China by comparing identical news stories in more than two news agencies (He & Zhou, 2015) and by collecting a larger sample size (Zhang & Wu, 2017) remain in need to further explore the western demonisation of China.

OBJECTIVE

The study aims to examine the representation of China and US in the blame game through transitivity and lexical choices associated with ideology.

METHODOLOGY

CDA was employed to analyse the political dispute linguistically and ideologically. Considering that CDA has long been criticised for selecting and utilising a small amount of data (Sriwimon & Zilli, 2017), all the headlines of the online news reports published on the respective official websites of the three news agencies (China Daily, CNN, and FOX News) were collected from 1st of March to 31st of June in 2020 because this period represented the beginning and culmination of the blame game. A systematic non-probability and purposive sampling was adopted to collect data (Creswell, 2002; Kharbach, 2020). The online news archive of the three selected media agencies were searched manually for news headlines containing the key words/phrases such as Blame Game, Coronavirus, Covid-19, US and China, Trump, Xi, US, Washington, China and Beijing. Some headlines were disqualified because the corresponding news articles did not predominately report this political dispute. After being filtered out, the corpus consists of 167 headlines.

The proposed CDA approach used for this study involves Fowler and Kress's (1979) Critical Linguistics, van Dijk's (1998) Ideological Square, and Wodak's (2001) Discourse-historical Approach. Transitivity processes and their corresponding participants were firstly identified and analysed, followed by lexical analysis in which polarised lexis was focused upon. Ideological analysis was conducted simultaneously to examine the in-group and out-group ideological constructions reflected by the choices of identified transitivity types and lexis. The intertextual analysis, which depends on the historical and socio-political contexts provided, was integrated with linguistic and ideological analyses to ensure objectivity.



FINDINGS

Verbal and material processes are the most dominant types of transitivity processes employed by the journalists of the three selected news agencies. The employment of verbal process mainly functions to justify the in-group members' criticism of the out-group members for their villainy by underscoring the in-group and out-group credible officials' claims. The major function of material process is to project the out-group members negatively by emphasising their negative actions and consequences. Furthermore, polarised lexis which loads journalists' ideologies in their coverage of the blame game is widely utilised by the three media outlets. Positive lexis is employed for the in-group members, and negative one is for the out-group members. Such stratagems are believed to be applied for legitimising the in-group member's exercise of power over the out-group members and delegitimising the out-group member's actions.

The identified usage of transitivity patterns and lexical structures revealed the discrepancies between the US and China news headlines on Covid-19 blame game as well as between CNN and Fox News. China is positively portrayed by China Daily as a victim that was scapegoated by the US for their incompetence and a pacifist that urged the US to cease the political game and cooperate with China to combat the pandemic. Conversely, China as the out-group member is negatively portrayed by Fox News as a hypocritical blamer that played the victim card and the main culprit of the catastrophic state of the US. Unsurprisingly, China is explicitly depicted by the two selected US news agencies as a dictatorial regime that lacks transparency and press freedom. CNN also implicitly portrays China as an ambiguous regime that consolidates its global image by glorifying itself and demeaning the US with the aim of replacing the US as the new global leader.

The Trump administration is positively projected by Fox News as a victim of the Chinese government's negative actions and a legitimate castigator. However, the Trump administration is negatively depicted by China Daily and CNN as negligent, incompetent and inept because it downplayed the severity of the pandemic and had sluggish responses to the outbreak, as well as a malignant blamer that deliberately spread debunked conspiracy theories to scapegoat China for the purpose of paving the way for Trump's re-election. Additionally, China Daily also described the US as a global sovereign which refuses to share information and cooperate with countries which have the potential to challenge the US global hegemony.

CONCLUSION

Adversarial ideological standpoints and political slants coupled with motives for achieving agendas contribute to the polarised representations of the blame game (van Dijk, 2001). For example, Fox News leans towards the Republican Party and emphasises China's cover-ups and failure to curb the pandemic; while CNN sympathises with the Democratic Party and highlights the Trump administration's inability and blame-shifting actions for the same political goal that is, implicitly garnering more votes/voices for the parties that the two US media agencies respectively support to



win the presidential election in 2020. China Daily as a state-controlled media outlet underlines the condemnation of the US's blame game, deception and libel to deflect internal discontent, to gain trust from its citizens and to avoid political instability during the pandemic crisis. Both China and the US politicizes Covid-19 to manipulate public opinion on the real culprit of the Covid-19 outbreak in order to avoid responsibility and mitigate blame for their failure to contain the spread of the pandemic.

Based on the linguistic and ideological analysis, it can be concluded that headlines are always polarised for the production/reproduction of group ideology and realisation of political agendas. Thus, they are marred with ideological manifestations of 'reality' without merely providing the audience with a full account of reality to guide readers' interpretation and understanding of an incident. The findings contribute towards raising readers' awareness of media manipulation, pinning hopes of possible alleviation of racism and xenophobia incided by the politicisation of Covid-19 in news discourses.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to sincerely thank two discourse analysts, Ms. Chris Lee Kam Fong, and Dr. Kais Amir Kadhim Al-Alwan, for their invaluable comments on this research.

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ANALYSIS OF STANCE FEATURES IN THE INTRODUCTION SECTION OF RESEARCH ARTICLES BETWEEN MALAYSIAN AND ENGLISH NATIVE AUTHORS

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Keywords: Metadiscourse, Stance Features, Rhetorical Moves, Introduction Section of research articles, Malaysian Authors, English Native Authors.

ABSTRACT

The study of academic writing has gained considerable interest. Good academic writing necessitates the writers' language talents and their comprehension of accepted rhetorical components. Many researchers have explored non-native's use of metadiscourse markers in academic discourses and how they differ from native authors. However, limited attention has been given to Malaysian authors, precisely stance features in each rhetorical Moves and the analysis of the metadiscourse markers in different sections of the Research articles. This study intends to bridge the gap of comparative studies of native and non-native authors in understanding the other usages of stance features within the rhetorical moves of research articles, focusing on the "introduction" section. The present study compares the "introduction" sections between six British and Australian authors' research articles and six Malaysian authors' research articles in applied linguistics. A mixed-method approach was used in this study. The data were analysed qualitatively to find the rhetorical moves in the 'Introduction' sections presented in the texts using Swales' (2004) Creating a Research Space (C.A.R.S) model. Quantitatively, the frequency of stance features used in each move was investigated using Hyland's (2005) stance features taxonomy. The findings of this study showed that the most frequently used stance features by Malaysian authors are hedges, followed by boosters and, lastly, attitude markers. The native authors used more stance features than Malaysian authors. As such, the results of this study have informed the pedagogical implications, and further research is needed.

INTRODUCTION

Academic writing has evolved significantly over the last several decades. It is not regarded as an objective, faceless, and impersonal writing style but rather as an effort for writers to begin some engagement with their readers (Hyland, 2005). In a corpus of research papers from eight fields, Hyland (1999) investigated how authors depict themselves and their readers in their works. He concluded that a writer's position is affected by the social practices of the academic discipline to which



they belong. Hence, it can be deduced that MD reflects the rhetorical skills of diverse fields and aids in expressing one's perspective in a crucial component of academic writing.

Given the significance of taking a stance, Hyland (2005) proposed a collection of ideas to consider while investigating stance-taking. Hedges and boosters are two examples of stance features. The stance expressions writers employ is intrinsically linked to how they establish their authorial perspective in their writings. For instance, attitude markers are used in academic research genres to present the author's evaluation, interact with their readers, and take their stance in the field (Sorayyaei Azar & Azirah, 2019). In other words, attitude markers have a significant impact on enhancing evaluation in academic discourses. As a result, numerous studies have looked into the usage of various forms of MD in scientific discourse, particularly in terms of stance features in academic research articles, to establish the author's perspective. Hamide (2016) points out that the significant difference in stance adverbs was influenced by cultural-bound variation between native and non-native authors.

OBJECTIVES

This research aims to seek a better understanding of the following research objectives:

- To identify the rhetorical moves in Research Article introduction sections written by Malaysian and Native authors in applied linguistics published in English medium Journals.
- To investigate the stance features used in each move written by Malaysian and Native authors in Research Article 'introduction' sections published in English medium journals.
- To compare similarities and differences of stance feature usage in each rhetorical move between Malaysian and Native authors in Research Article 'introduction' sections published in English medium journals.

DATA / METHODOLOGY

This study is based on Swales' (2004) C.A.R.S. model for the Introduction section. It aims to assess the relative discipline and explain the specific pattern of a paper's introduction and how it paves the way for the thematic context to flow. Furthermore, the model can be utilized to analyse particular research domains, mainly where a rhetorical space is being created to attract readers within this space. Finally, the model can evaluate these "moves" in specific steps that reflect an efficient introduction of a research paper, and there are three "moves" involved.

The other framework used in this research is Hyland's (2005) idea of metadiscourse (MD) in academic writings. Hyland's framework was chosen for this study because it provides insight into academic writing while encompassing several aspects evidentially. Hyland (2005) splits MDs into two categories based on their function. This study uses Interactional MD and it is categorized into two



parts: stance features and engagement markers. Writer-oriented qualities, also known as stance features, express the writer's views and judgments. The four subcategories of stance characteristics are hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions.

Therefore, a mixed-method approach was used in this study, including qualitative and quantitative research designs. First, qualitative analysis was used to find the rhetorical moves in Research Article "Introduction" sections presented in the texts. Then, the stance features employed in each move was analyzed through quantitative analysis. At the same time, the quantitative data was presented to explain the frequency of moves and the frequency of stance features occurring in the moves of the RA 'Introduction' sections.

RESULTS

The findings indicate that all (100%) of the research article from Malaysian and Native authors had Move 1. Meanwhile Move 2 and Move 3 were present 83% of the time in the research article from both groups. Hence, according to Kanoksilapatham (2005), Move 1 is found to be 'Obligatory', and Move 2 and Move 3 are categorised as 'Conventional' for both groups.

Malaysian authors used the most frequently used stance features in Move 1 (8.01 times per 500 words), whereas the Native authors used the most frequently used stance features in Move 2 (9.28 times per 500 words) following by move 3 (3.94 times per 500 words).

Hedges were frequently used by both groups of authors, including Malaysian and Native authors in the first two moves (1 and 2). The second similarity is that both groups of authors used hedges with the highest frequency and the second frequency goes to the boosters. Another similarity noted in this study indicates that attitude markers were the third least frequently used stance features in Move 1 and Move 2. Besides, no attitude markers are occurring in Move 3 for both Malaysian and Native authors.

On the other hand, Native authors used more hedges than Malaysian authors in the first two moves. It is noted that Malaysian authors used less attitude markers compared to Native authors in Move 1 and Move 2. There was a notable difference in Move 2, whereby Native authors used more stance features in Move 2 than Malaysian authors. Native authors only used Self-mention markers in Move 3.

In a nutshell, the findings are supported with the study by Lo, Othman et al, (2020), which found that the stance features used the most by Malaysian were hedges, followed by boosters, and lastly, attitude markers. When comparing the overall use of stance features between Native and Malaysian, the results clearly showed that Malaysian authors use fewer stance features (12.69 times per 500 words) than Native authors (24.48 times per 500 words). These findings aligned with Sorahi and Shabani (2016) study, which also revealed the English authors used more stance features than the Persians. However, both studies differed from the framework of the present study. The researchers of this study have searched in all search engines available for recent studies with similarities. The researchers realized that scant research focuses on the stance features used in each move of the



"Introduction" section in RA and the comparative study between Malaysian authors and Native authors.

CONCLUSION/ IMPLICATION FOR RESEARCH/ POLICY

This study seeks to identify rhetorical moves and stance features in the introduction sections of the research article. It tries to compare the similarities and differences between Malaysian and Native authors using stance features in each rhetorical move in Applied Linguistics highly indexed peer-reviewed English journals. This study also aims to bridge the present gap in the research on MD, especially stance features in each rhetorical move of the introduction section in RA.

This result is also in line with Sorahi and Shabani (2016) which found that native authors use more stance features than non-native authors. This study is significant because the findings of this study will improve the knowledge regarding enhancing academic writing skills for 'Introduction' sections by Malaysian authors in Applied linguistics. As a sub-genre in academic writing, the introduction section is significant because it can be considered as the selling option of the researcher's outcome. Therefore, this section should be practiced, and non-native authors should raise their awareness of the introduction section's rhetorical features and stance features. Writing a good 'Introduction' in research articles is a crucial skill because it offers the authors to re-establish the significance of their study, demonstrate and defend the niche of their research (Swales, 1990). Therefore, the findings can be converted into teaching materials for the English for Academic Purposes program (Flowerdew, 2013) in Malaysian academic settings. Comprehensive information about the conformity and non-conformity manifestations of rhetorical move patterns of research articles is needed. It can also better inform EAP lecturers to initiate a more referenced teaching approach that includes genre pedagogy.

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CHALLENGES OF ONLINE TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT AMONG LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS DURING THE PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

A language classroom requires an ideal environment with specific teaching materials and teaching methods. It cannot be categorised as every other subject taught, as it must evaluate students' proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing. However, with the pandemic, language instructors are forced to utilize online platforms to teach and assess the students. Thus, this study aims to examine the challenges of both online learning and online assessment among language instructors. Questionnaires using Google Form were distributed to all language instructors at the School of Languages, Civilisation and Philosophy (SLCP), Universiti Utara Malaysia. Among the languages taught at SLCP are English, Mandarin, French, Japanese, Spanish and German. The sample volume was 40 (56%) and the data was analyzed with SPSS statistic version 26 and Smart PLS-SEM 3.2.8 (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015). The SPSS statistics tool was utilized to analyse the measurement and structural model of this study. The biggest challenge for language instructors in terms of teaching are creativity, rapport, heavy workload and lack of communication and participation from students. Whereas, the problems in terms of assessments are the multiple applications and platforms, marking online, non-verbal evaluation and plagiarism.

Keywords: Language instructors; Language teaching; Online learning; Online assessment; Pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

The Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) has significantly affected the education sector. According to UNESCO, the education system has been in its worst state, as more than 1.6 billion children and youths have been affected by the lockdown on schools and universities (UNESCO, 2021). Due to the strict implementation of social distancing, most educational institutions are 'obliged' to swap to remote learning and teaching in a matter of days. Although most universities show encouraging signs in assimilating to e-learning during the pandemic, there are still limitations from both learners and educators' perspectives. Elberkawi et al. (2021) claimed that educational institutions will be struggling to apply technology in education, as e-learning necessitates three critical technological elements: excellent electronic infrastructure, competent academic personnel, and students.

A study by Agboola (2006) addressed that the education system has to be integrated with the development of technology to preserve its competitiveness. However, the majority of instructors are



not capable of providing high-quality instruction remotely due to inadequate technological equipment, socio-economic background, digital incompetence, lack of assessment and supervision, and heavy workload (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). In the context of language teaching and learning, this is definitely one of the predominant concerns. It is important to identify the challenges and barriers pertinent to language acquisition, as the nature of the language learning itself cannot be equated to learning the other subjects. The above-mentioned issues certainly pose a need for research to be done to understand the real challenges faced by language instructors through online teaching and learning.

OBJECTIVE

This research aims to identify the challenges language instructors fase when conducting online teaching and online assessment following the Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, this research will embark on the following research objectives:

- i. To investigate the difficulties encountered by language instructors during online teaching in the midst of the covid-19 pandemic.
- ii. To investigate the difficulties encountered by language instructors during online assessment in the midst of the covid-19 pandemic.

METHODOLOGY

Subject

The study was conducted at a public university, specifically under the School of Languages, Civilization and Philosophy, Universiti Utara Malaysia in July, 2021. There were 71 language instructors teaching various languages; English, Bahasa Malaysia, Mandarin, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, German and French. The study included 40 language instructors (56%) who have conducted online lessons for three semesters.

Survey Instrument

The instrument used in the study is a questionnaire. The questionnaire was constructed by google form. The items in the study were created based on past research. The questionnaire consists of four different parts; demographic, online teaching, online assessments and uses of technology. Then, the questionnaire was disseminated to all language instructors.

Data Analysis

The data was analysed using SPSS statistic version 26 and Smart PLS-SEM 3.2.8 (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015). The descriptive statistics of the respondent's demographic profile were conducted using the SPSS statistics tool. After that, a PLS statistical tool was used to examine the study's measurement. The measurement model test was used to establish if the components of this study had reached reliability and validity.



FINDINGS/DISCUSSION

Demographic

A total of 40 participants responded to the questionnaires, 76.2% were female and 23.8% were men. Almost half of the respondents were between 31 and 40 years old (42.9%). Furthermore, 38.1 percent of respondents had more than 6 years of teaching experience. Majority (57.5%) of the respondents were teaching English.

Demographic		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	32	76.2
	Male	10	23.8
Age	20 - 30 years old	12	28.6
	31 - 40 years old	21	50.0
	41 - 50 years old	9	21.4
Teaching	1 - 5 years	13	31.0
Experience in	11 - 15 years	7	16.7
years	16 - 20 years	4	9.5
	21 - 25 years	1	2.4
	26 - 30 years	1	2.4
	6 - 10 years	16	38.1
Teaching	Bahasa Melayu	3	7.1
Subject	English	24	57.1
language	French	2	4.8
	Mandarin	13	31.0

Table 1: Demographic Result

Challenges of Online Teaching and Assessment

The data from the questionnaire demonstrated that factors such as gender and age affected the perceptions of language instructors towards online teaching and learning. The main challenges faced by the instructors were creativity, preparation and heavy workload. A little more than half, or 55% responded they needed more time to prepare for online teaching. Additionally, half of them stated that they had a heavier workload when teaching online. Moreover, male language instructors were more accepting of online lessons compared to female instructors in terms of rapport and emotional support. However, regardless of gender and age, 95% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they needed to be creative in terms of the materials used.



In terms of difficulties of online assessment, the study found that the majority of the instructors aged between 31-40 preferred having a face-to-face presentation. This is parallel to the fact that 45% of them were unable to assess the students' body language during the online assessment. One-third of the instructors agreed that plagiarism is one of the main concerns, as they would not be able to closely monitor the students. Meanwhile, most instructors (22.5%) aged between 20-30 were comfortable conducting online language assessments and did not find it tedious or time-consuming to provide feedback online. The study also discovered that instructors of all ages (52.5%) had utilised many applications to conduct language assessments, and that it is very challenging and time consuming.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the results obtained found that the language instructors' challenges in integrating classroom assessments with technology include multiple online applications and platforms, organising online assessments, non-verbal evaluation and plagiarism. Whereas, the problems in terms of teaching are lack of communication and participation from students. Thus, the implications of this study narrate that language learning necessitates specific teaching materials and methods, as language learning itself cannot be generalised as similar to the other subjects. Proper training is needed for instructors of all gender, age and nationality. Finally, it should also be stressed that language learning is measured by looking further at students' proficiency in these four components: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Therefore, more research is needed to understand how assessments can be done online which is suitable for each skill. It should be stressed that in the context of implementing online lessons during the pandemic, the right contents and assessments are crucial in online language learning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work is supported by Universiti Utara Malaysia SLCP Research Grant (S/O code: 14793).

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COLLABORATIVE PROJECT-BASED ASSESSMENT OF ESL WRITING: THE CASE OF AN UNDERGRADUATE COURSE

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Keywords: ESL writing, collaborative learning, project-based assessment, portfolios, argumentative writing

INTRODUCTION

What we focus on when assessing English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing courses is studentwriters' language skills. Most writing rubrics that are used for assessing students' writing skills cover aspects of content (ideas and organization) and form (vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics). However, language assessment today is broadly defined as "obtaining evidence to inform inferences about a person's language-related knowledge, skills or abilities" (Green, 2013, p. 5). Indeed, what we often ignore in developing and assessing students' writing skills include their ability to make efficient use of the available resources, generate creative and critical ideas, engage the reader, collaborate with other learners, give meaningful feedback to peers, and improve their own writing based on their peers and course instructor's feedback. However, surprisingly most of these skills are considered cheating in conventional achievement test settings. The outcome is students become linguistically accurate but socially and communicatively unskilled. Our challenge during an online EAP writing course during the Covid-19 pandemic was how to assess students continuously, consistently, fairly, and meaningfully? Our objective was to examine the influence of the online collaborative project-based assessment on these commonly ignored skills.

METHODS

In this qualitative study, a group of ESL students (n=66), who experienced an online collaborative project-based assessment, expressed their views about the influence of their training on their communicative writing skills. The participants consisted of 58 female and 8 male intermediate level (MUET Bands 3 and 4, B1 and B2 CEFR levels) a mix of local (Malaysian, n=44) and international (Chinese, n=22) undergraduates at the English Department of a public university in Malaysia.



The students selected their own teammates and were divided into groups of three. Then, they were given a period of 12 weeks to complete the following writing project:

- 1. Select an argumentative topic
- 2. Brainstorm and generate ideas
- 3. Draft an argumentative essay
- 4. Provide/receive feedback for/from peers
- 5. Revise the essay
- 6. Receive teacher feedback
- 7. Create a related video voice over with their essay
- 8. Submit individual portfolios (3 reflections)
- 9. Publish the videos on YouTube
- 10. Present videos at the class Academy Awards

The students experienced a process approach to writing which allowed them to choose an argumentative topic, improve their drafts through ongoing self, peer, and teacher assessment using a number of online platforms, including Facebook, Zoom, Google Meet, and Kumospace, alongside the university's online learning-teaching platform. They also reflected and did self-evaluation of their learning experiences in their individual portfolios. The portfolios were analyzed qualitatively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Four central themes emerged from the inductive analysis of the portfolios, as follows:

- 1. Metacognitive awareness of learning needs/styles
- 2. Creative psycho-social outcomes (i.e., ability to work with others, constructive criticism, autonomy)
- 3. Criticality in writing
- 4. Creative input and output

What follows is a sample excerpt for each theme where the repeating ideas are underlined:

Excerpt 1 (Emerging theme 1: Awareness of own learning needs/styles)

I am a <u>visual</u> learner. A year of online learning has made me realize what I can do to <u>fit my</u> <u>learning style</u> such as use different coloured highlighters and pens to colour code information as I read, use visual organizers, such as flow charts to help me plan writing assignments. I also use sticky notes to record ideas for writing.

[Joan's portfolio]



Excerpt 2 (Emerging theme 2: Creative psycho-social outcomes)

Personally, <u>I am the type of person who likes to do my work at a fast pace</u>, so that it will be done in time, and we would have extra time to look back and improve our work. <u>My team members noticed my habit and tried</u> to keep up with my pace, and I am very thankful for that. After working with them, it made me realise that <u>team communication is so important</u> in completing this assignment.

[Amber's portfolio]

Excerpt 3 (Emerging theme 3: Criticality in writing)

Peer review activity is extremely beneficial to me since it allows us to <u>converse and evaluate</u> the progression of our writings from the viewpoints of others. Before the peer review session, we thought our essay was all good not realizing that we had a bunch of mistakes that needed to be fixed. We also thought that our stance was clear and strong enough. Therefore, I find that it is very important to let others review our essay and receive commentary from them.

[Joan's portfolio]

Excerpt 4 (Emerging theme 4: Creative input and output)

I feel the difficulties and feel insecure, due to my classmates' video editing more interesting and great. But this feeling is not killing me for a long time. <u>I tried to convince myself</u> and said that I can do the best for my group. I tried to <u>learn from Google and YouTube</u> to gain knowledge about it. Indeed, this courses really <u>taught me a new experience</u>, which I never had before. In the end, somehow, I am proud of myself.

[Faye's portfolio]

Our results corroborate the available literature in the area of language assessment. They confirm the significance of learner-oriented assessment in which learners' actual needs rather than merely linguistic needs are addressed (Farhady, 2021). The results also confirm Moradian et al. (2021) who conclude collaborative assessment helps "learners gain a better insight into their strengths and weakness; further, it led to their metacognitive awareness about components of a good piece of writing" (p. 667). Reportedly, collaborative assessment cultivates self- and peer assessment skills in learners and encourages them to consider themselves "competent in making judgements about their own and each other's work, which are surely good lifelong learning skills" (McConnell, 2002, p. 73). Similarly, studies on project-based learning have proved its positive influence on developing learners' innovative thinking (Barak & Yuan, 2021). Understandably, there will be resistance against this unconventional form of assessment, but the significance of collaborative project-based assessment in providing a useful model for assessing learners particularly in an online environment cannot be denied.



CONCLUSION

Based on our results, we conclude that students' writing skills can be assessed online even more meaningfully than the pre-Pandemic period. Ongoing assessment in the form of collaborative tasks improves students' writing and motivation. Input from relevant online journals, books, and other materials provides the sources of evidence to justify their arguments or counter-arguments. They also creatively combine ideas from different member's perspectives to enhance their drafts. Rounds of peer and teacher feedback help them add substantive evidence and interesting anecdotes in their essay. The final outcome, the video, displays the students' creativity. Giving students options and freedom unleashes their creativity. The creative input and output provide new possibilities for teaching writing and the way teachers assess writing in the new norm.

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COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES: AN ELF PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Research in English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has shown that English users of varying competencies actively use communicative strategies (CS) to communicate as well as resolve intelligibility problems in their interactions. Thus, communicative strategies are an essential tool for English language learners to acquire as these strategies may help them resolve miscommunications as well negotiate intelligibility. This study examines how English learners of lower proficiency use communicative strategies in negotiating and resolving intelligibility problems in interactions. This study specifically focuses on communicative strategies that are related to phonological features where we will look at how English learners vary phonological features to ensure successful communication. This study involved twelve English language learners in a public university and included Malaysians and foreigners. The study employed information gap tasks to elicit spoken data that was then transcribed. The findings showed that the participants adeptly used communicative strategies related to pronunciation to overcome miscommunications as well as to complete their tasks in relaying information. Investigating communicative strategies can allow us to better understand how L2 users of English use pronunciation features in order to negotiate intelligibility. Varying phonological features are part of communicative strategies to ensure the interaction is intelligibility.

Keywords: English as a Lingua Franca; ELF; Communicative strategies; Information gap task, Pronunciation

INTRODUCTION

The changing dynamics of the roles and status of English worldwide, non-native speakers (NNS) do not solely learn English or use English to communicate with the NSs of English as traditionally conceptualized. This has given rise and validation to the notion of English as an International Language (EIL) or English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), which according to Jenkins (2006, p.140), is a "world language whose speakers communicate mainly with other non-native speakers, often from different L1s than their own". ELF interactions involve members (usually from different cultures) for whom English is not a mother tongue or a first language (L1). With the rise of the use of ELF, its users, the NNSs, and the role they play in ELF has become a focal point of current research. A crucial principle in ELF research is the emphasis on the role of negotiation and accommodation that underlies ELF interactions (Firth, 1990; Jenkins, 2000; Kaur, 2009) as opposed to analyzing and comparing interactions between NNSs and NSs in terms of NS norms and models as in quite a number of second



language acquisition research (Firth, 1996; House, 1999; Jenkins, 2006; Kachru & Nelson, 2006; Kaur, 2009).

OBJECTIVE

In ELF research, communicative strategies are used by speakers to ensure successful communication and to preserve the "face of participants" (Firth, 1996; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Meierkord, 2000; Sato et. al, 2019). Communicative strategies are important as Kirkpatrick (2007) found that idiosyncratic pronunciation and a lack of explicitness as the most likely causes to obstruct communication and that the use of non-standard syntactic forms never hindered communication. Investigating communicative strategies can allow us to better understand how ELF speakers use pronunciation features in order to negotiate intelligibility. This study specifically focuses on the types of CS that English learners employ as well as how English learners vary phonological features to ensure successful communication.

DATA/METHODOLOGY

The data used in this study were collected through audiotape recordings of twelve learners of English who were enrolled in a public university in Malaysia. These participants were selected based on their L1s and English proficiency level. Four of them were Malay students, another four of them were Malaysian-Chinese students, and the other four were learners of English from the People's Republic of China (PRC). All of them had nearly the same range of proficiency of English, ranging from lower-intermediate levels to higher intermediate levels of English.

In order to elicit interactional data from the participants, five information gap tasks which were originally used by Kaur (2009) in a study with similar objectives and participants were used. The data consist of twelve dyadic conversations. Each participant interacted twice with another participant, first with a participant of the same L1 and later with another participant with a different L1.

The data was analyzed using conversation analysis (CA) procedures. CA is a sociological approach which is concerned with uncovering the structure of conversational interaction such as the sequential organization of talk and the social practices displayed by in talk-in-interaction (Lazaraton, 2002). This research relies on repeated observations of the audio recordings to access the micro-level details of dyadic interactions. The general direction of data analysis was "to do things bottom-up, i.e., to find patterns and regularities before trying to categorize them in an interplay between existing descriptions and new interpretations" (Lichtkoppler, 2007, p. 51).



RESULTS/FINDINGS

The interaction in Extract 1 below highlights a slight tension between the two participants due to P9CH pronunciation of 'green lake'. The turn of events leads to P9CH explicitly apologizing for his pronunciation; which P9CH refers to as [prənao], after his partner, P9ML uses various communicative strategies to explain the 'green lake' landmark (line 17). The two participants in this extract employed various communicative strategies that included the "let it pass" strategy (line 2), "echoing the phrase" (line 5), "explicit correction" (line 10) and "spelling the word" (line 12). Finally, in line 17, P9CH declares that his pronunciation may be the cause of the problem, but P9ML glosses over P9CH's admission by saying "okay okay" and they continue with the interaction. There were no uneasy moments or a breakdown in communication between the two participants. Both the participants showed a high level of cooperation and understanding in their interaction as shown in Extract 1.

Extract 1

1	P9CH:	and then and then after that you didn't got the green [grrnle?] is it
2	P9ML:	aha
3	P9CH:	Ok
4	P9ML:	[grmlek]
5	P9CH:	[grmle?] as actually I tell you riverview park from the riverview park
6	P9ML:	Hmmm
7	P9CH:	around one o'clock
8	P9ML:	saa one o'clock
9	P9CH:	one o'clock around one o'clock got the [grmle?]
10	P9ML:	[gri:nlerk]
11	P9CH:	aaa got [grmle?]
12	P9ML:	G-R-E-E-N [gri:n]
13	P9CH:	[grin]
14	P9ML:	aha
15	P9CH:	the colour of [grm] and then [leg]
16	P9ML:	ok
17	P9CH:	maybe my [prənaū] is not
18	P9ML:	ok ok
19	P9CH:	ok
20	P9ML	50



The data in this study show that participants were adept at using communicative strategies that involved phonological variation to overcome miscommunications. There were seldom awkward moments or breakdown in communication. Participants showed a high level of cooperation and understanding in completing the tasks. Interactions, although halting at certain times, were mostly carried out in a cooperative and understanding manner. There were no instances of overt irritation or correction among the participants. Given that the participants in the current study consist of less proficient speakers of English, it comes as no surprise that the conversation analysis of their interactions predominantly reveals prominent weaknesses in pronunciation, choice of lexical items, and syntactic structure. However, they were adept at using communication strategies to successfully complete their tasks. The participants used various CSs when they had problems understanding each other. The strategies were mainly used to ensure that the interactions progressed smoothly and to complete the tasks. One interesting observation from this study was that the participants were fully invested in the completing the tasks actively, despite their not so fluent English. This could be attributed to the nature of the task, which was challenging and interesting to the participants.

These strategies described above are based on how the participants react and co-act when there is a miscommunication; which is based on Kirkpatrick's (2007, p.120) premise that speakers and listeners who speak a range of varieties of English and at different levels of proficiency "will need to adopt specific strategies in order to ensure that communication takes place as freely and smoothly as possible and these strategies are likely to be common to all successful ELF speakers." Most communicative strategies are aimed at collaborative communication and "preserving the face of fellow participants" (Meierkord, 2000; Watterson, 2008). Although Kirkpatrick (2007a), Meierkord (2000), and Watterson (2008) discuss communicative strategies in ELF contexts, in this study it was found that these strategies are also used by learners of English who have different L1s. Although these learners may have lower levels of proficiency in the English language, they displayed high levels of agility in terms of employing various CSs in order to complete their tasks successfully.

CONCLUSION/IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH/POLICY

This study demonstrates the use of communicative strategies by learners of English in completing tasks. The participants used communicative strategies to encourage their interlocutors to continue interacting, clarify information, repeat information, rephrase information etc. This corresponds with Kirkpatrick's (2007) findings in his data, i.e. that participants display a high level of cooperation and mutual understanding in terms of encouraging each other when exchanging information. This study also highlights that communicative strategies can be encouraged through the use of task based activities. Learners need to be exposed to communicative strategies in task-based activities so that they can develop the skill of using communicative strategies in a classroom setting should be developed as communicative strategies enable learners to interact actively and engage in meaning making. Another implication from this study is the use of task-based activities and tasks in language classrooms to


encourage active participation and interaction. Future research should explore classroom-based research on the use of task-based activities in enhancing the development of communication strategies and encouraging interaction. Interaction is an essential key for language acquisition and development.

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DIGITAL LITERACY AMONG ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATORS

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ABSTRACT

The coronavirus pandemic has struck the education sector severely to the extent that students have been unable to attend and continue their studies in their respective education institutions. This has impacted the preschool, primary, secondary and tertiary education levels, forcing the educators to think out of the box in delivering quality and heuristic teaching. The objective of this research is to look at how educators, especially language lecturers, improved their capacity to use their digital skills in order to teach the undergraduates. It proved challenging as educators are obliged to initiate their tutoring for a lingual based subject virtually via online teaching and learning (OTL) system. There is a need to be accustomed to the specific software in order to impart knowledge to their students. The symbolic interaction perspective is suitable for this study as it examines the various expectations of the educators of their students in an online learning and teaching approach. As such, the research questions are as follows; 1) How do the English language lecturers teach a language-based subject via online mode? 2) What are the issues they have to confront in advocating digital linguistic literacy? The qualitative methodology is going to be utilized for this research. Twenty English language lecturers are participating voluntarily from a private higher learning institution in the Klang Valley. These interview sessions are audio recorded with their consent and to be transcribed later. The findings may be used as a reference by the academicians and higher learning institutions..

Keywords: Digital linguistic literacy; Educator; English language; Online teaching and learning

INTRODUCTION

English Language which is known as the global language is a system of communication which involves words structured either in spoken or written form to convey information or messages effectively. It is utilised to communicate in numerous scopes such as education, trade, diplomatic, media and entertainment. Excelling in it provides graduates more opportunities to be employed in both local and multinational companies. Due to the pandemic situation, the teaching and learning for most of the private universities have diverted to digital platforms in our country. According to Sacchez



(2021), the Covid-19 outbreak opened a new scenario where teachers must have adequate digital literacy to teach online and to implement a current and innovative educational model. Hence, digital knowledge among the English Language educators is essential. This has given pressure to the academic fraternity to forcefully divert from a chalk and board method to virtual teaching. According to Harvin (2021), digital literacy is the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills. Therefore, it is imperative for language instructors to equip themselves with the necessary technical proficiency for an effective online teaching and learning process. It enables them to use various avenues of digital tools such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Meet and et cetera. In addition, language lecturers have to ensure that they engage the undergraduate students effectively in their lessons with the integration of social media that assists in interactive discussions and interesting class lessons.

OBJECTIVES

The aim of this research is to explore the challenges of educators in teaching linguistic subject via virtual methods. Therefore, the faculty members have to bear the brunt of the current digital teaching practice. These lecturers were also diligent in mastering the craft of online teaching and learning (OTL) techniques. As such, this study will highlight two major aspects. First, it is to delve into the academician's efficiency in educating the undergraduates in English language by infusing the technological elements. Second, the challenges faced by these instructors towards the students' attitudes and motivation factors in learning via online.

METHODOLOGY

The data for this study was gathered using qualitative methods. Participants were interviewed about their current work, new approaches employed during the pandemic, and how they deal with this new means of teaching that has become the norm.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, only 20 educators from a private institution in Klang Valley participated in semi-structured interviews via the Microsoft Teams platform, and the findings were influenced by the constraints of teaching and learning in a hybrid environment. These educators were expected to engage in much more in-depth and sustained critical reflection, purposeful sustaining pedagogies, and a developed sense of urgency in order to help students in a blended learning environment. To learn more about the digital literacy of English language educators, the interview questions were divided into sections; to identify their general perspectives on virtual English teaching, the challenges of using online platforms, the problems students face in advocating digital language literacy, and recommendations for addressing this problem.



Saldana (2016) stated that coding is one method of evaluating qualitative data. "A word or brief phrase that symbolically provides a summative, prominent, essence-capturing, and/or evocative feature for a piece of language-based or visual data" Saldana (2016, p. 4). For qualitative data analysis, codes are generated to identify trends, identify patterns and categorize data (Saldana, 2016). In this study, interviews were recorded and transcribed, and data were coded for the phenomenological study to search for emerging common themes.

EDUCATORS' CHALLENGES

Students' attitude

In online teaching and learning, students' constant attention and focus on the content are very important. The responses revealed that educators faced challenges in the areas of maintaining students' attention, motivation and participation. The absence of physical interaction made it difficult to gauge students' understanding of the subject matter. Reading non-verbal expressions when teaching on an online platform is nigh impossible, hence detecting boredom or disinterest is out of question. Since the learners' motivation is also low, getting them to participate in online activities is another huge challenge. The lack of interaction was very obvious when students did not participate actively. The researchers boiled this non-participation down to virtual class fatigue. This could be overcome by perhaps getting to ask the learners how they would like to consider dealing with certain topics.

Technology

In online learning the device and internet connectivity play an important role. Many cases of unstable internet connections, Microsoft Teams 'freezing', and students' reluctance in switching on their cameras during their classes were considered in the study. It was found that both students' attitudes towards learning online and the technological aspect(s) were the main challenges for the educators. Conversely, the students too were often demotivated by internet disruptions and so on.

Motivation Factors

One of the questions asked how students demonstrated that they were motivated to learn English and the responses included unmuting to ask questions, constantly seeking feedback, being active and engaged in the online tasks given, and asking relevant questions in the chat box, among others. This clearly shows a positive level of motivation, which was encouraging to the educators especially to the non-digital native lecturers who, in the process, experienced a surge of confidence and enthusiasm. Responses to the question that asked how these educators could prepare their students for the virtual learning of the English Language were both student and teacher directed. Basically, as an instructor, one had to keep oneself updated and prepared for the utilization of online platforms and resources. This was a two-way communication that needed collaborative ventures between the learner and the



instructor. One interviewee/participant mentioned that the students themselves had to have intrinsic motivation because to most of them English is a burdensome subject and that the importance of English Language learning during their university academic sessions is realized only by a few learners. It was suggested that the lessons be made creative. Which actually translates as including visuals for drawing the learners' attention.

Recommendations

Where digital literacy is concerned, especially given the pandemic situation, online teaching of resources is a mandatory skill that needs sharpening to ensure continuous and stimulating teaching and learning. English language educators are advised to hone their skills and even if physical classes resume, the university must still encourage virtual learning and teaching. The hybrid system is expected to be in place all the more and hence educators should continue to learn and adapt to digital literacy/online learning-teaching. It is important too to have adequate training in all the features of the platform such as break out rooms, interfaces, assessment tools and interactive components.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Covid-19 pandemic situation has forced the language educators to acquire the knowledge and apply the skills and tools of digital technology to enable them to adopt the online teaching and learning into their teaching practices. The situation has also made the educators to go beyond their limits to work closely with the students to maintain all-the -time learning. All these can augment the knowledge, skills and competencies of language educators. The challenges faced by the English educators in terms of maintaining students' motivation, students' attitude towards learning English Language online and technology impediments are overcome by their positive attitudes towards embracing the challenges with the necessary changes to obtain its potential. Therefore, digital literacy is important for language educators to support learning process by getting the students motivated throughout the teaching and learning process. The tertiary institutions must also maintain and monitor the availability on internet services and adequate technology devices to ensure all students have the opportunity to use digital media beyond the campus environment for a smooth online teaching and learning process.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to thank the participants for cooperating in this research. Without their involvement, it would have been difficult to complete this study.

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DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF KING SALMAN'S SPEECH

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ABSTRACT

This research analyses of two speeches of King Salman bin Abdul Aziz, the seventh king of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The aims of the study is to identify the cohesive devices in both speeches, to reveal the most prominent cohesive device used in both speeches as well as a comparison between the first and second speech of King Salman. The present study contributes to the literature on the theory of cohesion via application through exploring the cohesive devices used in both speeches. A descriptive analytical method was employed to classify the speeches according to the theory of cohesion, which includes reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical items. The researchers adopted a qualitative approach, interpreting the data in the form of words rather than numbers and statistics. Results indicated that King Salman bin Abdul Aziz used a total of 218 cohesive devices with 50.93 percent in the second speech, more than the first speech where King Salman used a total of 210 cohesive devices with a percentage of 49.07. The difference between both speeches were minor. Furthermore, conjunction and reference were the most prominent cohesive device used in both speeches, shown through the percentages 50.95%, 36.19%, 50.46% and 38.53% respectively.

Keywords: Discourse Analysis, King Salman, Textual Linguistics, Cohesive Device, Cohesion

INTRODUCTION

Language is an important aspect in human life as it plays an active role in expressing human needs. According to Banga (2015), language is a tool used to express feelings, emotions and ideas. Language is considered as one of the important means of communication between individuals in society. Without the presence of language, the cognitive activity of individuals is deemed impossible. It is also



an important basis for social life due to its function in enabling communication and exchanging ideas in all diverse fields. The subject of language has been addressed by many researchers and linguists. Linguistics is among the sciences that concerned with languages, which is often attributed to Ferdinand de Saussure as among the early scholars. The field then expanded from to a broader field which includes text. According to Van Dijk (1985), linguistics focused on texts became prominent by 1964. Text linguistics is concerned with the study of text as the major linguistic unit. The text is a central concept in contemporary linguistic studies, and branches related to field include text linguistics, discourse linguistics and text grammar. Text linguistics overlaps with discourse analysis, where text is more general and comprehensive than discourse. Textual linguistics have applied a set of standards in analysis and interpretation of both oral or written text. Renkema (2004) noted that there are seven criteria in understanding text which are cohesion, coherence, informativeness, intentionality, acceptability, situationality and intertextuality. Linguists also study cohesion and coherence in tandem as these two concepts are primarily what makes the text a text, and the text achieves its cohesion through a set of verbal linguistic elements. A text is cohesive when the stretches of language are hung together with ties (Hasan, 1968). According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), the ties can be in the grammatical or lexical forms. Grammatical cohesion is the relation of grammatical elements that includes references, substitutions, ellipsis and conjunctions while the lexical items include antonym and repetition. This research analyses two speeches of King Salman bin Abdul Aziz. He is the seventh King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the prime minister and supreme commander of all military forces, and the twenty-fifth son of the founding king, King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud. He is one of the most prominent leaders and is highly respected in the Arab world and other countries for his expertise in the political, intellectual, Islamic and military field. His speech has value and great impact on the audience. There is limited research in analytical studies of political discourse through the lens of textual linguistics, which is concerned with the theory of cohesion. Thus, this study attempts to identify the cohesive devices in King Salman's annual royal speech at the Shura Council. The researchers want to address the role of the cohesive devices used in King Salman bin Abdul Aziz's speeches through his annual royal speech at the Shura Council.

OBJECTIVES

This research aims to identify the cohesive devices used in the discourse of King Salman bin Abdul Aziz in terms of reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical item, revealing the most prominent cohesive devices used in both speeches as well as highlighting the comparison between the first and second speech of King Salman. This research contributes to the understanding of the manifestation of cohesive devices through its precise and detailed concepts and mechanisms.

METHODOLOGY

The research uses a descriptive analytical method in analysing and classifying the speech of King Salman according to the theory of cohesion, which includes reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical item. The researchers adopted a qualitative approach, where the researchers



deal with data in the form of words instead of numbers and statistics. The researchers then chose two speeches of King Salman bin Abdul Aziz during the seventh session of the Shura Council (1439-1440). Although the researchers have identified several types of cohesion in the framework of Brown and Yule (1983), Cook (1989), McCarthy (1991) and Renkema (1993), the cohesion framework by Halliday & Hasan (2014) was chosen and adopted by the researchers in the present study due to its comprehensiveness of its well-developed taxonomy. The theory of discourse analysis from Halliday and Hasan (2014) was also applied as it focuses on the relationship between language and the society as well as the structure of language and the use of the language involved in speech. Firstly, the researchers identified and retrieved the speeches of King Salman from archives found in the government's official Royal Archive (www.shura.gov.sa). Secondly, the researchers thoroughly read the speeches multiple times to identify the cohesive devices. Finally, the researchers analysed the data obtained from the speech for interpretation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Halliday and Hasan (2014) mentioned five types of cohesion which are reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical item which can be found in both speeches of King Salman.

First Speech Second Speech **Cohesive Device** Total Percentage **Cohesive Device** Total Percentage Reference 76 36.19% Reference 84 38.53% Substitution 1 0.47% Substitution 2 0.92% 4 1.90% Ellipsis Ellipsis 1 0.46% Conjunctions 107 50.95% Conjunctions 110 50.46% Lexical Items 22 10.48% Lexical Items 21 9.63% **Overall Total** 210 **Overall Total** 218

TABLE 1The Most Important Cohesive Device Used in The Two Speeches of King Salman

King Salman used <u>conjunctions</u> the most in his speech such as "and, or, but, since". It can be seen from the following sentences:

... "The Kingdom will continue to confront extremism and terrorism"

... "The state will proceed with its plan to complete the state agencies' development to ensure the proper enforcement of regulations as well as to avoid any transgression **or** errors"

... "The Kingdom has repeatedly emphasize that standing by Yemeni People was not an option **but** a duty"

... "The Iranian regime has been interfering with the internal affairs of other countries **since** nearly four decades"



<u>Reference</u> is the second most frequently used cohesive device in King Salman's speech, for example, the use of pronouns such as "us, their, our".

... "It gives us great pleasure to meet you today to review the state's internal and external policy"

... "It allows the return of Syrian refugees to **their** homeland"

... "In the Iraq Issue, we commend the steps that have been achieved to strengthen relations between **our** countries"

The pronoun "us" referred to the government of Saudi Arabia. The usage of the pronoun "us" is important to ensure the cohesion of the text without having to repeat the word "Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" several times. Without the presence of the pronoun, the speech or discourse given by King Salman may have resulted in inconsistencies and redundancies. King Salman also used the pronoun "their" to refer to the Syrian refugees. The pronoun "our" is used to refer to the relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq to ensure the consistency and cohesiveness of the text.

King Salman used **substitution** in his words "do so" and "what they did".

... "Dear brothers and sisters, your country seeks to develop its present, build its future, and move forward on the path of development and modernization in a manner that does not contradict with its principles, adhering to moderation as an approach, as God commanded us to do so"

... "What they **did** does not undermine the integrity of the citizens of this pure and honorable country, including prince, ministers, businessmen, employees and workers at all levels and in various positions of responsibility in the public and private sector"

The usage of <u>ellipsis</u> in King Salman's speeches were not as dominant, but was present in few instances such as the usage of words "these are very few".

... "We ordered the formation of a higher committee for public corruption issues headed by His Highness the Crown Prince. We thank God that **these are very few**"

King Salman used <u>lexical items</u> by repeating the words "development" five times in the text. This affirms the consistency and cohesiveness of the content in King Salman Speech as his speech aims to develop the country.

... "The Saudi citizen is the main driver of the development"

... "We have met the Crown Prince and Chairman of the Council of Economic and **Development** Affairs to focus on developing human capabilities and preparing the new generation for future jobs"

... "One of our priorities in the future is to continue supporting Saudi private sector and to empower them as an active partner in **development**"

... "We visited the regions in the Kingdom in order to meet the citizens and learn about their **development** projects"

... "We have directed His Highness the Crown Prince and the ministers concerned in monitoring the needs of the regions and the priorities of the **development**"



King Salman used lexical items by using the antonyms as mentioned below:

... "We value the role of the private sector as an important partner in development and its support for the national economy, and the expansion of employment for the young **men** and **women** in the country" ... "What they did does not undermine the integrity of the citizens of this pure and honorable country, including prince, ministers, businessmen, employees and workers at all levels and in various positions of responsibility in the **public** and **private** sectors"

... "The Kingdom has an influential role in regional and international organizations"

... "An along with my speech today is the comprehensive review of the government's **internal** and **external** policy and its achievements during the past year"

... "The Kingdom contributes to the strengthening and growth of the global economy, including the continuation of its oil policy based on cooperation and coordination with producers **inside** and **outside** the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to maintain the stability of oil markets in a manner that protects the interests of **producers** and **consumers**"

The first speech emphasized on the kingdom's commitment to the Islamic faith and the application of Islamic Law, its efforts to achieve 2030's vision, empowerment of private sectors, the government's effort to provide more services, to form a committee for public corruption issues, to confront terrorism, to resolve the regions' crises and the Kingdom's regret for America's decision regarding Jerusalem.

The second speech focused on the country's domestic and foreign policy. The internal policy includes the development of the country, creating more job opportunities, the government's priorities in supporting private sector and improving services provided to citizens. Meanwhile, the foreign policy touches on the Palestinian issue, the Kingdom's support to the Yemeni people, Iranian regime, the Kingdom's call to resolve the Syrian crisis and the effort to strengthen the relations with Iraq.

FIGURE 1

The Comparison between The First and Second Speech of King Salman





CONCLUSION

Several conclusions can be made from the results obtained following the analyses two speeches of King Salman Abdul Aziz. It can be concluded that the usage of cohesive devices such as reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical item are prominent in King Salman Abdul Aziz's speeches.

- King Salman Abdul Aziz used more cohesive devices in the second speech with a total of 218 tools, comprising 50.93 percent compared to the first speech with a number of 210, comprising 49.07 percent. The small margin reveals minor differences between the two speeches upon comparison.
- 2) The conjunctions and reference tools were the most prominent cohesive device used in the first and second speech of King Salman with a percentage of 50.9, 36.19, 50.46 and 38.53 respectively.
- 3) The second speech of King Salman had more cohesive devices as it served more purposes than the first speech, which is to review the internal and external policy of the state.
- 4) The main purpose of the first speech is to focus on contributions implemented by the government since its establishment and the main purpose of the second speech is to review the internal and foreign policy of the state.
- 5) Cohesion is among the necessary tools used both discourses as it ensured the coherence of the speech.

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ENGAGING THE PEOPLE: THE DISCOURSE OF COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT IN MALAYSIAN BUSINESS NEWS REPORTS

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Keywords: Goods and Services Tax (GST); mainstream media; Critical Discourse Analysis; complaint management

INTRODUCTION

As the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in Malaysia with the main aim to "diversify the country's economy" (Gstmalaysiainfo, 2015) was a highly contentious issue, the former Barisan Nasional (BN) Malaysian government embarked on a nationwide campaign to promote the controversial tax and to educate and inform the people about its benefits through various channels, one of which was the setting up of the GST Malaysia Info website.

This study highlights the issue of language and power and how language is used by the powers that be to convince people about certain policy and issue. It also serves to narrow the literature gap in the examination of the GST implementation in Malaysia to illuminate how linguistic features are strategically employed by the former BN government to promote the mainstream discourse on the GST.

This study is predicated on Fairclough's (1989, 2001, 2015) three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework to examine how the discourse of complaint management is articulated through lexico-grammatical features in the news articles.

OBJECTIVES

The two research objectives that inform this study are as follows:

- a) To identify the different aspects of the discourse of complaint management present in the news articles on the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on the government website GST Malaysia Info.
- b) To analyse the linguistic features used to realise the different aspects of the discourse of complaint management present in the news articles on the website.

The description of formal linguistic features which define the discourse of complaint management draws on the experiential value of words (Fairclough, 1989, 2001, 2015) which indicate contents, knowledge and beliefs of the producer.



METHODOLOGY

The study observes the following steps: identification and application of theories, design of research questions, data collection and labelling, data categorisation, data selection, data description and analysis and data interpretation.

The data comprise five selected GST news articles on the discourse of complaint management from Article 30 to Article 34 on the GST Malaysia Info website. Qualitative close reading of the data was conducted to identify the different aspects of the discourse of complaint management in the news articles and their linguistic formulations. This entails the researcher's interpretative sources or "member's resources" (Fairclough, 2001).

RESULTS

The analysis of the linguistic features of overlexicalisation (Fowler, 1979, 1991) or overwording (Fairclough, 1989, 2001, 2015) and categorisation (Fairclough, 2015) which figure prominently in the articles points to a positive portrayal of the authorities as caring and concerned by foregrounding their effort in safeguarding consumers' rights. The study utilises tables to present selected findings related to the five aspects of the discourse of complaint management.

The first aspect of the discourse is the employment of words related to complaints as underlined in the news extracts in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Over	lexicalisation	of the word	'complaints'
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Extracts	References
1. Consumers who face <u>problems</u> with errant traders may channel <u>their</u> (consumers') complaints via smart phones.	Ar 30, para 1
2. He (KPDNKK Perlis director) said <u>minor hiccups</u> like this were expected	Ar 31, para 10

Examples of the second aspect related to authorities involved in managing complaints are underlined in the news extracts in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Categorisation of authorities involved in the GST complaint management

Extracts	References
1. He added that <u>more than 200 (KPDNKK Sabah) officers</u> had been moblised	Ar 31, para 13
2. <u>Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism deputy minister Datuk</u> <u>Seri Ahmad Bashah Md Hanipah</u> said a total of 528 complaint calls were received	Ar 32 para 2



Table 3 below enumerates the news extracts by underlining the third aspect i.e. recourse or channels available to consumers to lodge complaints:

Table 3: Categorisation of recourse or channels to lodge complaints

Extracts	References
1 through <u>the application 'EZ Complaint'</u> , consumers would be able to <u>channel complaints in photograph form as evidence</u> , direct to the <u>E-Complaint system</u> .	Ar 30, para 2
 135 complaints were made by consumers via <u>e-aduan, telephone calls</u> (63), directly to the office (32), email (three) and short messaging service (one). 	Ar 34, para 6

Instances from the news extracts are underlined in Table 4 below to illustrate the linguistic manifestations of success in complaint management by the authorities as the fourth aspect:

Table 4: Overlexicalisation of positive words describing the success in complaint management

Extracts	References
1. " <u>Of the total complaints received last year, 95.87 percent or 13,507</u> <u>complaints were resolved</u> compared to 10,864 or 91.7 per cent in 2013,"	Ar 30, para 8
2. He (KPDNKK Kedah director) added that his <u>officers would go to the</u> <u>outlets that were the subject of complaints and that action would be taken</u> <u>if they were found not complying to GST regulations</u> .	Ar 31, para 8

Table 5 below underlines the fifth aspect namely the use of the word 'consumers' and other related words to identify the parties lodging complaints in the news extracts:

 Table 5: Categorisation of the parties who lodge complaints

	Extracts	References
1.	The Kedah Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism office (PPDNKK) has received 234 complaints from <u>consumers</u> on the Goods and Services Tax (GST)	Ar 33, para 1
2.	many complaints were received because the people were confused.	Ar 34, para 3

CONCLUSION

Findings of this study reveal that the discourse of complaint management covers different aspects ranging from the authorities to complaint recourse or channels, actions taken and parties who lodge complaints.



In particular, their linguistic realisations through overlexicalisation and categorisation painted a positive picture of the outcome of complaint management by the authorities. This bears testimony to the pro-government mainstream media's attempt in swaying public opinions of the GST. This calls for critical reading of news articles by the mainstream media to excavate and evaluate their underlying ideology. This study provides a framework to conduct a Critical Discourse Analysis with a view to sensitising text consumers to such working of ideology in media discourse.

Despite such positive portrayal of the government by the mainstream media, it has not placated people's resentment towards the GST which political observers attributed as one of the main causes of BN's defeat by Pakatan Harapan in the 14th general election. This study provides useful retrospective insights on the importance of addressing the root causes of people's concerns instead of relying on partisan reporting of the pro-government mainstream media in policy implementation.

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EXPLORING THE OUTCOME OF ENGLISH ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME FOR POLYTECHNIC MECHANICAL ENGINEERING LECTURERS

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ABSTRACT

Using English as a medium of teaching has been long emphasized in the polytechnic system in Malaysia since the emergence of the Malaysia Polytechnic Blueprint in 2008 where the syllabus and references have been aligned towards using English. The mixed-method study is used to elicit the outcome of the English Enhancement course towards the lecturers in using English in the classrooms. The study focused on 15 Mechanical Department lecturers from Polytechnic Banting Selangor after undergoing a 3- days English Enhancement course. The course is designed to deem fit the needs of those technical lecturers, to lead and inspire as to instil readiness in them to be able to teach using language. These lecturers were selected based on their internal teaching and learning evaluation session conducted by the department itself. The study shows the lecturers were enhanced with knowledge and confidence of teaching subjects using the language. The impact is seen as very positive and they were encouraged and motivated in applying English in their teaching and learning in the classroom.

Keywords: (technical lecturers, English language, medium of instructions, polytechnic)

INTRODUCTION

In the context of polytechnics, using English Medium Instruction (EMI) was made compulsory in 2008 (Ninth Malaysia Plan 2006 – 2010). Polytechnics syllabus, modules, instructions were all converted to English. However, teaching in English has not been easy for many instructors in the polytechnic. On the other hand, the system was vigorously moving towards EMI. In light of this, it is worth investigating the polytechnic technical lecturers to gain confidence and readiness in using EMI in classrooms.

Currently, the polytechnic system uses syllabuses, assessments and references in English. Concerning this, there is an arising need for the technical lecturers in the polytechnics to be able to master the English language, be knowledgeable and proficient in communication skills. These technical lecturers who are not language specialists and mostly from Malay-medium education, face a tough situation coping with the demand of teaching technical subjects in English. As elaborated by Pandian et al. (2004) found that the older batch of lecturers who had their training in English may also find this new change in the education policy a challenging aspect as their experience largely involved the use of '*Bahasa Melayu*' as the medium of instruction. Whereas Tan's (2012) study shows the teachers were found not qualified to teach the content-based subjects using English after 30 years of using Bahasa



Malaysia as the medium of instruction. Therefore, change is anticipated in form of training or language enhancement courses.

Training and development programmes for technical lecturers are often considered expensive and adds no value (Desimone, 2009; Gauld & Miller, 2004). Nevertheless, on the global front, changes and innovation in education call for competent teaching personnel who can deliver quality education especially in using the language to deliver the subject-course matters (Wan Nooraini & Mohammed Sani, 2010). As to accommodate these changes, polytechnic technical lecturers need to foster a willingness to participate in professional development programs. Therefore, the English Enhancement course is designed to assist and uplift the mind set and readiness of the mechanical lecturers from the polytechnic to further engage in using EMI.

OBJECTIVE

Lecturers teaching technical subjects are required to use EMI to conduct their lessons where there will be one observation on their teaching and learning sessions by their superiors. The findings from the observations revealed that many technical lecturers were not using EMI in teaching. Thus ,the English Unit lecturers were directed to design a training or a programme to instil the confidence, motivation, and readiness among selected lecturers from the Mechanical department of one of the polytechnics in Malaysia.

Research Objectives:

- 1) To identify the outcomes from the designed programme on instilling the practices of using EMI in teaching and learning.
- 2) To find out the readiness of technical lecturers to attend English enhancement courses to motivate and uplift their confidence in using EMI.

DATA / METHODOLOGY

A mixed-method approach was used to collect data on the 3-day programme. A Feedback Analysis Form which is a standard instrument to gauge the effectiveness of the programme as well as a platform to provide improvisation for future programmes was used to collect data. The form is adapted from the Training and Development Unit, Department of Polytechnic Education (DPE) of Ministry of Higher Education where only five items from the instrument were selected to measure the effectiveness of the programme. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to present frequencies and percentages of the findings and a focus-group interview was carried out for triangulation. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data gathered from the interviews with three technical lecturers.



Total respondents were 15 technical lecturers (N=15) from Mechanical Engineering Department at one polytechnic.

RESULTS / FINDINGS

The 5 (FIVE) items from Feedback Analysis Form, highlighted the effectiveness of the training/programme on these Mechanical lecturers as well as instilled readiness in using EMI. It is found clearly that the training improves ones' knowledge, the subject matter of the programme found relevant, escalates the confidence and readiness to teach in using the language as medium of instruction, impactful and created insights to share the knowledge gained with others in future.

Item 9: Improves knowledge



N=10 (67%) out of N=15 respondents strongly agreed that the programme has improved their knowledge and understanding in using EMI in the teaching and learning whereas N=5 (33%) agreed on that aspect too.





N=12 (73%) out of N=15 respondents strongly agreed that the programme's subject content is relevant in using EMI in the teaching and learning whereas N=3 (27%) agreed on that aspect as well.



Item 11: Escalates the confidence and readiness



About N=11 (73%) respondents strongly agreed that the programme escalates the confidence and readiness to teach in using the language as medium of instruction whereas N=4 (27%) agreed on that aspect as well.

Item 12: Impactful



N=12 (80%) out of N=15 respondents strongly agreed that the programme was impactful in using the language as medium of instruction whereas N=3 (20%) agreed on that aspect too.



Item 13: Created insights to share the knowledge gained in future

In general, N=14 (93%) respondents confirm that the programme created insights to share the knowledge gained in future whereas N=1 (7%) found otherwise on that aspect.



The focus-group interview confirmed on the above items as the Mechanical lecturers found that the programme is beneficial in terms of applying the knowledge gained in using EMI. Therefore, the interest and readiness to further engage in such similar courses was looking positive from those participating lecturers.

CONCLUSION/IMPLICATIONS FOR THE RESEARCH

The outcome of the programme has shown a tremendous impact on the chosen Mechanical lecturers as to further explore their confidence in using EMI in classrooms and laboratories. In relation to that, the preparation of the macro-teaching session showed a positive approach and understanding which directly invades their attentiveness to apply the approach in using EMI. In that aspect, the lecturers show that the program developed is valuable in improving and progressing their teaching and learning process to able to use EMI.

Nevertheless, the study has its limitation on not being able to gauge all the Mechanical lecturers in the polytechnic in using EMI at the polytechnic. Further studies could be embarked on the aspect of having courses from professionals in enhancing their confidence to use EMI in their teaching and learning.



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FAITHFUL TO THE TEXT: TRANSLATION OF METAPHORS IN HO SOK FONG'S AWARD-WINNING ANTHOLOGY *LAKE LIKE A MIRROR*

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KEYWORDS: Ho Sok Fong; Natascha Bruce, *Lake Like A Mirror*; metaphors translation; semantic translation; translatability

INTRODUCTION

The act of translating a text from a source language into a target language is demanding, as it requires translators to have linguistic, pragmatic and social-cultural competence in two languages. Research has highlighted issues, for example, structural problems, translation of idioms, humour, phrasal verbs, among main challenges. Several researchers (Jakobson, 2000; Lakoff and Johnson, 2003; Conway, 2012) have highlighted the importance of cultural sensitivity in translation. Translators have found that metaphors could be challenging as images involved are often culture-specific (Kovecsses, 2010; Wagner, 2016), and translators need to faithfully reproduce the symbolism, rhetorical devices, and worldview (Woodsworth and Lane-Mercier, 2018). Despite the importance of metaphors in literary works, few studies have examined the translation of metaphors from Chinese into English. This study examines the translation of highly creative and original metaphors used nine stories in Ho Sok Fong's award-winning Lake Like A Mirror, which depict the rationality and absurdity of life in a multi-ethnic and multilingual society. This Malaysian anthology won the English PEN 2019 Award and was nominated for the 2020 Warwick Prize for Women in Translation. The translator, Natascha Bruce, was considered "masterful" by the Mekong Review (2020) and "sure-footed" by Jeremy Tiang, a prolific award-winning translator. (2020). Listed on Kirkus Reviews of the Best Book of the Year in 2020 (Library Thing, 2020), Ho's Lake Like A Mirror offers more than a hundred well-translated metaphors for scrutiny in the field of applied linguistics and literary translation.

OBJECTIVES

One of the first decisions in translation is the choice of the translation methods, for example, Nida (1982; 1986)'s dynamic equivalence or Newmark's (1980; 1988) semantic equivalence. While there might be a personal preference, the type of literature for translation and its functionality will guide the choice (Liu, 2017). However, it is observed that Newmark's semantic approach to the translation of metaphors has been widely adopted due to syntactic and sociolinguistic considerations (Gracia Landa, 2000). Besides, the translatability of the metaphors tends to be a key consideration (Broeck, 1981; Buden, & Norwontny, 2009; Alghbban, 2011; O'Brien, 2012), especially the conceptual transference in translation (Chen, 2019). This study examined the English translation of Ho Sok Fong's metaphors in *Lake Like A Mirror*, originally published in Chinese. The transference of over a



hundred original metaphors into English was examined from the perspectives of semantic equivalence and considerable translatability.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted by a bilingual researcher with good knowledge of figurative language and Chinese Malaysian cultures. The English translation of *Lake Like A Mirror* was carefully read twice to determine the context, meaning and symbolism. A three-step process, listed below, was followed.

<u>Step 1</u>: Identified, listed every metaphor in the English Translation of *Lake Like A Mirror*, and considered the context of use.

• Inclusion Criteria:

All short phrases that compare two seemingly images were considered, including dead metaphors (idioms), cliches, stock, adapted and recent metaphors adapted from modern songs.

• Exclusion Criteria: Phrases using allegories, analogies, and personification were excluded.

To study the semantic equivalence of the translation of metaphors, the researcher first coded the types of the metaphors by using the typology proposed by Newmark (1980; 1988), namely, dead metaphors, cliche metaphors, standard or stock metaphors, adapted metaphors, recent metaphors and original metaphors. Next, the translation strategies of the metaphors were carefully identified using Newmark's (1988) categorisation, which includes exact transfer, substitution, simile, paraphrase with added sense or total omission of the original image.

Step 2: Coded the selected metaphors in *Lake Like A Mirror* using Newmark's typology and categorisation.

Finally, the translatability of the metaphors was examined by comparing each metaphor in English with the matching metaphor in Chinese.

<u>Step 3</u>: Analysed and compared metaphors in the source text 《湖面如镜》with those translated into English in *Lake Like A Mirror*.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Using the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the researcher identified and categorised 116 metaphors in *Lake Like A Mirror* according to Newmark's typology (Table 1) and the five translation strategies (Table 2). In terms of typology, original metaphors were the most frequently used (110), followed by dead metaphors (2), cliche (1), stock (1), adapted (1) and recent (1). The most dominant translation strategies were the similes (77) and exact transfer (30). Other strategies were less frequently used, as only eight instances of paraphrasing and one rare omission were identified. No substitution of images was seen.



	TITLE OF STORIES	Occurrence	Examples
1	Dead metaphor	2	"draw the line" (p.27); "dog-eat-dog world" (p.118)
2	Cliché metaphor	1	"turn a blind eye" (p.21)
3	Standard/Stock metaphor	1	"freeze to death" (p.27)
4	Adapted metaphor	1	"what cat doesn't chase mice" (p.27)
5	Recent metaphor	1	"heaven has its way" (p.148)
6	Original metaphor	110	The entire anthology

TABLE 1Typology of 116 Metaphors in Lake Like A Mirror

TABLE 2Categories of 116 Metaphors in Lake Like A Mirror

	TITLE OF STORIES		METAPHORS				
			Exact Transfer	Substitution	Simile	Paraphrase	Sense only / Omission
1	〈墙〉	The Wall	4	-	11	2	1
2	〈天空剧场〉	Radio Drama	5	-	10	-	-
3	〈湖面如镜〉	Lake Like A Mirror	9	-	13	3	-
4	〈箱子〉	The Chest	1	-	3	-	-
5	〈夏天的旋风 〉	Summer Tornado	4	-	7	-	-
6	〈Aminah〉	Aminah	1	-	5	-	-
7	〈风吹过了 黄梨叶 与鸡蛋花〉	Wind Through The Pineapple Leaves, Through The Frangipani	4	-	18	2	-



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8	〈十月〉	October	2	-	9	1	-
9	〈小镇三月〉	March In A Small Town	1	-	4	-	-
			30	0	77	8	1

The strategies included the high occurrence of exact transfer and similes, no substitution of images, limited paraphrasing, and only one omission, highlighting the translator's faithfulness to the source text. The analysis revealed four observable qualities: (a) Successful transference of metaphors in the source language to the target language; (b) Adherence to the semantic translation approach; (c) Relatability of metaphors and surrealism in *Lake Like A Mirror*; and, (d) Translatability of Ho's metaphors.

CONCLUSION

Written with a surreal bent, the short stories in *Lake Like A Mirror* contain metaphorical images that could pose major challenges to translation. The analysis of the translated versions of Ho's vivid, original and highly creative metaphorical expressions revealed that a high percentage of the original metaphors in Chinese was kept intact and accurately translated into English, demonstrating the translator's skills, which reviewers lauded. This study examining the relatability and translatability of metaphors in *Lake Like A Mirror* has highlighted the principles of a good translation. Translation courses could use the translated work as a resource to teach aspiring translators and to demonstrate what an excellent example entails: a faithful translation that renders the meaning from the source language into the target language from the perspectives of semantic equivalence and translatability. The faithfully translated metaphors in the text widen access and promote understanding of Chinese Malaysian culture and exchanges between readers of different languages. While exploratory, this study has provided insights into the translation of figurative language and methodology that could be used to examine other translated works.

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NEEDS ANALYSIS AND THE THREE AREAS OF CONTROVERSIES IN EAP

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ABSTRACT

Juxtaposing needs analysis with rights analysis has been an alternative approach in employing needs analysis in EAP (Benesch, 1999, 2001). On a different note, Hyland (2006) proposes that EAP can be related to three areas of controversies: 1) the two approaches in EAP – EGAP and ESAP; 2) the approaches in the teaching of student writing – the study skills, academic socialisation and academic literacies models; and 3) the pragmatic and critical perspectives of EAP. Considering the central position of needs analysis in EAP, it is deemed necessary to situate rights analysis and needs analysis in the discussion of these three areas of controversies. This paper attempts to establish a clear picture of how the three areas are interconnected and interrelated, and how their concepts and ideologies are related to needs analysis and rights analysis. The outcome of this discussion is hoped to give the EAP practitioners a better understanding particularly on the less chartered areas in needs analysis and EAP.

KEYWORDS: Needs analysis; rights analysis, English for Academic Purposes (EAP); English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP); English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP); L2 (second language)

INTRODUCTION

The development in EAP has raised controversies along the effort to conceptualise and determine its nature and role. Hyland (2006) outlines the areas of controversies as: 1) the two approaches in EAP – EGAP and ESAP; 2) the approaches in the teaching of student writing – the study skills, academic socialisation and academic literacies models; and 3) the pragmatic and critical perspectives of EAP. This paper attempts to relate the discussion of the three áreas of controversies to needs analysis, which has a central position in EAP.

EAP: EGAP VS ESAP

According to Hyland (2006), one key issue in EAP is related to the notion of specificity, which has been discussed via the terms 'English for General Academic Purposes' (EGAP) and 'English for Specific Academic Purposes' (ESAP). According to Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), EGAP refers to "the teaching of the skills and language that are common to all disciplines" (p. 41). On the other hand, ESAP is a view that is concerned more with the needs of a particular group in academic contexts; in other words, ESAP implements disciplinary specificity in an EAP course (Hyland, 2013). For example, EAP courses that distinguish the courses by disciplines such as English for Law or English



for Medicine are considered ESAP. Hyland (2002) asserts that EAP must involve teaching literacy skills suitable to the purposes and understandings of particular academic communities. One of Hyland's main arguments against EGAP concerns the notion of the common core hypothesis – transferable general skills and forms across contexts and purposes. Hyland claims that the main problem lies in defining what a common core is, that it might be 'core' in a very general sense and give the wrong impression of uniform disciplinary practices.

In terms of practicality, the EGAP model appears to accommodate course designers in managing the stakeholders and preparing the course materials. However, although the ESAP model requires more work in designing the course, I believe it is a better step towards providing students with the right form of English for their academic purposes, that the students will be able to benefit when learning in their disciplines. The EGAP model may appear to fulfill the needs of the students at the general proficiency level, with students showing a better grasp of the general language skills. However, it does not guarantee that the students will be able to demonstrate the same level of proficiency when they write for their faculty assignments. It is important to note that students' disciplinary activities are an essential part of their engagement in their disciplines, and this part is addressed in the ESAP model.

EAP: STUDY SKILLS, ACADEMIC SOCIALISATION & ACADEMIC LITERACIES

Another area of controversy is the approach in the teaching of student writing that move towards a more context-sensitive perspective – study skills, academic socialisation and academic literacies models (Hyland, 2006). The study skills model emphasises on fixing students' problems in the areas of surface structures, grammar and spelling. In the context of EAP, this model can be associated with the EGAP approach, where the focus of the course is to enable students to see the relationship between skills and their studies. This is seen as possibly limiting the students' opportunities for optimum learning, as the model does not directly address students' disciplinary writing (Hyland, 2002). Students are provided with skills that are supposed to be transferable to other contexts and contribute to their communicative competence.

The academic socialisation model brings the cultural context into perspective. It is different from the study skills model as it integrates language, user and context (Hyland, 2006). This model mainly focuses on student orientation to learning and how they interpret learning tasks and acculturation into academic discourse. The tutor is expected to induce students into the culture of the academy (Lea & Street, 1998). On the other hand, Lea and Street (1998) criticise this approach as it regards culture as homogeneous, and students can access the institution simply by learning its norms and practices.

This notion makes this model different from the third model, the academic literacies model. Lea and Street (2006) mention that the study skills and the academic socialisation models have been the common guide for universities and schools in their curriculum, instructions and research. However, they claim that the academic literacies pays more attention to the "relationships of power, authority, meaning making, and identity that are implicit in the use of literacy practices within specific



institutional settings" (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 370). This is because the academic literacies model does not see literacy practices in just a disciplinary community; it also looks at how literacy practices of the student's institution are connected to what students need to learn and do. In the academic literacies model, the institutions where learning takes place are sites of discourse and power (Lea & Street, 1998).

EAP: PRAGMATIC VS CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES

The pragmatic and critical perspectives on EAP is another controversial area in EAP (Hyland, 2006). One of the early debates began after Santos (1992) claimed that L2 writing should be characterised by pragmatism and should not be ideological and political. Pragmatism is the mainstream approach in EAP, applied linguistics and L2 writing (Canagarajah, 2002; Santos, 2001). Santos asserts that by taking the pragmatic stance, the pedagogic approach writing especially in EAP should focus on preparing students to write their assignments. She adds that "pursuing political goals and/or changing students' sociopolitical consciousness is not on the ESL writing agenda" (p. 9). This perspective can be compared with EGAP and the study skills model. Even though developing learners' academic communicative competence is also emphasised in this approach, the fact that teachers are the ones playing an active role compared to students may be seen as limiting the students from exploring their full role as learners.

In contrast to pragmatic perspectives, social constructivists reject the view that writing is an act of an individual mind trying to communicate a message, but see writing as a social act that relates the individual with the society. This position is related to critical theory and critical pedagogy (Pennycook, 1989). Santos (2001) states that critical theory that has turned into practice is known as critical pedagogy, where schools are regarded as sites of political struggle, educators as transformative agents, and individual empowerment and social transformation as the education goals. In critical pedagogy, a critical approach to second language teaching focuses on the relationships between language learning and social change (Norton & Toohey, 2004). In the context of EAP, Hyland (2006) asserts that critical EAP is responsible in helping students to understand the power relations in their disciplines.

Critical EAP shares some similarities with the academic literacies approach. Like Street (1995) who used the term 'ideological' to refer to culture and power structures in literacy practices, Benesch (2001b) also describes critical EAP as ideological as it examines power relations and hierarchical arrangements in societies and institutions. Pragmatic EAP is effective to meet short-term needs of the institution, such as providing necessary skills for students to write their assignments, playing its role as accommodationist (Benesch, 1993). It seems to be a student-friendly approach, where students only need to accept what has been decided for them and strive to meet the course's prescribed targets instead of spending time to think about issues surrounding the course and addressing them. However, by not addressing issues like the political issues in the curricular and pedagogical decision-making and the students'/lecturers' voice in the course, we are limiting the opportunities especially for the students and also lecturers to be conscious about optimising what students can learn.



NEEDS ANALYSIS AND THE AREAS OF CONTROVERSIES

As a prominent feature of EAP, needs analysis has been used and refined in several models (e.g., Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Robinson, 1991). These models share a similar concept of needs analysis which reflects the notion of target needs and present needs. Generally, Benesch (2001a) sees these models as merely descriptive; they do not address questions about unequal power in academia, sociopolitical issues and their effects on curriculum, and social issues affecting students' current academic lives such as funding for education and job security. This is related to the pragmatic approach to EAP, where the focus of instruction is for students to gain communicative competence without involving political goals and changing students' sociopolitical consciousness (Santos, 1992). Benesch (2001a) views this as a notion that EAP is neutral, which has developed due to demands by learners. On the other hand, she sees EAP as ideological because education itself is political and never neutral, as there are always people who get to make decisions on the content, pedagogy, students, classroom and assessment (Benesch, 2001b; Pennycook, 1989; Shor, 1992). Thus, she proposes a critical approach to EAP to address the limitations of traditional EAP and consider the opportunities for learners' negotiation and resistance within and beyond the classroom (Starfield, 2013). I agree that needs analysis should consider the students nowadays whose needs may be different from the ones typically addressed in the traditional needs analysis. In addition, in the existing models of needs analysis, all stakeholders are presented as being at the same level. This is something that requires attention especially when the stakeholders are at different levels of the hierarchy, which raises the issues of power. The issues of power need to be taken into consideration in designing needs analysis.

Benesch (2001a) proposes the term 'rights' in critical EAP to replace 'needs' as it highlights "life as contested, with various players exercising power for different ends" (p. 63). According to Benesch, the use of rights analysis may uncover underlying elements related to power relations that could have been addressed other than the student needs. However, this does not in any way suggest that needs analysis is no longer relevant in designing EAP courses. The fact that most models in needs analysis are similar in nature calls for a need to tap into other potentials of needs analysis. In other words, there is a need for a critical perspective to scrutinise the dominant practice in EAP (Luke, 2004). Addressing the aspect of power in needs analysis is necessary to balance the descriptive nature of needs analysis with a critical approach to the target situation. Although addressing target needs to set the purpose of instruction has been the dominant worldview or ideology, juxtaposing needs analysis and rights analysis allows for a two-way strategy to address target needs; needs analysis is to discover and fulfill target goals, while rights analysis is for a "search of alternatives to strict adherence to those requirements" (Benesch, 2001a, p. 45).

On the subjects of controversies in EAP that have been addressed in the earlier sections, it can be observed that EGAP, study skills and pragmatic EAP share some similar notions (i.e., accommodating student needs with transferable language skills) and have been described as being the most common approaches in EAP (Basturkmen, 2006; Hyland, 2002; Lea and Street, 2006; Santos, 2001). They can



also be related to most models of needs analysis. On the other hand, ESAP, academic literacies and critical EAP are more associated with new ideas and controversies (i.e., discipline specificity, power relations in socio-political contexts) (Benesch, 2001b; Hyland, 2006, 2013; Street, 1995), and can be related to the critical approach to needs analysis – also known as rights analysis.

CONCLUSION

The discussion of three controversies: the two approaches in EAP – EGAP and ESAP; the approaches in the teaching of student writing – the study skills, academic socialisation and academic literacies models; and the pragmatic and critical perspectives on EAP, shows how they are interconnected and interrelated, and their concepts and ideologies are related to needs analysis. The notion of universal skills versus specificity, discussed in the EGAP and ESAP approaches, is extended in the study skills and academic literacies models, while critical EAP shares an orientation with the academic literacies approach (Hyland, 2006). With these comparisons, it is hoped that EAP practitioners can have a better awareness of the approaches or models in teaching EAP courses and conducting needs analysis, which in turn may help them to make decisions in their EAP courses.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank Dr Valerie Hobbs of the University of Sheffield for her invaluable input throughout this research project.

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NOT JUST CRAFTS MAKING: VISUAL ARTS ACTIVITIES AND EARLY SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Participating in visual arts activities benefits young children tremendously, especially in promoting young children's language development. However, the significance of visual arts is undermined in the Malaysian school system. In Malaysia, children are exposed and learn at least a second language (L2) at the age as young as 4 years old. Visual arts activities provide a language and discourse-rich environment for young learners to communicate, it is specially an upside learning environment for young learners in language learning, which a "now and here" situation is ideal. Interaction is the root of learning a language in the sociocultural learning perspective. The diversity of language input during the arts making process helps children to understand some abstract language instructions and meaning. Not only does visual arts promote languages learning, but also enhances the understanding of cultures diversity. It is exceptionally vital in the multicultural society in Malaysia. This paper aims to discuss the integration of visual arts activities to optimize L2 learning experience among the young children in Malaysia. Implications and suggestions for future research are discussed at the end of this paper.

KEYWORDS: Early second language learning; language learning; language development; visual arts; visual art education; multilingualism

INTRODUCTION

In Malaysia, children as young as four years old learn two languages (Bahasa Malaysia and English for national preschools) and three languages (Bahasa Malaysia, English, and Mandarin or Tamil for national-type preschools) base on the National Preschool Standard-based Curriculum). To learn a second language (L2) successfully, communicative and interactive activities is fundamental in the view of sociocultural theory. In line with it, visual arts activities provide an interactive environment for young children to genuinely communicate. Young children communicate what they know through visual arts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, as cited in Chang & Cress, 2013). To integrate visual arts activities in a language classroom, the diversity of language input during the arts making process enables young children to understand the functions of language which enhances the communication skills. Besides providing a communicative environment for language learning, visual arts act as the tool to bridge cultural and linguistic divides which is vital in the multicultural and multi-linguistic context in Malaysia.



EARLY SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

To learning a language, there are several levels of language a child has to master in order to reach competency, such as:

- Phonology
- Morphology
- Vocabulary
- Syntax

Due to the cognition immaturity, explicit teaching of abstract concepts such as the grammatical rules of a language may hinder the L2 learning among young children. They tend to perform better in an implicit learning environment which provides ample of interactions (Ellis, 2015). Young children learn what they hear most (Konishi, Kanero, Freeman, Golinkoff & Hirsh-Pasek, 2014). Hence, the quality and quantity of language input and interactions are vital in early language learning.

Cameron (2018) suggests that the language experience that young children get in their L2 learning is vital for their later language development. Young children should be given opportunities to make meaning of the new language they are learning. Oral language is the precursor of young children's future literacy development. Hence, for young L2 learners, a strong oral language foundation of the target language shall be laid. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes on children learn through social interactions. Similarly, Halliday (1973) emphasizes the significant of the mastery of linguistic functions in child language development. Learning a language is to communicate and make meaning of the world through realizing its functions while socializing.

VISUAL ARTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD LANGUAGE LEARNING

In the perspective of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, human mind is mediated. Vygotsky argued that learning occurs with the mediation of physical and symbolic tools (Lantolf, 2000). Visual arts, as one the cultural tools, can be used as the mediation tool to regulate young children's oral communication in the target language. The benefits of participating in arts making activities towards young children language development have long been discussed. According to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), young children are likely to communicate through visual arts. Besides, study by Heath & Wolf (2005) indicates that visual arts activity stimulated students' vocabulary, command of syntax, and the use of metaphor.

Saxton (2015) claimed that an ideal linguistic environment for a child shall comprise input (language forms) and interactions (how language forms are used in conversations). Activities in arts making such as drawing, painting, and crafts making which are introduced in early childhood education provide discursive and non-discursive learning experience that promote interactions among young children with their peers and teachers. In L2 learning, consequently, by integrating visual arts activities, it develops young children's oral and aural language skills as well as vocabulary.


INTEGRATING VISUAL ARTS IN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN MULTICULTURAL CONTEXT

Participating in visual arts activities helps bridging the cultural and linguistic divides. In sociolinguistic perspective, culture and language is tightly linked. Visual arts are the subdivision of culture. It contains ample cultural elements that can be used as the learning aids in a language learning classroom. When a L2 is being learned, the specific cultural knowledge of the community that is using the specific language is being transmitted. Put simply, learning another language allows learners to get to know that particular culture. Students showed interest in learning materials that are familiar with local flavors (Thirusanku & Yunus, 2016).

Integrating visual arts activities plays a significant role in young children language learning. It provides an interactive language learning context that stimulates interaction with others. The interactive and hands-on activities optimize the language learning among the young children. For instance, during a Bahasa Malaysia (Malay language) lesson, the wau making can be brought into the lesson. Students are exposed to both input (language forms) and interaction (conversation) in Bahasa Malaysia while making a wau. With the richness of culture in Malaysia, integrating visual arts not only benefits young language learners, but also to develop the recognition of the rich culture in Malaysia.

CONCLUSION

The perspective of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory plays a significant role in the multicultural classroom such as in the Malaysian context. It helps educators to understand and best respond pedagogically to the diverse learning context of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic, where at least two languages are compulsory to be learned since pre-school level. Language and culture are intertwined as arts. People are raised in a particular community and the same language is used to communicate. Without access to language, one cannot understand another culture directly. D'Angelo (2010) suggested that multicultural repertoires facilitate better learning (cited in Thirusanku & Yunus, 2016).

However, visual arts are undermined in our curriculum. There is little emphasis given to visual arts in the early learning sector in Malaysia (Chew, Hutagalung, & Teng, 2020). In Malaysia multicultural context, integrating visual arts in language learning classrooms unites the diversity of races and ethnic groups by acting as the cultural tool to bridge the diverse cultures and languages in the society. Future studies might put its focus on how integrating visual arts in other subjects, such as Mathematics to optimize learning experiences among the young children as early learning is the foundation of later academic advancement.

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OLD WAY, NEW DAYS : ILLUMINATING TRADITIONAL BELIEFS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH SEMAI ORAL TRADITION

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ABSTRACT

The Semai, keep their cultural heritage alive by passing their knowledge, arts, rituals, and performances from one generation to another, speaking and teaching languages, protecting cultural materials, sacred and significant sites, and objects through oral tradition. The lack of initiatives to preserve Indigenous cultural heritage may lead to its extinction. To promote cultural preservation, this study explores the oral tradition practice among the largest indigenous group particularly the Semai people who live in South- eastern Perak of Peninsular Malaysia. The folklores of the Semai are disseminated through oral tradition. Despite these stories' age and genre, they still carry important messages to learners today. Frequently emphasized values for global citizenship, such as respect for diversity, human rights, and sustainable development, which the stories touch on, remain to be discovered and translated into daily life. In this ethnographic research, the researcher has gathered stories from t elderly Semai people through a snowball sampling technique. The original stories have been transcribed verbatim from Semai language into English language for teaching and learning purposes. Bah Bertai, the ghost of Terloche and Cen Cemana are amongst the fascinating stories analysed to discover Semai beliefs and cultural heritage. The findings revealed that the main knowledge that is still being delivered through oral tradition is the traditional beliefs of the Semai people. There are five fundamental beliefs of the Semai which are the belief in the spirit of Gunik, the supremacy of animals, the sense of respect for the cosmos and the supernatural beings.

Keywords. Oral tradition; Semai folklores; Knowledge transfer; Traditional Beliefs; Cultural heritage.

INTRODUCTION

The Orang Asli in Malaysia have their intrigue unique cultures and stories that possess historical importance. In Semai society, folktales constitute a form of entertainment, relaxation, advice, and education for the children. The stories or folklores are the elements that are often intertwined in daily life in indigenous communities. The term "expressions of folklore" ishas been defined by the International Bureau of WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization) as referring to the elements of "traditional artistic heritage" that a certain community or individual has developed and maintained, and they reflect the traditional artistic expectations of such a community (Holden, 2008).

Just like the other Among the various Orang Asli ethnic community groups that exist in Malaysia, the Semais have portrayed some uniqueness in their own culture have preserved some elements of their culture through folklores. They believe that . tTheir unique cultures and the highly aesthetic values of the Semai are not to be hidden but to be revealed and appreciated as their folklores are like the window "door to understand their culture and life". In Semai community, folktales which was told



orally was a dominant medium used for in educating and entertaining the tribes of the concerned culture. The concept of faith (god or protector) is very much associated with the belief in the supernatural power. In addition, religious life for the Semai is a mixture of animism and traditional beliefs. This can be clearly seen in the Sewang (shamanism) rituals. Critics have examined folklore as ancient, uneducated, dying out and fundamentally dismissive. Against this backdrop, some critics limit the genres of folklore to three basic forms of narratives such as myth, folktales, and legends. The younger generation also have dismissed the idea of reading books of ancient folktales especially of the ones which consist different social values and cultural beliefs. Due to modernization and extreme influence of western cultures, there is a risk that these oral folktales may will be forgotten and become extinct. Therefore, there is an urgent need to embrace this oral tradition. Thus, the purpose of the studyis was to find out the traditional knowledge that is still being passed down to and embraced by the present Semai people. community of Semai and embraced by them.

OBJECTIVES:

This research is motivated by the drive to preserve the culture and heritage of the indigenous Semai and to produce references for the academics and Semai future generations. This study also intends to encourage the younger generation to value and respect multiculturalism, and to practice the good deeds instilled in such stories. The main purpose of the study is to comprehend and describe the Semai beliefs and cultural heritage as depicted in their folklores as well as to preserve such stories for knowledge and education purposes. Another aim is to create awareness of Semai indigenous folktales among the younger generation. Therefore, the objectives are:

- (1) To identify the fundamental beliefs which are portrayed in selected tales.
- (2) To illuminates traditional beliefs and good values from indigenous perspective.
- (3) To preserve the cultural and heritage of the indigenous Semai through the Semai folklores.

DATA/METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative in nature. The oral history technique is entrusted in carrying out this research project on the oral literature of the Semai community in Pos Dipang Perak. Oral history is the systematic collection of living people's testimony about their own experiences. It is both a research technique and a method of preserving history. Oral history is viewed as the recording and storage of interviews scheduled with selected individuals who can tell the memory recall and help in the reconstruction of the past (Charlton, 1985). It is a particularly useful way to capture ordinary people's lived experiences.

From the interviews, the researchers will get first-hand knowledge of the subject. The true impact of oral history comes through personal memory. In this research, oral history was applied to gather, preserve, and interpret the stories from the Semai mainly on their folklores, ghost stories, and shamanism rituals.

The participants were the Semai people who lived at Pos Dipang settlement, Batu Gajah, Perak Darul Ridzuan. The selection process of participants was based on snowball sampling which is one of the common forms of purposeful sampling in qualitative research.



In this study, interviews were the main procedure used and were carried out during several visits to the settlement. Each participant was interviewed individually. The participants were asked to reiterate the stories that have been passed down to them from generation to generation and that they have also passed them down to the present young generations. The selection process of participants was based on snowball sampling which is one of the common forms of purposeful sampling in qualitative research. Sampling is recommended until a point of saturation or redundancy is reached (Lincoln, and Guba, 1985). The nominated elders were those who had understood much of the local folktales, traditions and practices and able to provide reliable information.

The interview sessions were tape-recorded as to ensure explicit information was secured. The collected data were inductively analysed, to visualize the multiple realities. The interview involves several stages that can be summarized as follow:



Figure 1: The Data Collection Process

Figure 1 summarizes the stages in data collection process by using a snowball sampling method.

By using a snowball sampling method, the researcher collected ten folktales from the Tok Batin as the first interviewee, then, the snowball got bigger. Semai elderly, village headman, the Semai shaman, young Semai women and men were among the Semai who participated, and they were interviewed via oral tradition. Next, the researcher recorded the stories and translated them to Bahasa Melayu with the help of a Semai translator. To get a wider readership, the Semai folktales were then translated and rewritten into English Language and for the commercialization purposes and ESL teaching and learning purposes, the stories were presented in a new medium. The researcher used attractive illustrations and images and animated the short stories into short films and puppet shows.



RESULTS/FINDINGS

The findings have important implications for the respective community and educators.

Finding 1 - The needs to appease these spirits were mandatory in day-to-day life. Gunik is summoned whenever in troubles, misery, pain, and disasters. A shaman is used as a medium to tell the village folks what to do. Gunik could appear in many forms such wild animals. The Shaman would be behaving in these animals' mannerisms. It is a taboo for Semai to challenge the spirit with boastful remarks. For example, Geget Ghost will cause terminal illness to the one who is not afraid of it.

Finding 2 - During the Sewang ritual, only the shaman will communicate with Gunik, the supernatural power, to heal a patient and to seek for protection from diseases. Their extreme belief in Gunik and shamanism reveals their concept of religion or faith that binds them together as a community. In the the ghost of Terloche, Gunik was summoned to heal a Semai boy who had disobeyed the jungle's rule.

Finding 3 – The Supremacy of animals

Animals in the Semai community are respected and worshipped as they are considered as the elements that give warnings or certain hidden messages to the people of any disaster that may occur such as flood. Man must always keep a good relationship with animals. For example, from Geget ghost - the Semai will pull the dog's ear, they believe that the dog's scream would frighten and shun the ghost away.

Finding 4 – The almighty sense of nature

Semai believe that they are inferior to nature, and thus they have great respect towards the components of nature such as the river and jungle. This is because these beings are the Semai main sources for food. They believe that if they do not have the respect and preserve these elements of nature they will not be blessed by the cosmos.

Finding 5 – The Continuance of Life After Death

The Semais believe that a graveyard is a sacred place, and they will forbid outsiders to witness a funeral. If certain rules are not followed the dead Semai will become Kikmot. The spirits continue to wander and disturb the villagers. The Semais believe that the dead can still hurt the living by causing them misery and pain in their health and life.

CONCLUSION/ IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH/POLICY

For many decades, the oral tradition has served as an important teaching tool for the younger generations. The children are educated by their parents, who model cultural practices which they inherited from their ancestors. The core values espoused throughout the oral traditions of folklores provide continuity in nurturing the Semai's beliefs. Through the stories the elders reveal spiritual and social teaching in culturally significant terms. The Semai oral traditions have its own moral and transitions into which symbolize themselves which are the significant elements in the embodiment of their cultural and spiritual lifestyle. The Semai people's beliefs constitute of four different subcategories namely, the spirit of Sewang (Gunik), the supremacy of animals, the almighty sense of nature, and the continuance of life after death. Semai concept of "Stranger Danger" and "Serenglog"



are their basic principle in life. Semai teaches moral values in most of their folktales. Some of the values are still relevant in the present day.

It was discovered that the folktales are filled with the elderly Semai's intent of instilling good values to the younger generation of Semai. The findings have important implications for the respective community and educators and contributions to national heritage and body of knowledge. Hence, the unique cultures and the highly aesthetic values of the Semai are not to be hidden but to be revealed and promoted as additional reading materials for public use and in classrooms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Special thanks to Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli Perak, Bah Sermo and Pak Appa who have dedicatedly assisted in this research endeavour. The research is dedicated to the Children of Semai to quench their thirst for knowledge.

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RETHINKING ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION FOR A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD: PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES

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KEYWORDS: Assessment, Formative, Summative, Digital Literacy, Online learning-teaching, Higher education, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Sometime in early 2020, Covid-19 took the world by a storm causing disruption everywhere including the education industry. According to Rahim (2020), all aspects of human life were impacted by the emerging COVID-19 pandemic, including education with up to 1,725 billion students in over 100 countries across three continents affected by closures of educational institutions. Educators were not properly prepared nor equipped with the right knowledge. Like the rest of the world, in Malaysia all lessons teaching and learning activities had to be online. This caused educational institutions, including higher education institutions, to react homogeneously to the shift in online learning (OT&L).

As the months progressed, everyone got better at using technology albeit minor connectivity issues; however, assessment remained a challenge. The unprecedented challenge of shifting assessment to online platform from a physical classroom caused an urgent problem which is how to assess the learners online in the most valid, reliable, practical, and effective way. Moreover, as many countries have not experienced a pandemic of this scale, there is limited knowledge on how to deal with the crisis in terms of various digital literacy levels, types of online assessment, challenges and solutions.

Admittedly, studies addressed this problem during previous pandemic periods. However, the educational and technological settings of today are very different from those of the previous pandemic



cases. It may also be argued that today a growing number of articles are published on this topic, and yet most of these published materials are only conceptual or reflection papers. Therefore, the problem is lack of empirical evidence in this area that leaves a gap in the literature. In this study, we investigate the types of online assessment, online assessment challenges and solutions with a focus on both formative and summative assessment faced by lecturers. Since digital literacy is expected to create variability in the cases' responses, the lecturers' digital literacy level was also investigated.

METHODS

This qualitative study explored the assessment challenges and solutions qualitatively in order to obtain in-depth data that will potentially shed a deeper and more comprehensive understanding on the assessment changes caused by the pandemic. The cases (n=14) that we purposively selected to email interviews had different (low, moderate, and advanced) digital literacy levels and came from different types of university in Malaysia (public, private, profit-oriented, foundation owned non-profit oriented, and government linked company owned). A list of questions was emailed to the lecturers who consented to participate in the study. The questions were open-ended questions focusing on five domains – assessment in general, formative assessment, summative assessment, challenges and solutions, and digital literacy and competence. The collected data was analyzed inductively and deductively by all the researchers until they reached a consensus on the emerging central themes.

The quantitative instrument explored the relationship between lecturers' digital literacy level and the type of summative and formative assessment practices, challenges faced, and solutions implemented in summative and formative assessment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

One of the major challenges that lecturers faced was time management as they had to be in front of their device most of the time for classes, consultation, and marking assessments which led them to have online fatigue and aggravated more stress to themselves. In addition, in line with the results of previous studies, the lecturers in our study faced great mental stress with the sudden transformation as many of them lacked the requisite technological knowledge and competence (Sia & Adamu, 2020) in web applications and software for online teaching (Mohamad Nasri et al., 2020) as well as knowledge in preparation of valid online assessments. From the literature, some of the challenges that were faced by educators are lack of readiness, technological inequality, lack of infrastructure, assessment security, and integrity (Rahim, 2020; Azlan et al., 2020; Gamege et al., 2020). For this study, similar findings were brought to light mirroring that which was in the literature.

In terms of proper solutions, some institutions provided adequate support to the academic staff and ensured that the IT staff were always on the line to provide help. One of the challenges that lecturers faced was the academic integrity of the students whilst attempting to answer questions online. Some solutions that were taken are shuffle in questions administered and getting students to submit their work through plagiarism checkers like Turnitin. Some lecturers who were more tech savvy opted for alternative assessments like e-portfolios, video-based assessment, projects, and more questions on application and higher order thinking skills.



According to Akimov and Malin (2020), while traditional strategies for designing and implementing teaching and assessment are still relevant and vital to effective learning, the online environment has created new demands and a media-appropriate focus on content development. Our results showed after conducting formative and summative assessments online, lecturers have found a niche in their own institutions respectively namely, using Padlet, Miro, OneNote, Kahoot for formative assessment and projects, portfolios, short answer questions and group assessment for summative assessment. Ruze et al. (2020) stated that for a holistic evaluation combining both summative and formative assessments, they find that summative assessment and formative assessment are two overlapping complementary ways of assessing student progress.

CONCLUSION

The outcome of this study will contribute to the area of assessment by providing useful data on the types of online assessments, challenges faced by the lecturers and insights on the diverse ways in which they were able to overcome those challenges based on different digital literacy levels. As this is still an ongoing research project and the quantitative data which is part of Phase 2 of data collection will begin soon, there is room for more areas of research to be explored and shed more light on the current project.

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SADI MAA BOLI: CHALLENGES OF PRESERVING PANJABI LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

Each social group has its own linguistic system (oral and written). Language is vital not only for human interaction and exchanging of ideas, but it also represents a certain ethnic identity's culture. Ethnic minorities, in particular, face challenges in preserving the originality of the language due to technological advancements. The Malaysian Sikhs, a minority within a minority in the country, are no exception. Hence, this article examines the importance of retaining one's mother tongue for a greater sense of identity, as well as the efforts made by various Sikh NGOs to ensure the language's survival. The findings of the study were obtained through a structured questionnaire and semi-structured survey questionnaires in which a total of 82 teachers participated. Thematic analysis was used to look for common patterns in data that were related to the research question. The findings revealed that Sikh NGOs are highly active in creating initiatives to encourage the younger generation to learn Panjabi. However, some teachers believe that the Punjabi children are more likely to acquire English, Mandarin, and Malay than Panjabi language. This is because the Panjabi language is limited as a spoken language and has no economic value. Researchers predict that the Panjabi language will degrade and die out as a result of this view, and that future generations will lose a crucial component of the culture that is required to fully comprehend it. As a result, the Panjabi language is a fragile component of cultural heritage, making its preservation all the more vital.

Keywords: Panjabi language; Malaysian Sikhs'; preservation; language survival; Panjabi culture; religious identity

INTRODUCTION

Culture and language preservation are linked in a productive manner (Ali, 2010). The rapid rate of globalisation has posed a challenge to minority language usage, which is already in jeopardy. Minority communities in Malaysia are required to be fluent in Malay and English, as these languages bring more value in terms of "education, occupation, socialisation, urbanisation, and economics" (Ali, 2010, p.1). Unfortunately, this has led to many people being uninterested in or dismissing the need of communicating in their mother tongue, let alone preserving it. The Malaysian Sikh community is a "ethno-linguistic and ethno-cultural group" that appears to be culturally anchored but is seeing a steady decline in the use of its historical language (Manan, 2011). The Sikh minority in Klang Valley speaks Panjabi relatively little, whether to their in-group or even within their own family (David, et al., 2003; 2015). According to Majzub & Rais (2011), it is vital for an individual to speak his or her mother tongue so that one is able to preserve and develop one's culture. By using one's mother tongue, it also helps in further strengthening identity and self-esteem. However, Malaysian Sikh youth has



been discovered to favour English language when they communicate with their siblings and their usage of Panjabi language is only limited to their interaction with their grandparents and parents. Researchers Singh & Kaur (2021) concluded that their findings indicated how Panjabi language is slowly fading away and the need to continue using it in Sikh households and religious events is necessary.

OBJECTIVE

Sikhs confront significant obstacles in keeping their mother tongue in daily life as a minority population. Because Sikhs prefer the national language and English, which are thought to be more important and have economic worth, the Panjabi language receives less attention.

As a result, the Panjabi language suffered a major setback from inside the community. Henceforth, the objective of this study is to determine the perceptions of Panjabi school teachers on the importance of preserving one's mother tongue for a stronger feeling of identity as well as the efforts done by several Sikh NGOs to safeguard the language's survival as many of the activists are often seen highlighting this issue to the community members, but it often falls on deaf ears.

METHODOLOGY

This study gathered data using a survey strategy that was not only cost-effective and time-efficient, but also adhered to existing pandemic regulations. The surveys, which are divided into two sections, were completed by 82 Panjabi school teachers in total. Section A consists of structured or scaled questionnaires where respondents are asked to either strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with a particular statement. This form of scaling is known as a 'Likert Scale'. Section B focuses on semi-structured surveys that allow respondents to express their experiences and expertise about the language difficulties being examined. Researches used snowballing method by forwarding the survey and asking participants to forward it further to their contacts who fits the description; a Panjabi school teacher either currently employed or retired. Snowballing is a technique for increasing the sample size by asking one informant to refer additional people for interviews (Babbie, 1995). The link to the Google survey forms has been shared on WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter. Upon receiving the survey responses, the researchers began initial coding, which revealed a diverse range of codes. Researchers combined some codes under a larger theme simply because some of the ideas shared by participants were later discovered to be recurring, but in different words. To ensure ethical study, the researchers created a particular informed consent 'agreement' in order to get informed permission from participants. The researchers also maintained data usage confidentiality and all questionnaires were anonymous.



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This poll received 82 responses from educators. 75.6 percent were females and 24.4 percent were males. 36.6 percent were between the ages of 50 and 59, 28 percent between the ages of 60 and 69, 24.4 percent between the ages of 40 and 49, 4.9 percent between the ages of 30-39, 3.7 percent experienced educators between the ages of 70 and 79, and 2.4 percent between the ages of 20 and 29. Majority of the educators are from Sungai Petani, Petaling Jaya, Johor Bahru, Seremban, Rawang, Subang, Pulapol, Mantin, Butterworth, Taiping, Kampung Pandan, Shah Alam, and Tapah, Punjabi Education Centre, alumni of the Guru Nanak Institution in Ipoh, Khalsa Diwan Malaysia, and retirees.

Panjabi Language is in Danger and Losing Ethnic and Religious Identity

42.7 percent of educators urge that youths are not interested in studying Panjabi, 24.4 percent are doubtful, and 32.9 percent believe otherwise. Barely, 40 pupils were seen sitting for SPM Punjabi paper in 2020. Besides, Panjabi language is believed to lack economical or commercial benefits to Sikhs. Speakers are also perceived unintelligent, thus discourages Sikhs from learning the language. 96.3 percent of educators stated Sikhs cannot remain faithful and pray; consequently, conversion to other religion is seen and Sikhs lose their cultural and religious identities.

Revitalizing the Panjabi Language

Educators in Tapah forced parents to enrol their children in Panjabi schools and accommodate the high-end families to influence children to keep learning Panjabi. They introduce and involve in *bhangra*, watch Panjabi movies, participate in Panjabi *basha mela*, gurdwara programs in reciting *kirtan*, poems, and *sakhis* also known as historical account. Sikh NGO, Khalsa Diwan Malaysia (KDM) trains Panjabi teachers to enhance their teaching skills. Punjabi Education Centres (PEC) have opened 38 branches in Malaysia while Sikh Naujawan Sabha Malaysia (SNSM) organises Punjabi Language Carnivals involving the youths since 1992.

The findings for *Sadi Maa Boli*: Challenges of Preserving Panjabi Language shows that Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) are actively preserving Panjabi language which shows the language is not heading towards language death. The projectors in *gurdwaras*, the Sikh religious place explains the meaning of prayers to help those who do not understand *Gurmukhi* script and Panjabi, especially among the youths. As stated by Majzub & Rais (2011), to preserve and develop one's culture, it is important for one to speak his or her mother tongue. Parents should speak more at home and Sikh NGOs should work in removing negative perception towards the language.

CONCLUSION

The Malaysian Sikh Punjabi community is depicted highlighting the progressive reduction of its community members' usage of the Panjabi language over the years, echoing the predicament of many other minority communities throughout the world. The level of skill in the language has dropped dramatically as more members of the community find it simpler to express themselves and converse in other languages. According to Zuo (2007), the language death in the twenty-first century may be



linked to a variety of factors, including globalization's technical, socio-cultural, and economic developments (Majzub & Rais, 2011). The globalised ethos of "free markets" exists, which further threatens the extinction of minority groups' mother tongues. The Panjabi language is facing internal issues as a result of the Sikh community's stereotyped attitude toward the language, which labels it as having no economic or commercial worth, placing the language in jeopardy owing to diminishing usage. This has a direct influence on Panjabi culture and religion. Although the Sikh NGOs are working hard to teach Panjabi to youngsters, family institutions must also work together to preserve this mother tongue. If this linguistic issue is ignored, the Panjabi language would deteriorate and eventually die out. It is now more important than ever to preserve the Panjabi language for future generations.

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SMART TECHNOLOGY IN SMART TOURISM: THE WAY FORWARD IN VIRTUAL TOURS

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ABSTRACT

With globalization and digitalization, the tourism industry has inevitably embraced smart tourism technology to create new possibilities for tourism growth to alleviate travel limits due to Covid-19 pandemic. Malaysia has taken steps to embrace this technology. Virtual tours of "Animal Park" using digital platforms have become the way forward in attracting visitors to at least experience "visiting" the zoo by experiencing the zoo through virtual technology. Thus, this study will explore virtual on-site experiences of visitors in Malaysia's virtual animal parks. It aims to measures visitors' experiences on smart tourism in virtual tours of animal parks (informativeness, accessibility, interactivity, personalization, and security). Respondents were required to participate in a virtual tour of selected animal parks and complete a survey questionnaire on their experiences as well as the type of language used in such virtual tours. Findings from the study suggest that virtual tours are gaining popularity and technology has enabled smart tourism to thrive economically during this pandemic. This study will assist destination managers and local authorities to use the target language to attract visitors to participate in virtual online tours besides using smart tourism technology effectively towards fulfilling sustainable development goals, in line with the Malaysia Smart Tourism 4.0 initiative to take advantage of opportunities in the digital age.

KEYWORDS: Smart technology; smart tourism; virtual tour; target language; sustainable development goals

INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) has a tremendous impact on the world's economic progress (Goodell, 2020). This situation has created economic recession globally and one of the many service industries impacted include the tourism industry. In this new normal, Smart Tourism is introduced where there is a creation of new positions, new roads, and new demands (Alraouf, 2021). Smart Tourism refers to use of technologies "that rely on sensors, big data, open data, new ways of connectivity and exchange of information e.g., Internet of Things" (Gretzel, Sigala, Xiang & Koo, 2015, pg 179). These virtual tours use immersive technology that immerses people with images, situational awareness and delivers advanced tools for viewing, recording, and evaluating virtual data (Osman, Wahab & Ismail, 2009). One of the ways is to explore the visitors' satisfaction through language use (adjectives) in virtual sites. One of such sites includes "Animal Park" where live virtual tour is conducted online to attract visitors to experience "visiting" the zoo by seeing the view of the zoo through virtual technology. Therefore, the aim of the study is to measure the visitor's satisfaction via language use (adjectivization) in smart tourism technology experiences (informativeness, accessibility, interactivity, personalization, and security) that have been practiced in Malaysia's virtual animal park.



OBJECTIVES

There are still limited studies on the satisfactions towards smart tourism technology specifically on the live virtual tour. Therefore, two main objectives in this study are:

- 1. To measure visitors' experiences on smart tourism in virtual tours of animal parks (informativeness, accessibility, interactivity, personalization, and security)
- 2. To explore the type of language use in such virtual tours (focus is on adjectives)

METHODOLOGY

A self-administered survey questionnaire was used to collect the data for the study. The study's objective was answered utilizing structured questionnaires with closed-ended multiple-choice questions. In the quantitative method, there were 29 questions that highlighted the five elements on smart tourism technology that influence visitors' satisfaction. In addition, a qualitative method was used for respondents to express their emotions after experiencing the tour. This language input was converted to word cloud. Word clouds have emerged as a straightforward and visually appealing visualization method for text (Heimerl, Lohmann, Lange & Ertl, 2014).

As most of the items in this study were meant to test respondents' opinions and attitudes, a 4point Likert scale ranging from "4 = Strongly Agree" to "1 = Strongly Disagree" was used (Lin, 2021). 30 respondents participated in this pilot study which is considered as an appropriate sample size. Hill (1998) as cited in Johanson and Brooks (2010) suggested 10 to 30 participants for pilots in survey research. Therefore, 30 sample sizes were chosen in this investigation to acquire data for analysis. Before they answered the survey, they were given a link to live virtual tour in animal park for them to watch and experienced the tour. The duration of the tour is one hour. After completing the tour, the respondents completed the survey.

FINDINGS AND DISSCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis was used to organize data findings as represented in Figure 1 below. Mean score was tabulated to indicate the overall respondent's measurement of the five elements. The results show that the mean score for Informativeness (M = 3.61), Accessibility (M = 3.54), Interactivity (M = 3.56), Personalization (M = 3.52) and Security (M = 3.17) had an average mean score between 3.17 to 3.61.

The results in Figure 1 indicates that the respondents involved in this study agreed with all the variables used as the mean score showed a high-level value close to the maximum average score of 4.0. Although, Security (M = 3.17) had the lowest mean value in comparison to the other variables, its value is still considered to be higher than 3.0. Hence, it can be seen that all the variables used in this pilot study showed a mean value greater than 3.0, which qualifies all items and variables used for real data collection.



FIGURE 1 Mean Score Smart Tourism Technology The relationship between Smart Tourism Technology experience and Visitors' Satisfaction

Linear regression analysis was conducted in order to answer the hypothesis. The results indicate smart tourism technology experience as the predictor variable at 79.4 % ($R^2 = .794$) of the total variance in visitors' satisfaction. This shows that 79.4% of the respondents were satisfied with the tour. The p-value is .000 which means it is significant. Thus, Smart Tourism Technology has a positive relationship towards the visitors' satisfaction in experiencing the tour. This is in line with Jeong and Shin's (2020) study which claims that tourists are more likely to be satisfied when they have positive experience participating in activities at tourist attractions.



TABLE 1Result of Hypothesis

Predictors

Step 1: Model Variables Smart Tourism Technology	
R^2	0.794
Adj. R ² R ² Change	0.787
R ² Change	0.794
F-Change	107.907***

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001



Exploring the type of language use in such virtual tours (focus on adjectives)

The first step in the analysis was to produce a frequency wordlist of the language used by the 30 respondents who experienced the tour. Focus was on adjectives used to describe the tour experience (Pierini, 2009). In this study, 140 adjectives were extracted from the survey. Figure 2 below shows the Top 10 adjectives and its number of frequencies obtained in the pilot study.

FIGURE 2



Top 10 Frequency of Adjectives Used

Figure 2 indicates the adjectives used by the respondents in describing their experience of the virtual tour. All these words related to the five elements in smart tourism technology experience and their satisfaction towards the tour. After completing the survey, the adjectives were extracted and illustrated using word cloud method.

Word Cloud Method

As illustrated in Figure 3, word cloud displays the most commonly used words in text-based datasets, which is used in most studies (Sun, 2020). Figure 3 is a word cloud representation of the language use (adjectives) by visitors in describing the tour. The larger the font size, the higher the word frequency, and vice versa. The word cloud of adjectives clearly shows the frequent terms used by visitors to indicate their satisfaction in describing the tour. Visitors are satisfied with the tour as most of them mentioned that the tour is interactive, accessible and pleasant (see Figure 3).



FIGURE 3

Word Cloud of Adjectives



CONCLUSION

As the globe transitions to a digital ecology, smart tourism is becoming increasingly researched and examined. Smart tourism is widely regarded as a game-changer in the tourism sector. It is a crucial foundation for sustainable tourism services and enterprises. It employs digital technology in order to provide and improve visitors' travel experiences while also earning cash for the national and local economies. Findings from the study suggest that virtual tours are gaining popularity and technology has enabled smart tourism to thrive economically during this pandemic. The use of adjectives and word cloud has also enabled tour operators to understand visitors' satisfaction and preferences in online virtual tours. This study will assist destination managers and local authorities to use the target language to attract visitors to participate in virtual online tours besides using smart tourism technology effectively towards fulfilling sustainable development goals, in line with the Malaysia Smart Tourism 4.0 initiative to take advantage of opportunities in the digital age.



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THE REPERCUSSIONS OF CYBERBULLYING TOWARDS TEACHERS WHO SPEAK WITH A NON-NATIVE ENGLISH ACCENT IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the repercussions of cyberbullying towards teachers who speak with a non-native English accent in Malaysia. Malaysia is well known for its multicultural citizens. Different ethnicities speak different languages and most of the citizens' accents are influenced either by their mother tongue or regional background. Speakers of non-native English accent have been experiencing discrimination, prejudices and biasness to the extent of being cyberbullied by fellow Malaysians. This is a case study of a corpus of cyberbullying comments levelled at a teacher who speaks with a non-native English accent in Malaysia while teaching online. Comments from the public were collected and cyberbullying comments were isolated. For data analysis, a combination of thematic analysis and qualitative linguistic analysis are employed. The highlighted word groups and statements are analysed based on a collection of English positive and negative opinion words or sentiment words produced by Bing Liu and Minqing Hu. The findings suggest a good balance of positive and negative opinion words from the public; people did not agree with the act of cyberbullying the teachers and it was fine and acceptable for teachers to speak with a non-native English accent in Malaysia. However, a distinct group of cyberbullies was not of the same opinion.

KEYWORDS: Cyberbullying, Non-Native English, Accent, Discrimination

INTRODUCTION

This study constitutes a relatively new area which provides some insight into the impacts of cyberbullying towards teachers who speak with a non-native English accent in Malaysia. Speaking English with a non-native English accent is an ordinary situation that can be seen worldwide nowadays due to the globalisation of the English language. English is regarded as a lingua franca that is not exclusive to any country and is used worldwide for political, cultural, and economical exchange (Naji Meidani & Pishghadam, 2013). Although English is recognised as an international language, many fluent speakers of the language tend to be prejudiced towards those who speak English with a foreign accent. Past studies suggested that speakers with a non-native English accent are treated poorly (Kim et al., 2019; Fuertes et al., 2012). In just a year, there have been two cases of cyberbullying in Malaysia involving a politician and a teacher, in which the videos of them speaking in a non-native English accent went viral. Cyberbullying has long been an issue of concern ever since social media and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have



evolved. Now that the world is hit with the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of ICT is increasing. While ICT enables people to continue working despite having to stay at home, there are also negative impacts of it. Cyberbullying is one of them.

OBJECTIVE

The term accent has several meanings, but in speaking, an accent is an identifiable style of pronunciation that often varies geographically or even socioeconomically (Nordquist, 2018). Recently, cyberbullying based on how a person speaks has reared its head. Willard (2003) defined cyberbullying as defamation, bullying, harassment, or discrimination, the disclosure of personal information, or the use of rude, vulgar, or disparaging comments. Linking the two key terms, the objective of this study is to investigate the perspective of the public regarding teachers who speak with a non-native English accent while teaching online.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach was used to explore comments in reaction to the video entitled 'Teacher in viral video admits to shortcomings, says she's ready to improve' posted by The Star in YouTube and Facebook to investigate the public's perspective regarding teachers who speak with a nonnative English accent while teaching online.

Data Extraction from YouTube and Facebook

a. YouTube and Facebook Data Streaming

Data were retrieved from the comments in reaction to the video in YouTube and Facebook.

b. Data Analysis

Overall, 1529 comments were imported into Microsoft Excel Comma Separate Values Files for further evaluation, which took place in four stages:

i. Stage 1: Using key terms to screen comments

Pulling words were used to screen 1529 comments. The 'Find' tab was used by typing the term into the search input to look for similar comments.

ii. Stage 2: Manually coding and tagging comments

Identified remarks from Stage 1 were transferred into another page for manual classification and labelling. At this point, the researchers color-coded the comments and labelled them.

iii. Stage 3: Categorization of feedbacks

Every color-coded and labelled comment was rescreened. Based on the approach suggested by Rezvan et al., (2018), the same comments with comparable keywords were grouped together into one category.



iv. Stage 4: Reviewing interpreted comments

Based on the objective of this study, categorised comments were analysed and reviewed using a collection of English positive and negative opinion words or sentiment words produced by Bing Liu and Minqing Hu (Hu & Liu, 2004).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are discussed under two subsections namely 'Positive and Constructive Feedback' and 'Negative and Antagonistic Feedback'.

Positive and Constructive Feedback

Results from the data analysis suggested that almost 52 % of the comments of the video are positive and the commenters encouraged the teacher who was the victim of cyberbullying to not give up and continue to improve herself. Typical recurring opinion words that are positive in nature are 'great', 'never give up', 'admirable', 'keep going' and 'keep it up'.

TABLE 1

Post no. Comments 4 The laughter is on our education standards and not at her. She did her best and admitting to her shortcomings is admirable. 244 She's doing so great and the language is understandable for the student, so i dont see any problem that this thing can be a joke, well done teacher, keep teaching, never giveup! 1250 Keep it up. Don't give up!

Positive and Constructive Feedback

Negative and antagonistic comments

The victim of cyberbullying received negative opinion words from the public who commented on the videos. Common recurring words used are 'rubbish', 'embarrassing', 'unbearable' and 'shame'.

TABLE 2

Negative and Destructive Feedback

Post no.	Comments
10	Is this the best teacher for this segment by didik TV? Was there a selection process
	before engaging this teacher? Or are the producers themselves oblivious to the
	utter <mark>rubbish</mark> being presented?
487	Real <mark>shame</mark>
1022	This is very <mark>embarrassing</mark> , it shouldn't happened in the first place, we were once c
	proud nation of highest English language proficiency after independence but we
	are declining, this is what happens after 63 years and we continue to slide down
	at an alarming rate.



CONCLUSION

In summary, this paper argues that although the teacher who spoke with a non-native English accent in Malaysia was cyberbullied, there were still equally many that empathised and supported the teacher. From the comments of the public, it is heartening to note that the public is aware that victims of cyberbullying can also be teachers, not just school children. Despite the backlashes from some online, words of encouragement kept streaming in to motivate the victim. An implication of this study is that policymakers should look into integrating cyberbullying education into the school curriculum by creating awareness of social ills such as cyberbullying and looking at its consequences among students and teachers alike.

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THE USAGE OF THE MOTHER TONGUE AMONG THE NEPALI DIASPORA IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Language is not merely a medium of communication with one another; it also manifests the identity of an individual's origin, ethnicity and culture. Language and identity are intertwined, which is why the mother tongue, more often than not, exhibits a crucial role in making sense of one's identity. The Nepali diaspora residing in Malaysia is facing a tumultuous environment as they are a tiny minority in a pluralistic nation. Hence, the non-materialistic ideas derived from the larger ethnic groups influence their native language competency. The functionalist paradigm views the intangible customs as beneficial to the fundamental preservation of the society as it ensures the substantiality and continuity and survival of their lingua franca. This research will explore the Nepali language usage among the community members. The research questions will examine the following: i) Why is it important to converse in the Nepali tongue? ii) What are the challenges in sustaining the lingo? iii) What are the measures undertaken in retaining the linguistic competency of this group? Interviews with 15 Nepali residents will be conducted to understand these concerns. Audio recording of the conversation will be carried out with the consent of the participants. The dialogues will be transcribed according to the description of the chronology that emerges from it. Moreover, the informants will be kept incognito in order to conceal their identity. The outcome of this study will provide an insight into the minority lingual faction issues and will also help give recognition to the other minority groupings in this country.

KEYWORDS: Identity; Malaysia; Minority ethnic; Mother tongue; Nepali diaspora

INTRODUCTION

Language will only continue to exist if there are human interactions. As such, the communication with one another plays an essential role in conveying inner thoughts, exchanging ideas and expressing feelings (Samovar, Porter & McDaniel: 2007) of the speaker to the listener and vice versa. Therefore, verbal communication is crucial to every individual who lives in this society or the consequence would be catastrophic if any misunderstanding were to occur.

By its very nature, mother tongue literally is not only specific specifyingto the maternal language as the laymen interpret it but it also refers to the paternal, ethnic and the first language that



one is nurtured in since childhood. Intrinsically, our identity (Tiwari, 2007) will be constructed and internalized in the process of socialization with the environment that we reside in. Thus, in this research context the authors mean to make explorations into the minority ethnic group's native tongue.

On account of the Nepali diaspora (Muthiah, 2008; Nath, 2009; Ortiz, 2015 & Chandran, 2020), the Nepalese, a miniscule minority are struggling to preserve their native language in a multilingual nation. The major ethnic groups in Peninsular Malaysia are able to sustain their lingo due to their sizeable population. Moreover, the education system had accorded a leeway with the medium of instruction in the government schools such as the national schools (Malay language) and vernacular schools (Chinese and Tamil language). This situation granted a leverage to the ethnic groups to retain and secure their mother tongue for the coming generations.

OBJECTIVE

This research explores the Nepalese's proficiency in their of their spoken and written ability. The immigrants who resided in the host country will have to adopt and adapt to the local norms in order to avoid being 'alienated' by the locals. As such, this had marred their identity to converse in their ethnic tongue. Next, the challenges to maintain their natal lingo as they needed to master the economic and social lingual for survival caused another setback. Lastly, the actions taken to retain their first language for the sake of continuation of the future diaspora is looked into.

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative methodological technique was split into three facets (Creswell, 2007). First, the pre-fieldwork. It constitutes the ad rem of literature reviews in hard and soft copysoftcopy materials. The universities' libraries were the *numero uno* to gather the resources that concentrated on books, newspapers, magazines, et cetera. Thereafter, the online scholarly articles were gleaned to further furnish information on this community.

Second, the fieldwork. The researchers by word of mouth managed to obtain information about the Hindu shrine that the Nepalis typically visit. Hence, the key-informant was identified. Through thisThrough, this noteworthy individual the entrée to the other informants was rather cinch. The snowball sampling (Patton, 2002) enabled the data collection to progress smoothly. progress soonest

Hence, 15 participants agreed to be interviewed as the subject matter was close to their hearts and they were willing to take the time off from their hectic schedule to indulge the researchers. The conversations were audio-recorded with their knowledge and their identities were camouflaged. Due to the coronavirus pandemic that hit our nation to the nth to nth degree the partial lockdown was imposed. Given this unwelcome situation, only three participants could be interviewed face-to-face and the remaining dozen virtually via WhatsApp Messenger.

Third, the post-fieldwork. The saturated transcriptions were analysed for thematic recurrence sequence and peer-checked to avoid prejudice. Moreover, the blended practice in attaining the ammunition was as credible as in a physical interview without compromising the quality and standard. Thus, it provided an alternative avenue for the researchers to continue their inquest of knowledge.



NEPALI LANGUAGE

The importance of mother tongue

A person's mother tongue is paramount in reflecting one's identity of their ancestry. It brings a sense of belonging and indicates great pride in one's ethnic origin despite migrating overseas due to the political, economic and social motives.

The Nepali descendants who settled in Malaysia are still able to communicate verbally among themselves in their ethnic lingo. However, the issue lies in their competency skills across the generations. As we are cognizant, every generation that passes on will be deprived of their heritage, especially intangible ones if they fail to safeguard it. This is due to the acculturation process of the host country that exerts tremendous influence of the mainstream culture(s).

As such, the Nepalis encounter the predicament in not being articulate in their parent language. Thus, it causes them to feel uncomfortable in their own skin as they converse in 'broken' Nepali with others.

Challenges to sustain the lingo

Being a minority is a stumbling block to sustain the language as the Nepalis were not privileged to read and write as there were no teachers to educate them. The majority of the participants revealed their distress of not being able to master the language.

In addition, their community is scattered throughout Peninsular Malaysia which makes it even more difficult to mingle with one another regularly.

The failure to sustain one's language is also contributed to our education system that gave priority to the national (Malay language) and vernacular (Chinese and Tamil language) schools. Besides, their Nepali pronunciation is ambiguous and coupled with grammatical errors. Upon that, they could not even eloquently express their thoughts and opinions due to the limited vocabulary

Retaining the linguistic competency

To retain an endangered language is not facile as the relevant faction must step up to defend their evanescent heritage.

As a result, the Nepalis realized the significance of the mother tongue and wished to ameliorate their competency. They want to have the aptitudeaptness to read, be silver-tongued to speak and au fait to write but they have not been exposed to any formal instruction.

Besides, the advancement of technology has definitely been of great assistance. It can be utilized in online teaching platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Webex, Google Meet and et cetera. Meanwhile, audio-visuals such as YouTube channels are imperative to boost the learning process. Thus, these efforts will definitely bear fruit if one takes proactive measures to preserve their lingo.



CONCLUSION

The Malaysian Nepalese society only realized the importance of their ethnic lingo when they witnessed that the present generation's communication skills were inept; this was the 'Mayday' call. As such, the identity of this minority community will possibly be obsolete, and the consequences will be calamitous (Chamberlain, 2010 & Pun, 2020).

Therefore, the functionalist perspective (Thio, 2009) corroborates this plight. It views the indispensable non materialistic culture to be paramount in the aspect of linguistic conservation of their diaspora. Moreover, it secures the progression of the durability of the endangered language literacy.

However, the Nepalese must be given credit as they acknowledge this dilemma and try to resolve this issue with the assistance of technology. Indeed, the internet has opened up a plethora of resources for the netizens to improve their language capacity.

The Covid-19 situation has been a boon as it had led the community members to think out of the box on improving their heritage. Nevertheless, the question lies in whether the youth would want to follow in their ancestors' footsteps in preserving their valuable mother tongue and traditional culture.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the 15 participants who voluntarily agreed to support in providing the necessary information to complete this research.

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TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICES IN THE PROMOTION OF PRODUCTS IN BUSINESS RELATED INSTAGRAMS

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ABSTRACT

The Movement Control Order (MCO) kept in place to prevent the spread of Covid-19, has led to disastrous effects, particularly, towards small-medium enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia. In an effort to revitalize the SMEs economy, Malaysians were encouraged to support local business via the Jom Support Lokal-lah campaign initiated by the Star Media group. Indirectly it also gives prominence to the translanguaging practices that are prominent among Malaysian based online business owners, who utilize social media platforms (Instagram). In view of this current reality and limited research regarding translanguaging practices of local online businesses, this study aims to investigate how Malaysian online business owners employ linguistic repertoires to promote their businesses and shape their brand identity. This study employed purposive sampling. Data was collected via 100 digital postings from 10 Instagram business accounts and semi-structured interviews conducted with 3 participants. The findings of this study revealed that relatability, target audiences' preference of language, Instagram culture, participants' fluency in languages and customers' age to be prominent factors in impacting word choice and language use of online business owners' translanguaging practice. The findings also suggested that translanguaging practice shaped the business identity which centralized on showcasing of shared membership in specific speech communities and national identity. Local entrepreneurs could benefit from insights on how to use language creatively, particularly in attracting local crowds, to sustain and develop their business amidst the ongoing pandemic.

Keywords: Social media, Online Business, Translanguaging practice, Identity

INTRODUCTION

Researchers deemed the act of translanguaging as breaking language boundaries to achieve a meaningful and purposeful social practice. Li and Zhua (2013) highlighted that translanguaging engages with two or more entities simultaneously and continuously. Garcia & Wei (2014) exemplify translanguaging using the I \bigcirc NY symbol where designers of this symbol and readers process it as I love NY using means beyond language. Currently, translanguaging has been receiving unprecedented attention from scholars. However, there have not been much studies in creative translanguaging practice, especially in promoting products on social media platforms. In the local context, Malaysia is home to millions of multilinguals who are active translanguagers. The creative practice of translanguaging is highly prominent among these locals, particularly, among online business owners who promote products on Instagram. Miri-Lavassani (2017) noted that creative translanguaging practice takes up a certain style of language, which contributes to the overall construction of business identity among business owners. The recent pandemic, Covid-19 and its



resulting cordon sanitaire, MCO, has resulted in adverse effects on local Malaysian businesses. In an attempt to help these businesses, Malaysians were encouraged to further support them via Jom Support Lokal-lah! campaign initiated by the StarMedia group (TheStarOnline, 2020). In view of this current reality and limited research regarding translanguaging among online businesses, this study aims to investigate how Malaysia online business owners employ linguistic repertoires to promote their businesses and explore the construction of their business.

OBJECTIVE

As pre-mentioned, this study aims to investigate the translanguaging practices of Malaysian online business owners on Instagram, via digital postings that relate to #sapotlokal when advertising products. Simultaneously, the researcher also intends to investigate these business owners' identity constructions through their digital translanguaging practices. This study was guided by two research questions:

- 1. What are the factors impacting language use and word choice of traslanguaging practices of Malaysian online business owners when advertising products on social media?
- 2. How do Malaysian online business owners formulate their business identities through translanguaging practices when advertising their products on social media?

DATA/METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative approach and implemented purposive sampling. A total of 10 Malaysian online business owners' digital postings on Instagram promoting merchandise or services were observed for over three months (i.e. from June to November 2020). Out of 10 possible respondents, only 3 of the participants consented to being interviewed for this research, where the first language of two participants is Malay whereas the L1 of the remaining one participant is Mandarin. A total of 100 Instagtam digital postings of the above-mentioned 10 business owners were obtained and semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the above said 3 business owners.

Discourse-Centred Online Ethnography (DCOE) was employed to examine the first set of data enabling the researcher to observe and connect multimodal resources (100 digital postings) available in participants' linguistic repertoire (specific Malaysian lingos and mixed languages). The interpretations obtained from this systematic observation and linguistic analysis were divided into function, representation and interaction to illustrate construction of business identities. Thematic analysis is used to examine the interview responses. Familiarization with data, generation of initial codes, defining and naming codes and derivation of themes was carried out step by step when analyzing interview responses.

Ethical considerations were also considered from inception to culmination in this study. Ethical consent was obtained from all participants prior to interviews. The researcher adhered to the copyright and fair dealing principle imposed by Instagram in utilising digital postings. Re-iterative approach was employed to ensure validity while 'peer-coding' method was adopted to ensure reliability.



RESULTS/FINDINGS

This study revealed that all the participants' translanguaging practice seemed to be influenced by factors of *relatability*, *customers' language preferences* and *Instagram culture*. In the domain of relatability, all three participants insisted on using translanguaged text to connect or relate to potential or existing customers who are mostly Malaysians.

For instance, one of the participants, whose mother tongue is Malay language, incorporated words such as 'lauk-pauk' in the English description of her products. The participant explained in the interview the use of the word "lauk-pauk" (gravy),

".....So that our followers can relate to my postings. If I were to use words like gravy or curry, I'm afraid most of my audience, who are Malays, couldn't relate to my product.

This demonstrates that participants utilize their first language and cultural knowledge as an important point of reference in order to enhance the degree of relatability between brand and targeted audience.

The participant subsequently explained in the interview regarding the abbreviated choice of words, emoticons and misspelled words.

"For the instances where I used short forms such as 'smol' and 'fav' it partially comes from the Instagram culture but also stems from my texting style.

The explanation suggests that translanguaging is viewed as relating to a more relaxed culture and is utilized to showcase a dynamic mix of languages, symbols and emojis. Similar situation can be observed in Kongish Daily, a Facebook page known for its role in transcribing local news in Hong Kong into a dynamic and creative mix of Cantonese in traditional Chinese characters and other signs and images as noted by Wei, Tsang, Wong, and Lock (2020).

The present study also highlights the conveyance of business identity via translanguaged text. Membership in a specific speech community, who shared similar identity, is reflected via translanguaging practices. It is used to signal their "brand" to people. For instance, several online business owners' digital postings were observed to occasionally integrate Malay words (i.e *jauh tapi sayang, atas*), Malaysian English terms (i.e *makan-makan time*) and terms relevant to festivals celebrated in Malaysia (*i.e Eid Mubarak*) are inserted into sentences that are almost exclusively constructed in the English language.

The use of these words and hashtags smoothens perceptual fluency, enables consumers in identifying the "we-ness", and processes the meaning of messages easily as Malaysian audiences are aware of terms such as makan-makan time (*time to have meal*). Thus, these words also show-cased the shared national identity which has been commodified as brand/business community identity.



CONCLUSION/IMPLICATIONS

The findings revealed a few principles observed by the participants when constructing translanguaged text. Translanguaging indeed benefits online business owners originating from multilingual communities, as they are able to fashion their translanguaging practice based on these factors/principles when promoting products on social media. By uncovering these factors, the findings of this study contributes to the existing literature on the practice of translanguaging in digital space. Perhaps business owners could benefit from these insights that relate to the influential role played by social media in redefining the face of online business transactions, that now comprises social interaction, para-social relationship and degree of relatability between brand owners and customers (or *followers*).

As aforementioned, the findings reveal that translanguaging leads to positive outcomes for Malaysian online business owners when promoting products in a multilingual community. In view of this current linguistic reality, the author urges local educators and language instructors to reconsider their stance towards translanguaging and adopt a more receptive stance towards this practice in classroom settings. As indicated by this study, translanguaging practice meets both communicative and business needs of people originating from various speech communities; thus in learning contexts, it may also meet the communicative and learners' needs.

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VISUAL IDENTITY IN BRAND COMMUNICATION OF ELITE CHINESE UNIVERSITIES: PICTORIAL REPRESENTATIONS IN THEIR WEBSITES

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ABSTRACT

Empirical studies on branding of HEIs have increasingly explored the notion of corporate visual identity (CVI) of universities in the modern context. The positive effects of brand communication, especially offline communication, may be well investigated, whereas few studies have analysed how online brand communication can be realized. This study examines an under-discovered visual source, namely pictures, that performs a pivotal function to display the virtual identity of Chinese universities. This study investigates the multimodal elements of the 'About Us' web genre which employs pictures to portray the universities' brand identity, and examines their meaning potentials. Drawing upon the visual grammar framework of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), the sample for visual elements in this study were collected from the 'About Us' webpages of an alliance of nine elite Chinese universities regarded as the C9 League. Findings of the qualitative analysis indicate that pictures are ingeniously employed to display a virtual identity of the Chinese universities. The multifaceted brand identity of the universities may be projected through a heavy use of symbolic representations, along with a diversity of communication strategies to portray their representational meanings. The study provides information for universities to effectively use visual resources in constructing their brand identities and which offer persuasive information to their target audience via the web-mediated multimodal discourses.

KEYWORDS: Brand, Visual identity, University, Higher education, Pictures, Web-mediated communication

INTRODUCTION

In the cluster of higher education institutions (HEIs), universities specifically endeavour to increase quality education by creating and implementing new and innovative academic programs, and offering courses that will cultivate students for their future careers. Facing the vigorously increasing competitions, universities strive to build a positive identity as a powerful source in increasing their competitive edge. Today's universities seek to differentiate themselves and thereby generate a competitive position (Atakan & Eker, 2007). Marketing activities have since been adopted by HEIs



with branding being of interest to academics and professionals (Farhat et al., 2020). Furthermore, universities' promotional practices and marketing activities do not only influence their stakeholders, but they also create and capitalize on a unique brand identity which is generally reflected in their branding communication.

Identity refers to a socially constructed, emergent process that is concerned with a structured and symbolic discourse to suggest distinctive expertise on the one hand and group membership on the other. Academic visual identity (AVI) extends the concept of corporate visual identity (CVI) to interact with the symbolic representation of the education sector, in particular higher education institutions. AVI is realized by various symbolic artifacts, such as the institutions' logos, videos, photos in their websites. If the brand identity of a university is represented in its website in a way that fits the viewers' expectations and preferences, it will lead to a positive perception and evaluation of the institution, and intensifies viewers' engagement in the communication process of the university (Steinmann et al., 2015).

OBJECTIVES

This paper attempts to shed light on understanding the communication style of pictures that appear in some elite Chinese universities' websites, with a purpose to discuss how elite Chinese universities construct their visual identity to face new market conditions and achieve positive brand effects.

METHODOLOGY

The corpus for this study was compiled from nine Chinese universities which are defined as the elite C9 League group of universities, comprising of: *Fudan University, Harbin Institute of Technology, Nanjing University, Peking University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Tsinghua University, University of Science* and *Technology of China , Xi'an Jiaotong University, Zhejiang University.* The rationale behind the data selection is that the C9 League universities admit more elite groups of students and academic experts than the other higher educational institutes in China so that they are greatly dedicated to becoming academically renowned universities. The visuals presented on the universities' web pages, namely 'About Us' were collected as the data.

This study will advance the visual studies by conducting a systematic investigation into the representational dimensions of the data based on the analytical model of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) in order to identify prominent semiotic features of the visuals presented. Representational meanings are concerned with the conceptual and narrative processes. 'Narrative process is a kind of visual process in which the represented participants are depicted to be involved in unfolding actions and events, process of change, transitory, spatial arrangement' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 59). Whilst visual images of conceptual representation are presented based on their physical and spatial characteristics. Conceptual representation is identified in terms of class, structure or meaning in visual


structures of representation. There are three kinds of processes in conceptual representation: 'classificational process, analytical process and symbolic process' (*ibid.* pp. 49-79).

FINDINGS

The symbolic-meaning pictures usually show what the represented participants are engaged in and the details of the images are de-emphasized to show the 'mood' and 'atmosphere' of the images (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Any existing knowledge with relevance to the content represented in the visual images may be signified symbolically through audiences' perception (van Leeuwen, 2008). Through the signification of pictures, multiple signs visually contribute to shaping four dominant conceptual ideas (i.e. history and culture, harmonious environment, modernization, grandeur) in relation to cultural and social values that are related to the past, present and future of the universities. A university's identity is a desired image that the university insiders (e.g. administrators) expect to project that ideally reflects and influences its external reputation. The aforesaid symbols as visual representations of the university become part of the university's identity, and the students and stakeholders grasp perceptions and values relevant to these attributes. The symbolic attributes depicted in these stable pictures, both material (e.g. architecture, trees) and virtual (e.g. atmosphere, mood), affect the establishment of an aggregate institutional identity of the university, which influence students' perceptions of this identity in distinct ways.

Another significant concept for investigating the discursive process of portraying social practice is 'recontextualisation', which refers to the consideration of discourses as including or comprising participants, behaviours, goals, values, and activities (Machin, 2013). The primary communicative purpose of these visual images is to offer the viewers a special type of 'experience' through a mixture of narrative and persuasive content. In web discourse branding, these visual virtual experiences are frequently utilized as a metaphor for sensory interactions with people, places and social practices that are intended for branding. This kind of 'experience' narration projects a particular lifestyle associated with a certain social identity that has worthwhile values: you, as viewers, should engage yourselves in. A variety of visual images are tailored and employed in the university webpages to increase information provision, as well as to construct a multifaceted university identity. Along with displaying a positive and energetic atmosphere in the campus, the visual pictures contribute substantially to the promotional purposes of the webpage presentations. The viewers perceive the intensified qualities and values through the visual images, hence confirm what the accompanying texts describe: a vibrant and active atmosphere, a hands-on studying experience, a closely-knit academic community of diverse individualities, an international and multicultural university environment.

CONCLUSION/ IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

We have selected nine elite Chinese universities from a larger corpus to seek the knowledge regarding visual brand identity construction in the online academic institutional context. This study offers some interesting insights with growing concerns on visual identity and branding of higher education



institutions. We assert that visual components are efficient means and communication strategies to be utilized as by universities in their websites to promote a positive identity. The analysis of the nonlinguistic elements and pictures has confirmed the importance of visual resources as independent messages that carry fundamental ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings instead of relying fully on the linguistic text to form the corporate identity. Methodologically, from a semiotic stance, social values are designed and embodied via employing multifarious semiotic discursive elements and strategies. Hence, they should be analyzed on the basis of a systematic approach of the discursive features instead of disregarding them in the depiction and promotion of the institutions. This study offers a heuristic understanding of how to use appropriate visual pictures to project a positive identity of Chinese universities in their quest for effective brand communication. Finally, the visual-based approach of this study attempts to shed knowledge to webpage designers/writers or those involved in higher education branding and promotion, that the use of visual images and their features should be carefully considered in professional web communication and corporate branding.

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Malaysian Association of Applied Linguistics

WHATSAPP CONVERSATIONS USING BELF IN MALAYSIAN-TURKISH BUSINESS COMMUNICATION: ANALYSING INTERACTIONAL STRUCTURE USING SPEECH ACTS THEORY

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KEYWORDS: WhatsApp; social media; Speech Acts Theory; communication; BELF.

INTRODUCTION

Rapid technological advancement has enabled internet users to employ technology for useful purposes, and one of its most remarkable achievements is that it acts as a useful medium for entrepreneurs to broaden their marketing and business communication. Several researchers have emphasized the significance of social media in the business world as a powerful tool in elevating the generation of income to the business along with the success of their strategic planning (Kasemsap, 2014; Rao, 2017; Kahar, 2012). However, in Malaysia, exposure towards this matter is limited because only few research has been conducted on the use of social media such as WhatsApp, particularly in the context of Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF). In Malaysia, there are still SMEs who are struggling to broaden their marketing at international level due to language barrier. Language, in addition to providing statements or assertions to explain various states of affairs, performs a variety of roles such as questions, exclamations, and commands (Austin, 1975; Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969; Seto, 2019). Moreover, BELF interactions occur between people who speak English as a second (or additional) language (Nickerson & Planken, 2016), a neutral tool for many (Louhiala-Salminen, 2005; Martins, 2017) and it can act as a medium of communication for entrepreneurs. As a result, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) or entrepreneurs should be exposed to this knowledge in order to boost their marketing strategy and international networking. Therefore, this paper seeks to uncover the interactional structure of WhatsApp conversations using Speech Acts Theory.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To examine the structural features of SME Entrepreneurs WhatsApp messages in BELF context.
- ii. To identify the interactional structure of WhatsApp conversations using Speech Acts Theory.
- iii. To identify types of performative Speech Acts used in WhatsApp conversations between Malaysian entrepreneur and business counterparts.



METHODOLOGY

This research focused on WhatsApp interactions in a Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF) context. This study involved four participants who were a Malaysian SME (M1) and three business counterparts from Turkey namely, Turkish A (TA), Turkish B (TB), Turkish C (TC) who are currently conducting online business through social media. Data were gathered through social media WhatsApp messages/conversations. The findings were analysed using Content Analysis to examine the structure of messages and to identify the linguistic features. The analysis was built on Austin and Searle's Speech Act Theory (Austin 2009, as cited in Bayat, 2013). To begin, the data were coded according to the participant's nationality, his counterparts, and the line of conversations in the WhatsApp messages. Later, these were segregated into categories based on two aspects that were the Characteristics of Speech Acts Theory and the five categories of Performatives. Interpretations were made based on the coded conversations and finally, conclusions were derived.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section begins with the locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts during the encounters between M1 and his three business counterparts (TA, TB, and TC). The data demonstrated that there were variations in the characteristics of the different Speech Acts.

Based on the findings, locutionary acts were found to be the most frequently performed Speech Acts. In relation to the conversations between the M1 and his Turkish counterparts, the findings revealed that all the participants primarily used locutionary acts, which were similar to the utterance of a sentence with the literal meaning given along with the utterance (Hanna & Richards, 2019). Moreover, the locutionary act was also performed by the participants to learn more about the products. For example, in interaction between M1 and TB, locutionary acts can be found in their interactions such as when TB said, *"the available color we show on page" [#TBL6]* to M1 and this sentence is considered as a locutionary act because TB clearly wanted M1 to refer to the available colour of the products. Customers require information from business colleagues; as such, they must be transparent and understandable in their business communications. Thus, the locutionary act is usually used to perform the functions of describing the products.

In relation to the categories of Performatives or known as the Five Performative Headings, they include *directives*, *declaratives*, *commissives*, *expressive* and *assertives*. The findings revealed that *directives*, *expressives*, and *commissives* were the most commonly performed by M1 and his business counterparts during the business stage interaction. In terms of frequency, *commissives* and *expressives* recorded the highest usage where the participants used them six times respectively. The directive was ranked second, with five directives phrases appearing in business interactions. This was followed by *assertives* with four times being used. Lastly, declaratives had the lowest usage where only two declaratives were used in the business conversations.



Based on the findings, the participants performed *commissives* in a variety of ways since *commissives* require the interlocutor to commit to do something by conveying an intention such as promises (Searle, 2000; Acheoah, 2017). The interactions between the participants fall into this category to demonstrate that they intend to follow through on their statements. Both M1 and TA performed the *commissives*, with M1 using one commissive sentence and TA using two throughout the business stage. Participant M1 used one commissive sentence which was *"then, I'll banked in to your account, which bank?" [#M1TAL9]*. Alternatively, TA used two commissive sentences which were, *"Let me check ya" [#TAL20] and "Will get back to you shortly" [#TAL21]*. Thus, this indicates that the participants intended to act on their promises during the business interactions.

Subsequently, *expressives* were the most frequently employed by the participant, where the speaker's attitude is revealed in response to situations such as agreeing, giving excuses, and thanking (Searle, 2000; Acheoah, 2017). For example, M1 showed thumbs-up emoji () to indicate that M1 agreed with TA's statement. TB also used *expressive* heading such as "*first I am so sorry for delay*" [#TBL13] to give excuses regarding the inconvenience caused by the participant during the business interaction. Additionally, M1 also used *expressive* such as "*sure*" to convey his gratitude towards TB's statement. As a result, the participants utilised phrases such as "*thanks*," "*sure*" and "*that's great*." This portrays that the *expressive* words were frequently used by the entrepreneurs to show their feelings.

Finally, *directive* Speech Acts was also one of the most performed by the participants. Directive Speech Acts are those that are meant to elicit a response from the listener, such as ordering or requesting (Searle, 2000; Acheoah, 2017). The example of *directive* sentence used by participant M1 is that "*can we buy 21 pieces assorted, mix color but 10 are green?*" [#M1TAL11] where M1 was trying to request for the product from TA. TB used *directive* sentences such as "*CHOOSE ANY ITEM YOU LIKE TO TRY*"[#TBL11] to ask and indirectly order M1 in purchasing the products. As a result, throughout the business interaction stage, the participants utilised *directives* to request something.

CONCLUSION

Many entrepreneurs used BELF in their international business interactions as a tool to overcome any language barriers. The study had shown that locutionary acts were commonly used to describe the products offered in the business. It was also revealed that the categories under performatives were *directives*, *expressives* and *commissives*. To conclude, the use of appropriate linguistic elements can be a great help for entrepreneurs to speed up their business dealings.



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HOTEL RESPONSES TO ONLINE REVIEWS: THE OPENING AND CLOSING MOVE STRUCTURES IN RAPPORT MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Technological advances have had a considerable role in the evolution of communication media. With the rise of digital communication, the transformation from traditional Word-of-Mouth (WOM) to electronic Wordof-Mouth (eWOM) has seen the latter becomes increasingly influential in social media marketing. In the hotel industry, consumers have become more reliant on online reviews in their selection of hotels. The active participation of hotel management in responding to online reviews builds consumer trust and establishes a positive online reputation. Using Spencer-Oatey's (2008) Rapport Management Model (RMM), the present study explores the rapport management strategies that 30 Malaysian hotels used to respond to online reviews from the RMM discourse domain. In particular, the opening and closing move structures in hotel responses were examined with the Genre Analysis Model (Bhatia, 1993). The responses from Malaysian hotels with five-, four-, and three-star ratings were collected from the world's largest online travel website, TripAdvisor, using purposeful sampling. These hotels are situated in tourist destinations in the capital, Kuala Lumpur, and four states of Malaysia. The findings demonstrate the difference in formality in the writing styles. The five- and four-star hotels were inclined to use a more formal writing style, while the three-star hotel management preferred to use a slightly informal writing style to manage rapport with reviewers. These findings provide insights into the management of virtual rapport by Malaysian hotels with their consumers via digital platforms.

Keywords: online reviews; rapport management; hotel responses; move structures, TripAdvisor



INTRODUCTION

Technology has revolutionized communication worldwide, and this development has facilitated global connections between and within communities, cultures, and continents through digital means. This technological revolution has dramatically altered the marketing strategy of traditional Word-of-Mouth (WOM) to electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) in global industries, including the hotel and hospitality sector.

With the large increase in social media use, online reviews are emerging as a key influence on consumer behavior and hotel revenues. Focusing on Malaysia, Wee, Tan, Yeo, and Soh (2018) found that consumers' online reviews significantly affect online hotel booking intentions in Malaysia.

Engaging in online review communities by responding to online reviews is an effective way to establish positive online reputations, which can lead to improved business performance and profitability. Responding to online reviews effectively has been recognized as one of the digital communication challenges for the hotel industry (Sparks, So, & Bradley, 2016). Hotel management responses to online reviews are not only examples of social participation by management, but are also online texts that are viewable by a massive global audience (Zhang & Vásquez, 2014).

Therefore, it is essential for hotel management to manage rapport virtually while responding to online reviews. Using Spencer-Oatey's (2008) Rapport Management Model (RMM), the present study explores the rapport management strategies employed by 30 Malaysian hotels in responding to online reviews on the *TripAdvisor* platform, focusing on move structures.

OBJECTIVE

The general objective of the present study aims to investigate the rapport management strategies utilized by Malaysian five-, four-, and three-star hotels in responding to both positive and negative online reviews. Using the Genre Analysis Model (Bhatia, 1993), the opening and closing move structures in the hotel responses were examined.

The research questions are:

- i. What are the opening and closing move structures in hotel responses to online reviews when managing rapport?
- ii. How do five-, four-, and three-star hotels differ in their move structures when responding to customerreviews?



METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes the research approach of Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA). Herring (2004) proposes this approach in analyzing online interactive behavior in computer-mediated communication. The management responses from Malaysian five-, four-, and three-star hotels were collected from the world's largest travel online community—*TripAdvisor*.

To ensure research reliability, the study incorporates data triangulation. Patton (1999) maintains that data triangulation permits the examination of the consistency of different sources within the same method. Thus, hotel responses were collected from five-, four-, and three-star hotels in Malaysia's capital, Kuala Lumpur, as well as in the states of Selangor, Pahang, Melaka, and Penang, as illustrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Data Triangulation in Collection of Hotel Responses

It is noteworthy that the selected hotels in this study are located in popular tourist destinations for both local and international tourists. Using purposeful sampling, 240 hotel responses to both positive and negative reviews were collected. All the hotel names and reviewers' names in this study were made anonymous due to ethical considerations. Sugiura, Wiles, and Pope (2016) state that privacy and anonymity should be considered by researchers, even though digital data are publicly and easily accessible.

RESULTS

Two sub-moves were identified in the opening move structure: salutation and greeting. In the opening move, the five-star hotel responses showed a preference for using both salutation and greeting in responding to online reviews, when compared to the four- star hotels. Below are some instances from five-star hotels in three different destinations:



- Dear Susan, Happy New Year to you and family! (Kuala Lumpur)
- Dear Monsieur Henry, Bonjour from Pahang Hotel-A! (Pahang)

The findings show that the three-starhotel management rarely used both these sub-moves in their opening structure; they were more inclined to begin their response with an acknowledgment of the online review. Consider the example below of a three-star hotel in Melaka responding to a positive review:

• Dear Sam, Thank you for your fantastic review of Melaka Hotel-C. (Melaka)

As seen in the instance above, after the sub-move of salutation, this hotel directly acknowledged the reviewer's positive review with an expression of gratitude without a sub- move of greeting.

As for the closing move structure, the four sub-moves identified were complimentary close, name, job title, and affiliation. The five- and four-star hotels emphasized the sub-moves of the complimentary close, name, and job title, as shown in the following examples:

- Kind Regards, Adam, Cluster Director of Operations (Kuala Lumpur)
- Warm Regards Mike Hotel Manager (Melaka)

On the other hand, there is considerable variation among the three-star hotels in the closing move. Below are some examples from the three-star hotels from different destinations:

- Forest Regards, Simon Operations Manager (Pahang)
- Hospitably yours, Dayang Hotel Manager (Kuala Lumpur)
- best regards, Mohammed (Selangor)
- The Penang Hotel-E Team (Penang)

The most striking observation to emerge from the comparison between the hotel star categories was that the three-star hotels' complimentary close appears to be more personalized, as shown above. Interestingly, it was found that an independent four-star hotel in Penang personalized the complimentary close, which is rather unusual in comparison with the other four-star hotels, as shown in the following:



• Stay Inspired Kent

Overall, the Malaysian hotels of the three different classes are similar in conveying a friendly and warm tone in the opening and closing structures to establish rapport with reviewers. However, both the fiveand four-star hotels appeared to adopt a more formal writing style than the three-star hotels in the move structures. These findings may be explained by the fact that high-context cultures such as those in Malaysia emphasize formality in achieving effective business communication.

CONCLUSION

The five- and four-star hotels appeared to place emphasis on formality in language and writing styles to manage rapport via hotel responses. This study fills a gap in the rapport management literature by investigating rapport management strategies through the content in Malaysian hotel responses on *TripAdvisor*. In addition, its findings will expand the existing literature on rapport management in workplace communication, particularly in the hotel management, tourism, and hospitality industry. These findings could be useful for the Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH), which is the representative body for hotels in Malaysia, to provide training in writing hotel management responses to establish and enhance online corporate reputation and maintain virtual customer relationships.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author¹ would like to express her sincere appreciation for the research fund and support provided by the University of Newcastle, Australia.

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Acknowledgement





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