Editorial Board

Editorial Preface

Dear Esteemed Readers,

Welcome to Volume 5, Issue 1 of the Journal of Research in Language & Translation (JRLT). This issue presents a diverse collection of articles exploring important themes in language education, translation studies, and sociolinguistic dynamics. Each contribution offers valuable insights that reflect ongoing developments and challenges within the field.

Our first article, "Examining Deep Learning's Effects on Critical Reading and Self-Regulation in Female EFL Students," by Dr Alwahibee and Dr Alotaibi, investigates how deep learning-based instruction can enhance critical reading and self-regulation among female EFL learners. The findings underscore the importance of integrating innovative teaching methods to improve educational outcomes.

Next, Dr Alshehri's article, "Phonetic and Sociolinguistic Dynamics of Vowel Variation in Hiberno-English: An Acoustic Analysis," delves into the phonetic shifts in Hiberno-English. Through a comprehensive analysis, the research highlights the social and cultural factors influencing vowel variation, offering an interesting perspective on the evolution of dialects in the context of globalization.

Dr Al-Mekhlafi and Al-Wajeeh explore the teaching of audiovisual translation in Yemen in their study, "Audiovisual Translation Teaching at Yemeni University Translation Programs." Their investigation reveals significant variation among university programs and emphasizes the necessity of integrating audiovisual translation into curricula to enhance students' skills and employability.

In "Exploring EFL Instructors' Awareness of Metacognitive Strategy Use in Saudi Higher Education Institutions," Dr Al Sultan examines the metacognitive strategies employed by EFL instructors. The study identifies gaps in awareness and suggests professional development opportunities to enhance teaching practices in higher education.

Dr Alturki's article, "Issues of Rendering some Polysemous Quranic Words into English: A Qualitative Study," addresses the complexities of translating polysemous words in the Quran. The research highlights the nuances of translation and the importance of context in conveying the intended meanings, inviting further reflection on the responsibilities of translators.

Dr Aljammaz's study, "Strategies and Sensitivities in Arabic Subtitling of Taboos in Horror TV Series," explores the challenges faced by translators in rendering taboo language while respecting cultural norms. The findings reveal differing approaches between commercial and cybersubtitlers, shedding light on the delicate balance between emotional impact and cultural sensitivity.

Finally, Dr Entisar Aljoundi and Prof Ayub Sheik "Learning English in an Arabic Context: A Study of First-Year Libyan University Students' Challenges in the Learning of English" where they investigate the challenges faced by EFL students in developing communicative competence for academic purposes at a Libyan university. Through a mixed methods approach, the research identifies linguistic, cultural, institutional, and structural challenges that hinder English language acquisition.

Together, these articles contribute to a richer understanding of the intricate relationships between language, culture, and translation. We hope this issue inspires further research and discussion among scholars, educators, and practitioners in the field.

We extend our sincere gratitude to our authors, reviewers, and the editorial team for their dedication and hard work in preparing this issue. Thank you for your continued support of the JRLT.

Editor

Prof. Hind Alotaibi
College of Language Sciences
King Saud University
March 1, 2025

Table of Contents

Examining Deep Learning's Effects on Critical Reading and Self-Regulation in Female EFL Students

Khalid Mohammed Alwahibee
Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University

alwahibee@hotmail.com

Muneera Falah Alotaibi
Post graduate student at English Department at
Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University

Muneerafalah86@gmail.com

_____

الملخص

بحثت هذه الدراسة في تأثير التعليم القائم على التعلم العميق على مهارات القراءة النقدية والتنظيم الذاتي بين طلاب السنة الأولى في جامعة الإمام محمد بن سعود الإسلامية. وشمل البحث ثمانين طالبة جامعية سعودية يدرسن اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) في ذات الجامعة. تم تقسيم الطلاب إلى مجموعة تجريبية، تلقت تعليمات قائمة على التعلم العميق، ومجموعة ضابطة، اتبعت أساليب الفصل الدراسي التقليدية. استخدمت الدراسة تصميم بحث مختلط الأساليب، وجمع البيانات الكمية من خلال استبيانات القراءة النقدية والتنظيم الذاتي، بالإضافة إلى اختبار ما بعد الفصل. تم جمع البيانات النوعية من خلال ملاحظات الفصل. أشارت النتائج إلى أن المجموعة التجريبية تفوقت على المجموعة الضابطة في الاختبار ما بعد الفصل، وأسفرت استبيانات التنظيم الذاتي والقراءة النقدية عن نتائج إيجابية. وتختتم الدراسة بالآثار التربوية التي تقدم فيها أدوارًا عملية للمعلمين لتحسين اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) في الفصول الدراسية. علاوة على ذلك، قدمت بعض الاقتراحات لإجراء المزيد من البحوث لتوسيع عدد الموضوعات، والتأثير المحتمل للعوامل الديموغرافية والثقافية والبيئية، واقتراحات أخرى.

Examining Deep Learning's Effects on Critical Reading and

Self-Regulation in Female EFL Students

Khalid Mohammed Alwahibee
Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University

alwahibee@hotmail.com

Muneera Falah Alotaibi
Post graduate student at English Department at
Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University

Muneerafalah86@gmail.com

_____

Abstract

This study investigated the impact of deep learning-based instructions on critical reading skills and self-regulation among freshman English learners at Imam Mohammad ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU). The research involved eighty Saudi female university students studying English as a foreign language (EFL) at IMISU. The students were divided into an experimental group, which received deep learning-based instruction, and a control group, which followed traditional classroom methods. The study employed a mixed-methods research design, collecting quantitative data through critical reading and self-regulation questionnaires, as well as a posttest. Qualitative data was gathered through class observations. The results indicated that the experimental group outperformed the control group in the posttest, and the self-regulation and critical reading questionnaires yielded positive outcomes. The study concludes with pedagogical implications in which it offers practical roles for teachers to improve English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in classrooms. Moreover, it gave some suggestions for further research to expand the number of subjects, the potential influence of demographic, cultural, and environmental factors, and other suggestions.

_____

Introduction

Background

Reading plays a crucial role in academic, social, and personal development, providing both pleasure and the necessary skills for success in various aspects of life (Anderson et al., 1985). It is an interactive process where readers construct meaning through their engagement with the text (Durkin, 1993). Snow (2001) emphasized the interactive nature of reading, stating that it involves extracting and constructing meaning through engagement with written language. Critical reading enhances higher-order thinking skills by enabling learners to evaluate, infer, and draw conclusions based on evidence.

Critical reading involves analyzing a text to identify patterns, information, values, assumptions, and language usage (Kurland, 2004). It helps students become better readers and thinkers by encouraging them to view reading as a process rather than a product, and by developing skills to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what they read (Abd Kadir et al., 2014). Therefore, it is essential to expose and teach students how to be critical readers.

Self-regulation, as highlighted by Cohen (2012), is vital for effective learning. Students need to develop the ability to self-regulate and monitor their thinking processes. Zimmerman (2000a) defined self-regulation as self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions that are planned and adapted to achieve personal goals. Self-regulatory processes include goal setting, self-monitoring, self-evaluating, self-consequences, environmental structuring, and seeking help (Kitsantas, 2002). Self-regulation influences learners' performance, metacognition, intrinsic motivation, and strategic actions (Sun, 2014). It allows learners to plan, set goals, organize, self-monitor, self-evaluate, and be self-aware and knowledgeable in their learning approach.

More recent studies have further emphasized the importance of self-regulation for student success. Wang and Sperling (2020) found that students who demonstrated stronger self-regulation skills performed better academically and were more engaged in their learning. Additionally, Zimmerman and Schunk (2021) highlighted the crucial role of self-regulatory strategies, such as time management and task planning, in helping students adapt to the challenges of remote and hybrid learning environments during the COVID-19 pandemic. These findings underscore the need to explicitly teach and support the development of self-regulation skills in educational settings.

Deep learning, as described by Biggs (1999), involves seeking meaning, understanding concepts, evaluating patterns, and critically examining information. It leads students to connect ideas, relate them to their experiences, and critically evaluate for patterns and meanings. Deeper learning enables individuals to transfer knowledge and apply it to new situations (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012). It fosters domain expertise and the ability to apply knowledge to solve problems. Teaching practices that promote deeper learning create a positive learning community, promoting content knowledge and interpersonal competencies (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012).

Research on approaches to learning supports the positive correlation between a deep approach and making connections, resolving misunderstandings, reflecting on understanding, and examining the logic of arguments within a text (Biggs, 1993; Veeman et al., 2003). In contrast, a surface approach is associated with reproducing text content by summarizing or

repeating it and passive misunderstanding (Biggs, 1993; Veeman et al., 2003). A deep approach involves higher-level questions that integrate knowledge and make predictions, while a surface approach focuses on basic facts and procedures (Chin & Brown, 2000). A deep approach to reading involves higher-order cognitive skills such as analysis, synthesis, problem-solving, and metacognitive thinking (Hermida, 2016). Deep readers focus on the author's message, ideas, argument structure, and make connections with prior knowledge, applying this understanding to new contexts.

Wong's (2016) study found that Saudi students faced unique academic challenges, particularly regarding critical reading skills. Despite demonstrating strong memorization of grammatical rules, the students struggled with basic text comprehension. They were especially unable to respond effectively to open-ended questions requiring critical thinking, such as those focused on interpreting purpose or meaning. Wong attributed these difficulties to the predominant teaching approaches in the Saudi education system, which heavily emphasize rote memorization (surface learning) rather than developing deeper understanding. The curriculum typically relies on conventional methods like audio-lingual and grammar translation, which may not sufficiently foster critical thinking abilities.

To address these needs, Wong (2016) designed a specialized academic reading curriculum. This approach provided "explicit instruction in the critical thinking strategies" (p. 62) while also offering scaffolding support to improve the Saudi learners' text comprehension and critical analysis skills. The goal was to tailor the instructional methods to better meet the unique learning requirements of this student population.

Saudi students face unique challenges in critical reading due to the memorization-based education system and reliance on traditional teaching methods (Wong, 2016). Wong's curriculum aimed to address these challenges by providing explicit instruction in critical thinking strategies and scaffolding support. Therefore, for this study, deep learning-based lessons were designed and pre- and post-tests were administered to measure skill acquisition over time. A critical reading and self-regulation questionnaire were also administered, and qualitative data was collected through class observations. The study analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data to examine the effect of deep learning-based instruction on critical reading skills and self-regulation.

Statement of the Problem

Due to the lack of studies investigating the effect of deep learning instruction on female Saudi students' critical reading and self-regulation, the current study aims to build upon Alotaibi's (2013) findings by exploring the impact of deep learning-based instruction on critical reading skills and self-regulation among first-year female students at Imam Mohammed ibn Saud Islamic University.

Alotaibi (2013) conducted a mixed-method study to explore the relationship between male Saudi students' academic achievement and self-regulated learning. The findings indicated a positive correlation between self-regulated learning and students' performance, as well as their ideals of their future selves. However, despite the significance of critical reading for language learning, several previous studies (Wong, 2016) have revealed that it is often neglected in English language teaching. Additionally, research on self-regulation has emphasized the need

for language learners to regulate their own performance and behaviors. Various studies (Jenson, 2011; Naseri & Motallebzadeh, 2016) have stressed the importance of fostering learners' self-regulation abilities.

In our own experiences as educators and students at Saudi universities, we have observed that self-regulation strategies are not given due attention in teaching practices. While lesson goals are introduced, the personal goal setting of learners is rarely addressed in the classroom. Furthermore, there is a lack of formative or summative assessment of self-regulated strategies, even when they are taught.

This study aims to address these gaps by investigating the effects of deep learning-based instruction on the development of critical reading skills and self-regulation among female Saudi freshmen at Imam Mohammed ibn Saud Islamic University in Riyadh. It is worth noting that this study differs from Alotaibi's (2013) research, as it focuses specifically on female students to contribute to the research field in the context of deep learning-based instruction.

Purpose of the Study

The study had four main objectives. Firstly, it aimed to assist freshman students in understanding the significance of critical reading in the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Secondly, it sought to identify the specific critical reading skills that are essential for female freshman EFL learners. Thirdly, the study aimed to examine the effectiveness of deep learning in enhancing the critical reading skills and self-regulation abilities of female freshman EFL learners. Lastly, it aimed to propose an observation, and a hypothesized treatment plan based on a deep-learning approach, with the intention of fostering the development of critical reading skills and self-regulation among female freshman EFL learners. These objectives collectively formed the foundation for the study and guided its research methodology and analysis.

Significance of the Study

This study addresses a gap in teaching reading in Arab universities, specifically the lack of deep-learning and higher-order thinking skills among Saudi students. A curriculum was developed to help learners critically comprehend and evaluate texts using deep learning-based instructions, aiming for improved results. The study aims to change reading instruction in undergraduate classes at Al-Imam Mohammad ibn Saud Islamic University, and this approach can be adopted by other Saudi universities seeking innovative methods to motivate students and implement deep learning-based instruction.

Research Questions

This study answered the following questions:

1. What is the effect of the deep learning-based instruction on freshman female EFL learners' critical reading skills?
2. What is the effect of deep learning-based instruction on freshman female EFL learners' self-regulation?
3. How effective is the proposed instruction in evolving freshman female EFL learners' attitudes towards reading?
4. How can a deep learning-based instruction be integrated in freshman female EFL learners' reading classes?

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

Deep learning, introduced by Marton and Säljö (1976), encompasses higher-order thinking skills and a personal commitment to acquiring knowledge. It enables learners to transfer concepts to different situations, resulting in a rich network of knowledge and understanding. Deep learning leads to qualitative goals and emotional and cognitive development. Motivation plays a crucial role, with learners employing either deep or surface-learning strategies. Surface learning focuses on achieving minimum effort for passing grades, lacking the knowledge transfer of deep learning. The deep learning process involves a recursive cycle that moves from specialized to integrated approaches, incorporating experience, reflection, thought processes, and action.

Borredon et al. (2011) describe a three-level learning process. The first level emphasizes performance and specialized learning styles, while the second level focuses on interpretation and learning-oriented approaches. The third level is integrative and development-oriented, involving all four modes of learning. Traditional lecture-based instruction primarily addresses the first level, but incorporating practical applications and reflection taps into the second level. The third level is stimulated by additional learning opportunities and collective reflection, linking experience with conceptual knowledge.

Deep learning is associated with learner-centered methodologies that enhance metacognitive skills and promote deeper understanding. Fink (2003) presents a taxonomy encompassing foundational knowledge, application, integration, human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn. Interactivity and interchangeability among these categories are crucial for deep learning, fostering significant and long-lasting knowledge. Constructivism, emphasizing active engagement, problem-solving, and collaboration, is closely related to deep learning.

Deep learning approaches differ from surface learning in terms of student engagement, contentment, and understanding. Internal motivation is often associated with deep learning, while external motivation is more common in surface learning. Students typically employ both levels of learning, gradually transitioning to critical thinking and higher-order skills. As educators encourage greater involvement and progress through the taxonomy, assimilation, synthesis, reflection, and self-commitment become essential elements.

Functional Definitions

Deep Learning: "The deep approach arises from a perceived need to engage with the task appropriately and meaningfully, so the student tries to use the most appropriate cognitive activities for handing it." (Biggs, 2003, p. 16)

Critical Reading: Critical reading is defined as "a dialogue between the reader and the text" (Grabe, 1988, p. 56).

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL): According to Zimmerman (1989), self-regulated learning (SRL) is defined as "the degree to which students are metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning process" (p. 329).

Surface Learning: "The surface approach arises from an intention to get the task out of the way with minimum trouble while appearing to meet the course requirements" (Biggs, 2003, p. 14).

Deep Learning

Rhem (1995), McKay and Kember (1997), as cited in Millis (2010), identified four key characteristics of deep learning. Firstly, deep learning involves a knowledge-based system that focuses on understanding and integrating information, leading to a cumulative learning experience. Secondly, learners need to have an appropriate level of motivation, with intrinsic motivation being maximized, in order to develop a sense of ownership and engagement with the material. Thirdly, deep learning requires active learner participation, emphasizing active learning rather than passive learning. Finally, interaction and collaboration with others, whether it be with teachers or fellow students, are essential components of deep learning-based instruction.

Critical Reading

Reading has been the focus of numerous research studies due to its importance in interpreting messages and acquiring information from texts. Pretorius (2010) found a strong correlation between reading proficiency and academic success, highlighting that increased reading leads to higher grades. Critical reading, as described by Duncan (2014), goes beyond interpreting messages and involves analyzing and evaluating texts.

Scholars have demonstrated the positive impact of critical reading strategies on reading comprehension and performance (Abd Kadir et al., 2014). Nasrollahi et al. (2009) define critical reading as examining evidence, evaluating arguments, considering limitations, assessing interpretations, and deciding the extent to which the reader accepts the authors' arguments. Teaching critical reading strategies is essential for developing this skill (Critical Reading Strategies, 2009). Salisbury University (2009) identifies seven strategies for critical reading, such as previewing, questioning, reflecting, evaluating, and comparing, which foster deep learning and understanding of the text.

Yu (2015) suggests that strong reading skills correlate with strong writing skills. Therefore, this research aims to provide instructional guidelines for educators to help struggling readers become better readers, writers, and academic performers by implementing critical reading strategies within deep learning-based instruction and self-regulated learning (SRL). Critical reading is a valuable skill and very important which is becoming increasingly rare among college graduates. Unlike passive reading, critical reading involves analyzing texts and evaluating their impartiality. It consists of three stages: analyzing what is said, what the text does, and what it means. Foorman and Torgesen (2001) emphasize the importance of critical reading skills for university students, as they enhance literacy and enable students to distinguish between biased and objective information.

In the business world, critical reading skills are also essential. Cameron (2008) highlights the significance of critical reading in contract signing, where careful examination is necessary to identify adverse provisions. Critical reading is also crucial when reviewing financial statements and other documents for making informed decisions, according to Halpern (2003).

Self-Regulated Learning

Distinguishing self-regulation from mental capacity or academic achievement is crucial. Self-regulation involves the process of self-direction and encompasses a range of activities that enable learners to convert their mental skills into abilities (Zimmerman et al., 2002). Over time, these abilities can develop into habits through guided positive reinforcement (Butler, 2002) under the supervision of educators (Paris & Paris, 2001).

Building on this foundation of self-regulation, Zimmerman (1998a) identified two categories of self-regulated learners: metacognitively active learners and behaviorally self-regulated learners. These learners possess several characteristics, including self-awareness, knowledge, decisiveness in learning, intrinsic motivation, seeking information and advice, self-instruction ability, and self-initiation and management. Self-regulated learners, regardless of their age or abilities, are more likely to excel academically and have an optimistic outlook on their future. This allows teachers to adopt learner-centered approaches and strive for excellence among their students.

In the field of education, various models of self-regulated learning (SRL) are utilized, including problem-based learning, distance learning, scenario-based learning, self-directed learning, and self-planned learning. While these models may differ, they all share common characteristics that form the foundations of SRL, such as self-motivation, personal learning commitments, reflective thinking, and performance assessment. Rehearsing, explaining, and illustrating concepts using written or visual aids is an integral part of acquiring and utilizing information. These strategies, as suggested help students connect their learning to real-life experiences, enhancing long-term memory retention. Various approaches proposed by Cepeda (2006) have also proven effective in improving recall, such as diversifying subjects or activities in different settings instead of repetitive sessions focused solely on one subject.

Modifying the learning environment contributes to memory retrieval and retention. By managing their physical, emotional, and psychological environment and avoiding procrastination, students take responsibility for their learning. Self-regulated learners strive to become logical thinkers rather than exhibiting worrisome or perfectionistic tendencies. Standard schooling often lacks teaching aids and encourages a fixed approach to learning, limiting students' ability to think reflectively and develop their own personalized learning methods.

Zimmerman (1998b) identified three phases of self-regulated learning: the forethought phase, characterized by metacognitive techniques and preparation; the performance phase, focused on executing plans, monitoring progress, self-instruction, and fostering learner autonomy; and the self-reflection phase, where students assess their own performance and formulate strategies for future assignments. These phases form a learning cycle that supports self-regulated learning.

Previous Studies

Upon reviewing several studies in this regard, we can summarize the effects as follows:
Hattie and Donoghue's (2016) model of learning identifies various strategies that foster metacognition and self-regulated deeper thinking. These include elaboration, organization, strategy monitoring, concept mapping, metacognitive strategies, self-regulation, and elaborative examination. Building on this, Hall et al. (2004) found that integrating positive changes in the

educational setting can impact the learning styles of first-year accounting students. Deep approaches to learning, such as extensive reading, making text connections, and connecting information to prior knowledge, were associated with increased use. Moreover, some studies have emphasized the importance of understanding students' interests, skills, and educational contexts in promoting deep learning. For instance, Phillip and Graeff (2014) introduced a simulation to an accounting class, recommending active learning strategies to prepare students for real-world experiences and connect abstract concepts to practical applications.

Similarly, Tochon (2013) discovered that deep learning combined with blended learning and self-regulated projects increased students' self-sufficiency, curriculum authority, and oral proficiency in English. Expanding on this, Wang's (2013) study highlighted the positive impact of higher-order education, integrative learning, and reflective learning on developing lifelong learning tendencies and intellectual growth. Furthermore, Offir et al. (2008) investigated the effects of synchronous versus asynchronous deep learning in a distance learning system, revealing positive impacts on student achievement. This body of research underscores the multifaceted nature of deep learning and the need for tailored instructional approaches to foster it effectively.

The significance of deep-learning approaches in various educational contexts, including language learning and distance education, and emphasize the importance of active learning strategies and creating developmentally appropriate learning environments. The integration of deep learning in education has significantly transformed teaching and learning practices. Dede (2014) highlights the necessity of using technology to enrich content and pedagogy while fostering connections between in- and out-of-class learning. Digital teaching platforms (DTPs) facilitate methods like case-based instruction and collaborative learning (Dieterle, 2009). Initially focused on knowledge-based approaches, the scope of deep learning has expanded to include learning diagnostics and analytics (Luckin et al., 2016), with applications in special needs education, such as early dyslexia detection.

Studies indicate that deep learning strategies improve critical reading skills among EFL students (Chen & Dhillon, 2012; Hermida, 2009) and enhance self-regulated learning (Ghasemi & Dowlatabadi, 2018). This body of research demonstrates the diverse benefits of deep learning, promoting critical thinking, reading proficiency, and self-regulation in students. Sun et al. (2022) found that deep learning activities in blended environments enhance academic competencies and cognitive development, fostering intrinsic motivation, critical thinking, and collaboration skills. Learners using these strategies achieve higher pass and merit rates, indicating improved academic performance.

Hật and Le (2023) reported a positive correlation between completed assignments and assessment performance, with reflective writing exercises improving content retention and higher-order thinking. These studies highlight the effectiveness of instructional strategies that encourage active engagement and advanced cognitive processes, suggesting that increased learning activities and reflective practices can sustain deep learning among students.

Critical reading from a critical literacy perspective in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has received limited focus. Park (2011) found that integrating critical literacy practices, like analyzing news articles and peer discussions, enhanced EFL students' skills in Korea. Macknish

(2011) showed that Chinese EFL students in Singapore could uncover hidden messages in texts through peer interactions, indicating critical thinking can develop regardless of language proficiency. Ko (2013) highlighted effective instructional strategies for promoting critical literacy. Le et al. (2024) emphasized the need for critical reading education to balance lower and higher-order thinking skills, recognizing linguistic proficiency as essential for effective critical reading.

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL), developed by Barry Zimmerman, involves learners managing their cognition, actions, emotions, and incentives to achieve goals. The SRL cycle includes prediction, performance, self-reflection, and self-reaction, allowing students to set goals and evaluate their work. Research shows a positive link between SRL interventions and academic performance, with studies by Ahmad (2007) and Muhammad and Abu Bakar (2015) indicating that enhanced SRL skills correlate with higher achievement. Additionally, deep learning is tied to self-regulation, as shown by Kollerup (2015) and others. Junaštíková (2024) noted a connection between SRL and technology post-COVID-19, highlighting teachers' roles in fostering SRL skills. Ultimately, SRL is vital for lifelong learning and can significantly improve academic outcomes, especially for disadvantaged learners.

Methodology

Research Design and Procedures

A mixed-methods research design was used in this study, incorporating two quantitative approaches: a quasi-experimental method and a survey to explore students' attitudes toward critical reading and self-regulation. Permission was obtained from the English department at IMISU in Riyadh, and two sections were randomly selected—one as the control group taught by a regular teacher, and the other as the experimental group taught by a researcher. The experimental group received additional deep learning-based instruction alongside the standard curriculum. Pretests established a baseline, and after several weeks of instruction, a posttest was given in Week 7 to assess the instructional impact.

Participants

The research participants were 80 Saudi students aged 18 to 20, with English proficiency levels ranging from A1 to B2. Two sections of a Level 1 reading course were randomly selected, each with 40 students. One section served as the control group, receiving standard instruction from the regular teacher, while the experimental group, also with 40 students, was taught by a researcher who included additional reading activities and deep learning-based methods.

Instruments

The study employed the following instruments:
1. Pretest and posttest: The study used these tests to measure students' critical reading skills before and after the experiment.
2. Questionnaires: The study utilized the questionnaire to assess students' attitudes towards critical reading and self-regulation.
3. Observation sheets: This tool would allow the researchers to systematically document the differences in student engagement, critical thinking, and self-regulatory behaviors between the experimental and control groups.

For the critical reading test, the researchers adapted Wallace (2003) test to evaluate a wide range of critical reading skills among EFL students. The test was administered to both the experimental and control groups. Prior to its administration, the researchers checked the validity and reliability of the tests.

To establish the validity of the pre- and posttests, two academic professors evaluated the test. Validity is a key concept in research that refers to the extent to which a study or measure accurately represents or captures what it is intended to measure. Therefore, the research measured different types of validity that research aimed to establish. Face validity was established by presenting the test to a group of students at the same academic level, considering their feedback, and making necessary revisions. Content validity was established by involving academic professors, teachers, and educational supervisors to evaluate the test's relevance, clarity, and appropriateness for the study's participants. Their insights and suggestions were taken into account, resulting in a final test comprising 30 questions, including both open-ended and multiple-choice items.

The researchers assessed the internal consistency validity by calculating Pearson's correlation coefficients between each test question's score and the total test score. The obtained correlation coefficient values (0.482 to 0.736) were statistically significant, indicating the consistency and applicability of the test questions to the study's sample.

Reliability of the Reading Pre- and Posttests
The study employed a test repeat (stability) method to determine the reliability of the pre- and posttests. The test was administered twice with a 2-week gap, and the Pearson correlation was calculated. After the initial test, the experimental group received deep learning-based instruction. A posttest focusing on critical reading skills was conducted to assess participants' progress. The test booklets were scored using rubrics, and manual scoring was performed. The percentages for both groups were calculated, and statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS. The correlation coefficient between the two test applications was found to be 0.637, which was statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates that the test repeat method demonstrated reliability, suggesting that the test is consistent and can be depended upon to provide accurate results when administered to the main sample.

Table 1
Pearson Correlation Coefficient between the Two Application Scores of the Reading Test

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Sig
Pre	0.637**	0.01
Post	0.694	0.01

Questionnaires
First: Self-Regulation Questionnaire
For this research, Brown et al.'s (1999) questionnaire was used. It was modified to investigate self-regulation in Saudi female university students studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The questionnaire employed a Likert scale with mainly closed-ended

statements having five response options. Closed-ended statements are advantageous due to their straightforward coding and tabulation. Additionally, the questionnaire included positive or negative statements rated on a five-point Likert scale. The statements were developed following recommendations for brevity, natural language, and the avoidance of ambiguity or loaded words. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the collected data, with a sample size of 80 students providing diverse perspectives.

Second: Critical Reading Attitude Questionnaire

Most items included in the questionnaire were derived from the attitude toward reading questionnaire developed by Yildirim and Söylemez (2018). The aim of the questionnaire survey conducted in this study was to explore the attitude of Saudi female university students towards critical reading classes in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context.

Validity
Validity for Self-Regulation Questionnaire

For this purpose, face validity and internal validity were measured. For the face validity, few professors evaluated the questionnaire. Accordingly, some statements were modified in the final version of the questionnaire. As for the internal validity, the Correlation Coefficients between each statement and the total score on the self-regulation questionnaire were calculated and ranged between 0.509 and 0.860. The results show that all correlation coefficient values were statistically significant. This indicates the consistency of test questions and their applicability to the study's main sample.

Validity for Critical Reading Attitude Questionnaire

For this purpose, face validity and internal validity were measured. For the face validity, the same professors evaluated the questionnaire. Accordingly, some statements were modified in the main questionnaire. As for the internal validity, the Person Correlation Coefficients between each statement and the total score on the Critical Reading attitude questionnaire were measured and ranged between 0.565 and 0.940. The results show that all correlation coefficient values were statistically significant. This indicates the consistency of test questions and their applicability to the study's main sample. The results indicate significant correlations between all statements in the critical reading questionnaire and its total score, with significance levels ranging from 0.05 to 0.01. These correlation coefficient values confirm the consistency between the participants' responses to the statements and their effectiveness in measuring the intended purpose of the questionnaire.

Reliability
Reliability for the Self-Regulation Questionnaire

To assess the reliability of the self-regulation questionnaire, two methods were employed: Cronbach's alpha coefficient and the split-half method using Guttman's equation. This was necessary due to the uneven split of the questionnaire statements, as the number of statements was odd. The reliability coefficients are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Cronbach's Alpha and Split-Half Coefficients of the Self-Regulation Questionnaire

Self-Regulation Questionnaire	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Split-Half Reliability	
		Two Parts Correlation Coefficient	Split-Half Reliability Coefficient
	0.977	0.986	0.993

The results displayed in Table 6 demonstrate that the self-regulation questionnaire exhibited high reliability. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.977, and the split-half reliability coefficient was 0.993, both of which are statistically acceptable values. These findings indicate strong internal consistency and suggest that the questionnaire can be relied upon to yield accurate results when administered to the main sample of the study.

Reliability of the Critical Reading Questionnaire

The reliability of the critical reading questionnaire was assessed using two methods: Cronbach's alpha coefficient and the split-half method with Guttman's equation. This was necessary due to the uneven split of the questionnaire phrases, as the number of phrases was odd. The reliability coefficients are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3

Cronbach's Alpha and Split-Half Coefficients of Critical Reading Questionnaire

Critical Reading Questionnaire	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Split-Half Reliability	
		Two Parts Correlation Coefficient	Split-Half Reliability Coefficient
	0.976	0.903	0.948

The findings in Table 9 reveal that the critical reading questionnaire demonstrated high reliability. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.976, and the split-half reliability coefficient was 0.948, both of which are statistically acceptable values. These results indicate strong internal consistency of the critical reading questionnaire. Consequently, it can be trusted to yield accurate results when applied to the main sample of the study.

Data Analysis

Mixed-methods research combines quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis to gain a deeper understanding of a research problem. In this study, data were collected through a critical reading test, a self-regulation questionnaire (quantitative data), and a critical reading questionnaire (qualitative data). Various methods, such as stability reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, and split-half reliability coefficient, were used to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire. The Pearson correlation coefficient measured the validity of the study tools. Descriptive and analytical statistics, including frequency calculations, means analysis, standard

deviation, independent samples t-test, and paired samples t-test, were performed. Effect size calculations, using eta squared ($\eta2$) for independent groups and Cohen's d indicator (Cohen's d) for paired groups, determined the impact of deep learning-based instruction on critical reading skills and self-regulation in EFL learners.

Tools for Data Analysis

To meet the research goals and analyze the data, the researchers used the software package SPSS (version 21). Descriptive statistics, such as frequency calculations for counts and percentages, were performed. A significance level of $p < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Results and Discussion

Results of Research Questions

To answer the first question, the researchers administered a pretest of critical reading skills to both the experimental and control groups in this study to ensure that the two groups statistically comparable. We measured the mean and standard deviation values of the test results based on the group variable (experimental or control) during the pretest.

We conducted an independent sample t-test to know if there were any significance differences in mean scores between the experimental and control groups in the critical reading skills test. See Table 4 for the results.

Table 4

M, SD, and T-Test for the Experimental vs Control Groups in the Pre-application of the Critical Reading Skills Test

Level	Application	Group	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	T Value	Value of Significance A	Level of Significance 0.05
Overall Score of Critical Reading Skills Test	Pre	*Control*	40	26.22	3.57	0.713	0.478	Not statistically significant

According to the results presented in Table 4, there were no significant differences found between the experimental and control groups in their performance on the pretest of critical reading skills. The value of t for the total score on the test was 0.713, and its significance level was higher than the predetermined threshold ($0.05 \geq \alpha$). This indicates that the two groups, the experimental and control, were equivalent in terms of their mastery of critical reading skills prior to the start of the experiment. Therefore, any changes observed in the level of critical reading skills among students in the English language department is attributed to the independent variable of the experiment, which is the deep learning-based instruction.

To answer the second, the researchers tested and confirmed the following hypothesis "There are no statistically significant differences at the level of $0.05 \geq \alpha$ between the mean scores of the experimental group of students (who studied according to deep learning-based instruction) in the pre- and post-applications of the self-regulation questionnaire."

To test and confirm the hypothesis, the means and standard deviations of the experimental group's scores were computed for both the pre- and post-application of the self-regulation questionnaire. The t-value was then employed to compare the means of the control and experimental groups. See Table 5.

Table 5

M, SD, and T-Test Results, Differences Among the Means of the Experimental Group in the pre- and Post-applications of the Self-Regulation Questionnaire

Level	Group	Application	N	M	SD	T Value	Value of Significance A	Level of Significance 0.05	(Effect Size)
Total Score of Self-Regulation Questionnaire	Experi-mental	Pre	40	3.17	0.248	10.649	0.000	Statistically significant	1.68 **(Great)**

Table 5 reveals a significant statistical difference between the scores of the experimental group of students in the pre- and post-application of the self-regulation questionnaire. The t-value for the differences between the pre- and post-application scores on the total score of the self-regulation questionnaire was 10.649, with a statistical significance of 0.000, which is lower than the predetermined significance level of $0.05 \geq \alpha$. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It says, "There are statistically significant differences at the level of $0.05 \geq \alpha$ between the mean scores of the experimental group of students (who studied according to deep learning-based instruction) in the pre and postapplication of the self-regulation questionnaire." Table 5 also shows that the mean score of the experimental group of students' performances was 3.66, while the mean score of the control group of students' performances in the pre-application on the same questionnaire items was 3.07 out of a total score of 5. Furthermore, as the mean score in the post-application phase was higher than that of the pre-application phase, it indicates that the trend of differences favors the post-application.

Table 5 also presents the Cohen's d indicator value for the total score, which was calculated as 1.68. This indicates that the independent variable of deep learning-based instruction plays a direct role in the observed differences between the pre- and post-application of the self-regulation questionnaire. Consequently, it suggests that deep learning-based instruction has a significant effect on the development of self-regulation among the students in the English Language Department.

To answer the third question, the researchers collected data from the experimental group, including the frequency, percentages, standard deviations, and means of their responses for each item in the critical reading questionnaire. These measurements were used to analyze the results and determine the order of importance for each item in descending order.

Table 6 (in the Appendix) presents the findings that indicate the experimental group had positive attitudes towards critical reading. The overall mean score for their responses to the total questionnaire was 4.36 out of 5.00, and the p-value (sig) was lower than the predetermined level

of significance ($0.05 \geq \alpha$). This suggests that the mean score of the experimental group's responses surpassed the agreement threshold (3), indicating that the individuals in the experimental group generally had positive responses to the paragraphs in the critical reading questionnaire.

Table 6

General Results for the mean, S.D, T. value, P. Value for All Items for the Experimental Group

General Results	Mean	S. D	T-Value	P. Value
	4.36	0.421	20.443	0.000

Furthermore, there was consensus among the individuals in the experimental group regarding their attitudes towards critical reading. The questionnaire consisted of 33 statements, with mean scores ranging from 3.92 to 4.65. The p-values (sig) for these statements were also lower than the proposed level of significance ($0.05 \geq \alpha$). This indicates that the mean scores for the responses to these statements exceeded the agreement threshold (3), demonstrating the positive attitudes of the experimental group towards the statements on the critical reading questionnaire.

When the statements were ranked in descending order based on the degree of agreement, they came as follows:

1. Statement 4 had a mean of 4.70 out of 5, a standard deviation of 0.564, and a p-value (sig) lower than the proposed significance level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$).
2. Statement 33 had a mean of 4.65 out of 5, a standard deviation of 0.533, and a p-value (sig) lower than the proposed significance level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$).
3. Statement 29 had a mean of 4.62 out of 5, a standard deviation of 0.540, and a p-value (sig) lower than the proposed significance level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$).
4. Statement 12 had a mean of 4.62 out of 5, a standard deviation of 0.586, and a p-value (sig) lower than the proposed significance level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$).
5. Statement 28 had a mean of 4.60 out of 5, a standard deviation of 0.545, and a p-value (sig) lower than the proposed significance level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$.

See Table 7 for the rearrangement of all statements based on students' responses.

To answer the fourth question, the researchers followed few steps to answer this question:
Step One
The data from the pre- and post-application of the critical reading test and self-regulation questionnaire were analyzed. The results indicated that the independent variable of deep learning-based instructions was responsible for an increase in the mean score of the experimental group. The pretest t-value for the total score of the test, comparing the control and experimental groups, was 0.713. Its significance was greater than the predetermined level ($0.05 \geq \alpha$), indicating equivalence between the two groups. The difference in mean scores between the experimental group (33.27) and the control group (28.15) in the post-application of the test

suggests that deep learning-based instructions contributed to the development of critical reading skills.

Furthermore, the statistical analysis of the self-regulation questionnaire in both pre and post-application indicates an increase in the use of self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies in the responses of the experimental group, which received deep learning-based instructions. The mean score of the experimental group's performance on the questionnaire was 3.66, while the mean score of the control group's performance in the pre-application was 3.07 out of a total score of 5. As the mean score in the post-application phase was higher than the pre-application mean, it suggests that deep learning-based instructions contributed to the development of SRL in the experimental group.

Step Two

The researchers conducted face-to-face and online class observations of both groups and found that students in the experimental group were more engaged and aware of cognitive and metacognitive processes. Three observation visits were made, with results indicating that deep learning-based instruction helped students enhance their critical reading skills and develop self-regulated learning (SRL) techniques, fostering autonomy. The experimental group showed a strong sense of responsibility for their learning, with observation results falling in the positive continuum (very high to high), while the control group's results were in the negative continuum. This finding was supported by questionnaire results. (See Tables 8 and 9)

In contrast, the control group, which used traditional instructional methods, did not exhibit improvements in critical reading skills or self-regulation. To validate these findings, the researchers interviewed the control group's instructor. The interview revealed that, after four weeks of instruction, there was no significant difference in the students' use of critical reading skills and self-regulated learning compared to their initial state.

Step Three

The researchers worked together with English Language instructors from IMSIU's Department of English Language to investigate the impact of incorporating deep learning-based instructions on freshmen students in their reading course. The majority of instructors agreed that deep learning-based instruction should be implemented at the university, considering that many students relied on surface learning strategies solely to pass the course. They also recognized the importance of teaching students self-regulated learning (SRL). The teachers further recommended that teachers receive professional training to effectively utilize deep learning-based strategies and a cognitive and metacognitive training package in the classroom, thereby maximizing the benefits of deep learning and SRL.

Based on the data collected from tests, questionnaires, and the responses from the focus group, it is reasonable to conclude that integrating deep learning-based instructions and strategies at the university level will enhance students' development of critical reading skills and self-regulation. By prioritizing professional staff development and receiving support from the deanship, the incorporation of deep learning-based instructions will contribute to students' growth in critical reading skills and self-regulation.

Discussion

The findings of this study emphasize the crucial role of teaching critical reading strategies, demonstrating that formal deep learning-based instruction effectively enhances learners' critical reading skills. This improvement is attributed to the structured tasks and goal-setting strategies that promote self-regulated learning (SRL). The results align with previous research, such as Parson's (2002) work on metacognitive strategies, which found that such strategies enhance reading comprehension and critical thinking. Similarly, the experimental group in this study, who received deep learning instruction, outperformed their peers taught through traditional methods.

Further supporting this, Chen and Dhillon (2012) noted that deep learning strategies significantly improve reading skills, particularly using Briggs's (2003) 3P model. Hermida (2009) found that first-year students shifted from surface learning to more critical evaluation after instruction in deep learning strategies. This shift indicates that interactive, student-centered activities can transform learners into more proficient readers.

Statistical data from pre- and post-assessments revealed a direct correlation between critical reading strategies and deep learning instruction, with the experimental group performing better than the control group. Prior studies by Heikkilä and Lonka (2006) and others have also shown a strong link between SRL and a deep learning approach. Heikkilä and Lonka found that expectations of success are positively correlated with SRL, while Vermunt (1998) concluded that deep-processing strategies depend on self-regulation. Lonka and Lindblom-Ylänne (1996) reinforced that a deep learning approach influences students' self-regulation and goal orientation.

Overall, self-regulated learning, deep understanding, and critical evaluation are interconnected, contributing to academic success (Heikkilä et al., 2011). Research shows that a deep learning approach correlates with better outcomes, while a surface approach is linked to poorer performance (Entwistle et al., 2001). This study reinforces the importance of integrating deep learning strategies to enhance critical reading and self-regulation.

In educational psychology, there's a consensus that effective learners employ cognitive strategies, such as rehearing, elaborating, and organizing, to enhance comprehension (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990). These strategies lead to improved academic performance. High-achieving students tend to use a broader array of cognitive strategies than low-achieving peers (Cleary et al., 2000), highlighting the role of critical thinking in transforming metacognitive abilities into tangible outcomes. Fabriz et al. (2014) identified SRL as vital for university students, advocating for increased awareness of its benefits. Al-Jarrah (2010) found significant differences in academic achievement between students with varying levels of SRL, with higher levels correlating with better goal setting and planning.

In summary, the current study aligns with existing research, indicating that combining self-regulation, goal-setting, and deep learning strategies leads to higher critical reading scores in the experimental group. The data suggest that deep learning-based instruction effectively develops critical reading skills and self-regulation, underscoring its substantial impact on student learning outcomes.

Summary, Recommendations, and Suggestions

Summary

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach, collecting both quantitative data through critical reading tests and questionnaires, and qualitative data via classroom observations. A pretest-posttest design was implemented for both experimental and control groups. The control group received standard instruction, while the experimental group was taught additional deep learning-based activities by the researcher.

The study aimed to address four questions regarding the effects of deep learning on critical reading skills, self-regulation, attitudes towards reading, and integration into classes. Findings indicated that deep learning-based instruction significantly improved participants' critical reading skills and self-regulation, with the experimental group outperforming the control group. The control group's lack of exposure to these strategies resulted in no significant improvement. Overall, the study suggests that deep learning can effectively enhance critical reading skills and self-regulation in freshman female EFL learners, highlighting the importance of integrating such strategies into reading classes for better academic performance.

Recommendations

This study has significant theoretical and pedagogical implications for educators, highlighting the need to incorporate deep learning-based instruction into the curriculum. It shows that such instruction enables students to activate prior knowledge, make connections, infer meaning, and critically evaluate texts, fostering self-regulated learning.

From a pedagogical standpoint, the study recommends that EFL teachers adopt strategies that enhance deep reading comprehension, making learning more engaging and authentic. It also emphasizes the importance of formative assessments to address abstract knowledge difficulties. Additionally, syllabus designers should create materials that promote active participation through both deep and surface learning approaches. By embracing deep learning, teachers can better meet learners' needs, enhancing critical reading skills applicable across disciplines and transforming their role into facilitators of learning.

Suggestions for Further Research

First: Expand the sample size beyond the small, homogeneous group of female students from IMSU to include participants from different universities and diverse socioeconomic backgrounds for varied findings.

Second: Consider the influence of demographic, cultural, and environmental factors on deep learning-based instruction's impact on critical reading and self-regulation in future research.

Third: Implement deep learning-based instruction as a standalone curriculum, separate from the existing curriculum, due to the limited course duration.

Fourth: Conduct classroom observations in face-to-face settings on campus for more reliable qualitative data, as virtual observations were conducted due to COVID-19.

Fifth: Use an integrated and contextualized approach to investigate predictors of academic achievement related to deep learning and self-regulated learning (SRL).

Sixth: Further investigate self-regulation and self-motivation in EFL learners, in addition to the study's exploration of deep learning and self-regulation.

Seventh: Explore how teachers assess and evaluate deep learning-based instruction in EFL classrooms to gain insights from educators' perspectives.

Acknowledgement

Bio

Khalid Mohammed Alwahibee is a professor of Curriculum and Instruction with interest in TESOL and Applied Linguistics, department of English Language and Literature, College of English Language and Translation, Imam Mohammed bin Saud Islamic University.
alwahibee@hotmail.com

Muneera Falah Alotaibi is a post graduate student in Applied Linguistics at the department of English Language and literature, College of English Language and Translation, Imam Mohammed bin Saud Islamic University.
Muneerafalah86@gmail.com

References

Abd Kadir, N., Subki, R., Jamal, F., & Ismail, J. (2014). *The importance of teaching critical reading skills in a Malaysian reading classroom*. West East Institute.

Ahmad, I. I. (2007). Self-regulation of learning and self-motivation and their relationship with the academic achievement of the students of the College of Education (Predictive study). *Journal of the College of Education, EinShams University*, *31*(3), 69–135.

Al-jarrah, A. (2010). The relationship between self-regulated learning and academic achievement among sample of Yarmouk University students. *The Jordanian Journal of Educational Sciences*, *6*(4), 333–348.

Al-Otaibi, S. M. (2013). Investigating Saudi EFL learners' vision of future-self and its relationship to their self-regulated learning behaviour. *Arab World English Journal for Translation & Literary Studies*, *4*(4), 112–127.

Anderson, R. C., Hiebert, E. H., Scott, J. H., & Willkinson, I. A. G. (1985). *Becoming a nation of readers: The report of the commission on reading*. University of Illinois.

Biggs, J. (1993). What do inventories of students' learning processes really measure? A theoretical review and clarification. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *63*(1), 3–19.

Biggs, J. (2003). Aligning teaching and assessing to course objectives. Teaching and learning in *Higher education: New trends and innovations*, *2*(April), 13–17.

Borredon, L., Deffayet, S., Baker, A. C., & Kolb, D. (2011). Enhancing deep learning: Lessons from the introduction of learning teams in management education in France. *Journal of Management Education*, *35*(3), 324–350.

Briggs, A. R. J. (2003). The 3P model of learning: A framework for understanding and improving student learning. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *28*(1), 33-44. https://doi.org/10.1080/0260293032000052276

Brown, H. D., Hudson, T., Coombe, C., & Lado, W. (1999). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. Longman.

Butler, D. (2002). Individualizing instruction in self-regulated learning. *Theory into Practice*, *41*, 81–92.

Cameron, S. (2008). *The MBA handbook: Skills for mastering management*. Pearson Education.

Cepeda, N. J., Pashler, H., Vul, E., Wixted, J. T., & Rohrer, D. (2006). Distributed practice in verbal recall tasks: A review and quantitative synthesis. *Psychol Bull.*, *132*(3), 354–380.

Chen, L., & Dhillon, J. K. (2012). Deep approaches to learning in improving reading skills: A case study from Yunnan Agricultural University. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *2*(8). https://doi.org/10.4304/tpls.2.8.1603-1613

Chin, C., & Brown, D. E. (2000). Learning in science: A comparison of deep and surface approaches. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, *37*(2), 109–138. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1098-2736

Cleary, T. J., Zimmerman, B. J., & Schunk, D. H. (2000). Self-regulation and academic achievement: The role of goal setting. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *92*(3), 559-570. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.92.3.559

Cohen, M. (2012). The importance of self-regulation for college student learning. *Free Patents Online*. http://www.freepatentsonline.com/article/College-Student-Journal/312618227.html

Critical reading strategies. (2009). Salisbury University. http://www.salisbury.edu

Dede, C. (2014). The role of digital technologies in deeper learning. *Jobs for the future*. Harvard University.

Dieterle, E. (2009). Neomillennial learning styles and River City. *Children, Youth, and Environments*, *19*(1).

Duncan, S. (2014). Critical reading in higher education: A new perspective. *Journal of College Literacy and Learning*, *40*, 25-34.

Durkin, D. (1993). *Teaching them to read*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Fabriz, S., Pritchard, A., & Boulton, H. (2014). The role of self-regulated learning in academic success: A study of university students. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *67*, 54-65. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2014.05.002325–345

Fink, L. D. (2003a). *A self-directed guide to designing courses for significant learning*. University of Oklahoma, *27*(11).

Foorman, B. R., & Torgesen, J. (2001). Critical elements of classroom and small group instruction to promote reading success in all children. In *Learning disabilities research & practice*. Blackwell Synergy.

Ghasemi, A. A., & Dowlatabadi, H. R. (2018). Investigating the role of task value, surface/deep learning strategies, and higher order thinking in predicting self-regulation and language achievement. *The Journal of AsiaTEFL*, *15*(3), 664–681. https://doi.org/10.18823/asiatefl.2018.15.3.664

Grabe, W. (1988). Reassessing the term "interactive." *Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading*, *6*, 56-70.

Hall, M., Ramsay, A., &., Ravens, J. (2004). Changing the learning environment to promote deep learning approaches to first-year accounting students. *Accounting Education*, *13*(4), 489–505.

Halpern, D. F. (2003). *Thought & knowledge: An introduction to critical thinking*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Hật, N. T., & Le, T. H. (2023). The impact of reflective writing on student performance: Enhancing content retention and higher-order thinking. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *123*, 102-115. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2023.102115

Hattie, J., & Donoghue, G. (2016). Learning strategies: A synthesis and conceptual model. *Npj Science of Learning*, *1*, 1–13.

Heikkilä, A., & Lonka, K. (2006). Studying in higher education: Students' approaches to learning, self-regulation, and cognitive strategies. *Studies in Higher Education*, *31*(1), 99–117. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070500392433

Hermida, D. (2009). The importance of teaching academic reading skills in first-year university courses. *The International Journal of Research and Review*, *3*(1), 20–30.

Hermida, J. (2016). Strategies to promote a deep approach to reading. *College Quarterly*, *19*(1), 1-13.

Jenson, J. (2011). Promoting self-regulation and critical reflection through writing students' use of electronic Portfolio. *International Journal of ePortfolio*, *1*(1), 49–60.

Junaštíková, J. (2024). Self-regulation of learning in the context of modern technology: A review of empirical studies. *Interactive Technology and Smart Education*, *25*(2). https://doi.org/10.1108/ITSE-08-2023-0145

Kitsantas, A. (2002). Test preparation and performance: A self-regulatory analysis. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, *70*, 101–113.

Ko, M. Y. (2013). A case study of an EFL teacher's critical literacy teaching in reading class in Taiwan. *Language Teaching Research*, *17*(1), 91–108.

Kurland, D. (2004). *How the language really works: The fundamentals of critical reading and effective writing*. http://www.criticalreading.com/index.html

Le, H. V., Nguyen, T. A. D., Le, D. H. N., Nguyen, P. U., & Nguyen, T. T. A. (2024). Unveiling critical reading strategies and challenges: A mixed-methods study among English major students in a Vietnamese higher education institution. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 2326732. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2326732

Lonka, K., & Lindblom-Ylänne, S. (1996). Epistemologies, conceptions of learning, and study practices in medicine and psychology. *Higher Education*, *31,* 5–24.

Macknish, C. J. (2011). Understanding critical reading in an ESL class in Singapore. *TESOL Journal*, *2*(4), 444–472.

Marton, F., & Säljö, R. (1976). On qualitative differences in learning: I-outcome and process. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *46*(1), 4–11. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8279.1976.tb02980.x

McKay, J., & Kember, D. (1997). Spoon feeding leads to regurgitation: A better diet can result in more digestible learning outcomes. *Higher Education Research and Development*, *6*(1), 55–67. https://doi.org/10.1080/0729436970160105

Millis, B. J. (2010). Promoting deep learning (IDEA Paper No. 47). *The IDEA Center*. http://sph.bu.edu/otlt/teachingLibrary/Learning%20Theory/Deep-learning.pdf

Muhammad, A. S., & Abu Bakar, N. (2015, September 6–7). Relationship of self-regulated learning and academic achievement among Universiti Sultan Zainalabidin (UNISZA) undergraduate students. *International Conference on Empowering Islamic Civilization in the 21st Century*, Universiti Sultan ZainalAbidin, Malaysia.

Naseri, S., & Motallebzadeh, K. (2016). Podcasts: A factor to improve Iranian EFL learners' self-regulation and use of technology. *Educational Technology*, *19*(2), 328–339.

Nasrollahi, M., Krishnasamy, P., & Noor, N. (2009). Process of implementing critical reading strategies in an Iranian EFL classroom: An action research. *International Education Studies*, *8*(1), 9–16.

Offir, B., Lev., Y., & Bezlel, R. (2008). Surface and deep learning processes in distance education: Synchronous versus asynchronous systems. *Computers & Educational*, *51*, 1172–1183.

Paris, S., & Paris, A. (2001). Classroom applications of research on self-regulated learning. *Educational Psychology*, *36*, 89–101.

Park, Y. (2011). Using new articles to build a critical literacy classroom in an EFL setting. *TESOL Journal*, *2*(1), 24–51.

Parson, J. (2002). Critical reading: Can it be improved through the use of metacognitive strategies? *American Reading Forum*. http://www.americanreadingforum.org/Yearbooks/ 85_yearbook/pdf/39_Parson.pdf

Pintrich, P. R., & De Groot, E. V. (1990). Motivational and self-regulated learning in the college classroom. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *82*(1), 33-40. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.82.1.33

Pretorius, E. (2010). The importance of reading: A guide to learning English. http://esl.fis.edu/parents/advice/read.htm

Rhem, J. (1995). Close-up: Going deep. *The National Teaching & Learning Forum*, *5*(1), 4.

Salisbury University. (2009). Critical reading strategies. http://www.salisbury.edu

Snow, C. E. (2001). Reading for understanding. *RAND Education & the Science and Technology Policy Institute.*

Sun, L. (2014). Teacher's role in promoting students' self-regulated learning. https://wiki.oulu.fi/download/.../research+plan(Liping).pdf?version

Sun, L., Wang, J., Gong, D., & Jiang, N. (2022). The effectiveness of implementing deep learning activities in a blended learning perspective based on big data analysis. Harbin Huade University Academy of Data Science and Artificial Intelligence, China.

Tochon, F. (2013). Effectiveness of deep, blended language learning as measured by oral proficiency and course evaluation. *Journal of the National Council of Less Taught Languages*, *14*, 51–86.

Veeman, M. V. J., Prins, F. J., & Verheij, J. (2003). Learning styles: Self-reports versus thinking-aloud measures. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *73*, 357–372. https://doi.org/10.1348/000709903322275885

Vermunt, J. D. (1998). The regulation of constructive learning processes. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *68*, 149–171.

Wallace, C. (2003). *Critical reading in language education*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Wang, J. (2013). *The effects of deep approaches to learning on students' need for cognition over four years of college* [Doctoral dissertation, Iowa University].

Wang, M. T., & Sperling, R. (2020). The role of self-regulation in academic success: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, *32*(3), 607-635. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-020-09562-4

Wong, B. (2016). *Using critical-thinking strategies to develop academic reading skills among Saudi IEP students* [Doctoral dissertation, School of Education].

Yildirim, S., & Söylemez, Y. (2018). The effect of performing reading activities with critical reading questions on critical thinking and reading skills. *Asian Journal of Education and Training*, *4*(4), 326–335.

Yu, J. (2015). Analysis of critical reading strategies and its effect on college English reading. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *5*(1), 134–138.

Zimmerman, B. J. (1989). A social cognitive view of self-regulated academic learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *81*(3), 329-339. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.81.3.329

Zimmerman, B., Bonner, S., & Kovach, R. (2002). Developing self-regulated learners: Beyond achievement to self-efficacy. *American Psychological Association*.

Zimmerman, B. J. (1998a). Academic studying and the development of personal skill: A self-regulatory perspective. *Educ Psychol.*, *33*, 73–86.

Zimmerman, B. J. (1998b). Developing self-fulfilling cycles of academic self-regulation: An analysis of exemplary instructional models. In D. H. Schunk & B. J. Zimmerman (Eds.), *Self-regulated learning: From teaching to self-reflective practice* (pp. 1–19). Guildford.

Zimmerman, B. J. (2000a). Attaining self-regulation: A social cognitive perspective. In M. Boekaerts, P. R. Pintrich, & M. Zeidner (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation* (pp. 13–39). Academic Press.

Appendix A

Table 7
Arrangement of Statements in the CRQ Based on Student's Responses

Statements
4. I can distinguish the information that does not agree with mine.
33. I always revise to detect the mistakes I may make when I assess a text.
29. I can share what I have learned from the text.
12. I can associate the images with the text.
28. I can decide the type of information relevant to application in my life.
11. I can relate the images and the topic of the text.
6. I can identify the specific concepts in the text and which of them were sufficiently explained.
16. I can detect if the text is based on truth or fiction.
1. I am aware of the significance of the text I read.
8. I can distinguish the main theme and secondary themes of the text.
3. I can identify what I should research about in the text and what parts of it I have information about.
23. I can state my predictions regarding the text.
18. I can determine author's main argument in the text.
17. I can validate the results, solution, and recommendations given in the text.
10. I can decide on the type of relationship that I have found in the text and whether it has been established correctly.
26. I'm able to detect if the information in the text is reliable, current, and valid.
25. I'm aware of the clear, consistent, logical or unethical information that I have found in the text and the reasons for providing it.
7. I can name the problem or the phenomenon in the text and how successfully the author explained it.
9. I can relate the main theme and secondary themes.
15. I can decide whether the ideas given in the text are convincing.
5. I can specify the information that I need to verify by referring to information sources.
31. I try to avoid the interference of my prejudices and prior knowledge on my assessments regarding the text.
21. I'm able to detect any inconsistency in the text.
24. I can detect the results I come up with based on the information provided by the text.
13. I'm able to detect the text containing overt/covert commercial/propaganda.
19. I'm able to detect the purpose of the author.
32. I know how to evaluate the text objectively.
20. I'm able to detect how the formal logic of the text has been formed.
2. I can read the text critically, and I feel ready to handle it.
14. I can detect the kind of pattern of classifying the information given in the text according to the degree of importance.
30. I ask for help when I feel I am unsure of the assessment I've made about the text.
27. I can deduce the author's beliefs and prejudices from the text.
22. If the text contains a logical fallacy, I'm able to detect how it affects the general structure and hence the conclusion.

Table 8

Researchers'' Observation Tool for Assessing Student Engagement and Self-Regulated Learning Experimental group

Categories	V. High	High	Neutral	Low	V. Low
First: Students Engagement:					
- Level of engagement in assigned tasks.	✓				
- Participation in discussions and activities.		✓			
- Time on task and focus during instruction.		✓			
Second: Awareness of Cognitive and Metacognitive Processes:					
- Verbalization of thought processes.		✓			
- Monitoring of comprehension and progress.		✓			
- Use of learning strategies and techniques.		✓			
Third: Application of Critical Reading skills:					
- Identification of main ideas and supporting details.		✓			
- Analysis and evaluation of text.		✓			
- Drawing inferences and making connections.	✓				
Fourth: Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) Behaviors:					
- Self-initiation of learning activities.	✓				
- Use of goal setting and planning.		✓			
- Self-monitoring and self-evaluation.		✓			
- Adaptability and flexibility in learning approaches.		✓			

Appendix C

Table 9

Researchers' Observation Tool for Assessing Student Engagement and Self-Regulated Learning Experimental group

Categories	V. High	High	Neutral	Low	V. Low
First: Students Engagement:					
- Level of engagement in assigned tasks.				✓	
- Participation in discussions and activities.				✓	
- Time on task and focus during instruction.					✓
Second: Awareness of Cognitive and Metacognitive Processes:					
- Verbalization of thought processes.					✓
- Monitoring of comprehension and progress.					
- Use of learning strategies and techniques.				✓	
Third: Application of Critical Reading skills:					
- Identification of main ideas and supporting details.			✓		
- Analysis and evaluation of text.				✓	
- Drawing inferences and making connections.					✓
Fourth: Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) Behaviors:					
- Self-initiation of learning activities.			✓		
- Use of goal-setting and planning.				✓	
- Self-monitoring and self-evaluation.					✓
- Adaptability and flexibility in learning approaches.				✓	

Phonetic and Sociolinguistic Dynamics of Vowel Variation in Hiberno-English: An Acoustic Analysis

Awad Hajran Alshehri
Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University,
College of Languages and Translation
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

ahalshehri@imamu.edu.sa
http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3937-2413

_____

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد الجوانب الصوتية والاجتماعية اللغوية للإنجليزية الإيرلندية، مع التركيز على تباين الأصوات المتحركة. وباستخدام منهجية ثلاثية المحاور تشمل مراجعة الأدبيات، وجمع البيانات باستخدام أدوات صوتية عالية الجودة، والتحليل الوصفي عبر أدوات برمجية مثل برات وأوداسيتي، تحدد الدراسة الاختلافات في الأصوات المتحركة مثل /ɪ/ و/ɑ:/ و/æ/ التي تميز بوضوح الإنجليزية الإيرلندية. وتتشكل هذه التباينات في الأصوات بفعل العوامل الاجتماعية والجغرافية والثقافية، حيث يُظهر ذلك تأثير الصوتيات على اللغويات الاجتماعية وتشكيل اللهجات. وتوفر هذه المنهجية الجديدة، التي تمزج بين نطق الأصوات المتحركة والإلقاء الرسمي والحوارات العفوية، فهماً شاملاً للأصوات المتحركة في الإنجليزية الإيرلندية. وتُظهر النتائج أن الصوتيات في الإنجليزية الإيرلندية تشهد عملية تطور تتأثر بالعولمة ووسائل الإعلام والهجرة، مما يشير إلى لهجة ديناميكية تم إدخال عناصر جديدة عليها دون أن تفقد طابعها المميز. ويكشف التحليل الموضوعي البيئة الاجتماعية اللغوية في أيرلندا، مع دراسة حالات اللهجات الإقليمية، والتنقل الاجتماعي، والعولمة، والتحول اللغوي. من خلال مقارنة البيانات التي تم جمعها بالمعايير التي قدمها لادافوغيد (2006)، وتساهم هذه الدراسة في علم الصوتيات المقارن، وفي اللغويات بشكل عام.

Phonetic and Sociolinguistic Dynamics of Vowel Variation in Hiberno-English: An Acoustic Analysis

Awad Hajran Alshehri
Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University,
College of Languages and Translation
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

ahalshehri@imamu.edu.sa
http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3937-2413

_____

Abstract

This study aims to establish phonetic and sociolinguistic aspects of Hiberno-English with a focus on vowel variation. Utilizing a three-pronged methodology encompassing a literature review, data collection through high-quality audio equipment, and descriptive analysis via software tools like Praat and Audacity, the research identifies significant phonetic shifts in vowels such as /ɪ/, /ɑ:/, and /æ/ that clearly distinguish Hiberno-English. These variations in sounds are shaped by social, geographical, and cultural factors. This shows the impact of the phonetics on sociolinguistics and the formation of dialects. The novel method, mixing isolated vowel articulation, formal elocution, and unrehearsed dialogues, offers an overall understanding of Hiberno-English vowel sounds. The results show that Hiberno-English phonetics are undergoing a process of evolution, taking their cue from globalization, media, and migration, which points to a dynamic dialect in which new elements have been introduced without losing their character. The thematic analysis explores the sociolinguistic setting of Ireland, looking at the case of regional dialects, social mobility, globalization, and code-switching. By comparing the acquired data against standards, such as those supplied by Ladefoged (2006), this research contributes to comparative phonetics and, in general, the linguistic discipline.

_____

Introduction

The linguistic dynamics of Ireland, a nation deeply entrenched in rich historical narratives, paint a vivid picture of its cultural and historical lineage through the evolving tapestry of languages and dialects. This is significantly evident in the Hiberno-English dialect, the harmonic blend of Irish and English nuances that forms a unique subset of linguistic characteristics influenced by both its Gaelic and Anglo-Saxon heritage (Hickey, 2007).

This study centers on the intricacies of vowel sounds in Hiberno-English, significant markers of regional dialect variations, representing a fertile ground for an exhaustive investigation (Wells, 1982b). Despite a substantial body of existing literature, there still seems to be a gap in the complex network of vowel sounds specific to this dialect, with a potential overlook on the in-depth acoustic analysis spotlighting the formant frequencies and vowel durations in Hiberno-English.

To bridge that gap, the present study is planned as a detailed study of the present-day Hiberno-English vowels. And by means of a methodologically sound dissemination, it attempts to find a way through the difficult trails of vowel sounds of Hiberno-English thus providing a true representation of the country's linguistic legacy and a modern perspective for celebrating the diversity of speech forms.

The journeys through this linguistic and phonetic discourse are now at the turning point where they attempt not only to significantly contribute to linguistic research but also to preserve the linguistic wealth of the area to create a well-drawn portrait of the linguistic and cultural identity of Ireland as manifested through language. Besides that, it attempts to convey a better understanding and appreciation of the Hiberno-English dialect, a highly significant dialect both linguistically and culturally. This project is intended to enhance the linguistic and phonetic discourse which could lead to broader cultural education through the use of information gained from linguistics.

The study attempts to answer the following questions:
1- What phonetic features distinguish Hiberno-English vowels from other dialects, emphasizing their acoustic uniqueness?
2- How do factors like regional diversity, social influences, and migration shape the unique vowel sounds of Hiberno-English, according to formant frequency analysis?

The research sets the following hypotheses:
1- Hiberno-English possesses a distinct set of vowel sounds, influenced by the Irish language and significantly varied by regional and social factors.
2- Distinctive acoustic features of Hiberno-English vowels, identified through formant frequencies and qualitative analysis, differentiate them from vowels in other dialects.

Literature Review

Irish English or Hiberno-English emerged in Ireland as a result of the blending of the Gaelic and Anglo-Saxon linguistic cultures. This literature review outlines the main studies that have been done on the linguistic features of Irish English and sheds light on the outstanding elements in this variety.

Starting with the historical context and present-day forms, Hickey (2007) provides a comprehensive analysis of the historical context and contemporary manifestations of Irish English in his work. His study shows the particular phonetic and lexical features of Hiberno-English and demonstrates the impact that the Irish language has on its pronunciation and vocabulary. The technique Hickey's uses to inspect such a plethora of Hiberno-English dialectical traits is undoubtedly among the most meticulous, thus contributing to the recognition of a distinct English dialect for Ireland.

Moving on to morphology and syntax, Filppula et al. (2008) discussed the grammatical facets of Hiberno-English in the study "Irish English: Morphology and Syntax". The research described the morphological and syntactic distinctions that make Hiberno-English different from the other English varieties. The research to some extent clarified the differences in word choice and sentence construction and explained that the Irish language legacy is a potential component influencing the distinctiveness. They also investigated manifolds of different kinds of pursuits which are the semantic variation and the phonetic distinctions that result as the mother tongue Hiberno-English.

As to the accents of English, Wells (1982a) provided in his eminent work "Accents of English" a detailed account of the various accents that adorn the language. His work provided a profound analysis of the many vowel and consonant sounds of different English accents including Hiberno-English. The phonetic research by Wells provided a comprehensive account of the articulatory nuances at play in English accents; this created a framework for other explorations in linguistic disciplines and academic endeavors that were geared towards developing a refined knowledge of English accents, their vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Another significant aspect was also concerned with regional variation; this was the main topic of the examination by Corrigan (2010) whose work, "Irish English: Northern Ireland" came into view. Herein, the author sheds light on a significant part of Hiberno-English speech, explaining the morphosyntactic aspects as well as vocabulary and pronunciation typical of the north-eastern variety. Corrigan's findings displayed a complex combination of influences and language properties, paving the way for it to be clearly distinguished within the Hiberno-English grouping, and that in turn contributes to the identification of its character.

Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2000) provided a new perspective on studying language evolution by applying social network analysis (SNA). Examining society-related aspects like social binding and social action unveiled the mechanisms of how societal factors influence language development - including vocabulary and pronunciation. The research suggested that this approach should be applied to language variants like Irish English to reveal how the features of dialects appear through the interconnectedness of the communities, as a result of their social contacts and relationships. In sum, social circles serve as a driving force that makes languages successful or the reason for their demise.

In his study *Irish English: Phonology*, Hickey (2008) elaborated on the various phonological features that make Irish English distinct from other regional dialects. This study involves in-depth acoustic analysis, as well as the evaluation of existing literature, and it investigates the variability of vowels, consonant usage, and pronunciation patterns to highlight the different features resulting from the blending of Irish and English characteristics. Hickey's

work is integral to understanding the dialectal variations of English spoken in Ireland, as it identified and analyzed their distinctive phonological features.

Filppula et al. (2008) scrutinized the Anglo-Celtic linguistic interfaces, which still occur in the phonetics, morphology, and syntax of Irish English. Not only their fine-grained analysis but also their presentation of dialectal variation provided valuable insight into the dialectal usage that is unique to Irish English, which is greatly influenced by the interactions of English and Irish languages through processes of contact and language transfer. The study emphasized the fact that one must know about contact languages.

Finally, in her study titled *Hiberno-English language and culture in Cork*, Hickey (2021) presents key findings about the influence of regional dialects on vocabulary and pronunciation in the Cork area. Her research relies on acoustic analysis, which is based on the comparison of vowel sounds from speakers with various accents. The research demonstrates that accent variation is a regional characteristic deeply connected to the linguistic, cultural, and identity dynamics. The research reveals specifically how Cork City's Hiberno-English is unique and specific to the region. The intricate link between language and local identity is evident in the distinct characteristics of Cork City's Hiberno-English.

The existing literature on Irish English discusses its vocabulary, phonetics, history, morphology, and syntax, presenting unique features and regional varieties in detail. However, there is a lack of thorough theoretical explanation and comparison of its vowels with those of more prominently used English dialects worldwide. This research seeks, first, to provide further information about similarities or differences in Irish English vowel production and perception; and second, to explore how these findings contribute to an understanding of Irish English phonology and its connection to other English varieties.

Methodology

Preliminary Literature Review

As a first step, we carried out a literature review to determine the boundaries of already existing works on Hiberno-English. While a thorough study of the corpus helped us mark some notable gaps in the current discourse, the issue of phonetics and phonology emerged as by far the most prominent. Using the residual biases of preceding research as a dominant force, the researcher emphasized the significant role of descriptive analysis. This methodology was recommended not merely as a supplementary tool but as a vital technique increasingly recognized in dialectology and sociolinguistics, paving the way for more advanced monolingual research.

Data Collection

I used the Honor X's built-in recorder app to capture high-quality sound. To maintain research reliability, several measures were implemented during the data collection process to create a large dataset of Hiberno-English vowels. This methodology was applied across various communicative settings. To this end, I developed an instrument through which participants, all of whom were originally from Ireland, read a list of words, enabling the recording of isolated vowel articulations in formal elocution settings to evaluate controlled language production. This

age group was chosen because they were considered less likely to be influenced by American media and more likely to retain their authentic Irish accent compared to younger generations.

Subsequently, dialogues guided by a set of predetermined probe questions were conducted to allow for spontaneous speech from participants. This three-pronged methodological approach was designed to optimize the results of future research on Hiberno-English vowel properties and their historical background. The recorded dialogues were then subjected to thematic analysis to determine their suitability for the study.

Descriptive Analysis

The researcher used advanced software tools, such as Praat and Audacity, to examine the audio elements in the recordings. Using the capabilities of those dedicated apps the researcher could accurately extract the data about the frequencies of the formants and vowel durations. This was carried out as the most significant part of the organized cataloging of the specific phonetic signs that are unique to Hiberno-English vowel sound patterns. The results are projected to change the factual understanding of the intrinsic phonetic and phonological features of this dialect. The researcher also designed an interview template with the main goal of obtaining more details from native Hiberno-English speakers. This tool was developed to gain an understanding of the personal experiences and views of the participants regarding the type of vowels being produced in this accent. By offering qualitative information, such as speaker views and subjective perceptions, the researcher could complement the results of acoustic studies.

This three-pronged approach was proposed in order to foster a more intricate and multi-dimensional knowledge of the peculiarities of the language as used in Hiberno-English. Together, the qualitative data offered an in-depth view of consonant and vowel intricacies with richness and depth when connected with other sources of information.

Data Presentation

Using a well-thought-out approach to express and demonstrate the specific information in a clear and visually comprehensible manner, the researcher applied the available data to create the visual tools. A range of visual aids were employed to make the quantitative parameters comprehensible and logically persuasive. I then illustrated this evaluation by including a thorough comparative analysis that compared the Hiberno-English data with the results obtained by Ladefoged (2006) as a benchmark. Ladefoged's work is a foundational reference in the field of phonetics, known for its comprehensive and rigorous methodology. This approach to studying languages has proven the comparative method to be an exceptionally effective tool for investigating phonetic changes and variations in the dialect's phonemic foundation.

Figure 1 shows two charts displaying the frequencies of the first three formants (F1, F2, F3) for eight American vowels, as reported by Ladefoged (2006, p. 185-187). The vowels included are [i], [ɪ], [e], [æ], [a], [ɔ], [o], and [u]. The formant frequencies are measured in Hertz (Hz) and plotted on the vertical axis, with the vowel symbols along the horizontal axis. The charts show the higher frequency ranging from approximately 1000 Hz to 3000 Hz, which encompasses the second and third formants (F2 and F3), and the lower frequency ranging from about 250 Hz to 1100 Hz, showing the first formant (F1) values.

Figure 1

The Frequency of the First Three Formants in Eight American Vowels (Ladefoged, 2006, p. 185-187)
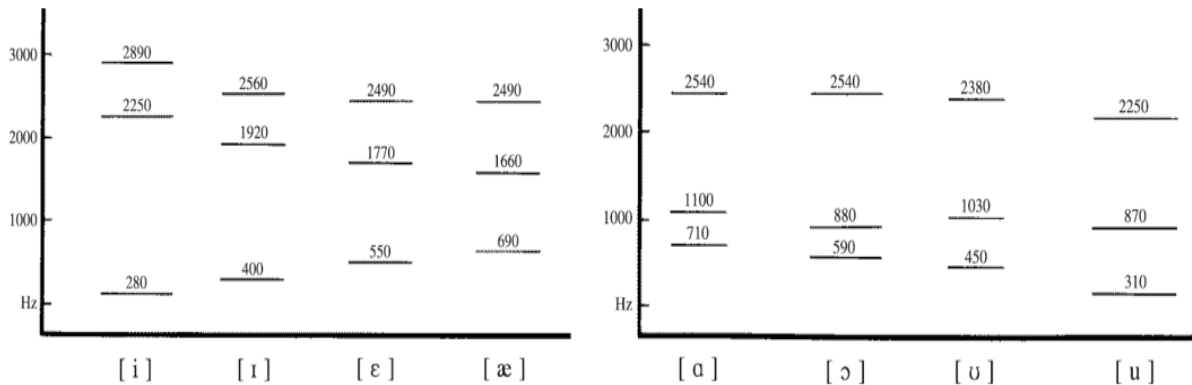
Figure 2 below is a spectrogram representation of the first formants (F1) in eight American vowel sounds, as cited from Ladefoged (2006, p. 185-187). The correlation between the first formant (F1) and vowel height operates in an inverse manner. First, vowels articulated with a fronted tongue, such as /a/, become characterized by reduced F1 frequencies. However, the vowels that are produced by the tongue in the higher position in the oral cavity, like /i/ and /u/, are the ones that have the lower F1 frequency. This phenomenon can be attributed to the spatial dynamics within the oral cavity during vowel production: lowering the tongue will expand the oral cavity area, so the resonant frequency will decrease and this means that the higher F1 will be produced. Conversely, a raised tongue position will have a less vocal cavity space and therefore will result in a higher resonant frequency (F1). Red color is used to indicate front vowels with higher F2, and blue signifies back vowels with lower F2 frequencies.

Figure 2:

The First Formants (F1) in Eight American Vowels. (Ladefoged, 2006, p. 185-187)
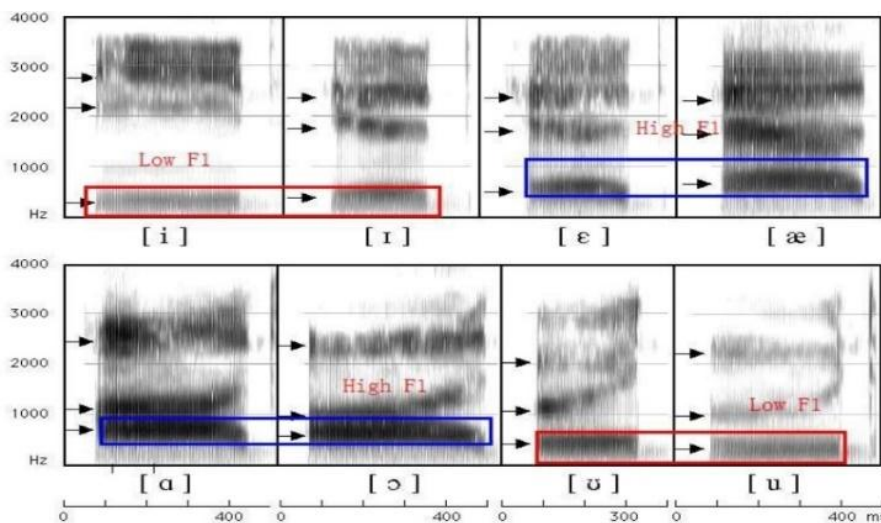
The second formant (F2) (Figure 3) relates to the vowel's degree of backness—how far back in the mouth the tongue is when articulating the vowel. Front vowels (like /i/) have higher F2 frequencies because the tongue is positioned forward, creating a longer vocal tract that resonates at higher frequencies. Back vowels (such as /u/), where the tongue retracts towards the back of the mouth, have lower F2 frequencies, indicating a shorter vocal tract. Lip rounding can affect F2; rounded lips can lower the F2 frequency, often seen in back vowels. In the figure, red is used to indicate front vowels with higher F2, and blue signifies back vowels with lower F2 frequencies.

Figure 3

The Second Formants (F2) in Eight American Vowels. (Ladefoged, 2006, p. 185-187)

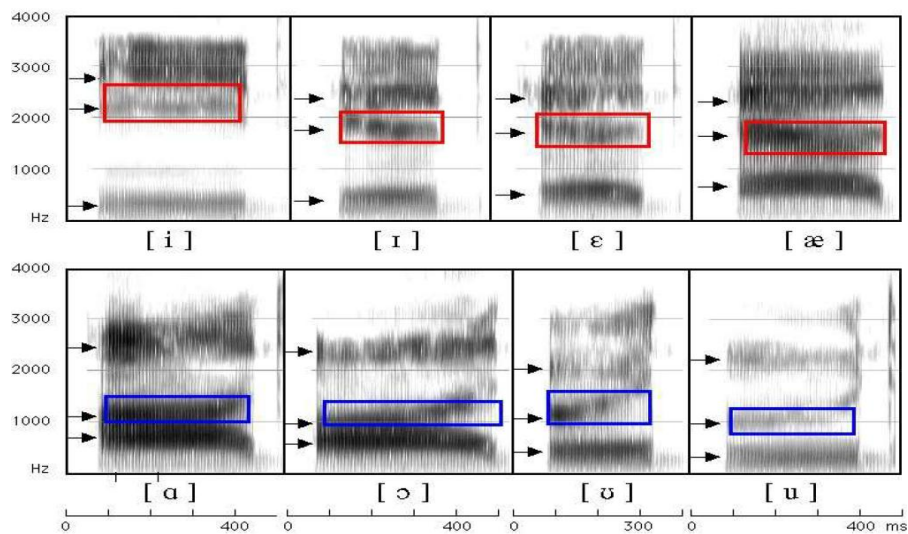The third formant (F3) is linked to the rounding of the lips. A lower F3 frequency often indicates more rounded lips, as observed in vowels like /u:/. However, compared to F1 and F2, F3 plays a smaller role in differentiating vowel quality. This implies, i.e., that although F3 is indicative of some factors of vowel articulation e.g., lip rounding, it plays a smaller role in differentiating vowels from each other compared to F1 and F2. Therefore, I did not consider this in my comparison.

Limitations

First, the small sample size and limited diversity could limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the reliance on controlled speech settings instead of natural, ordinary speech may not fully capture vowel variations, which could affect real-world applicability. Finally, the selection of Ladefoged as a benchmark, although known for its comprehensive and rigorous methodology, might not fully align with Hiberno-English vowels, potentially leading to oversimplification in comparisons.

Ethical Considerations

Consent was obtained from the participants and they understood the research and their right to opt out at any time. Their identities were concealed with pseudonyms and the data collected was secured from any identity disclosure. Cultural preferences or concerns related to Hiberno-English were respected in the research process, and the data collected in the research

was kept secure to ensure it did not fall into the wrong hands. The findings of the study are genuine since the research was conducted objectively and without any form of prejudice.

Results

Vowels Analysis

The pronunciation of English vowels by Irish speakers can vary significantly depending on numerous factors including geographical location, social context, and the influence of the Irish language. However, in the context of this study, I am considering Irish English as one variety regardless of the subtle differences between the different accents within Ireland. The recorded list included all 20 vowels in English, but the focus later shifted to the marked vowels—those with different frequencies and formants than those appearing on Ladefoged's spectrogram. Several vowel sounds are often pronounced differently in Hiberno-English, compared to other forms of English.

In some Hiberno-English accents, this sound can be pronounced closer to a schwa (/ə/) or even a short /iː/ in certain contexts. In phonetics, the analysis of formant frequencies provides insight into the ways in which different dialects realize vowel pronunciation, as with the vowel /ɪ/ in American and Hiberno-English accents. Table 1 illustrates a significant increase in the first formant (F1) frequency, indicating that, compared to American English, the vowel is positioned lower, to such an extent that it verges on a schwa (/ə/). The decrease in the second formant frequency (F2), on the other hand, conveys information about some slight retraction or centralization of the vowel in Hiberno-English that does not occur in the American counterpart. The decrease in the third formant frequency (F3) is also part of the story, but its influence on the vowel lessens as we move higher in formant frequency. However, this thorough acoustic analysis of vowels emphasizes the subtlety with which vowel sounds differ across dialects thus, comprehensively demonstrating the intricate nature in which language and accent variation arise in speech.

Table 1
/ɪ/ as in the Word "bit"

Formants Frequency	American English	Hiberno-English	Difference
F1_Hz	280	366.789434	+86.7894
F2_Hz	2250	2085.806662	-164.1933
F3_Hz	2890	2752.948699	-137.0513

In Hiberno-English, this vowel /ɑː/ might be pronounced more fronted, somewhat resembling /æː/. The examination of /ɑː/ as in "start" (Table 2) shows interesting phonetic differences in American English and some Hiberno-English dialects. The /ɑː/ in Hiberno-English shows a more advanced tongue root and a more fronted articulation than the American /ɑː/. This can also be seen in the formant frequency data; F1 is significantly lower in Hiberno-English than in American English (615 Hz) showing a higher vowel height. F2 is slightly higher

in Hiberno-English. It suggests the second formant is slightly higher and the vowel more fronted. Most importantly, there is a substantial decrease in F3 in Hiberno-English, which is critical in making the /ɑ:/ sound closer to /æ:/. Therefore, phonetic and acoustic features bring out the difference in Irish accents spoken by people in terms of vowel pronunciation and provide a clue to the vowel variety in different dialects.

Table 2
/a:/ as in the Word "start"

Formants Frequency	American English	Hiberno-English	Difference
F1_Hz	710	615.489906	-94.5101
F2_Hz	1100	1157.045955	57.04596
F3_Hz	2540	1736.302784	-803.697

The next vowel is /æ/ as in the word "bat". Table 3 shows that this sound is more centralized and less open in Hiberno-English than in American English. This vowel is pronounced in a much more central and much less open position. The first formant (F1 = 677 Hz) in Hiberno-English is lower than in American English. Therefore, a small shift towards higher vowel articulation in Hiberno-English is evident compared to American English for this vowel, which is characterized by a pronounced fall of the second formant (F2) and is associated with more peripheral vowels. Similar to American /ae/, Hiberno-English /æ/ is centralized, albeit less so than American /æ/. The third formant (F3) experiences only a slight increase. However, we still find that its effect on vowel quality is not as noticeable as either F1 or F2. Variations in the formant frequencies reveal subtle yet significant differences in the production of the vowel sound /æ/ in Hiberno-English. These variations highlight a range of distinct vowel sounds that contribute to the rich tapestry of English dialects worldwide.

Table 3
/æ/ as in the Word "bat"

Formants Frequency	American English	Hiberno-English	Difference
F1_Hz	690	677.065892	-12.9341
F2_Hz	1660	1313.028520	-346.971
F3_Hz	2490	2572.008884	82.00888

This sound /ɒ/ can sometimes be realized as /ɔ/ or even /ɑ/ in some varieties of Irish English. An examination of the vowel /ɒ/ in "cot" reveals a significant change in its realization in many varieties of Irish English where it is often realized as a /ɔ/ or even an /ɑ/. This is apparent in the comparison of the formant frequency data between American and Hiberno-English. The first formant (F1) in Hiberno-English is much smaller (554 Hz) indicating a vocalic height significantly greater than that of its American English counterpart. This large degree of lowering in F1 is a primary factor in the shifting of this vowel from something more like /ɒ/ to more like

/ɔ/ or /ɑ/. The second formant (F2) also shows a large reduction, suggesting a more back vowel quality–similar to that found in /ɔ/ or /ɑ/. In addition, F3 undergoes a significant decrease, further distinguishing the dialects. The changes in formant frequencies, which represent the multifaceted nature of dialectal variations in vowel pronunciation, draw attention to the acoustic characteristics that differentiate the forms of spoken English and, furthermore, give in-depth insight into the phonetic subtleties typically conveyed by Irish English.

Table 4
/ɒ/ as in the Word "cot"

Formants Frequency	American English	Hiberno-English	Difference
F1_Hz	1475	554.642343	-920.358
F2_Hz	2811	719.315566	-2091.68
F3_Hz	5437	2378.500691	-3058.5

This vowel /e/ can be pronounced as a more open, almost closer in openness to /æ/ in certain regions. This is interesting because when we look at a plot of F1 values for /e/ (as in "bet") in American English and regional varieties of Hiberno-English, we can see that Hibernocentric varieties tend toward a realization of /e/ that is more open, approaching /æ/. These data allow us to better understand the phonetic basis for this regional variation. A significant decrease in F1 from American English to Hiberno-English by approximately 920 Hz suggests a substantial shift towards a higher vowel articulation in Hiberno-English. This dramatic reduction implies that the vowel in question is articulated with the tongue positioned closer to the roof of the mouth in Hiberno-English compared to its American counterpart. The second formant (F2) is considerably lower, an indicator of retraction or, in fact, a backward movement of the tongue, moving closer to /æ/. This very marked difference in the F1 frequencies between the two dialects corresponds to a huge difference in the means of realization of the same vowel sounds and therefore to a drastic change in the quality of vowels. This placement could contribute to the perceptual differences recognized by listeners familiar with both dialects.

Table 5
/e/ as in the Word "bet"

Formants Frequency	American English	Hiberno-English	Difference
F1_Hz	550	532.034938	-17.9651
F2_Hz	1770	1643.078392	-126.922
F3_Hz	2490	2584.813317	94.81332

The vowel sound **/ʊ/** might be pronounced more like /ʉ/ in some dialects, exhibiting a more centralized tongue position. It shows significant phonetic variation; in many dialects of English, the vowel is raised to something more like /ʉ/ with a mid-centralized tongue position. The formant frequency data provide a taste of such variation; in these dialects, the first formant (F1) is significantly higher at 515.202250 Hz, compared to 450 Hz for American English, suggesting a marginally higher tongue position "Table 6". Moreover, the second formant (F2) increases sharply from 1030 Hz to 1129.470473 Hz, thus drawing the vowel even closer to the standard for schwa. Surprisingly, the third formant (F3) is notably less; it stands at 2181.010184 Hz down from 2380 Hz, with important implications for vowel range. Thus, formant data show some phonetic minutiae that distinguish the pronunciations of vowels among dialects, and hints at some of the causes for rich variety in English dialects.

Table 6
/ʊ/ as in the Word "put"

Formants Frequency	American English	Hiberno-English	Difference
F1_Hz	450	515.202250	65.20225
F2_Hz	1030	1129.470473	99.47047
F3_Hz	2380	2181.010184	-198.99

In Hiberno-English, the diphthong /əʊ/ might be realized acoustically as a monophthong pronounced something akin to /oː/ or /ɔː/. The /əʊ/ as in *go* is an important token of the phonetic inventory of Hiberno-English, as compared to American English. In Hiberno-English, this diphthong tends toward a more monophthongal initial position, such as the realization as /oː/ or /ɔː/. This difference is clearly marked in the formant frequency data in Table 7. For /əʊ/ in Hiberno-English, the first formant (F1) is significantly lower (356 Hz) than in American English, indicative of a more closed vowel quality, consistent with the sounds of /oː/ or /ɔː/. The decrease in F2 from American English to Hiberno-English by approximately 104 Hz suggests that, for this particular vowel sound, Hiberno-English speakers tend to produce it with slightly more backness compared to American English speakers. The third formant (F3) undergoes a modest rise, but it is less important to the overall variability of the vowels considered. These acoustic properties reflect the movement of /əʊ/ from a diphthong to a more monophthongal realization in Hiberno-English and serve to add not only to our understanding of the unique phonetic inventory of this variety, but also to our understanding of the variance of vowels in English dialects.

Table 7
/əʊ/ as in the Word "go"

Formants Frequency	American English	Hiberno-English	Difference
F1_Hz	539	356.605812	-182.394
F2_Hz	886	782.154106	-103.846
F3_Hz	2485	2514.145162	29.14516

As can be derived from the data in Table 8, the diphthong /aɪ/ can sometimes be realized as /ɔɪ/ in a rounded fashion in specific contexts. The first formant (F1) of Hiberno-English (1781.424406 Hz) is considerably lower than that of American English, suggesting that the Hiberno-English vowel system employs a more open vowel position, which corresponds to the /ɔ/ element of the /ɔɪ/ diphthong. Additionally, the significant increase in the second formant (F2) in Hiberno-English demonstrates that the vowel /ɔɪ/ is produced with the tongue positioned much nearer to the front of the oral cavity, sliding from the mid-back to high-front. The Hiberno-English vowel is characterized by an F3 peak that is particularly sharp compared to the American version of the pronunciation. The comparison of formant frequencies reveals that the /ɔɪ/ diphthong in Hiberno-English is pronounced with a more open and fronted vowel articulation compared to American English, as indicated by the variations in F1 and F2. This difference, along with a distinctive F3 peak, highlights the unique vowel production and the phonetic diversity between the two dialects.

Table 8
/aɪ/ as in the Word "my"

Formants Frequency	American English	Hiberno-English	Difference
F1_Hz	771	1781.424406	1010.424
F2_Hz	1320	2995.841737	1675.842
F3_Hz	2787	5437.143417	2650.143

In some Irish dialects, the sound /iː/ might exhibit a more centralized quality, which can be quantified using formant frequency data to analyze this phonetic variation. When compared to American English, Hiberno-English's first formant (F1) exhibits a slight increase (301 Hz), suggesting a slightly higher vowel height—more akin to /ɪː/. The second formant (F2) is also higher in Hiberno-English, where there is a shift towards a more centralized and fronted tongue position, indicative of the quality of the sound. Meanwhile, the third formant (F3) is lower, indicating a slight retraction and a relatively more back position of the tongue, although the effect on vowel quality is not overly detrimental. The change in these formant frequencies reveals that in the Irish variety under discussion, the vowel /iː/ has shifted to a more centralized /ɪː/, which, although slight, represents a significant articulatory modification

Table 9
/iː/ as in the Word "seat"

Formants Frequency	American English	Hiberno-English	Difference
F1_Hz	280	301.598350	21.59835
F2_Hz	2250	2439.968462	189.9685
F3_Hz	2890	2707.026918	-182.973

The diphthong /eə/, as in "hair", shows a clear phonetic difference in some Irish English accents where it is often realized more as a monophthong and sounds extremely close to /ɛː/. The formant frequency data provide clear evidence for this difference. The first formant (F1) is significantly lower (396.802053 Hz) in Hiberno-English, indicating a closer vowel quality to /ɛː/. The second formant (F2) also decreases, albeit to a lesser extent, reflecting a movement of the vowel into a more centralized position and this is a characteristic quality of /ɛː/. The third formant (F3) also shows a decrease, further indicating that this pronunciation is different from the vowel in American English. These acoustic differences demonstrate clear acoustic evidence of a shift from the diphthong /eə/ to a more monophthongal /ɛː/ pronunciation in Irish English, reflecting the diversity of linguistic and phonetic characteristics that arise from differing regional dialects and accents in the English language.

Table 10
/eə/ as in the Word "hair"

Formants Frequency	American English	Hiberno-English	Difference
F1_Hz	655	396.802053	-258.198
F2_Hz	1710	1607.884732	-102.115
F3_Hz	2021	1874.728897	-146.271

The vowel /uː/ as in "boot" shows a phonetic shift in some dialects, notably in Hiberno-English, where it is pronounced with a more fronted tongue position, close to /ʉː/. This shift is clearly shown in the formant frequency data in Table 11. In Hiberno-English, the first formant (F1) is slightly lower (289.537601 Hz) than in American English, reflecting a marginally more closed vowel. This change is even more significant in the second formant (F2). Fronting of the tongue can be inferred from the substantial increase in F2 values observed in this data. Such fronting is an important feature of /ʉː/. In addition, the third formant (F3) also rises considerably. It is perhaps this prominent expansion in the vowel that typifies Hiberno-English. These formant changes demonstrate the nuanced shift from the traditional /uː/ in certain Irish accents to approximate a /ʉː/-like sound, thereby reflecting the interesting variations that can also take place in the vowel pronunciation between different dialects of English.

Table 11
/uː/ as in the Word "boot"

Formants Frequency	American English	Hiberno-English	Difference
F1_Hz	310	289.537601	-20.4624
F2_Hz	870	1092.259472	222.2595
F3_Hz	2250	2693.880659	443.8807

Vowel analysis and formant frequencies in American and Hiberno-English indicate distinct phonetic variations associated with each variety, which highlights the diversity and

uniqueness of English pronunciation globally. F1, F2, and F3 play a key role in illustrating the differences in vowel height, backness, and roundness in accents, calling attention to the dominance of regional characteristics in speech. The assimilation of vowels from close to open or centralized vowels or the conversion of diphthongs to monophthongs illustrates the complexity of the dialect. Through this research apart from depicting the beauty of English accents it associates acoustic phonetics with language variation and change.

Thematic Analysis

From the interview analysis, a number of themes emerged related to Hiberno-English as a whole, with the vowels being central to the investigation even if it is not mentioned directly. In other words, when accent, dialect, or a variety is mentioned, we know for sure that none of these can be without vowels, which vary too.

Regional Variation and Identity

The interview starts with observing the regional differences in pronunciation of the word "ride" focusing on the variations stemming from different vowel articulation. So, for example, "the /ɑɪ/ sound in 'ride'" is contrasted with the rounded vowels in words like "oil." One respondent said: "Oh, ride. Yeah. I've never thought about it. I say ride. Right. Yeah, ride a bike. As in right, as in fight. You can hear it in some places with little rounding as the vowel oil, foil, and the like." This indicates how the dialogue about accents plays an important role, stressing the significance of regional spoken language variations to the entirety of linguistic diversity.

In addition, the responses show how social classes, education levels, and pronunciation are inseparably tied to the regional variations, which results in language use differences. As expressed by one respondent: "It doesn't only depend on parts of the country, but it can also depend on, if we can say so, levels of education, social class as well." This indicates the intrinsic relationship between language and social identity — "Young people farther away (from the east coast) often speak with certain words that we call mid-Atlantic accent – This shows the evolving nature of the language being influenced by social factors like where a person was raised or what education the person has had."

Another point the interview revealed was the influence of American and British media on linguistic practices, highlighting how regional cultural spaces within a country can shape linguistic identity, particularly among the younger generation. One of the interviewees explained: "The cultural influence and identity formation engage in a complex struggle when language becomes the battleground." Another influence, as revealed, comes from immigration, which plays a role in contributing to the linguistic diversity and the development of regional accents. Another respondent added, "There is real potential for change, but this is not just caused by American influence. There is also large migration to Ireland."

This tells us that regional linguistic identity is considered one of the pillars when it comes to personal and communal identity maintenance both during shifts and globalization processes. The responses accentuate the view on the diversification of dialects, which express the theme of identity, with local perspective in a way exploring how language defines regional, cultural and human nature. Therefore, it demonstrates that local dialects are not only connected to aspects such as geographical, economic and social differences but also play a core function in the creation of the individual and collective identities.

Social Mobility and Linguistic Flexibility

The discussion about young people who assimilate to what is commonly known as a mid-Atlantic accent during their college years illustrates linguistic flexibility as a response to social mobility. This is clarified by one of the interviewees: "The cases of young people who adopt a mid-Atlantic accent when they go to college, and we call this assimilation. This accent adaptation signals a bid to comply with a more cosmopolitan or conspicuously trendy identity, usually linked to university and a wider social spectrum."

Moreover, the transcript suggests that social class and level of education can impact pronunciation, thus showing that there are some markers of social mobility within linguistic practices. As one participant puts it: "Indeed, social class and education level can affect how people pronounce; there are sometimes indicators of social mobility in linguistic practices." People's speech discloses two kinds of information through words: the content expressed by the language and the speaker's social position and their ambitions.

The influence of the American and British media on the pronunciation of younger generations speaks of the globalization of cultural influences that may cause speakers to sound as if they were from a place other than where they live. One participant stated: "Okay now, you know that the TV shows and movies from the Americans will change the accent." This occurrence provides evidence of the possibility that young people and perhaps other groups might adopt linguistic elements from global cultures while trying to find a sense of belonging within a bigger and more socially and culturally interconnected circle of people.

The impact of migration on Irish accents and how diverse accents have been accepted into the local speech serves as an illustration of the linguistic adaptability of the community in the face of demographic changes: "... not entirely due to American influence, rather the large migration to Ireland contributes to this shift." The fact that linguistic adaptation underpins the processes of social advancement supported by a fluid environment of constant movement speaks volumes about the progress of languages, human beings and their race-informed sense of identity.

We can conclude that social mobility and linguistic flexibility underscore the capacity of individuals to adapt their language use in response to changing social contexts, aspirations, and influences. This linguistic adaptability is considered a key facet of social communication, allowing individuals to adapt themselves to desired social groups, navigate social hierarchies, and respond to the pressures and opportunities of a globalizing world.

Media Influence and Globalization

In an ongoing conversation about the choice of youth to speak accents and phrases similar to Americans, the topic of the immediate influence of global media uses is raised: "Okay now, you know how the American and British TV shows and movies will affect the accent they sort of have because those shows have more American than...they tend to adopt more American impression." This trend demonstrates the ever-increasing power of the American market through its mass media exports, showing us that mass media today have networking abilities as well as the potential of a cultural exchange medium.

The observation of youth adopting an American accent and using American words shows young people's identities are based on that of this globalized generation. Although

communicating through the world's media popularizes American English, young people struggle with a decision between the global influence and settling in their local linguistic identity: "Younger generations watch cartoons and... So. Disney. Yeah. They almost look like natives by their American accent." The idea that this type of interaction indicates how globalization goes hand-in-hand with the preservation of local culture is illustrated by the use of language as an explicit element.

The transcript conveys that the national media surge makes the youth flexible in their language since they are the most uninhibited persons who become keen to incorporate foreign cultures in their identity: "I suppose the youth will if they have been constantly immersed in more American than British TV and movies rather than properly educated on the British language." This trait seems to be inherent to the process of globalization with the concept of identity becoming increasingly variable and the language practices embracing both the global and the local nuances.

In doing so, the fact that migration trends go hand-in-hand with the media's impact on discourse practices highlights the complex picture of globalization which implies not only the flow of media and ideas, but also the movement of people: "It's also the huge migration to Ireland." Migration impacts language and culture by offering new influences and diversity that eventually result in complexity and variety in global and local communications or interactions. The transcript deals with media influence and globalization and highlights that the phenomena are part of a wider horizontal perspective where the global media serves as a channel and motor for cultural and linguistic change, thus challenging and confronting the society.

Code-Switching and Context-Dependent Speech

The interview illustrates that when young people living in bilingual or multiple-language contexts speak a different code depending on where they are. This habit shows that depending on the social class, people may adjust their pronunciation to suit the given atmosphere, as we noticed in the example of the taxi driver below. Social contexts, such as formal events or less formal conversations with certain social groups, might lead people to change their accent or pronunciation.

This signifies a social awareness of the stylistics of language use and a purposeful communication style in which the speakers will choose the language that they perceive as most befitting or beneficial at a particular time. Here is a taxi driver anecdote:

A taxi driver once told me that a group of young ladies from going to university got into his car going out at night and they were speaking in their college accent. And by the time that he picked them up to bring them home, they were after having a pleasant evening and imbibing some alcohol. And they were now talking in their rural, Tipperary, Clare accents. So, what I'm saying is that people will revert. They are conscious about what they are saying, they will start to use the standard.

The anecdote above about individuals reverting to their regional accents after a night out serves as a poignant example of how context-dependent speech can be influenced by emotional states or a sense of belonging. This reversion to a more authentic or comfortable linguistic identity in familiar or informal settings underscores the deep connection between language and personal identity. This approach is a way of changing one's language depending on different

social surroundings or norms in order to facilitate communication, demonstrate identity or gain social status. In addition, delving into code-mixing and context-dependent speech demonstrates how intricate the link between language, personality, and social context is. It is a manifestation of how people use linguistic fluidity to conform to various social worlds, negotiate personal identities within relational borders, and adapt to the globalizing tendencies of the media and culture.

From the analysis above, I am therefore in a position to justify, correlate, and explain the observed variations in vowel frequencies and formant patterns in relation to important linguistic parameters such as regionalism, mobility, and media. It must be recognized that regional identity is likely an influential factor contributing to the development of distinct vowel peculiarities within specific communities, particularly due to the tradition of passing down dialect norms from one generation to the next. Social mobility may lead to shifts in aspects such as the use of new vowel sounds, as individuals change their speech patterns due to a change in social status or occupation, especially when entering higher education institutions or moving to urban areas. Moreover, media pressure, particularly from American and British sources, can influence young speakers to adopt a more neutral phonemic variation, which is considered more prestigious. Thus, by combining these factors with the acoustic analysis, we gain a richer perspective on how social factors influence phonetic variation in Hiberno-English.

The Future of Irish English

There is an emphasis on the role of the immigrant population in solidifying the status of both Irish and English as the co-official languages of Ireland. People coming into Ireland with different mother tongues, automatically leads to the adoption of diverse accents and dialects in the country that accounts for a multifaceted and intriguing Irish English: "It might be influenced by Americans, and it also is because of the large influx of immigration into Ireland." This transformation, which is part of the ongoing change, helps the language used in Ireland evolve alongside global migration trends.

Despite globalization and multiculturalism, the tradition of Irish English, principally its accent, inherent warmth, and regional vernaculars, is likely to be retained. The interview highlights that although the external pressures are quite perceptible, there is no likelihood of them completely taking over the beautiful mosaic of regional accents in Ireland: "I feel that the Irish accent will probably always stay the way it is... But the combination of the two together I do not think they can do; most Irish people wouldn't use them." Through this persistence, we can also see the pride and the preservation of identity and rootedness among Irish language speakers.

Discussion

Vowels

The findings show the subtle ways in which the different vowel sounds vary across the American English and Hiberno-English dialects and how these dialects are phonetically diverse. Our study highlights the complexity of vowel pronunciation, which comes about due to different designs of formant frequencies that create the rich dialectal diversity of English. Within this context, the analysis reveals that vowels such as /ɪ/, /ɑ:/, and /æ/ in Hiberno-English go through considerable phonetic adjustments that are distinct from what may be found in American English when it comes to the way vowels are pronounced.

Specifically, these shifts often pertain to adjustments in formant frequencies that entail modifications of vowel height, frontness, and rounding, resulting in these vowels typically being pulled towards either a schwa (/ə/) or showing retreating or central tendency. This pattern of vowel sound adaptation illustrates the unique and original phonetic identity that Hiberno-English comprises. These findings do, in fact, add to prior research on accents of English, as those documented by Wells (1982) and Hickey (2008). Therefore, we can conclude that the first hypothesis—assuming that Hiberno-English possesses a distinct set of vowel sounds influenced by the Irish language and significantly varied by regional and social factors—has been verified.

Also, those variations are the basic factor of dialect formation in sociolinguistics, and they prove that a dialect is the reflection of social, geographical, and cultural differences supported by formant frequency data. This highlights the critical role of phonetics in sociolinguistic studies, exemplified by the advanced tongue root in Hiberno-English /ɑ:/ contrasting with its counterpart the American /ɑ:/, which is generally understood as a characteristic of the dialects in which it is found but not only as a mere phonetic differentiator. It enhances our understanding of the delicate connection between language, society, and culture more vivid. The notion of the social factor elucidated in our research is reinforced by the study undertaken by Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2000), which illuminates the processes by which vocabulary and pronunciation are shaped and influenced by social networks and interactions. The phonetic differentiator mentioned earlier can support the second hypothesis: the distinctive acoustic features of Hiberno-English vowels, identified through formant frequencies and qualitative analysis, differentiate them from vowels in other dialects.

As the discussion progresses, the participants come to the conclusion that dialect evolution is characterized by dynamicity strongly associated with globalization. The media and migration significantly affect language use which suggests that even the phonetic features of language varieties like Hiberno-English are on the path to further evolving. The interaction between American mass media and Hiberno-English multilingualism implies such a process, demonstrating the constant negotiation between local linguistic identities and global cultural influences. These results are in line with the work of Stuart-Smith (2007) and Stuart-Smith et al. (2013). The scenario expresses dialect fluidity, the adaptation and reshaping of these dialects that happens as a result of the influences from outside the society.

Dialectal diversity can enrich the language, adding complexity since vowels in different regions tend to sound different. Here the complexity of the association between language and society becomes evident emphasizing how the way in which one speaks aligns with one's social identity as emphasized by Hickey (2008). Vowels, as we have asserted, are integral to those linguistic features that stand out in any given variety.

Thematic Analysis

The thematic analyses carried out show how Irish English functions as a complex communication medium involving language, society, and identity. Each theme uncovers the sociolinguistic environment of Ireland and challenges many language debates such as differences caused by regional dialects, social advancement, how the globalizing world influences grammars and the complexity of code-switching.

The consideration of regional differences and personalities shows how strongly language is rooted in place. It is an identity carrier at the regional level, and changes in pronunciation and dialect highlight the sense of belonging to a particular region. Such an investigation exposes the intricate details of how social group and educational status come together to form an identity with many facets to it, making the landscape of speech diverse. Additionally, media and migration trends suggest that regional identities are dynamic and adaptable. These identities can absorb new influences while preserving essential elements that connect people to their cultural heritage. These findings align with the work of Stuart-Smith (2007) and Stuart-Smith et al. (2013).

Language is an instrument that provides ways to navigate the complexities of society. Teens who are among the earliest to incorporate a 'Mid-Atlantic accent' in their speech are also seen as a testament to a growing phenomenon: adaptation to social environments by using a mix of different language varieties. This highlights language as the key element that serves the purpose of achieving social mobility as a tool for navigating social classes. People are using strategies like assimilation and mixing languages in order to fit into the groups and project their identities. It implies a competition in which the ability to speak and achieve social goals are restrained by privileges, opportunities and the ambition of fitting in. This concept of adaptation is consistent with the accommodation strategy explored by Rahmasari et al. (2022).

Media and globalization, as two influential forces in the language process, have put a spotlight on the prominent role of global media agencies in creating linguistic trends. American slang and accents appropriated by Irish youth through TV shows, movies, and online media channels reveal the extent of American culture, mediated through TV, films and online platforms, is absorbed by others. These dynamics of cultural interaction often occur at the expense of local non-dominant language groups. It implies the global media can act as a barrier for the exchange of culture, but at the same time, challenging well-established language norms which are replaced with a mix of lingual phrases that also reflect globalization itself. The influence of American media on English dialects around the world has been emphasized by some prior research. For example, Bolton (2010) researched American English and the media, and Mammadzada (2023) discussed American English and its influence on British English.

The idea of code-switching and discourse-appropriate speech highlights language's ability to adapt to the environment and the strategic use of speech in different socio-cultural situations. It conveys the success of the individual in navigating among different linguistic codes and uses of speech in different speech contexts, depending on their audience and objectives. This idea emphasizes the capacity of vocabulary to impart certain social cues, as well as the unique space it creates for personal identity, group alignment, and communication. In the context of our study, the exploration of code-switching within language is supported by prior works in the following chronological order: Auer (2005), De Fina (2007), Abdul-Zahra (2010), Auer (2013, Ed.), and Anchimbe (2015).

The topic of Irish English's future addresses the way this dialect is changing as a result of globalization, the spreading influence of media worldwide, and the prevalent processes of immigration. It envisions a path where Irish English continues to retain its traditional components while simultaneously integrating new linguistic properties. This scenario proposes a balance between maintaining tradition and welcoming innovation, ensuring that the

distinctiveness of local accents and the flexibility of its speakers contribute to the ongoing vitality and depth of Irish English. This perspective is supported by insights from Filppula et al. (1993) in *Changing paradigms in the study of Hiberno-English* published in the Irish University Review, and by Pietsch (2010) through *What has changed in Hiberno-English: Constructions and their role in the contact-induced change*, demonstrating the ever-changing behavior of English influenced by global and methodological factors.

The study of formant frequencies in both American and Hiberno-English accents illustrates a varying foundation of vowel sounds across the dialects. In this way, we develop a more profound understanding of the importance of phonetics not only in terms of studying language variation but also, in sociolinguistics and dialect adoption to our increasingly interconnected world. At the same time, the emerging themes present a holistic reflection on the sociolinguistic dynamics of Irish English. They reveal how language serves as a mirror for social identity, navigates globalization's complexities, and adapts to the rapidly changing world.

Conclusion

The phonetic patterning of Hiberno-English such as the vowel sounds having distinct differences acoustically from other English dialects was confirmed by this research. Molded by the interests of geography, cultural context, and external influences, Irish English vowels are a distinct system. The localized speech varieties and the use of unique vocabulary, the influence of the media and the toggling between different codes as well as merging the old with the new are the elements of a dialect that upholds tradition but allows for innovation too. Drawn from a comparison of localities, the investigation has the ultimate goal of demonstrating how Hiberno-English exhibits the abundance of complex phonetic features that it acquires from a more connected world. Language dialect as a whole reflects the relationship between language and group affiliation by its intricate and ever-changing identity. On the other hand, that keeps the door open to new lines of research to be put forward. The vowels are the eloquent expression that allows people to conserve the essence of tradition despite an ever-changing environment.

Implications

The study aims to display the phonetics and sociolinguistics of Hiberno-English, focusing on vowel variation and its sociocultural implications. It reveals significant phonetic shifts in vowels like /ɪ/, and /ɑ:/. Furthermore, the /e/ and /æ/ compared to their English counterparts, illustrate the Hiberno-English's distinct phonetic sound. Thus, we have variations that arise from the social, geographical and cultural forces, which indeed points to the contribution of phonetics to sociolinguistic analyses and accent formation. The linguistic reality as influenced by globalization, the media, and migration is constantly changing and has become a highly diverse world where different dialects are continuously developing. Beyond this, thematic analyses of the sociolinguistic environment of Ireland consider regional dialects and the phenomenon of code-switching, alongside the influence of social standing on language, emphasizing the inseparable nature of language and identity. This diverse and continuous phonetic patterns examination provides us with comprehensive information linked to our initial questions and assumptions, which depicts the rich phonetic diversity of Hiberno-English in the global context.

Bio

Awad Alshehri, an associate professor of applied linguistics from Saudi Arabia, earned his PhD from the University of Limerick, Ireland. He teaches at the College of Languages and Translation and was the Dean for Evaluation and Quality from 2017 to 2022. His research focuses on syntax, phonetics, and phonology. ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3937-2413.

References

Abdul-Zahra, S. (2010). Code-Switching in language: An applied study. *Journal of College of Education for Women*, *21*(1), 283-296.

Anchimbe, E. A. (2015). Code-switching: Between identity and exclusion. In G. Stell & K. Yakpo (Eds.), *Code-switching between structural and sociolinguistic perspectives* (pp. 139-162). De Gruyter Mouton.

Auer, P. (2005). A postscript: Code-switching and social identity. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *37*(3), 403-410. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2004.10.010

Auer, P. (Ed.). (2013). *Code-switching in conversation: Language, interaction and identity*. Routledge.

Bolton, K. (2010). Constructing the global vernacular: American English and the media. In K. Corrigan, K. P. (2010). *Irish English, Volume 1 - Northern Ireland*. De Gruyter Mouton.

De Fina, A. (2007). Code-switching and the construction of ethnic identity in a community of practice. *Language in Society*, *36*(3), 371-392. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404507070182

Filppula, M., Klemola, J., & Paulasto, H. (2008). *English and Celtic in contact* (Vol. 13). Routledge.

Hickey, A. (2021). Hiberno-English language and culture in Cork. *Academia Letters*, 2.

Hickey, R. (2007). *Irish English: History and present-day forms*. Cambridge University Press.

Hickey, R. (2008). Irish English: Phonology. In B. Kortmann & C. Upton (Eds.), *Varieties of English: The British Isles* (pp. 71-104). De Gruyter Mouton.

Ladefoged, P., & Johnson, K. (2011). *A course in phonetics* (6th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Mammadzada, S. (2023). American English and its influence on British English. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *13*(1), 1-11. https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v13n1p1

Pietsch, L. (2010). What has changed in Hiberno-English. *Irish University Review, 40*(2), 202-218.

Rahmasari, G., Yuniarti, E., Nurhayati, I. K., & Maharani, I. F. (2022). Dialect variation as an accommodation strategy in cultural interaction. *Makna: Jurnal Kajian Komunikasi, Bahasa, dan Budaya*, *11*(2), 72-83.

Stuart-Smith, J. (2007). The influence of the media. In C. Llamas, L. Mullany, & P. Stockwell (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to sociolinguistics* (pp. 140-148). Routledge.

Stuart-Smith, J., Pryce, G., Timmins, C., & Gunter, B. (2013). Television can also be a factor in language change: Evidence from an urban dialect. *Language*, *89*(3), 501-536. https://doi.org/10.1353/lan.2013.0041

Tieken-Boon van Ostade, I. (2000). Social network analysis and the history of English. *European Journal of English Studies*, *4*(3), 211-216. https://doi.org/10.1076/1382-5577(200012)4:3;1-S;FT211

Wells, J. C. (1982a). *Accents of English 1: An introduction*. Cambridge University Press.

Wells, J. C. (1982b). *Accents of English*. Cambridge University Press.

Audiovisual Translation Teaching at Yemeni University Translation Programs

Amin AL-Mekhlafi

Department of English, Faculty of Education, Sanaa University

Sanaa, Yemen

Almekhlafi.amin@gmail.com

http://orcid.org/0000-0003--9954-2968

Afraah Al-Wajeeh

MA in Translation

Sanaa, Yemen

afrahnaji137@gmail.com

_____

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استقصاء الوضع الراهن لتدريس الترجمة السمعية البصرية في ثمانية برامج ترجمة في الجامعات اليمنية، من خلال تحديد مدى توفر الترجمة السمعية البصرية كمكون من مكونات برامج الترجمة في الجامعات اليمنية، ومن خلال معرفة إلى أي مدى يتم تدريب الطلبة عليها، وتركز الدراسة أيضاً على معرفة تصورات طلاب الترجمة ومدرسيهم حول فوائد تدريس الترجمة السمعية والبصرية والتحديات التي تواجهها، والحلول الممكنة لمواجهة هذه التحديات، وقد استخدم الباحثان استمارة تحليل محتوى بالإضافة إلى استبانة مغلقة لجمع البيانات المطلوبة، كما استخدم الباحثان نهجاً مختلطاً كمي – نوعي، ووصفي - تحليلي، لجمع بيانات الدراسة وتحليلها، وقد شارك في الدراسة تسعة وثلاثون من مدرسي الترجمة، ومائة وثلاثون طالباً من طلبة المستوى الرابع في البرامج المستهدفة. وتظهر النتائج تبايناً واضحاً بين برامج الترجمة الجامعية فيما يتعلق بتدريس الترجمة السمعية والبصرية ومدى توفرها، وأهميتها، كما تظهر النتائج أن كلاً من طلبة الترجمة ومدرسيهم يرون ضرورة أن تكون الترجمة السمعية والبصرية مكوناً مهما من مكونات أي برنامج ترجمة جامعي، لأن ذلك يعمل على تعزيز مهارات الطلاب اللغوية والتكنولوجية وتعزيز قدراتهم في الترجمة. وبالإضافة إلى ذلك، تشير النتائج أن تدريس الترجمة السمعية البصرية في الجامعات اليمنية يواجه بعض التحديات، ومن أهمها البيئة الغير مناسبة لتدريب الطلبة على الترجمة السمعية البصرية بالإضافة إلى سوق العمل الغير مشجع على ذلك، وتقترح الدراسة بعض الحلول الممكنة، كما يراها المشاركون للتغلب على بعض هذه التحديات، مثل تحسين بيئة الدراسة المرتبطة بالترجمة السمعية البصرية، وتزويد الجامعات اليمنية بمدرسين مؤهلين تأهيلاً جيداً للترجمة السمعية البصرية أو تأهيل من فيها من المدرسين، والعمل على تشجيع سوق العمل على إدراج الترجمة السمعية البصرية كجزء أساسي فيه.

Audiovisual Translation Teaching at Yemeni University Translation Programs

Amin AL-Mekhlafi

Department of English, Faculty of Education, Sanaa University

Sanaa, Yemen

Almekhlafi.amin@gmail.com

http://orcid.org/0000-0003--9954-2968

Afraah Al-Wajeeh

MA in Translation
Sanaa, Yemen
afrahnaji137@gmail.com

_____

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the status quo of teaching audiovisual translation at eight Yemeni university translation programs by determining the availability of audiovisual translation as a component of translation programs in Yemeni universities, and the extent to which audiovisual translation training is provided. The study also focuses on identifying the perceptions of translation students and their translation instructors on the benefits of teaching this type of translation, the challenges it faces, and the possible solutions to address these challenges. The researchers used a checklist and a close-ended questionnaire to collect the required data. The researchers also used a mixed quantitative/qualitative, and descriptive/analytical approach to collect and analyze the data. 39 translation instructors and 130 level four students participated in the study. The results show clear variation among targeted university translation programs concerning the teaching of audiovisual translation in terms of its availability, extent, and importance. They also show that the students and instructors see audiovisual translation as a significant component of any translation program since it can enhance students' linguistic and technological skills and translation abilities. In addition, the results indicate that teaching audiovisual translation in university translation programs in Yemen faces some challenges of which poor study environment and the job market are the most serious. The study suggests some possible solutions, as seen by the participants, to overcome some of these challenges, such as improving the related study environment, providing university translation programs with well-qualified audiovisual translation instructors or qualifying the present ones, and encouraging the translation job market to include this type of translation as an important part of it.

Keywords: *audiovisual translation, dubbing, subtitling, teaching, translation programs*

_____

Introduction

Translation is one of the most important channels of cross-cultural communication among individuals and nations. Print or written translation via paper and books was the most predominant type in the past. However, nowadays, as indicated by Gamal (2014) "digital technology has changed the rules of the game almost entirely. In its traditional sense, translation is no longer accessed through paper and books but via screens and online. This is the world of audiovisual translation" (p. 1).

Audiovisual Translation (AVT), as indicated by O'Sullivan and Cornu (2019), is the term applied to the interlingual or intralingual transfer of different audiovisual (AV) products such as films, news programs, documentaries, TV series, etc. There are two main modes used for this kind of translation: 1) subtitling, in which a written translation is added to the AV products without distorting the original soundtrack as pointed out by researchers such as Guillot (2019), Neves (2019), and Romero-Fresco (2019), and 2) re-voicing (dubbing or voice-over), in which the original soundtrack is totally or partially replaced by a spoken one as indicated by researchers such Matamala (2019) and Diaz Cintas and Orero (2010).

Looking at the AVT scene in the Arab World, one can notice that it is constantly, but slowly, changing. The beginning of this change, as indicated by Gamal (2007), started decades ago. For this reason, AV communication pioneers, such as Gamal (2009), suggest that academia in the Arab World should pay more attention to AVT and university training programs (UTPs) must make this translation mode part of their study plans. For this reason, several universities in the region have started to include AVT in their translation programs. Yet, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, no rigorous studies have been conducted to investigate the status quo of AVT in UTPs in the Arab World. To take Yemen as an example, there are several translation programs in public and private universities in the country. However, very little is known about AVT and its teaching in such programs. For this reason, the current study investigated the status quo of teaching AVT at translation programs at eight Yemeni universities. In particular, the current study tried to answer the following four questions:

1. Are AVT courses available as a component of UTPs and to what extent are they offered?
2. What are the views of translation students and instructors on the benefits of AVT teaching?
3. What are the main challenges that constitute obstacles to AVT teaching?
4. What are the possible solutions for the challenges of AVT teaching from the point of view of the translation students and instructors?

Review of Literature

The Emergence of Dubbing and Subtitling

AVT is an important development in the history of Translation Studies (Diaz Cintas, 2008a; Diaz Cintas & Orero, 2003; Gamal 2007; O'Sullivan & Cornu, 2019; Valdeón,2022; and Zanotti, 2022). It has shortened, to a great degree, the distances of transferring and transmitting norms, values, and cultures among individuals, and nations, in all forms of social media and shortened the time of transference as well. In its historical movement, AVT passed through

several stages where translation at the pre-sound stage remains, according to O'Sullivan and Cornu, "one of the biggest gaps in audiovisual translation research" (2019, p. 15). At this stage, the translation of intertitles, title cards, texts, or film explainers took the form of written texts on cardboard between the images of the silent film. It was a form of intralingual, interlingual, and inter-semiotic film translation.

The introduction of synchronized speech in film production created new problems for the film industry related to meeting and maintaining worldwide film distribution. This led to the development of two methods of AVT as indicated by O'Sullivan and Cornu (2019) and Sponholz (2003). The first method was to add and superimpose written texts as title cards onto the film itself, or to display such title cards on an adjacent screen. The second method was to replace the original dialogues with translated ones to meet the needs of foreign language audiences. Technological developments ushered in the advancement of AVT and developed it to the stage we witness today (see O'Sullivan & Cornu, 2019 for more details).

Subtitling and dubbing started in the late 1920s and early 1930s in America and some European countries and then moved south to Latin America and east to China and Japan (O'Sullivan & Cornu, 2019). Even though these two important forms of AVT share similar historical development processes, they differ in nature, ideology, and cost. The former seems easier and less expensive, and it maintains, to a certain extent, the authenticity of the original product. The latter is not as easy as the former. It costs more and is subject to more censorship, yet it allows the audience to have an enjoyable experience without the struggle to read texts (Ivarsson, 2002ك Tveit, 2009). Due to such reasons, certain countries favor and develop one form of AVT more than the other.

Certain countries with major film industries concerned about cost issues, nationalistic ideologies, political policies, or literacy problems favor dubbing rather than subtitling. On the other hand, countries that are concerned more about cost and have less concern about ideology or multilingualism opt for subtitling. For example, some European countries such as Germany, Italy, and France, as mentioned by O'Sullivan and Cornu (2019) and Tveit (2009), favor dubbing for countries with smaller film infrastructures. Dubbing also became the preferred choice in some Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America for literacy and national bilingualism concerns (Freire 2015). Other countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Portugal, and Greece prefer subtitling. Both modes of translation are used in the Arab world where censorship is a common practice for various reasons as indicated by Izwaini (2015). Some countries in the Arab World (Albarakati, 2024) and Turkey (Sahin, 2018) exercise more censorship over subtitling and dubbing for various religious, political, and cultural reasons. Subtitlers and dubbers are required to observe the rules set forth by government institutions.

Dubbing and subtitling have developed into various modes as confirmed by Lertola (2019). These modes are further delineated by Alonso-Peres and Sanchez, (2018) into two main modes, namely, subtitling and re-voicing. Subtitling includes intertitling, standard subtitling, surtitling, subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing, respeaking-based subtitling, 3d subtitling, and fandubbing. On the other hand, revoicing has other modes such as dubbing, voice-over, free commentary, narration, audio description, simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, and others (e.g., karaoke, audio-subtitling, and fandubbing).

Audiovisual Translation in the Arab World

University translation programs, in the Arab World, offer two main modes of AVT (i.e., subtitling and dubbing) in which, according to Thawabteh (2011), subtitling is the preferred mode. However, in the past few years, dubbing has become popular as well. Maluf (2003) points out that there is no exact date for the start of dubbing in the Arab World. However, the first dubbed work, in the Arab World, was the children's cartoon "Sinbad" in 1974 followed by "Zena Wa Nahoul" in 1975, and later by a slew of other cartoons for children. Then, by 1991, a surge of dubbed Mexican works started invading the region. After that period, dubbed Turkish works prevailed. Buccianti (2010) stateي that MBC channels started broadcasting Turkish series dubbed in the Syrian dialect in 2007 with series such as 'Iklil al Ward', and the like. In the last 10 years or so, Arab audiences have been watching more popular Turkish historical series such as "The Resurrection of Ertuğrul", which is about the establishment of the Ottoman Islamic Caliphate, and "The Capital of Abdul Hamid" which talks about the last caliph in the Ottoman Caliphate, Sultan Abdul Hamid II, in addition to many other subtitled or dubbed products.

This increasing interest in AVT requires UTPs to consider this orientation in their programs (Gamal, 2014). Hence, courses on AVT, in general, and on dubbing and subtitling, in particular, should be integrated into UTPs not only because they qualify translation students to be future AV translators, but also because of their multifold benefits to translation students during their study. These courses help students to develop their linguistic competencies (Al-Dabbagh, 2017; Neves, 2004), strengthen their technical skills (Capitani, 2016), and enhance their cultural awareness. Moreover, the job market requires UTPs to qualify their candidates in AVT to meet job market requirements.

In a study conducted by Sponholz (2003), she investigated whether training translation students in subtitling in Europe meets the demands of the subtitling market. The study found that the subtitling market sector, translation instructors, and translation students agreed on the usefulness and importance of subtitling as one form of AVT in translation program courses. Sponholz's study concluded that university training in subtitling in Europe seems to meet the demands of the professional subtitling market to a great extent. Regionally speaking, Al-Dabbagh (2017) explored students' attitudes regarding the benefits of teaching subtitling to translation students at Jordanian universities. The study showed that the participants had a positive attitude towards integrating the teaching of subtitling in UTPs. Thus, there is a consensus that AVT is important and should be part of any translation program.

Researchers such as Al-Dabbagh (2017), Diaz Cintas and Orero (2003), and Janecová (2012) among others, claim that AVT, despite its significance, is not given due attention in most educational institutions. However, this situation has been changing as Diaz Cintas (2008a) indicates. These recent changes in AVT teaching reveal that "teaching audiovisual translation has become an increasingly attractive area of research and practice in the academic environment across the globe" (Janecová, 2012, p. 17). In the Arab context, Al-Dabbagh (2017) shows that, in Jordan, the focus is on written translation rather than other translation modes. Gamal (2020) pointed out that "audiovisual translation remains a vogue in Arab academia unable to take its rightful position as a catalyst for change and reform in Arab society" (p. 74). Unfortunately, in Yemen, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, there is a lack of studies, seminars, or conferences on AVT.

Audiovisual Translation Teaching

Nowadays, AVT teaching is considered important due to the fast changes in the technological scene and the demands of the job market at a global level. Gambier (2013) stated that "in the last 20 years . . . [AVT] has come into its own as a recognized form of translation and also as an academic field of research" (p. 45). Two important factors are considered significant in the success and enhancement of AVT teaching in universities. These are technology and well-qualified instructors. The relationship between technology and AVT teaching is strong and very close. If the technical devices (i.e., computer programs and other AV facilities) are available in the teaching environment, the teaching situation will be plausible, real, and practical.

But suppose such critical and essential devices are not available. In that case, the teaching situation will be implausible, unreal, and impractical since it lacks the necessary ingredients for effective AVT teaching and training practices (Capitani, 2016). Some of these devices and computer programs, no doubt, could be expensive for some universities, particularly in Yemen; consequently, some universities may not be able to afford them. This financial problem is exacerbated, since AVT facilities, if available, require constant updating and continuous maintenance, which adds to the overall cost of such facilities. Even though the financial problem, as pointed out by Diaz Cintas (2008b), has become an old trend over time in some parts of the world, the researchers of the current study see it differently in Yemen taking into consideration the current political unrest in the country.

The lack of qualified instructors who can work with modern technical devices and computer programs is another complication standing in the path of AVT teaching. Providing UTPs with well-qualified AVT instructors who can efficiently train students is essential before integrating AVT as a recognizable part of any translation program. Diaz Cintas (2008a) acknowledges that "AVT is an area in which there seems to have been a chronic lack of expertise amongst trainers to teach it" (p. 5).

In a study conducted on game localization training, a type of AVT, Odacıoğlu, et al. (2016) analyze the position of game localization training within academic translation teaching by analyzing the curriculum content of two translation programs, one at the undergraduate level and the other at the postgraduate level, at two universities. The study reveals the absence of courses related to game localization. The study recommends that it is important to raise the translation instructors' and translation students' awareness of the importance of this form of AVT training. The study also confirms that it is worth considering game localization in translation programs just like other types of translation such as medical, legal, economic, and literary translation, mostly due to its potential in the translation market.

There seems to be a growing dissatisfaction among UTP candidates regarding the performance of translation programs. El Haj Ahmed (2019) evaluates the status of translation teaching at Gaza universities by examining the teaching courses, textbooks, instructors, and teaching methods at five universities in Gaza. The study confirms this conclusion, recommends - as an urgent solution - a remedial plan to enhance the current positive sides, and encourages a change in the status of translation teaching in Palestine. The findings show an insistent and persistent need to develop and integrate technology-based courses in the UTPs' study plans.

Mohammed (2020) investigated the efficiency of translation programs at two Yemeni universities in Taiz in preparing and qualifying skilled translators. The study shows that translation students were not satisfied with the translation programs at their universities since those programs failed to train them to be skillful translators. The researcher recommended that UTPs should be periodically revised, and new courses should be added to qualify their candidates and meet job market requirements. At the heart of this is the investigation of the status quo of AVT teaching which, in itself, has become an important part of any translation program.

Research Methods

This study employed a descriptive-analytical mixed-method research approach in which the researchers integrated these paradigms to achieve a comprehensive understanding of AVT teaching in the targeted UTPs and give the reader a clear picture of the topic. The qualitative-descriptive approach was used to carefully examine and analyze course descriptions related to AVT teaching and compare the analysis to actual practices. At the same time, the quantitative-analytical approach was used to give the reader as accurate a picture as possible of the perceptions of translation students and their instructors regarding the importance of AVT, the challenges facing it, and the possible solutions to meet the challenges using statistical values and figures.

The target population comprised level four translation students (N=235) and translation instructors (N= 39) at eight UTPs in one public and seven private universities in Sana'a during the academic year 2021/2022 as shown in Table 1. After excluding absent students, students who participated in the pilot study, and students who submitted incomplete questionnaires, the final samples of the study were composed of 130 students and 39 instructors. The students were both males and females whose ages ranged between 22 to 24 years. Table 1 presents the sample distribution at the eight UTPs. The capital letters (A, B, C, D, E, F, J, H) were used to refer to the universities to maintain their anonymity.

Table 1

The Distribution of the Sample at UTPs

UTP.	Public/ Private	No. of Selected Students	No. of Piloted Students	No. of Absent Students	No. of Incomplete Copies	No. of Participating Students	No. of Instructors
A	Pub.	70	10	3	7	50	11
B	Priv.	36	5	11	3	17	4
C	Priv.	23	0	7	2	14	5
D	Priv.	6	0	2	0	4	3
E	Priv.	22	0	1	3	18	4
F	Priv.	18	0	7	3	8	3
J	Priv.	30	0	11	8	11	3
H	Priv.	30	0	15	7	8	6
Total		**235**	**15**	**57**	**33**	**130**	**39**

The instructors were also male and female PhD holders with the academic rank of either assistant professor, associate professor, or full professor. Table 2 shows their fields of specialization and years of teaching experience.

Table 2

Instructors' Specialization and Teaching Experience

No.	Specialization	No.	%	No.	Years of Teaching Experience	No.	%
1.	Translation	17	43.6	1.	1 – 5	8	20.5
2.	Linguistics	10	25.6	2.	6 -10	12	30.8
4.	Eng. Language	7	18	3.	10 -15	8	20.5
3.	Eng. Literature	5	12.8	4.	15 – plus	11	28.2
	Total	**39**	**100**		**Total**	**39**	**100**

Data Collecting Tools

To collect the required data, the researchers developed two tools written in English: a checklist and a 5-point Likert Scale close-ended questionnaire. The researchers created a checklist to investigate the availability of AVT courses as a component of UTPs and the extent to which AVT is offered in the targeted UTPs. The checklist consisted of seven items. Items 1-6 investigated the availability of AVT, subtitling, and dubbing whether as separate courses or as parts of any other translation courses, the percentages of subtitling and dubbing represented in the course description, and the extent to which they were practiced. Item number seven was used to collect data related to the UPT's study plan course components.

The first draft of the checklist was given to six experts in translation and applied linguistics for review. A final draft was created based on the reviewers' comments. To check reliability, the checklist was filled out twice within three weeks by one instructor teaching AVT at a private university, and the answers were the same both times. This proved that the checklist was reliable. The checklist was then given to one translation instructor at each UTP to fill out, and the researchers used it to examine and analyze each UTP's lesson plans, translation course descriptions, and actual practice.

The researchers also developed and designed a close-ended questionnaire. Only the items related to the benefits of AVT teaching were adapted from Al-Dabbagh (2017). The questionnaire was intended to explore the perceptions of level four students and translation instructors of the benefits of AVT teaching, the main challenges facing AVT teaching, and the possible solutions for such challenges. The questionnaire was divided into two parts (A and B). Part A included the participants' demographic information in addition to two items targeting whether the participants knew or did not know about dubbing and subtitling. Part B included three main sections with a total number of 53 items.

The first draft of the questionnaire was given to the same six experts in translation and applied linguistics who reviewed the checklist to review its content and face validity. The validation process provided the researchers with valuable comments and advice. Accordingly, a second draft with 47 items in part B was created and used for piloting on 15 students. SPSS was used to calculate the value of Cronbach's Alpha which was (.75). This value showed that

the questionnaire was reliable. Also, the questionnaire was given to an AVT instructor to check its adequacy and clarity. Based on the experts' comments and the results of the pilot study, a final draft containing 40 items in part B was created. The 40 items were divided into three sections. The first section (10 items) addressed the benefits of AVT teaching. The second section (16 items) addressed the challenges related to teaching AVT and was divided into four sets: the first set (three items) addressing challenges related to the status of AVT at Yemeni UTPs; the second set (four items) addressing the challenges related to the study place and technical facilities; the third set (three items) addressing the challenges related to instructors and research; and the fourth set (six items) addressing the challenges related to the translation market.

Due to the lack of adequate expertise and the need for representative information, only the first and the second sets of this section were used to collect data from the students, but all four sets were used to collect data from the instructors. The third and last section (14 items) was about the possible solutions to address the challenges facing the teaching of AVT. The questionnaire was manually distributed in paper form to students during classes and to their instructors while they were in their offices.

Data Analysis

In this section, the researchers intend to provide a detailed account of the answers and findings related to the study questions. The researchers manually tabulated the data collected using the checklist. However, they used SPSS software version 21 to analyze the data collected using the questionnaire

Results Related to the Availability of AVT Courses at UTPs

The first research question was about the availability of AVT courses as a component of UTPs and the extent to which they were offered. Data related to this question was collected using the checklist and manually tabulated for descriptive and statistical analysis.

Table 3

The Availability of AVT Courses Compared to Other UTPs Courses

No.	UTPs	Total No. of Courses	Translation Courses		AVT Courses		Other Courses		Total
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%
1	A	52	23	44.2	1	2	28	53.8	100.0
2	B	49	14	28.6	0	0	35	71.4	100.0
3	C	50	13	26	0	0	37	74	100.0
4	D	48	15	31.3	1	2	32	66.7	100.0
5	E	47	15	31.9	1	**2.1**	31	66	100.0
6	F	51	13	25.5	0	0	38	74.5	100.0
7	J	50	13	26	0	0	37	74	100.0
8	H	50	14	28	1	2	35	70	100.0

Table 3 shows the percentage of AVT courses compared to those of translation and other courses at the eight UTPs. The percentages recorded for AVT courses across the eight programs are low in comparison to translation and other courses. The highest percentage of AVT courses as shown

in Table 3 is only 2.1% found in UTP E, while the lowest is 0% found in four UTPs (B, C, F, and J). The analysis also showed that AVT was a separate course at four UTPs (A, D, E, and H), while the other four programs did not have AVT, as an independent course. Further analysis of the study plans of the targeted UTPs was conducted to find out if subtitling and dubbing existed as separate courses in the study plans. Table 4 shows the results of this analysis.

Table 4

The Availability of Subtitling and Dubbing as Separate Courses

No.	UTP	Subtitling	Dubbing
1	A	Not Available	Not Available
2	B	Not Available	Not Available
3	C	Not Available	Not Available
4	D	Not Available	Not Available
5	E	Not Available	Not Available
6	F	Not Available	Not Available
7	J	Not Available	Not Available
8	H	Not Available	Not Available
Total		**8**	**8**

Table 4 shows that there is a total absence of subtitling and dubbing as independent courses at the eight UTPs. Therefore, there was a need to investigate if both modes of translation were included as parts of other translation courses in the study plans and in actual practice and to determine the percentages of each mode of translation in both cases compared to other components in each course. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

The Percentage of Subtitling and Dubbing Training in the Course Description and Actual Practice

No.	UTP	AVT-Related Course	% in Course Description		% in Actual Practice	
			Subtitling	Dubbing	Subtitling	Dubbing
1	**A**	Audiovisual Translation	50%	10%	50% plus	10 -20%
2	**B**	Electronic Tools for Translation	10%	5%	10 -20%	10 -20%
3	**C**	No AVT-Related Course	0%	0%	0%	0%
4	**D**	Audiovisual Translation	50%	5%	50% plus	10 -20%
5	**E**	Audiovisual Translation	70%	30%	50% plus	20-30%
6	**F**	Electronic Tools for Translation	5%	5%	10% minus	Less than 10%
7	**J**	No AVT-Related Course	0%	0%	0%	0%
8	**H**	Audiovisual Translation	70%	10%	50% plus	10 -20%

When examining the statistical values displayed in Table 5, it is clear that subtitling training constitutes between 50% and 70% in the course descriptions and more than 50% in actual practice in the four UTPs that have a separate course for AVT. However, subtitling constitutes only 5-10% of the course description and 10-20% or less of actual practice in the two UTPs that have AVT-related topics within another course called "Electronic Tools for Translation". The results displayed in Table 5 show that subtitling is not taught in two UTPs, namely C and J. Furthermore, the percentage of dubbing training is low in the course descriptions and in actual practice compared to the percentage of subtitling training. Dubbing training is 0% in two UTPs (C and J) in the course description and in actual practice. In the course descriptions, dubbing accounted for 5% in UTPs B, D, and F, 10% in UTPs A and H, and 30% in UTP E. But in actual practice, it accounted for less than 10% in UTP F ,10-20% in UTPs A, B, D, and H, and 20-30% in UTP E.

Results Related to the Benefits of AVT Teaching

The second research question was about the perceptions of the students and instructors regarding the benefits of teaching AVT. To answer this question, the researchers used the data collected using the close-ended questionnaire. The results are presented and discussed separately for each category of participants.

The Students' Perceptions of the Benefits of AVT Teaching

It was necessary to investigate, in the first place, if the students knew about subtitling and dubbing as two important modes of AVT. Therefore, some items in the questionnaire were intended to investigate this issue. Table 6 displays the statistics related to the students' knowledge of subtitling and dubbing.

Table 6
Students' Knowledge of Subtitling and Dubbing

Knowledge of subtitling and dubbing	Subtitling		Dubbing	
	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	123	94.6	96	73.8
No	7	5.4	34	26.2
Total	**130**	**100**	**130**	**100**

Only seven students (5.4%) out of 130 did not know about subtitling, while most students (94.6%) indicated that they knew about subtitling. On the other hand, 34 students (26.2%) did not know about dubbing whereas 96 students (73.8%) knew about it. Table 7 shows the students' perceptions of the benefits of AVT teaching. The statistical values in Table 7 show that the average mean score of the students' perceptions is 4.18. This value indicates that most of the students agreed on the benefits of AVT teaching. AVT's improvement of listening skills ranked highest (M=4.57) while AVT's enhancement of ideological awareness ranked lowest (M=3.81). Nevertheless, the statistical values in Table 7 show that the students at the eight UTPs either strongly agreed or agreed that AVT teaching is beneficial to them from various dimensions: linguistics, translation, culture, and technology.

Table 7

Students' Perceptions of the Benefits of AVT Teaching

Rank	The Intended Benefit	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1.	AVT improves listening skills	4.57	.68	Strongly Agree
2.	AVT improves students' translation skills	4.39	.73	Strongly Agree
3.	AVT gives students an idea about AVT-related genres (films, television series, news programs and documentaries etc.)	4.31	.71	Strongly Agree
4.	AVT helps translation students develop technology awareness and practice	4.22	.87	Strongly Agree
5.	AVT improves vocabulary acquisition	4.17	.97	Agree
6.	AVT improves language skills	4.16	.91	Agree
7.	AVT helps translation students keep up with what is most recent through constant contact with mass media	4.11	.82	Agree
8.	AVT enhances cultural awareness (through different foreign cultures seen in different AV products)	4.03	.79	Agree
9.	AVT improves students' translation criticism (through comparing different translations etc.)	4.00	.66	Agree
10.	AVT enhances ideological awareness (different translations can be found because of different beliefs)	3.81	.82	Agree
	Average	**4.18**	**.80**	**Agree**

The Instructors' Perceptions of the Benefits of AVT Teaching

The items related to whether or not the instructors knew about subtitling and dubbing were statistically analyzed. Table 8 displays the statistics related to this issue. It shows that 37 instructors (94.9%) out of 39 knew about subtitling, whereas two instructors (5.1%) did not. On the other hand, 35 instructors (89.7%) out of 39 knew about dubbing, whereas four instructors (10.3%) did not.

Table 8

Instructors' Knowledge of Subtitling and Dubbing

Knowledge of subtitling and dubbing	Subtitling		Dubbing	
	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	37	94.9	35	89.7
No	2	5.1	4	10.3
Total	**39**	**100**	**39**	**100**

The collected data related to the instructors' perceptions of the benefits of AVT teaching was statistically analyzed, and the results are shown in Table 9. The mean values are used to report the findings.

Table 9

Instructors' Perceptions of the Benefits of AVT Teaching

Rank	The Intended Benefit	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1.	AVT improves listening skills	4.51	.64	Strongly Agree
2.	AVT gives students an idea about AVT-related genres (films, television series, news programs and documentaries, etc.)	4.51	.68	Strongly Agree
3.	AVT improves vocabulary acquisition	4.46	.51	Strongly Agree
4.	AVT improves students' translation skills	4.38	.63	Strongly Agree
5.	AVT helps translation students develop technology awareness and practice	4.38	.63	Strongly Agree
6.	AVT improves language skills	4.38	.75	Strongly Agree
7.	AVT enhances cultural awareness (through different foreign cultures seen in different AV products)	4.31	.73	Strongly Agree
8.	AVT improves students' translation criticism (through comparing different translations etc.)	4.23	.74	Strongly Agree
9.	AVT helps translation students keep up with what is most recent through constant contact with mass media	4.03	.78	Agree
10.	AVT enhances ideological awareness (different translations can be found because of different beliefs)	3.92	.93	Agree
	Average	**4.31**	**.70**	**Strongly Agree**

The average mean score of the instructors' perceptions is 4.31 indicating that most of the instructors had a strong agreement concerning the benefits of teaching AVT to translation students. AVT's improvement of students' listening skills ranked highest (M=4.51), while AVT's enhancement of ideological awareness ranked lowest (M=3.92). It is interesting to note that the instructors at the eight UTPs showed a higher degree of agreement (M=4.31) on the benefits of AVT teaching compared to the students' degree of agreement (M=4.18) as shown in Table 7. However, both categories of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that AVT teaching is beneficial to translation students in various dimensions: linguistics, translation, culture, and technology.

The Challenges of AVT Teaching

The third research question was related to the main challenges facing teaching AVT in UTPs in Yemen. The answer was achieved by analyzing both the students' and instructors' responses regarding the challenges related to the training venue and technical facilities as well

as the status of AVT in Yemeni universities. In addition, the instructors' responses related to the translation market, instructors, and research were also analyzed. The results are presented separately below for each category of participants.

The Students' Perceptions of the Challenges Facing AVT Teaching

The relevant items were analyzed, and the results are shown in Tables 10-13 below. Table 10 presents the students' overall perceptions of the main challenges facing AVT teaching in Yemeni UTPs. The average mean score of the challenges is 3.75. Challenges related to the study place and technical facilities achieved a mean score of 3.96, whereas challenges related to the status of AVT at Yemeni UTPs scored a mean value of 3.54. These values indicate that most students believed that challenges related to these two areas might constitute real obstacles to AVT teaching. Further analysis was carried out for each set of challenges.

Table 10

Students' Overall Perceptions of the Main Challenges Facing AVT Teaching

No.	Challenges related to …	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1.	The study place and technical facilities	3.96	1	Agree
2.	The Status of AVT at Yemeni UTPs	3.54	1.1	Agree
	Average	**3.75**	**1.05**	**Agree**

Challenges Related to the Study Place and Technical Facilities

After discussing the overall perceptions of students regarding the two sets of challenges as shown in Table 10, further analysis of each set of challenges was carried out separately. Table 11 shows the challenges related to the study place and technical facilities. The average mean value is 3.96 which indicates that a good number of the students agreed that challenges related to the study place and technical facilities constituted a real threat to AVT teaching at UTPs in Yemen. The lack of appropriately equipped AVT laboratories ranked highest with a mean score of 4.14 while the number of students in class ranked lowest with a mean score of 3.78.

Table 11

Students' Perceptions of the Challenges Related to the Study Place and Technical Facilities

Rank	Item	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1.	University translation programs lack appropriately equipped AVT laboratories	4.14	.99	Agree
2.	University translation programs lack proper AVT equipment	4.00	1	Agree
3.	University translation programs lack AVT software	3.91	1	Agree
4.	Classes contain a large number of students	3.78	1.2	Agree
	Average	**3.96**	**1**	**Agree**

Challenges Related to the Status of AVT at Yemeni UTPs

Three items in the questionnaire, as shown in Table 12, were used to collect data related to the status of AVT in Yemeni UTPs and how students viewed this form of translation. The collected data were analyzed, and the results are displayed in Table 12 which shows that the average mean score of this set of challenges is 3.54 indicating that a good number of students agree that AVT is facing serious challenges that might affect AVT teaching in Yemeni UTPs. The newness of AVT has a mean score of 3.92, while not considering AVT as a means of cultural awareness in Yemeni UTPs has a mean score of 3.32.

Table 12

Students' Perceptions of the Challenges Related to the Status of AVT at Yemeni UTPs

Rank	Item	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1.	AVT is a new kind of translation	3.92	.96	Agree
2.	AVT is not considered a form of translation at Yemeni university translation programs	3.38	1.2	Not sure
3.	AVT is not considered a means of cultural awareness in the Yemeni university translation programs	3.32	1.2	Not sure
	Average	**3.54**	**1.1**	**Agree**

Translation Instructors' Perceptions of the Challenges of AVT

The items related to challenges facing AVT teaching in the eight UTPs as seen by the instructors were analyzed, and the results are shown in Tables 13-17 below. Table 13 presents the instructors' overall perceptions of the challenges facing AVT teaching. It shows that the average mean score of the instructors' overall perceptions is 3.79. Challenges related to the study place and technical facilities and those related to the translation market achieved mean scores of 4.19 and 4.02, respectively. The former ranked highest among the other categories of challenges and the latter was ranked second. Challenges related to instructors and research and those related to the status of AVT in Yemeni UTPs obtained mean scores of 3.53 and 3.42, respectively. This indicates all four sets of challenges mentioned above constitute obstacles to AVT teaching.

Table 13

Instructors' Overall Perceptions of the Main Challenges For AVT Teaching

No.	Challenges related to …	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1.	The Study Place and Technical Facilities	4.19	.91	Agree
2.	Translation Market	4.02	. 84	Agree
3.	Instructors and Research	3.53	.98	Agree
4.	The status of AVT at Yemeni UTPs	3.42	1.1	Agree
	Average	**3.79**	**.96**	**Agree**

Challenges Related to the Study Place and Technical Facilities

After presenting the instructors' overall perceptions of the four sets of challenges, the researchers conducted further analysis to investigate the challenges of each set separately. The first set included four items related to the study place and technical facilities. The results of the first sets are shown in Table 14 which shows that the lack of adequately equipped AVT laboratories ranked highest (M=4.44) while the number of students in class ranked lowest (M=3.74). The average mean score as shown in Table 14 is 4.19 indicating that almost most of the instructors strongly agreed that challenges related to the study place and technical facilities constitute a serious obstacle to AVT teaching in UTPs in Yemen.

Table 14

Instructors' Perceptions of the Challenges Related to the Study Place and Technical Facilities

Rank	Item	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1.	University translation programs lack appropriately equipped AVT laboratories	4.44	.82	Strongly Agree
2.	University translation programs lack proper AVT equipment	4.31	.77	Strongly Agree
3.	University translation programs lack AVT software	4.26	.85	Strongly Agree
4.	Classes contain a large number of students	3.74	1.2	Agree
	Average	**4.19**	**.91**	**Agree**

Challenges Related to the Translation Market

The instructors' perspectives on the challenges related to the translation market were identified by analyzing the six relevant items. Table 15 shows the results revealing that the challenges related to the translation market achieved an average mean score of 4.02. Among these challenges is the lack of dubbing practices in Yemen which ranked highest with a mean score of 4.18. On the other hand, the challenge related to the absence of a subtitling market in Yemen ranked lowest with a mean score of 3.87.

Table 15

Instructors' Perceptions of the Challenges Related to Translation Market

Rank	Item	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1.	There is a lack of dubbing practice in Yemen	4.18	.72	Agree
2.	There is a lack of subtitling practice in Yemen	4.13	.77	Agree
3.	There are no dubbing studios in Yemen	4.05	.89	Agree
4.	There are no subtitling companies in Yemen	3.97	.90	Agree
5.	Dubbing is not a market demand in Yemen	3.90	.91	Agree
6.	Subtitling is not always a market demand in Yemen	3.87	.83	Agree
	Average	**4.02**	**.84**	**Agree**

Challenges Related to Instructors and Research

To investigate the instructors' perceptions of the challenges related to research in AVT and instructors' familiarity with the technicalities of subtitling and dubbing, the researchers used data collected through the relevant questionnaire items. The results, displayed in Table 16, show that the average mean score of this set of challenges is 3.53. The lack of research in AVT in the Arab World has a higher mean score of 3.95 and challenges related to instructors (items 2 and 3) have an average mean value of 3.32. These values indicate that a good number of the participants agreed, to an extent, that AVT faced challenges in relation to instructors and the lack of research in AVT.

Table 16

Instructors' Perceptions of the Challenges Related to Instructors and Research in AVT

Rank	Item	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1.	There is a lack of research on AVT in the Arab World in general and in Yemen in particular	3.95	.94	Agree
2.	The instructors who teach translation are not familiar with the technicalities of subtitling and dubbing	3.51	1	Agree
3.	The teaching staff at university translation programs are not interested in AVT	3.13	1	Not sure
	Average	**3.53**	**.98**	**Agree**

Challenges Related to the Status of AVT in Yemeni UTPs

The data from three relevant items in the questionnaire was used to identify the instructors' perceptions of the challenges related to the status of AVT in Yemeni UTPs. The results are displayed in Table 17 which shows that the average mean score of this set of challenges is 3.42. This value indicates that a slightly good number of the instructors agreed that this set of challenges was among the ones facing AVT teaching in Yemeni UTPs. Looking closely at the values displayed in Table 17, it can be noticed that the newness of AVT has a higher ranking with a mean score of 3.92, while the instructors' perception of AVT as a means of cultural awareness in Yemeni UTPs has a lower mean score of 3.13.

Table 17

Instructors' Perceptions of the Challenges Related to the Status of AVT at Yemeni UTPs

Rank	Item	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1.	AVT is a new kind of translation	3.92	.96	Agree
2.	AVT is not considered a form of translation at Yemeni university translation programs	3.21	1.3	Not sure
3.	AVT is not considered a means of cultural awareness at Yemeni university translation programs	3.13	.89	Not sure
	Average	**3.42**	**1.1**	**Agree**

Results Related to the Solutions for the Challenges

The fourth research question was about the possible solutions for the challenges facing teaching AVT as seen by the students and instructors. To answer this question, the researchers analyzed the responses of the students and their instructors to the third section of the questionnaire.

Students' Perceptions of the Solutions

Regarding the students' perceptions of the solutions, the researchers statistically analyzed the collected data and displayed them based on their rankings from highest to lowest. The results are displayed in Table 18 which shows that the average mean score for the prospective solutions from the students' perspectives is 4.39. The mean score for items 1 and 2 is the highest among all other items in this section (M= 4.61). The lowest mean score value is 4.22 for item 14. The statistical values displayed in Table 18 indicate that most students strongly agreed on the type of possible solutions to overcome the challenges of AVT teaching in Yemeni UTPs.

Table 18

Students' Perceptions of the Solutions

Rank	Items	Students		
		Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1.	University translation programs should highlight the importance of AVT as a form of translation	4.61	.62	Strongly Agree
2.	University translation programs must have well-equipped AVT laboratories	4.61	.64	Strongly Agree
3.	University translation programs should be provided with qualified AVT instructors	4.43	.70	Strongly Agree
4.	University translation programs should hold constant AVT training for translation students	4.42	.70	Strongly Agree
5.	Large numbers of students should be divided into small groups in AVT teaching classes	4.42	.76	Strongly Agree
6.	University translation programs should buy AVT software	4.41	.81	Strongly Agree
7.	University translation programs should encourage research in the AVT field	4.40	.77	Strongly Agree
8.	University translation programs should encourage individual and group learning among students concerning (subtitling/dubbing) applications	4.38	.83	Strongly Agree
9.	University translation programs should highlight the importance of AVT as a means of cultural awareness	4.37	.75	Strongly Agree
10.	University translation programs should hold constant AVT training for instructors	4.32	.76	Strongly Agree
11.	Institutions in Yemen should be encouraged to post AVT-related jobs	4.32	.93	Strongly Agree

Rank	Item	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
12.	University translation programs should enhance using mobile (subtitling/dubbing) applications among students	4.31	.90	Strongly Agree
13.	The private sector should be encouraged to establish subtitling companies and dubbing studios	4.25	.83	Strongly Agree
14.	Interaction between mass media communities and university translation programs should be encouraged	4.22	.88	Strongly Agree
	Average	**4.39**	**.78**	**Strongly Agree**

The Translation Instructors' Perceptions of the Solutions

To investigate the translation instructors' perceptions of the solutions, the researchers used the data collected through the relevant items of the questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed, and the results are displayed in Table 19, which shows that the average mean score of the solutions as seen by the instructors is 4.56. The need for well-equipped AVT laboratories has a higher mean score (M= 4.77), whereas encouraging the private sector to establish subtitling companies and dubbing studios has a mean score of 4.33. The statistical values displayed in Table 19 indicate that many instructors strongly agreed on the type of possible solutions to overcome the challenges facing AVT teaching at Yemeni UTPs.

Table 19

Instructors' Perceptions of the Solutions

Rank	Item	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1.	University translation programs must have well-equipped AVT laboratories	4.77	.43	Strongly Agree
2.	University translation programs should be provided with qualified AVT instructors	4.72	.46	Strongly Agree
3.	Large numbers of students should be divided into small groups in AVT teaching classes	4.69	.47	Strongly Agree
4.	University translation programs should hold constant AVT training for instructors	4.64	.49	Strongly Agree
5.	University translation programs should buy AVT software	4.62	.54	Strongly Agree
6.	University translation programs should encourage research in the AVT field	4.59	.50	Strongly Agree
7.	University translation programs should hold constant AVT training for translation students	4.59	.64	Strongly Agree
8.	University translation programs should encourage individual and group learning	4.56	.60	Strongly Agree

	among students concerning (subtitling - dubbing) applications			
9.	University translation programs should enhance using mobile (subtitling - dubbing) applications among students	4.56	.64	Strongly Agree
10.	University translation programs should highlight the importance of AVT as a form of translation	4.51	.51	Strongly Agree
11.	Interaction between mass media communities and university translation programs should be encouraged	4.46	.60	Strongly Agree
12.	University translation programs should highlight the importance of AVT as a means of cultural awareness	4.44	.64	Strongly Agree
13.	Institutions in Yemen should be encouraged to post AVT-related jobs	4.41	.60	Strongly Agree
14.	The private sector should be encouraged to establish subtitling companies and dubbing studios	4.33	.66	Strongly Agree
	Average	**4.56**	**.56**	**Strongly Agree**

Comparing Translation Students' and Instructors' Perceptions

It is worth comparing the students' perceptions of the benefits of AVT teaching, the challenges facing AVT teaching, and the solutions to overcome the challenges with the instructors' perceptions concerning those areas. The overall results are displayed in Table 20, which shows that both groups seem to show a relatively similar level of agreement in these three areas. The displayed average mean scores are 4.11 for the students' responses and 4.22 for the instructors' responses. The displayed statistical values also show slight differences between the levels of agreement of both groups.

Table 20

Comparing Translation Students' and Instructors' Perceptions

Rank	Section	Translation Students			Translation Instructors		
		Mean	SD	Verbal Value	Mean	SD	Verbal Value
1	The benefits of AVT teaching	4.18	.80	Agree	4.31	.70	Strongly Agree
2	The challenges facing AVT teaching	3.75	1.05	Agree	3.79	.96	Agree
3	Solutions to overcome the challenges	4.39	.78	Strongly Agree	4.56	.56	Strongly Agree
	Average	**4.11**	**.88**	**Agree**	**4.22**	**.74**	**Strongly Agree**

<center>**Discussion**</center>

Although some Yemeni UTPs do, to some extent, take AVT into account in their study plans and actual practice, in the best-case scenario, it is typically in the form of one course for all modes of AVT. Moreover, some programs seem to pay the least attention to AVT. Two out of the eight targeted programs did not have any courses dedicated to AVT and did not include subtitling or dubbing as part of any other translation course. This neglect of an important type of translation does not match the general awareness that exists among translation students and instructors of the importance and benefits of teaching AVT or the assumed expectations of the translation job market. Translation students and instructors agreed that AVT teaching enhances the students' translation, linguistic, cultural, and technological skills. However, none of the targeted UTPs had subtitling or dubbing as a separate course. This shows that AVT and its various modes are not given the attention and space they deserve in Yemeni UTPs compared to written translation courses. These results are consistent with Diaz Cintas and Orero (2003) who indicate that AVT is not given its due place in most educational institutions despite its importance in people's daily lives. Even though AVT is given some attention at some UTPs, there is still a need to give it more space, attention, and interest.

Since the ratio of subtitling and dubbing in theory (i.e., course descriptions and study plans) and practice is insignificant compared to the ratio of other translation courses. No or very little space and attention are devoted to such important modes of translation in Yemeni UTPS. This creates a significant gap between Yemeni UTPs and similar programs in the region or other parts of the world. UTPs in Yemen and some Arab countries such as Jordon (see Al-Dabbagh, 2017) do not have separate courses for subtitling and dubbing. By contrast, these modes of translation are allocated 25% or more, as mentioned by Sponholz (2003), in translation programs in some European countries. Therefore, there is a need for integrating AVT (i.e., subtitling and dubbing) as separate courses and not as parts of other courses to qualify students and meet the potential demands of the global job market.

Furthermore, the findings showed that the participants believed that AVT-related courses are beneficial to translation students. Such courses can contribute to the development and enhancement of the student's linguistic, translation, cultural, and technological skills. Therefore, AVT modes such as subtitling and dubbing should be included as core components of any UTPs. These findings are consistent with Al-Dabbagh (2017) who shows that teaching subtitling enhances students' linguistic and translation skills. The same findings are also consistent with several previous studies such as Canepari (2018), Capitani (2016), Martínez Sierra (2014), McLoughlin (2009), Neves (2004), and Visky (2015) that assert the important role of AVT in enhancing undergraduate students' linguistic, translation, and technological skills.

The results showed that AVT teaching in Yemeni universities faces various challenges, such as poor study places as well as the lack of technical facilities, instructors specialized in AVT, and an AVT market. Such findings are consistent with Gamal (2020) and Capitani (2016) who highlight several factors affecting the design and delivery of AVT. The inadequate digital infrastructure nationwide and the lack of interest in AVT among the teaching staff are among the serious challenges. The findings of the current study also revealed that most instructors who teach in UTPs are not translation specialists. This is consistent with Al-Hamad (2014) and

<center>71</center>

Ganjalikhanizadeh and Fatehi Rad (2022) who indicate that translation specialists in UTPs are only a few and, thus, universities have to hire language instructors to teach translation. This constitutes a major problem in such programs. AVT teaching, in itself, requires both linguistic skills and translation, technical, and technological skills. Diaz Cintas and Orero (2003) state that the lack of interest in AVT and the lack of expertise are among the challenges of teaching AVT in universities. Therefore, there is an urgent need for trainers who are not only specialized in translation but also familiar with AVT techniques.

The lack of research in the field of AVT in the Yemeni context as well as in the Arab World adds to the challenges facing AVT teaching. This is consistent with Al-Dabbagh (2017) who refers to the lack of research and the scant number of publications in the field of AVT in the Arab World. In addition, the lack of an AVT-encouraging market may contribute to the status of AVT in UTPs. Higher demands in the job market necessitate higher importance directed to such modes of translation and the inclusion of such modes of translation in UTPs' study plans. The findings showed that improving the AVT's study place, providing UTPs with well-qualified instructors in AVT, encouraging research in the field of AVT, and encouraging the market to include AVT were among the most important solutions to the challenges of teaching AVT in UTPs in Yemeni universities. These findings support those of Ganjalikhanizadeh and Fatehi Rad (2022) who claim that issues and challenges facing the translation field should be addressed and dealt with to provide students with the proper training in AVT.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the current study sheds light on the status quo of teaching AVT in some Yemeni universities. Although translation students and their instructors perceived it as important and useful, the two important forms of AVT (subtitling and dubbing) were completely ignored in most targeted UTPs, while others taught them within other courses in a small percentage that was not sufficient or comprehensive. Moreover, the findings showed that AVT faced various challenges in Yemeni universities such as the lack of adequate facilities, instructors qualified in AVT, and an AVT job market. The study offers some possible solutions to address the challenges and obstacles.

The study also enhances the understanding of UTP administrations and translation professionals of the importance of teaching AVT in UTPs. The study findings help to raise awareness among university program designers, UTP administrations, translation instructors, and syllabus designers of the importance of teaching AVT in UTPs, and of working with the community, the job market, and the private sector to create an adequate environment for teaching AVT to provide society with qualified translation professionals. This may encourage UTP administrations to pay more attention to AVT, particularly, subtitling and dubbing; include them in study plans; and work on overcoming the challenges and obstacles facing AVT teaching.

Bios

Dr. Amin Abdullah AL-Mekhlafi is an Associate Professor of ELT and applied linguistics at Sana'a University, Yemen. He holds a PhD in applied linguistics and foreign language teaching

from Florida State University. His special interests are Applied Linguistics, English Language Learning and Teaching, Teacher Education, and Teacher Training.

Ms. Afraah Sa'eed Al-Wajeeh is an MA holder in Translation. She is interested in audiovisual & literary translation.

References

Albarakati, M. (2024). Arabic audiovisual translation censorship: A corpus study of subtitles of three films. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation, 7*(1), 51–61. https://doi.org/10.32996/ijllt.2024.7.1.5

Al-Dabbagh, U. K. (2017). Teaching subtitling at Jordanian universities: An untapped territory. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 8*(1), 16–25. https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0801.03

Al-Hamad, M. Q. (2014). The translator in strange lands. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 4*(3), 199–210.

Alonso-Perez, R., & Sanchez-Requena, A. (2018). Teaching foreign languages through audiovisual translation resources: Teachers' perspectives. *Applied Language Learning, 28*(2), 1–24. https://shura.shu.ac.uk/18464/1/Alonso-Perez-TeachingForeignLanguagesThroughAVTranslation%28AM%29.pdf

Buccianti, A. (2010). Dubbed Turkish soap operas conquering the Arab world: Social liberation or cultural alienation? *Arab Media and Society, 10*(2), 4–28. https://www.arabmediasociety.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/20100330130359_Buccianti_-_for_PDF.pdf

Canepari, M. (2018). Using audiovisual material in teaching medical translation to non-medical students. *MonTi: Monografías de Traducción e Interpretación, 10*, 141–176. http://publicaciones.ua.es

Capitani, F. (2016). The job of a subtitler: Theoretical, technical, and professional aspects of interlingual subtitling. *Trans-kom, 9*(2), 254–265. http://www.trans-kom.eu

Díaz Cintas, J. (2008a). Introduction. In J. Díaz Cintas (Ed.), *The didactics of audiovisual translation* (pp. 1–18). John Benjamins.

Díaz Cintas, J. (2008b). Teaching and learning to subtitle in an academic environment. In J. Díaz Cintas (Ed.), *The didactics of audiovisual translation* (pp. 89–103). John Benjamins.

Díaz Cintas, J., & Orero, P. (2003). Postgraduate courses in audiovisual translation. *The Translator, 9*(2), 371–388. https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.2003.10799164

Díaz Cintas, J., & Orero, P. (2010). Voiceover and dubbing. In Y. Gambier & L. van Doorslaer (Eds.), *Handbook of translation studies* (Vol. 1, pp. 441–445). John Benjamins.

El Haj Ahmed, M. (2019). The status of teaching translation at Gaza universities: Analysis and new insights. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature, 7*(1), 1–13. https://www.academia.edu/download/86851407/68144476c6c516e852c336188c29799fa391.pdf

Freire, R. L. (2015). The introduction of film subtitling in Brazil. *Matrizes, 9*(1), 187–211. https://www.revistas.usp.br/matrizes/article/download/100680/99415

Gamal, M. (2007). Audiovisual translation in the Arab world: A changing scene. *Translation Watch Quarterly, 3*(2), 78–95. https://www.academia.edu/download/34169722/TWQ_3.2_GAMAL_2007.pdf

Gamal, M. (2009). Adding text to image: Challenges of subtitling non-verbal communication. *Journal of Multicultural Research, 1*(1), 1–27. https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/document?repid=rep1&type=pdf&doi=23f8a206b6f363b0677f8afeb1feb21daffa81a5

Gamal, M. (2014). Audiovisual translation in the Arab world (v 0.4): Mapping the field. *Arab Media and Society, 19*, 1–12. https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/185417/20141008102933_Gamal_AudioVisualTranslation_Final.pdf

Gamal, M. (2020). Context, field, and landscape of audiovisual translation in the Arab world. *ESSACHESS-Journal for Communication Studies, 13*(25), 73–105. https://essachess.com/index.php/jcs/article/download/481/501

Gambier, Y. (2013). The position of audiovisual translation studies. In C. Millán & F. Bartrina (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of audiovisual translation* (pp. 45–59). Routledge.

Ganjalikhanizadeh, M., & Fatehi Rad, N. (2022). Technology in teaching translation: Problems and challenges of the current state of teaching translation in postgraduate studies. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research, 10*(42), 105–118.

Guillot, M.-N. (2019). Subtitling on the cusp of its futures. In L. Pérez-González (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of audiovisual translation* (pp. 31–47). Routledge.

Ivarsson, J. (2002). Subtitling through the ages: A technical history of subtitles in Europe. *Language International, 14*(2), 6–10.

Izwaini, S. (2015). Translation of taboo expressions in Arabic subtitling. In A. Baczkowska (Ed.), *Impoliteness in media discourse* (pp. 227–247). Peter Lang.

Janecová, E. (2012). Teaching audiovisual translation: Theory and practice in the twenty-first century. *Çankaya University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 9*(1), 17–30. https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/45383

Lertola, J. (2019). *Audiovisual translation in the foreign language classroom: Applications in the teaching of English and other foreign languages.* Research-publishing.net.

Maluf, R. (2003). Dubbing into Arabic: A Trojan horse at the gates. Retrieved January 2023, from https://inhouse.lau.edu.lb/bima/papers/Dubbing.pdf

Martínez Sierra, J. J. (2014). The use of audiovisual translation software in second language teaching. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Translation Studies, 3*(1), 74–85.

Matamala, A. (2019). Voice-over: Practice, research, and future prospects. In L. Pérez-González (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of audiovisual translation* (pp. 64–81). Routledge.

McLoughlin, L. I. (2009). Subtitles in translators' training: A model of analysis. *Romance Studies, 27*(3), 174–185. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Laura-Mcloughlin-3/publication/233695179_Subtitles_in_Translators%27_Training_A_Model_of_Analy

sis/links/54b14b140cf28ebe92dff870/Subtitles-in-Translators-Training-A-Model-of-Analysis.pdf

Neves, J. (2019). Subtitling for deaf and hard-of-hearing audiences: Moving forward. In L. Pérez-González (Ed.), *The Routledge handbook of audiovisual translation* (pp. 82–95). Routledge.

Zanotti, S. (2022). Audiovisual translation. In K. Malmkjaer (Ed.), *The Cambridge handbook of translation* (pp. 440–460). Cambridge University Press.

Exploring EFL Instructors' Awareness of Metacognitive Strategy Use in Saudi Higher Education Institutions

Hanan Al Sultan

Department of English Language, College of Arts, King Faisal University,
Hofuf, Saudi Arabia

hfalsultan@kfu.edu.sa
https://orcid.org/0009-0008-0720-1805

_____

الملخص

تعتبر «فوق المعرفية» عنصرًا حاسمًا في سيكولوجية تعليم اللغة الأجنبية. وعلى الرغم من ضروريتها ، إلا أن هناك فهما محدودا من قبل أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لكيفية التعرف عليها وتنفيذها في ممارساتهم التدريسية نظرًا لمحدودية الدراسات التي تستهدف على الأساتذة في مؤسسات التعليم العالي في السياق السعودي. وبذلك تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف مدى وعي أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في مؤسسات التعليم العالي بالإستراتيجيات فوق المعرفية. بلغ عدد المشاركين في هذه الدراسة 160 عضوًا بواقع (80 أناث -80 ذكور) أُختيروا بالطريقة غير الإحتمالية كعينة ملائمة من مختلف الجامعات والكليات السعودية. استخدم مقياس (MAIT) لبالسيكانلي (2011) للكشف عن الفروق بين الجنسين لدى هيئة التدريس وصُنِّفت مستويات الوعي فوق المعرفي الست لديهم: المعرفة التصريحية، والمعرفة الإجرائية، والمعرفة المشروطة، والتخطيط، والرصد، والتقييم. أظهرت نتائج التحليل الإحصائي عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية على أساس الجنس في وعي أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بالإستراتيجيات فوق المعرفية ، وكذلك بين الفئات الفرعية. تقدم هذه الدراسة رؤى ومقترحات لاعتبارات أندراغوجية لمؤسسات التعليم العالي. يُشجع الأساتذة على حضور ورش العمل التدريبية التي تزيد من وعيهم بالممارسات ما وراء المعرفية حيث ستمكنهم إتاحة فرص التطوير المهني من التفكير نقدياً وإثراء فلسفتهم التعليمية ، مما يعزز فعاليتهم في الفصول الدراسية. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، ينصح الباحثون في الميدان بإجراء مزيد من الأبحاث لاستكشاف مؤسسات التعليم العالي لسد الفجوة بين الإطار النظري والممارسة العملية.

Exploring EFL Instructors' Awareness of Metacognitive Strategy Use in Saudi Higher Education Institutions

Hanan Al Sultan

Department of English Language, College of Arts, King Faisal University,
Hofuf, Saudi Arabia

hfalsultan@kfu.edu.sa
https://orcid.org/0009-0008-0720-1805

_____

Abstract

Metacognition is a crucial component of the psychology of foreign language instruction. Although metacognitive strategies are essential, there is limited understanding of how EFL instructors recognise and implement them in their teaching practises due to the lack of studies focusing on instructors in higher education institutions within the Saudi context. This study explores the awareness of metacognitive strategy among EFL instructors in Saudi higher education institutions. The participants were 160 instructors, consisting of 80 males and 80 females, who were selected using a nonprobability convenience sampling method from various universities and colleges in Saudi Arabia. The Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAIT) by Balçıkanlı (2011) was used to assess gender differences and categorise metacognitive awareness into six levels: declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, conditional knowledge, planning, monitoring, and evaluating. The analysis showed no statistically significant gender-based differences in EFL instructors' awareness of metacognitive strategy, nor among the subcategories of metacognition. This study offers insights and suggestions for andragogical practises in higher education institutions. Instructors are encouraged to attend training workshops that increase their awareness of metacognitive practises. These professional development opportunities will enable educators to reflect critically on their instructional philosophy, enhancing their classroom effectiveness. Additionally, researchers are advised to conduct further research exploring higher education institutions to bridge the gap between theoretical framework and practical implications.

Keywords: *evaluating, metacognition, monitoring, planning*

_____

Introduction

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, metacognition is a fundamental concept that requires practise, integration, prioritisation, and facilitation. Flavell (1979) defined it as thinking about thinking, emphasizing the role of the school environment as a hotbed of metacognitive development due to its components. Schraw and Dennison (1994) divide metacognition into the knowledge of cognition, encompassing three types of knowledge: declarative, procedural, conditional, and regulation of cognition, involving five types: planning, managing information, monitoring comprehension, and debugging and evaluation.

EFL instructors in the Saudi context confront challenges influenced by three factors, which Alghamdi (2017) listed as follows. First was students' culture, including societal influence on their mentalities and personalities, their aversion to making errors, and class participation. Second was motivation, as students primarily studied English as a requirement rather than from a genuine desire to learn the language. They also felt that they had no practical use for the language outside of the classroom, and the instructors sometimes felt frustrated when dealing with unmotivated students due to their lack of authority to give extra marks for participating in additional tasks. Finally, the instructors' perspectives on students' backgrounds and experiences were significant, with influential factors including the quality of previous education, different socioeconomic backgrounds, exposure to the language, and overall learning experiences, both within and outside the classroom.

Metacognitive strategies impact teaching and learning outcomes. For instance, they play a key role in supporting academic performance, fostering collaboration, maintaining motivation, increasing information retention, creating concept connections, and deepening understanding of students' learning development. Moreover, integrating metacognition enhances teaching and learning by providing students with assets that boost classroom tasks. Strategies such as planning, evaluating comprehension, reviewing their work, and reflecting critically would promote awareness of learning processes, enabling students to take control of their progress. (An et al., 2024; Beziat et al., 2018).

In planning, implementing and assessing a course, an instructor acts as a course planner, knowledge transmitter, facilitator, assessor, and developer. Therefore, understanding these processes represents a crucial tool that stimulates an individual's thinking process about the content to which they are exposed, their perspective, and their awareness of their prior knowledge.

Metacognition is beneficial for both learners and instructors. It empowers learners to orchestrate their learning processes and obtain valuable strategies during their educational progression. Analogously, instructors can leverage metacognition to fine-tune their teaching methods and foster more autonomous learning settings. Wilson and Bai (2010) proposed that metacognitive instruction involves understanding the fundamental aspects of educating learners to be metacognitive and outlining the framework for educational development. Thus, by enhancing their metacognitive skills, EFL instructors can improve their teaching and support better student learning outcomes.

Some studies exist in the Saudi higher education context, such as Ahmadi and Motaghi (2024), Alkhaleefah (2023), Al-Khresheh and Alruwaili (2024), and Alshammari (2022), which focus on the metacognitive awareness of EFL undergraduate students in Saudi Arabia. Al-thresher and Al Basheer Ben Ali (2023) studied students and instructors and collected qualitative data through semi-structured interviews with English instructors. Despite these efforts, there remains a dearth of research on EFL instructors' metacognitive awareness in the context of higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia, which has led to the current study.

The study's aim to explore the metacognitive awareness of EFL instructors is central for two primary reasons: First, understanding instructors' metacognitive knowledge can provide insights into developing expertise in English language instruction (ELI). Second, the diversity of learners with varying social, emotional, and physical abilities necessitates a heightened level of responsibility for instructors within the classroom community.

By actively involving learners in tasks and promoting metacognition, instructors can effectively create an inclusive environment that caters to the needs of all students, regardless of their individual differences. To promote these goals, instructors must be equipped with the metacognitive skills to handle different types of students and help them learn effectively. The practical implications of our research findings, such as the potential for improving EFL instruction and enhancing student learning outcomes, can significantly contribute to the advancement of EFL education in Saudi higher education institutions.

The Aim of the Study

The study aimed to explore the metacognitive awareness of instructors at higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia. It identified a research gap by measuring the metacognitive awareness of instructors as candidates in the following dimensions: declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, planning, monitoring, and evaluation in this context. Realising this awareness is essential for guiding their professional development and influencing their academic achievements.

Research Questions

The research questions under investigation for this study are as follows:

1. Are there any significant differences in metacognitive awareness between male and female EFL instructors in higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia?

2. Are there any significant differences among the six dimensions of metacognitive awareness among EFL instructors in higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia?

Literature Review

A brief overview of previous research on metacognitive strategy instruction will be given. The related literature review will focus on five issues: metacognition, metacognitive instruction, metacognitive awareness, and metacognitive measures components, as well as previous empirically relevant studies. This will build upon existing research and contribute to a deeper understanding of the topic.

Metacognition Definitions

Scholars have defined metacognition in various ways. Flavell (1979) defined the term metacognition as a "segment of your (a child's, an adult's) stored world knowledge that has to do with people as cognitive creatures and with their diverse cognitive tasks, goals, actions, and experiences" (p. 906). Brown (1987) referred to metacognition as an "understanding of knowledge, an understanding that can be reflected in either effective use or overt description of the knowledge in question" (p. 65).

Larson and Gerber (1992) considered metacognition as "the key concern in promoting generalised improvements in learning" (p. 127). Hennessey (1999) characterised metacognition in terms of "the awareness of one's own thinking, awareness of the content of one's conceptions, an active monitoring of one's cognitive processes, an attempt to regulate one's cognitive processes in relationship to further learning, and an application of a set of heuristics as an effective device for helping people organise their methods of attack on problems in general" (p. 3). Schraw (1998) focused on two significant aspects of metacognition: knowledge of cognition and regulation. He suggested using a strategy evaluation matrix (SEM) to improve knowledge of cognition and a regulatory checklist (RC) to improve regulation.

Peteranetz (2016) proposed a metacognitive framework for thoroughly understanding cognition encompassing three subcategories of metacognitive knowledge: declarative, procedural, and conditional. The framework can provide information on how individuals comprehend, monitor, and control their cognitive processes, leading to better academic achievement. Furthermore, the framework involves the regulation of cognition, which can be achieved by metacognitive skills such as planning, monitoring, controlling, and evaluating tasks. Mitsea et al. (2021) stated, "Metacognition constitutes the key factor that allows individuals to manage their cognitive functions in ways that make them creative, cooperative, critical, resilient, decisive, and flexible" (p. 124).

Therefore, increasing instructors' awareness about metacognitive strategy use is a key principle of modern professional development. A growing body of literature (e.g., Livingston, 1997; Louca, 2003; Rahimi & Katal, 2012; Wilson & Bai, 2010) has suggested that the efforts of instructors to create a better learning experience need to be supported by two elements. First, instructors should facilitate opportunities that promote students' metacognitive development through metacognitive experiences, which will provide input for permanent metacognitive knowledge. Second, researchers have asserted that metacognition implies the cognitive process of actively controlling the higher-order thinking encountered in learning.

Metacognitive Instruction Awareness

Peteranetz (2016) defined metacognitive instruction as "instruction that is designed to build metacognitive knowledge, introduce and develop metacognitive skills, and help students develop a habit of using metacognition. Specifically, it is instruction with "built-in" support for

students' metacognition" (p. 74). Therefore, employing metacognitive instructional strategies is beneficial for three reasons:

1. It expands individuals' realisation and deepens their learning processes.
2. It increases their recognition of their strengths and weaknesses.
3. It affects the appropriateness of the strategy to achieve a successful outcome.

Research on instruction and instructor education has addressed metacognitive awareness. In their work, Veenman et al. (2006) highlighted the fundamentals of integrating metacognitive instruction into the curriculum by encouraging instructors to initiate students' metacognitive awareness through three basic principles: First, embed metacognitive instruction in the course content, then enlighten students about the practicality of metacognitive strategies and activities, and finally, improve the smooth and maintainable application of metacognitive activity through continued training.

Through such approaches, students can rationalise their thinking and optimise their cognitive processes to enhance their achievements. These principles were implemented in the WWW&H rule: *What to do, When to do it, Why it should be done, and How to do it*. Moreover, these three principles guide effective instructional programs. Öztürk (2017) presented a generic model of metacognition instruction whose purpose is to practise and guide students in metacognitive strategies overtly. Applying the WWW&H rule is linked to using the think-aloud technique, which involves verbalising one's thoughts while performing a task and provides insight into cognitive processes. Moreover, self-questioning during metacognitive discussions offers guided and independent practise opportunities that promote learners' metacognitive development (Öztürk, 2017).

Metacognitive Measures Components

Researchers in the field have suggested several components for exploring metacognitive strategy instruction awareness that has formed the foundation for various measurement instruments. First, Schraw and Dennison's (1994) scale, which classifies metacognition into knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition, consists of eight subcategories between these two categories. Knowledge of cognition has three subcategories: declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge. Regulation of cognition has five subcategories: planning, information management, comprehension monitoring, and debugging and evaluation. This scale was the basis of this study inventory. According to Balçıkanlı's (2011) modified version, the six components are declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, conditional knowledge, planning, monitoring, and evaluating.

Instructor-Focused Research

Nahrkhalaji's (2014) quantitative study measured the metacognitive awareness of language teachers' relationship with pedagogical effectiveness, academic education, and experience. The participants were 50 female EFL teachers and 417 learners in Iran. The researcher used two instruments. First, teachers completed the Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) by Schraw and Dennison (1994), which evaluated six components of metacognition: procedural knowledge, declarative knowledge, conditional knowledge, planning, evaluating, and management strategies. Then, learners completed the Language Teacher Characteristics Questionnaire (CSIET) by Moafian and Pishghadam (2009), which was

used to evaluate their teachers' pedagogical performance. The study's findings demonstrated a significant correlation between the factors.

Öztürk's (2018) mixed-method quasi-experimental study investigated the relationship between teachers' self-reported metacognitive awareness and teaching with metacognition. The participants were 30 EFL teachers in Turkey. The two hypotheses were: 1) There is a relation between teachers' metacognition and teaching metacognitively, and 2) A single professional development module of teaching metacognition might exert an impact. The data were collected by two inventories: the MAI (Schraw & Dennison, 1994) and the Metacognitive Awareness Inventory for Teachers (MAIT) developed by Balçıkanlı (2011). Interview protocols were also employed. The findings indicated that metacognitive awareness and teaching with metacognition were significantly correlated.

Taghizadeh and Alirezanejad Gohardani's (2019) mixed-method study explored the use of metacognitive strategies by EFL instructors while teaching listening. This study investigated EFL instructors' knowledge and use of metacognitive strategies, shedding light on their awareness of metacognition in areas such as experience, teaching, reflection, self, planning, and monitoring of language instructors. The participants were 63 EFL instructors at the Iran University of Science and Technology. The study measured to what extent EFL instructors activated metacognitive listening comprehension strategies using the Teacher Metacognition Inventory (TMI) adapted from Jiang et al. (2016).

This instrument consists of six categories: teacher metacognitive experience, metacognitive knowledge about pedagogy, teacher metacognitive reflection, metacognitive knowledge about the self, teacher metacognitive planning, and teacher metacognitive monitoring. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted. The findings revealed the importance of metacognitive awareness concerning experience, pedagogy, reflection, self, planning, and monitoring of English language teachers. It confirmed that EFL teachers need to give more thorough instructions about teacher metacognitive planning, which received the lowest mean score. This study can serve as a well-documented guide for educators due to its impact on academic achievement and teaching performance.

Siddiqui et al. (2020) conducted a quasi-experimental study at a public university in Lahore, Pakistan. Their study aimed to assess the role of instructors' metacognition in improving task performance in classrooms and to measure its effect on student performance. The participants were 68 B.Ed. Honours students. The researchers hypothesised that 'metacognition development does not significantly affect prospective teachers' task performance'. To test this hypothesis, the researchers used three instruments: the MAI (Schraw & Dennison, 1994), rubrics, and observation sheets to evaluate students' task performance. The findings indicated that metacognition development significantly affected the task performance of students who received the intervention.

Keçik (2021) conducted nonexperimental quantitative research at foundational higher education institutions in Ankara, Turkey. The study examined the differences in the metacognitive awareness levels among EFL instructors. The participants were 161 instructors. This study aimed to determine whether there was a significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness among EFL instructors based on their age, educational attainment and degree, years of teaching experience, and the number of training courses they had received for

professional development. Two data collection tools were employed: a demographic information form developed by the researcher and the MAIT (Balçıkanlı, 2011). The results showed high metacognitive awareness among EFL instructors. The mean score for the declarative knowledge subcategory was the highest, while the lowest score was in the evaluating subcategory. There was a significant difference among the subcategories of EFL instructors' metacognitive awareness regarding the four addressed variables.

Benbouzid and Hamitouche's (2022) quantitative study investigated metacognitive awareness among Algerian EFL university writing instructors and their motivation, beliefs, and attitudes toward writing instruction in university settings. A metacognition awareness-raising questionnaire adapted from Petric and Czarl (2003) was administered to eight university instructors from two different universities to discover the three components of their metacognitive knowledge: person, task, and strategy knowledge. The study investigated the awareness of the candidates' teaching practises and whether they aligned with metacognition. The survey results corroborated that Algerian EFL writing teachers hold a positive attitude towards teaching writing and are metacognitively aware, motivated, and have positive beliefs about teaching and metacognition.

Greenier et al.'s (2023) quantitative study examined the relationship among EFL teachers' perceptions of school climate, teaching enthusiasm, teaching metacognition, and teaching for creativity (TFC). The researchers used four instruments to collect data: (a) the Teaching for Creativity Scale (TCS) developed by Rubenstein et al. (2013), (b) the Teaching Enthusiasm Scale, designed by Kunter et al. (2011), (c) the school-Level Environment Questionnaire (R-SLEQ) by Johnson et al. (2007), and (d) the TMI, developed by Jiang et al. (2016). The participants were 387 English teachers from different cities in Iran. This study investigated eight hypotheses concerning how teaching enthusiasm positively affects TFC, teaching metacognition, and vice versa.

Their findings included the following: (a) How teachers perceived school climate positively influenced TFC and influenced their teaching metacognition; (b) school climate positively affected teaching enthusiasm; (c) teacher-perceived school climate was related to TFC via the mediation of teacher metacognition, and (d) teaching enthusiasm was related to TFC via the mediation of teacher metacognition. Structural equation modelling (SEM) analyses indicated that teaching enthusiasm was the most effective predictor of TFC. Direct influences of school climate and teaching metacognition on TFC were also substantiated. Furthermore, the impact of school climate on TFC was mediated through teaching enthusiasm and metacognition (Greenier et al., 2023). These findings bear substantial implications for teacher education initiatives, elucidating the pivotal role of school climate in fostering creativity through teaching enthusiasm and metacognitive strategies

Based on the analysis of existing literature, two research gaps were identified. First, is the contextual gap, as all previous studies were conducted in different countries. In contrast, the present study narrows a gap that has remained largely unexplored and under-researched, particularly within the context of various Saudi universities. Studies in the field of metacognitive awareness have mainly focused on EFL students in higher education institutions and neglected the instructor role. By exploring the metacognitive awareness of Saudi higher education institution instructors, this study sheds light on a crucial area and emphasises the importance of

further investigation within EFL education. Second, a methodological gap emerged regarding participants and design, as previous studies varied in their approach to gender differences and the number of instruments used.

For instance, Öztürk's (2018) mixed-method quasi-experimental design used three instruments to find correlations among male and female instructors. Nahrkhalaji (2014) conducted a correlational study addressing female teachers and students using two quantitative instruments. Taghizadeh and Alirezanejad Gohardani (2019) conducted a mixed-method study using two instruments to explore instructors' metacognitive strategy use but did not differentiate by gender. Siddiqui et al. (2020) conducted a quasi-experimental quantitative study on B.Ed. Honours students to measure the role of instructors' metacognition effectiveness on the performance of the students using three instruments.

Keçik (2021) conducted a quantitative study of instructors using two instruments without highlighting gender differences. Benbouzid and Hamitouche's (2022) study focused on the metacognitive awareness of eight instructors of EFL writing courses and their attitude towards teaching writing. Thus, this study aims to fill these gaps by exploring the metacognitive awareness of instructors, with a specific focus on gender differences among the participants in many higher educations. The implications of these findings are not just academic but also practical. They offer insights that could potentially shape and enhance pedagogical practises in the unique context of Saudi Arabia, benefiting both instructors and students.

Methods

The current study, employing a quantitative research design holds significant importance in shedding light on instructors' metacognitive awareness in various higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia. The choice of a quantitative research design is deliberate, as it is highly regarded for its scientific rigour, objectivity, and widespread acceptance (Allen et al., 2008; Nardi, 2018). By incorporating statistical analysis, this research design minimises bias, ensures consistency across researchers, and maintains an objective perspective. The precision, reliability, and structured nature of the data obtained from this type of research make it widely accepted and valuable for informed decision-making in academia.

Participants

The study involved 160 EFL instructors, comprising 80 males and 80 females, from various colleges and universities in Saudi Arabia. The study engaged a diverse group of EFL instructors, each representing different levels of academic accomplishment. This included teaching assistants, lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors. This diversity of educators provided different insights into the metacognitive strategy used to teach languages in different academic settings.

Convenience sampling, a nonprobability method based on participants' accessibility, was used to select the candidates. Although convenience sampling poses a risk by introducing bias and undermining the validity of findings, it is considered a dual-edge challenge because it relies on readily available volunteers, making it a resource-efficient data collection method. Furthermore, it rationalises the enrolment process and enhances the efficiency of data collection by utilising easily accessible participants. Consequently, strategic selection also ensures that the study can be conducted within a reasonable timeframe while maintaining the sample's integrity.

Instrument

Research data were obtained via the Metacognitive Instruction Inventory developed by Balçıkanlı (2011), who conducted a study encompassing three distinct phases comprising, respectively, 323, 226, and 125 student teachers. The inventory displayed a validity coefficient of 0.794. Notably, the inventory's reliability, denoted by Cronbach's alpha scores, ranged from 0.79 to 0.85, suggesting a consistently high level of reliability. Correspondingly, similar levels of validity and reliability were observed in studies by Kallio et al. (2017), Keçik (2021), and Öztürk (2018) that used the same inventory. Accordingly, with its robust validity and reliability, this inventory was chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of instructors' metacognitive awareness, thereby enlightening the field of foreign language instruction (see Appendix A). The inventory options were based on a five-option Likert scale: strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. This scale consisted of 24 items. These items were subcategorised according to the following dimensions of metacognition:

1. Declarative knowledge refers to the acquaintance of the strategies that can be implemented.
2. Procedural knowledge pertains to the ability to execute these strategies.
3. Conditional knowledge is the toolkit for tackling a challenge.
4. Planning involves organising strategies.
5. Monitoring tracks the progress of strategies.
6. Evaluating entails assessing the effectiveness of the selected strategies.

Under each dimension, there are four items. The Cronbach's alpha reliability score of declarative knowledge was $\alpha = 0.865$, procedural knowledge was $\alpha = 0.795$, conditional knowledge was $\alpha = 0.823$, planning was $\alpha = 0.786$, monitoring was $\alpha = 0.823$, and evaluating was $\alpha = 0.817$. The scale score was $\alpha = 0.933$, indicating overall excellent internal consistency because the closer Cronbach's alpha coefficient is to 1.0, the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale.

Procedure

The study proposal was officially approved by the university, granting permission for the principal investigator to collect data from EFL instructors in higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia. To ensure a comprehensive and inclusive sample, all instructors were invited to participate via various communication channels, including email, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and Twitter. These platforms were deliberately selected due to their extensive use within the target population.

From an ethical standpoint, participants were carefully chosen to join the study voluntarily, without any conflict of interest. The data collection for this quantitative study spanned 4 months, from September to December 2023. Participating instructors were required to allocate 10–15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The collected responses were subsequently analysed quantitatively using Jamovi version 2.3.28 (https://www.jamovi.org), an open-source statistical processing software developed explicitly for academic purposes. Moreover, the collaborative nature of Jamovi allows for generating and sharing analyses, thereby enabling knowledge-sharing with a broader audience.

This section presents data analysis in four phases: the normality test, the homogeneity of variances test, the non-parametric test, and descriptive statistics. The first data analysis phase checks for the normality distribution of the candidates and determines whether the data follows a normal distribution pattern using the Shapiro-Wilk test. The second phase evaluates whether the different groups in your data have similar variances. Variances' homogeneity is calculated using Levene's test. The next phase decides if the parametric test assumptions are met or not. Consequently, the Mann-Whitney U is utilised as a non-parametric test as an alternative test. Finally, median data is highlighted as a part of the descriptive statistics.

Normality Test

First, the Shapiro-Wilk test was used to ensure the normality of the candidates' distribution. The results showed that the low p-value violated the normality assumption (see Table 1).

Table 1

Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality

Subcategory	W	P
Declarative Knowledge	0.802	< .001
Procedural Knowledge	0.880	< .001
Conditional knowledge	0.856	< .001
Planning	0.899	< .001
Monitoring	0.889	< .001
Evaluating	0.951	< .001

Homogeneity of Variances Test

Second, Levene's homogeneity of variances test was used to verify the assumption that groups have equal variances. The results of this test showed a low p-value, indicating a violation of the assumption of equal variances (see Table 2).

Table 2

Levene's Homogeneity of Variances Test

Subcategory	F	df	df2	P
Declarative Knowledge	0.00594	1	158	0.939
Procedural Knowledge	0.02476	1	158	0.875
Conditional knowledge	0.07376	1	158	0.786
Planning	0.12859	1	158	0.720
Monitoring	0.55420	1	158	0.458
Evaluating	0.22295	1	158	0.637

Non-parametric Test

Third, the independent samples t-test alternative (Mann-Whitney U) was employed to analyse nonparametric data. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test revealed that effect size varied based on the rank-biserial correlation coefficient (rb). The rb correlation coefficient measures effect size, which indicates the strength and direction of the association between the two groups.

The researcher calculated correlation coefficients (r) and effect sizes for the Mann-Whitney-U test based on the statistical data. Regarding interpretation, values between .01 and .09 indicate a negligible relationship. On the other hand, a small relationship is represented by values ranging from .10 to .29. Values between .30 and .49 identify a medium relationship, while values of .50 and above indicate a strong relationship. (Green & Salkind, 2005; Pallant, 2007). The first subcategory is declarative knowledge (U = 2857, p = 0.236). This analysis had a small effect size (r = 0.1073) ranging between (0.10–0.29).

Second, in the procedural knowledge (U = 3137, p = 0.828). There was a negligible effect size for this analysis (r = 0.0198) because it was (< 0.10). Third, for conditional knowledge (U = 3023, p = 0.543). There was a negligible effect size for this analysis (r = 0.0553) because it was (< 0.10). Next, for planning (U = 3139, p = 0.834). There was a negligible effect size for this analysis (r = 0.0192) because it was (< 0.10). After that, for monitoring (U = 3116, p = 0.772). There was a negligible effect size for this analysis (r = 0.0264) because it was (< 0.10). Finally, evaluating (U = 3083, p = 0.689). There was negligible effect size for this analysis (r = 0.0366) because it was (< 0.10). Thus, the effect sizes of each subcategory were slightly distinctive but remained insignificant (see Table 3).

Table 3

Mann-Whitney U Test Results

Subcategory	Test	Statistic	p		Effect Size
Declarative Knowledge	Mann-Whitney	2857	0.236	Rank biserial correlation	0.1073
Procedural Knowledge	Mann-Whitney	3137	0.828	Rank biserial correlation	0.0198
Conditional knowledge	Mann-Whitney	3023	0.543	Rank biserial correlation	0.0553
Planning	Mann-Whitney	3139	0.834	Rank biserial correlation	0.0192
Monitoring	Mann-Whitney	3116	0.772	Rank biserial correlation	0.0264
Evaluating	Mann-Whitney	3083	0.689	Rank biserial correlation	0.0366

Descriptive Statistics

Finally, the descriptive statistics of the two groups' medians are discussed below to determine whether the difference between the medians of the two groups is statistically

significant. As shown in Table 4, declarative knowledge was equal for males and females (Mdn = 4.25) and procedural knowledge (Mdn = 4.00). Conditional knowledge was higher among males (Mdn = 4.50) than females (Mdn = 4.25), whereas planning was equal among males and females (Mdn = 4.00). Monitoring was higher among males (Mdn = 4.25) than females (Mdn = 4.00). Evaluation was higher among females (Mdn = 4.00) than males (Mdn = 3.75). Thus, medians ranged between 3.75 and 4.50, with the agreement level increasing the closer the value is to 5. Despite the differences observed among these medians, they have no statistical significance.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics

Subcategory	Gender	N	Median
Declarative Knowledge	Female	80	4.25
	Male	80	4.25
Procedural Knowledge	Female	80	4.00
	Male	80	4.00
Conditional knowledge	Female	80	4.25
	Male	80	4.50
Planning	Female	80	4.00
	Male	80	4.00
Monitoring	Female	80	4.00
	Male	80	4.25
Evaluating	Female	80	4.00
	Male	80	3.75

The primary aim of this study was to explore the awareness of metacognitive strategy among EFL instructors in Saudi higher education institutions. The researchers used the Metacognitive Instruction Inventory, a validated instrument Balçıkanlı (2011) developed to gather quantitative data. The study sought to identify significant differences in metacognitive awareness between male and female EFL instructors and among the six dimensions of metacognitive awareness. This section addresses the two research questions posed in the study.

RQ1: Are there any significant differences in metacognitive awareness between male and female EFL instructors in higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia?

To answer the first research question, the Mann-Whitney U test, an alternative to the independent samples t-test for nonparametric data, revealed that effect size varied based on the rank-biserial correlation coefficient (rb). The effect sizes of each subcategory were slightly distinctive but remained insignificant. Declarative knowledge has a low relationship between .10 and .29, while Procedural knowledge, Conditional knowledge, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating have a negligible relationship between .01 and .09 (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

Effect Size among the MAIT Dimensions
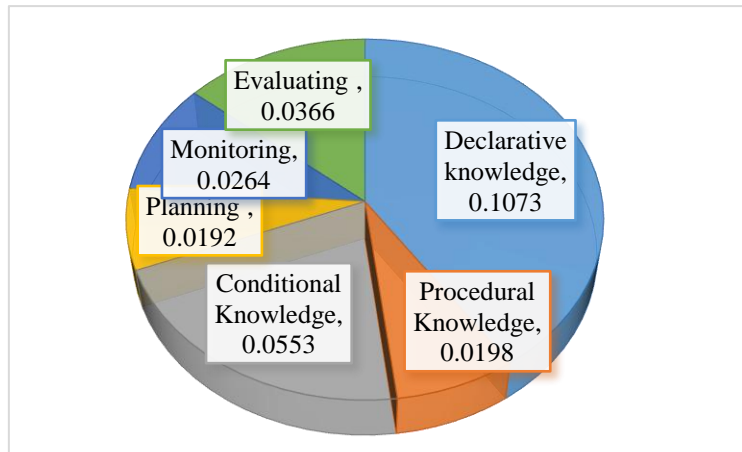
The results indicated that both male and female instructors demonstrated awareness of metacognitive strategy instruction, with no significant differences between genders. Indicating a consistent level of comprehension and approach towards metacognitive practises in their teaching across both groups.

RQ2: Are there any significant differences among the six dimensions of metacognitive awareness among EFL instructors in higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia?

Scores were calculated using medians, a measure of central tendency used with nonparametric data. Each median represents the precise middle value and depicts insight into the central point of the distribution of values. In the descriptive statistics, the analysis revealed no significant differences in the levels of each dimension among males and females. The higher median values typically ranged between 3.75 and 4.50, indicating a strong level of agreement approaching the maximum value of 5 (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

Similarity of Male and Female Medians between MAIT Dimensions
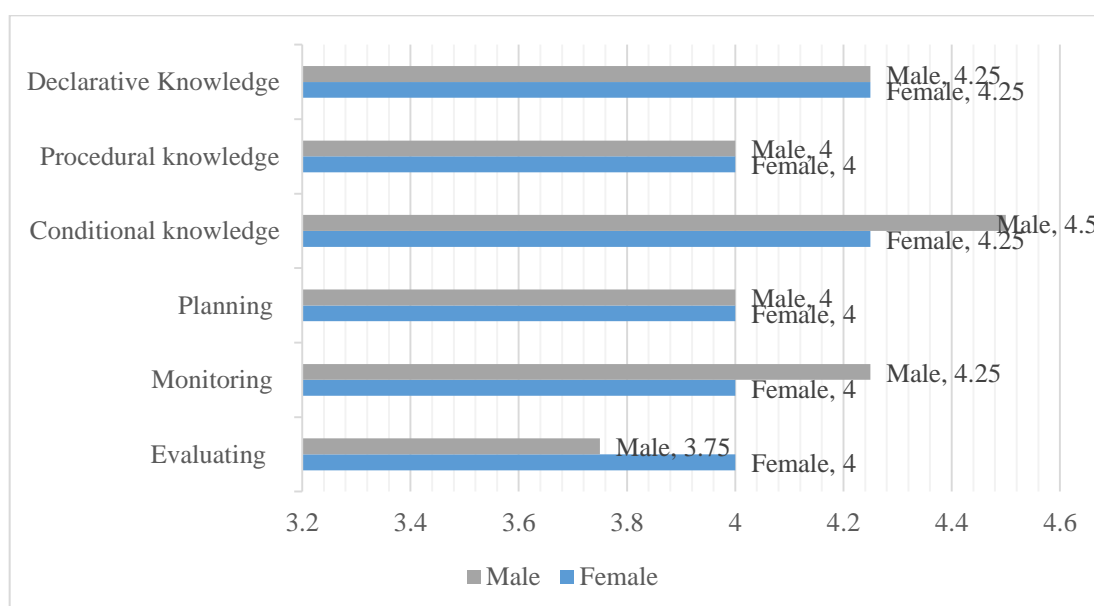
Accordingly, it is crucial to consider various factors that influence the significant level of metacognitive awareness across genders in Saudi Arabia. First, the educational sector is affected by a range of factors, including individuals' educational backgrounds and the availability of equal opportunities for professional development provided by universities and the Education and Training Evaluation Commission (ETEC) in Saudi Arabia; for instance, it provides professional development courses to enhance the skillful practices of educators aiming to improve the quality of education. These courses cover a wide range of topics, are expert-led, and are available online in Arabic and English. Furthermore, it provides interactive learning and certification upon completion. Additionally, instructors in Saudi Arabia adhere to the National Qualification Framework (NQF) established by ETEC. The NQF categorizes qualifications based on learning outcomes to enhance quality and recognition. It includes levels aligned with global standards for universal recognition, aiding institutions, employers, and students in understanding and comparing qualifications. This would develop course specifications, outline course plans, and establish key performance indicators (KPIs). This commitment significantly enhances the development of higher-order thinking skills and expands metacognitive instruction within the educational environment (Livingston,1997; Okoza & Aluede, 2013; Öztürk, 2018).

Second, Sociocultural factors include societal perceptions of the teaching profession, the influence of traditional teacher-development approaches, group learning, community support as an interactive process and shared knowledge action. Moreover, Integrating cultural sensitivity and Islamic values into the educational framework is paramount because they guide teaching methods and align educational objectives with society's moral and ethical standards in Saudi Arabia (Almuhammadi, 2024).

Third, the background of EFL instructors based on the previous two factors outlines the methodological factor when EFL instructors in Saudi universities use different strategies to help inculcate metacognition development among their students, thereby promoting better learning outcomes.

The findings of this study corroborate the results obtained in previous studies, which highlighted that instructors' awareness of metacognitive strategies was insignificant. This finding also parallels those of Hashmi et al. (2019), who utilised the MAI (Schraw & Dennison, 1994) to assess the metacognitive awareness of 400 prospective teachers at Public Universities in Punjab. The findings revealed no significant differences in the prospective teachers' metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive regulatory skills across gender and age. Moreover, Alci and Karatas (2011) conducted a study to assess the metacognitive awareness levels among teacher candidates. The study aimed to examine whether these levels varied according to certain variables, such as gender or domains, using the MAI (Schraw & Dennison, 1994) to investigate 233 teacher candidates enrolled in the Pedagogical Formation Certificate Program at Yıldız Technical University, representing the domains of social sciences (121), numeric (51), and fine arts and design (61). Remarkably, the results indicated that gender differences were insignificant.

A paucity of scientific literature focuses on the metacognitive awareness of EFL instructors worldwide in higher education institutions. More comprehensive research in this area

is crucial to enhance our understanding and elevate the quality of education. In conclusion, while the field of metacognition has made significant progress, several conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and analytical issues still need urgent attention to expand and have a meaningful impact.

Conclusion

This exploratory research aims to contribute substantially to the current body of literature in the Saudi context. It is specifically tailored to offer valuable insights to educators in higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia regarding instructors' awareness of metacognitive strategies. Given the complex interplay between metacognition and EFL instruction, the goal is to foster the repertoire with the dynamics involved in teaching and elevate the efficacy of learning within the EFL environment in Saudi Arabia.

This study's findings indicated no statistically significant differences between genders regarding EFL instructors' awareness of metacognitive strategies or in the various subcategories of metacognition, which include Declarative Knowledge, Procedural Knowledge, Conditional Knowledge, Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluating. This research offers insights that cultivate the Saudi context where higher education is valued, and stakeholders actively contribute to the learning process.

Furthermore, by focusing on the specific context of Saudi universities, this study fills a critical gap in the literature. It provides a perspective on EFL instructors' challenges and opportunities in this educational setting. Ultimately, the investigation of Saudi university instructors' metacognitive awareness holds promise for enriching both theoretical and practical aspects of language education, providing continuous work into this dynamic area of research.

Limitations, Implications and Suggestions for Further Studies

The study highlights potential constraints observed in higher education research. First, it notes the limited number of studies conducted in higher education institutions globally over 10 years (2014–2024), encompassing only the seven referenced studies. Second, the study's sample size can be increased to produce more valid generalisations based on the results.

The instructors' insights reveal important andragogical implications in metacognitive strategy instruction, which is vital in enhancing their metacognitive knowledge. The process can be effectively enhanced through a series of suggested steps based on the six dimensions of metacognitive awareness:

First, a mentorship committee should be implemented as part of the professional development program for faculty members, where experienced professors collaborate with less-experienced committee members to promote professional development and share effective methods that increase their metacognition. Also, teaching methods that align with the cultural norms of male and female EFL instructors should be adopted to foster an inclusive environment. Additionally, faculty members should be trained to incorporate metacognitive strategies into their course tasks. Furthermore, they should be encouraged to reflect on their teaching experiences to identify when, where, why, what, and how these strategies can be used. Lastly,

faculty should be inspired to engage in metacognitive teaching by facilitating opportunities for peer observations, peer reviews, and self-assessments.

Based on the findings discussed above, it is recommended to conduct further EFL studies on the following:

First, since the data was gathered through one questionnaire with closed-ended items, a semi-structured interview could be employed to examine the same variables and then analyse them qualitatively to triangulate results. Second, a qualitative study using think-aloud protocols could be investigated by focusing on sociocultural factors influencing EFL instructors' metacognitive strategy awareness. Third, longitudinal studies on metacognitive strategy awareness could be implemented. This may involve studying instructors' performance over an extended period to observe how their understanding and utilisation of these strategies progress. Finally, further research could explore the influence of professional development training courses in metacognitive strategy instruction on EFL instructors' teaching philosophy, which may depict significant gender differences. It can help gain insights when it uncovers their tacit beliefs about how metacognitive strategies are integrated into instruction and provides broader implications for teaching effectiveness in EFL contexts.

Acknowledgements

Bio

Dr. Hanan Fahad M. Al Sultan is an Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics at King Faisal University, Saudi Arabia. She holds a B. A in English Language and Literature from the Department of Foreign Languages at KFU, Saudi Arabia (2009), an M.A. in Linguistics (2012), and a PhD in Applied Linguistics (2020) from IMISU, Saudi Arabia. Dr. Al Sultan has contributed to the academic community through her publications in high-impact Clarivate and Scopus-indexed journals. Her research interests revolve around the philosophy of language instruction and the interdisciplinary aspects of language, computer science, psychology, neurology, evaluation, and assessment.

References

Ahmadi Safa, M., & Motaghi, F. (2024). Cognitive vs. metacognitive scaffolding strategies and EFL learners' listening comprehension development. *Language Teaching Research, 28*(3), 987-1010. https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688211021821

Alci, B., & Karatas, H. (2011). Teacher candidates' metacognitive awareness according to their domains and sex. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Thought, 1*(6), 255-263. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Hakan-Karatas/publication/309359075_TEACHER_CANDIDATES'_METACOGNITIVE_AWARENESS_ACCORDING_TO_THEIR_DOMAINS_AND_SEX/links/580b48e508ae2cb3a5d7aaba/TEACHER-CANDIDATES-METACOGNITIVE-AWARENESS-ACCORDING-TO-THEIR-DOMAINS-AND-SEX.pdf

Alghamdi, D. J. (2017). *EFL teaching in university classrooms in Saudi Arabia: A case study of instructors and curriculum and implementation for language learning* (Order No. 10241093). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1916538819). https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/efl-teaching-university-classrooms-saudi-arabia/docview/1916538819/se-2

Alkhaleefah, T. A. (2023). Assessing Saudi EFL learners' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies: A cross-sectional study. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 13*(11), 2780-2788. https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1311.07

Al-Khresheh, M. H., & Al Basheer Ben Ali, R. (2023). A mixed method study on the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies used by Saudi EFL students. *Journal of Pedagogical Research, 7*(4), 30-47. https://doi.org/10.33902/JPR.202321535

Al-Khresheh, M. H., & Alruwaili, S. F. (2024). Metacognition in listening comprehension: Analyzing strategies and gender differences among Saudi EFL university students. *Cogent Social Sciences, 10*(1), 2291954. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2291954

Allen, M., Titsworth, S., & Hunt, S. K. (2008). *Quantitative research in communication*. Sage Publications. https://books.google.com.sa/books/about/Quantitative_Research_in_Communication.html?id=xvt0AwAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y

Almuhammadi, A. (2024). Exploring the influence of socio-cultural factors on teacher development in the Saudi EFL setting. *International Journal of English Linguistics, 14*(3), 13. https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v14n3p13

Alshammari, R. F. (2022). The effect of inquiry-based learning strategy on developing Saudi students' metacognitive reading comprehension skills. *English Language Teaching, 15*(5), 43-51. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v15n5p43

An, D., Ye, C., & Liu, S. (2024). The influence of metacognition on learning engagement: The mediating effect of learning strategy and learning behavior. *Current Psychology*, 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-024-06400-y

Balcikanli, C. (2011). Metacognitive Awareness Inventory for Teachers (MAIT). *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology, 9*(3), 1309–1332. https://doi.org/10.25115/ejrep.v9i25.1620

Benbouzid, M., & Hamitouche, F. (2022). Investigating metacognitive awareness among Algerian EFL university teachers of academic writing. *Social Sciences Journal, 16*(2), 540-552. https://doi.org/10.34118/ssj.v16i2.2542

Beziat, T. L., Bynum, Y., & Klash, E. F. (2018). Metacognitive awareness and mindset in current and future principals. *School Leadership Review, 12*(2), 23-31. https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/slr/vol12/iss2/4

Brown, A. L. (1987). Metacognition, executive control, self-regulation, and other more mysterious mechanisms. In F. E. Weinert & R. H. Kluwe (Eds.), *Metacognition, motivation, and understanding* (pp. 65–116). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Education and Training Evaluation Commission. (n.d.). Retrieved December 1, 2024, from https://etec.gov.sa/ar/service/nationalqualifications/servicedocuments

ETEC. (n.d.). Retrieved November 19, 2024, from https://etec.gov.sa/ar/services/corporate

Flavell, J. H. (1979). Metacognition and cognitive monitoring: A new area of cognitive developmental inquiry. *American Psychologist, 34*, 906-911. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.34.10.906

Green, S. B., & Salkind, N. J. (2005). *Using SPSS for Windows and Macintosh: Analyzing and understanding data* (4th ed.). Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Greenier, V., Fathi, J., & Behzadpoor, S. F. (2023). Teaching for creativity in an EFL context: The predictive roles of school climate, teaching enthusiasm, and metacognition. *Thinking Skills and Creativity, 50*, 101419. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2023.101419

Hashmi, A., Khalid, M., & Shoaib, A. (2019). A cross-sectional study of assessing metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive regulatory skills among prospective teachers and its relation to their academic achievement. *Bulletin of Education and Research, 41*(2), 215-234. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1229425

Hennessey, M. G. (1999). Probing the dimensions of metacognition: Implications for conceptual change teaching-learning. *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Association for Research in Science Teaching*, Boston, MA. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED446921.pdf

Jiang, Y., Ma, L., & Gao, L. (2016). Assessing teachers' metacognition in teaching: The teacher metacognition inventory. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 59*, 403-413. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.07.014

Kornell, N., & Bjork, R. A. (2009). A stability bias in human memory: Overestimating remembering and underestimating learning. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 138*(4), 449-468. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017350

Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition.* Pergamon Press.

Livingston, J. A. (1997). Metacognition: An overview. *Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)*. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED474273.pdf

Manning, B. H., & Payne, B. D. (1993). A Vygotskian-based theory of teacher cognition: Toward the acquisition of mental reflection and self-regulation. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 9*(4), 361-371. https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X(93)90003-S

Mokhtari, K., & Reichard, C. A. (2002). Assessing students' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 94*(2), 249-259. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.94.2.249

Oxford, R. L. (2017). *Teaching and researching language learning strategies: Self-regulation in context* (2nd ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315719146

Paris, S. G., & Winograd, P. (1990). How metacognition can promote academic learning and instruction. In B. F. Jones & L. Idol (Eds.), *Dimensions of thinking and cognitive instruction* (pp. 15-51). Erlbaum.

Pintrich, P. R. (2002). The role of metacognitive knowledge in learning, teaching, and assessing. *Theory into Practice, 41*(4), 219-225. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4104_3

Schraw, G., & Dennison, R. S. (1994). Assessing metacognitive awareness. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 19*(4), 460-475. https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1994.1033

Schraw, G., & Moshman, D. (1995). Metacognitive theories. *Educational Psychology Review, 7*(4), 351-371. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02212307

Schunk, D. H., & Zimmerman, B. J. (1994). *Self-regulation of learning and performance: Issues and educational applications.* Erlbaum.

Veenman, M. V. J., Van Hout-Wolters, B. H. A. M., & Afflerbach, P. (2006). Metacognition and learning: Conceptual and methodological considerations. *Metacognition and Learning, 1*(1), 3-14. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11409-006-6893-0

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Harvard University Press.

Winne, P. H., & Azevedo, R. (2014). Metacognition. In R. K. Sawyer (Ed.), *The Cambridge handbook of the learning sciences* (2nd ed., pp. 63-87). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139519526.006

Zimmerman, B. J. (2002). Becoming a self-regulated learner: An overview. *Theory into Practice, 41*(2), 64-70. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4102_2

Issues of Rendering some Polysemous Quranic Words into English: A Qualitative Study

Majed Alturki

Department of Translation, Faculty of Languages and Translation, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

mmturki@imamu.edu.sa
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5507-0845

_____

الملخص

أحد أوجه الاعجاز في القران الكريم وجود عدد كبير من الكلمات التي تتجلى فيها ظاهرة الاشتراك اللفظي. تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلى إبراز الطرائق التي يستخدمها المترجمون الذين ينحدرون من بيئات ثقافية ولغوية متنوعة للتعامل مع هذه المعضلة اللغوية. يكمن الإشكال في أن على المترجمين القيام بدور المفسر بالإضافة الى وظيفتهم الأساسية كوسطاء لنقل النص. يمكن القول بشكل عام إن المترجمين لا يتبنوا أسلوبا واحدا للتعامل مع المشترك اللفظي. لكن الاتجاه الغالب بينهم هو اختيار المعنى المشهور طالما أنه يناسب السياق الذي وردت فيه الكلمة. في بعض الحالات يتجه المترجمون الى اختيار معنى أقل شيوعاً إذا كان المعنى الذي يتبادر أولاً إلى الذهن لا يتلاءم مع فهمهم للنص. فالمعول عليه عندهم في هذه الحالات هو السياق القرآني حسب فهمهم. في هذه الورقة يتناول الباحث كيف أن المترجمين يضيعون على القراء فرصة تذوق جمال الإعجاز اللغوي القرآني. وقد أفاد ملايين المسلمين وغيرهم من ترجماتهم لكتاب الله الذي استعصى على فصحاء العالم ببلاغته وإعجازه. وهذا التقويم يهدف إلى تطوير أساليب عملهم، ويسهم في إرشاد مترجمي المستقبل.

Issues of Rendering some Polysemous Quranic Words into English: A Qualitative Study

Majed Alturki

Department of Translation, Faculty of Languages and Translation, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

mmturki@imamu.edu.sa
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5507-0845

_____

Abstract

One of the inimitable aspects of the Quran is the presence of a large number of words with polysemic significance. This paper aims to examine the different manoeuvres that translators of the Quran who have their roots in different linguistic and cultural milieux employ to tackle this predicament. Polysemy poses a quandary for translators since they have to take on the role of an exegete in addition to their role as linguistic mediators. Generally speaking, translators of the Quran do not adopt a unified strategy when they encounter words with multiple senses. They tend to adopt the meaning that tallies with the common (or primary) import of these words taking into consideration the relevant linguistic context. Sometimes, they depart from the primary sense of the word that comes to the mind when found in isolation and pick out a meaning that better collocates with the surrounding context. Put differently, it is usually the context that dictates this course of action. In this paper, the author argues that some translators of the Quran inadvertently put their readers at a disadvantage by depriving them of a window of opportunity to be more appreciative of the sublime grandeur of the linguistic miracles of the Quran. The study at hand has revealed that a couple of meanings can coexist and it is incumbent on the translator to make the reader informed about such aspects of the Quran which has made it inimitable in its original form. While millions of people are indebted to many translators of the Quran for their no mean feat considering its unsurpassable eloquence , there is always room for improvement.

Keywords: *inimitability of the Quran, polysemy, Quran translation, translation strategies, vagueness.*

_____

Introduction

It is a forgone conclusion that translation is an uphill task. It is a task that requires adequate proficiency not only in the source language but also in the target language. The task is even more strenuous when translating the words of God. Leading translators and translation experts have pointed to the impossibility of equivalence even at the word level. Such difficulty is compounded in sensitive texts like that of the Muslims' Holy Book.

Many Muslim scholars object to the use of the word 'translate' when describing the process of rendering the meaning of the Quranic text into English. Alternatively, they prefer to use the word 'interpret' as it more aptly describes what translators do. Such interpretations are just "crude approximations" at best. This made Muslim scholars reject the idea of translating the Quran. Shakir explains that regarding "the matter of the lawfulness of translating the Holy Quran into any foreign language, we can have little confidence in the balance of meaning being preserved" (Shakir, 1926 as cited in AbdulRaof, 2004, p. 92).

More precisely, Ali (2006) states, "the Quran is only the Quran when it is in Arabic, in its original wording as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad" (p. 19). In general, Muslims believe that the Quran should be read in Arabic because it is the direct and exact word of Allah. However, we can only resort to translation to have a general or rather incomplete idea of the original meaning. Accordingly, it goes without saying that no translator of the Quran has ever claimed that their translation is meant to be a substitute for the original text.

One of the thorniest issues that a translator of the Quran faces is polysemous words that are language-specific, time-specific, or culture-specific. For instance, the translator is faced with the difficult decision of choosing between the different meanings that a given word has. Resorting to the different exegeses of the Quran might sometimes resolve this issue. These works might not, however, provide a one-to- one meaning of the word. They list all possible senses that might be at play.

The multiplicity of senses may vary from language to another and poses some problems to translators. This leaves the translators baffled and their choice of the best equivalent may be influenced by what they know about its widespread meaning. The likely outcome would be a translation which is literal and does not quite represent the intended meaning. Even worse, some translators fail to rely on exegeses in their search for the meaning of the Quranic expression. To be fair, these translators do not refer to the different exegeses of the Holy Quran as they sometimes erroneously assume that consulting any external source is unnecessary. That is, if the meaning is so clear, these translators do not feel the need to rely on any interpretation or dictionary to help them. Sometimes they fail to notice that the word at the time of revelation might have a meaning which sometimes does not bear any relationship to its modern sense.

It is important to note that in the literature they agree that polysemy is a word that has more than one sense (Crystal, 1980; Ullman, 1967). Some stipulated that these senses or meanings should be related (e.g., Hurford, 2007; Yule, 1987), otherwise it is a case of homonymy. It is, however, sometimes impossible to distinguish between polysemy and homonymy especially when we are dealing with sensitive texts like that of the Quran. Another important concept which is interchangeably used with the above concepts is vagueness. "A word is said to be 'vague' when it appears to have one basic sense (monosemy) which is nevertheless

flexible enough to allow for minor variations in meaning or use which are not particularly entrenched in the mind of the speaker" (Hurford, 2007, p. 132).

Vague words have one "more inclusive true meaning" that "subsume other meanings" (Tuggy, 1993). Despite the presence of some vague words in the Quran, they are usually treated as polysemous or homonymous. For example, the word الفساد "al-fasad" (i.e. corruption) cited by Abdul-Raof (2013, pp. 89-90) as an example of homonymy is a typical example of vagueness. One of the tests suggested by Hurford (2007) is to see whether native speakers consider the different meanings related or not. In fact, all the senses listed by Abdul-Raof (2013, pp. 89-90) are obviously related. Another approach which fails the test and does not capture the essence of homonymy is Abedelrazq (2014) where almost all the examples she examined in the Glorious Quran are not intuitively cases of homonymy. They are rather typical examples of vagueness because all the senses listed under each item hierarchically belong to one general meaning.

Examples abound which demonstrate the erroneous rendering of some lexical items. For example, the Arabic word قميص 'qamees' was always translated as "shirt" in all the famous translations of the Holy Quran. Today, the word "qamees" refers to "a cloth garment usually having a collar, sleeves, a front opening, and a tail long enough to be tucked inside trousers or a skirt" (Merriam Webster Dictionary). This type of clothing in its modern sense may not be common during the time of the actual narrative or the time of revelation. To translate it into 'shirt' would impose the modern sense of the word and prevent any other alternatives that could widen the scope to explore the types of clothes common in the relevant place and time.

Also, such influence can be seen in the translation of the word أمة 'Ummah'. Literally, the word means "nation". However, when used to describe a person, it means 'somebody who has all the good attributes' or 'a teacher of good virtues'. All the famous exegeses of the Holy Quran give it this meaning when applied to human beings. [c.f Al-Tabari, 1987; Ibn Kathir 1970; Al-Qurtubi, 1973].

There are cases when translators overlook polysemic words. For example, the word ضحك 'dhahek' usually carries the meaning of " laugh". In Arabic dictionaries, we can see that the word can mean "menstruate". Although this is not the common meaning, in some contexts the word can have this sense as in the context of the following verse:

Example One

Source Surah: Chapter Hud (11): Verse 71

Source Text in Arabic: ﴿وَامْرَأَتُهُ قَائِمَةٌ فَضَحِكَتْ فَبَشَّرْنَاهَا بِإِسْحَاقَ وَمِن وَرَاءِ إِسْحَاقَ يَعْقُوبَ﴾ (71:هود)

Target Text:

> Pickthall (1969): And his wife, standing by laughed when We gave her good tidings (of the birth) of Isaac, and, after Isaac, of Jacob.

> Yusuf Ali (1983): And his wife was standing (there), and she laughed: But we gave her glad tidings of Isaac, and after him, of Jacob.

Khan and Al-Hilali (1996): And his wife was standing (there), and she laughed (either, because the Messengers did not eat their food or for being glad for the destruction of the people of Lout (Lot). But We gave her glad tidings of Ishaque (Isaac), and after him, of Yaqoob (Jacob).

Khattab (2015): And his wife was standing by, so she laughed, then We gave her good news of ˹the birth of˺ Isaac, and, after him, Jacob.

Abraham's wife was barren and she was given the good news of a new baby. Most translators make no mention of this meaning even though it can fit in this context. It seems that translators do not refer to the different exegeses unless a need arises or they do not feel compelled to mention these secondary meanings perhaps in order not to confuse the reader. Even Khan and Al-Hilali's (1996) translation which relies heavily on exegetical details do not make any mention of the possible second meaning. Why deprive the readers of the extra layers of meaning especially Muslim readers who are keen on gaining deep knowledge of their sacred book? This can also be said as a rebuttal to the argument that adding further details will impact adversely the flow of the translation.

Another apt example is the translation of the word جمل 'jamal' in the following verse:

Example Two

Source Surah: Chapter Ala'raf (the heights) (7): Verse (40)

Source Text in Arabic:

(الاعراف:40) ﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا عَنْهَا لَا تُفَتَّحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّىٰ يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ﴾

Target Text:

Pickthall (1969): Lo! they who deny Our revelations and scorn them, for them the gates of heaven will nor be opened not will they enter the Garden until the camel goeth through the needle's eye.

Yusuf Ali (1983): To those who reject Our signs and treat them with arrogance, no opening will there

be of the gates of heaven, nor will they enter the garden, until the camel can pass

through the eye of the needle:

Khan and Al-Hilali (1996): Verily, those who belie Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and treat them with arrogance, for them the gates of heaven will not be opened, and they will not enter Paradise until the camel goes through the eye of the needle (which is impossible).

Khattab (2015): Surely those who receive our revelations with denial and arrogance, the gates of heaven will not be opened for them, nor will they enter Paradise until a camel passes through the eye of a needle.

Although the common meaning for "jamal" is (camel), there are some commentators who suggest that in this context, "jamal" means 'thick rope'. However, famous translators gloss over this suggestion apart from Asad (1980) who opted for the less common meaning "thick rope" and explained in a footnote that in this context it was more appropriate to translate camel as "twisted rope" and he cited some of the commentators who support his claim. Also, he traced the origin of the word 'jamal' and its various derivatives which he thought they lend support to his claim. Interestingly, to corroborate his point, he referred to the Bible which has the same parable and the word "rope" is used.

Asad's lengthy explanation sheds light on the difficulty that some translators face when they encounter such polysemic words. It is important to mention here that I am referring to the different meanings of the word "jamal" as being polysemous in the broader sense of the term polysemy. Although Khan and Al-Hilali (1996) list all the possible senses of the word آيات "proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc." they fail to do the same with the word 'jamal' which suggests inconsistency in the way they treat polysemous items. Al-Qurtubi (1973) pointed out to the different etymological sources of the two meanings. We might, therefore, argue that this word should alternatively be regarded as a case involving homonymy which makes the mention of the two senses even more worthwhile.

The issue that needs to be investigated first is whether some translators of the Quran are aware of the huge presence of words with multiple meanings. Also, translators do not seem to agree on a single strategy for the translation of words with more than one sense but which strategy takes more precedence and whether the translator's religious and linguistic background comes into play when they are faced with such choices.

Generally speaking, I would like to examine challenges that face the translators of the Quran when rendering polysemous words. To do this, I will explore the different translations of some polysemous words in the Quran and compare the chosen senses linguistically, historically and culturally. This could help us spot the most common approach in translating such items, i.e. whether translations of the Quran adopt the primary/ general sense of the word or the specific one that tone down or up a given sense of the word, such as figurative usage, specialised sense (belonging to a certain genre), technical sense and transferred sense (Zgusta, 1971).

Here are the two main research questions of this paper:

(1) What are the challenges that translators of the Quran encounter when they render polysemic words?
(2) What are the common strategies that translators of the Quran adopt to transfer words with multiple senses?

Literature Review

Polysemy has been explored in linguistics and translation studies. Some linguists like Ullman looked at it as a source of ambiguity. Here, ambiguity appears in cases where an item has "more than one cognitive meaning for the same piece of language" (Leech, 1969, p. 205). In this sense, many researchers find this phenomenon to be a unique feature that characterises the Quran and must be considered in translation. For instance, Alzeini (2009) noted, "One of the most outstanding linguistic unique features, which tend to make the Quran 'untranslatable'

is its extensive usage of ambiguity" (p. 33). She therefore pursued the translation of some ambiguous (i.e., polysemous) words in the Quran, particularly a list of representative ambiguities from the Chapter of The Heifer.

By contrast, Ibn Durustwayh denied the existence of polysemy in the Quran on the basis that it would lead to ambiguity that contradicts the clear message of the Quran and the logical usage of the Arabic language itself. (Al-Suyuti, 1986). However Classical Arabic dictionaries like Lisan Al'Arab list several senses under many lexical items, acknowledging the existence of this phenomenon.

Abdul-Raof (2013) discusses at length the issue of literal translation in the translation of the Quran which, he argues, can be seen in the translation of polysemic words. He uses the word "literal" to refer to what we can call 'the common meaning'. He gives many examples where translators chose a sense of the polysemic word which is not in line with the context in which the word was mentioned. Hassan (2013) proposes a contextual approach where both linguistics and culture interrelate in analysing the translation of polysemy and culture-specific expressions in the Qur'ān. He examined the challenges of translating the language of the Quran, particularly polysemy and culture-specific expressions based on a source text analysis rather than doing a comparison of translations. He argues that some words in the Quran have acquired new senses and one area in which future research can be conducted is whether translators have been successful in explaining the semantic development of these words.

Having examined a number of studies on polysemy in the Quran, we can notice that there is a conspicuous vagueness in the way they identify polysemy. For example, many researchers assume that a vague concept which subsumes other concepts is an example of polysemy. For example, the word 'fitnah' (trial or temptation) is polysemous just because it includes several forms of trial. Literallly, in Arabic the word means 'test". This test can be used to assess the degree of truth or authenticity of one's belief or steadfastness. In this way, the different forms of tests, tribulations, trials or ordeals inflicted upon a person are forms of 'fitnah' and multiple senses that are relatable by extension yet they can be easily distinguished. This can be likened to the vague word 'bread' which is in English is an umbrella term for the different types of bread (e.g., loaf, pitta, naan etc.).

We are not in a position to argue that these types are 'senses' of the word 'bread' by the sheer fact that it subsumes several manifestations. رحمة (mercy), مطر (rain), رجس (filth) are other vague words that are often cited in the literature. These general words are contextually based for their interpretation. For instance, رجس (filth) on one occasion can refer to spiritual 'filth' such as idol-worshipping, and in other contexts it can refer to physical torment or punishments. These interpretations are driven by the context and as such do not represent genuine cases of polysemy.

There are many studies that have tackled the issue of polysemic words but from a completely different perspective. For example, Kembaren et al. (2024) compared the translation of polysemous words from Arabic into Batak Angkola, Indonesian, and English. So the scope of comparison in the aforementioned study is not made between different English versions of the same instance of polysemy. Another example is Kalakattawi, F. A. (2005) which focuses on a single case of 'vaguenss' (i.e., the word 'فتنة') which has been misidentified as a case of 'polysemy'. Also, her analysis is limited to a single word (i.e., فتنة) which does not constitute a

representative sample according to rigorous academic standards. Polysemy which poses a real challenge for the Quran translators is when we encounter a word that has multiple discernible senses each of which is well documented by exegetical authorities. The translator will either choose one sense over all other possible senses or combine all the possible senses. The presence of words that have multiple senses all of which are viable in a particular context is one of the inimitable hallmarks of the Holy Quran. Therefore, it is incumbent on the translator of the Quran to deliver these senses so a prospective reader of the Quran can really appreciate the grandeur of the Quran unparallel style.

In this paper, I propose a more systematic method for analysing polysemy by looking at the different senses of a given polysemous word as listed in Arabic reliable sources of Tafseer 'exegesis of the Quran' as well as the classical Arabic dictionaries. Then I will have a look at the different translations of the Quran to spot which sense was toned up or down.

Research Methodology

The proposed study is going to be descriptive in nature. Descriptive translation studies as defined by Holmes (1988) "describe the phenomenon of translating and translation as they manifest themselves in the world of our experience" (p. 187). Toury (1995) redefined such studies to include "carefully performed studies into well-defined corpuses or set of problems" (p. 1). In the proposed study, this model will be used which looks upon the process of translation as one of the decision-making processes in which the translator has always to choose between "a number of alternatives" (p. 1), stated Levy (1967).

Descriptive studies also pay a special attention to the notion of norms which are in the descriptive literature perceived as Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997) illustrated "reflections of the translation practice which typifies the translations produced by a certain translator" (p. 113). The present study will be restricted to a list of selected polysemes frequently used by Arab scholars of Islamic studies when discussing words of multiple senses in the Quran. A valuable source is "Almufradaat fi Ghareeb Alquran" by Alragheb Al-Asfahani 'A dictionary of uncommon words in the Holy Quran'. However, the list of items derived from Al-asfhani will be examined first in common usage and the exegetical sources to capture all possible meanings of each item in the Arabic language in general before moving to the Quran.

Then the translation of these lexical items in the famous translations will be investigated. The famous translations are the ones that have acquired popularity not only among researchers but also among different sections of readers. If this study is to bear fruit, a representative sample of polysemic words should be selected. To investigate whether these words represent genuine cases of polysemy, we can rely on the intuition of Arabic native speakers to identify the common meanings of these polysemic items. This list will compare the common meaning today and the common meaning at the time of the revelation of the Glorious Quran. This common meaning can be identified using authentic texts produced during the early centuries of Islam. The output will then be examined and subjected to the test put forward by Hurford (2007) to extract the polysemous words.

Findings

It is relatively easy to find words with multiple senses even when we look at chapters that are often recited by Muslims such as الفلق (Alfalaq). The first polysemic word we encounter in this chapter is the eponymous word الفلق which according to famous exegetes [e.g., Altabari, 1978; Al-Qurtubi, 1973] has many meanings such as 'daybreak', 'a prison in hell', 'hell' and 'creations'.

Consider the following translations.

Example Three

Source Surah: Chapter Alfalaq (the daybreak) (113): Verse (1)

Source Text in Arabic: ﴿ الفلق ﴾ (الفلق:1)

Target Text:

"Pickthall (1969): daybreak

Yusuf Ali (1983): Dawn

Khan and Al-Hilali (1996): daybreak

Khattab (2015): daybreak"

All the above translators pick up one sense of the Arabic word الفلق (i.e., daybreak) to the exclusion of other possible senses. There might be some legitimate excuses for such exclusion. This is the sense usually chosen by modern exegetes of the Quran. Perhaps more importantly, this is the sense which resonates with the intuition of speakers of modern standard Arabic. Also, it has been suggested that earlier translators of the Quran influence subsequent translators (cf. El-Magazy, 2004, p.78). In other words, modern translators of the Quran do not see any compelling reason to alter their translations. Finally, they might presume that adding any alternative interpretation might confound the readers.

The above example does not represent a case which every translator faces but there are words which pose some issues even for native speakers of Arabic reading the Holy Quran, let alone translators. For example, the word "Dhan" in classical Arabic can mean (believe) or (think/guess) as in the translation of the following verses:

Example Four

Source Surah: Chapter Albaqara (the heifer) (2): Verses (45-46)

Source Text in Arabic: ﴿ وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ ۚ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ (45) الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُم مُّلَاقُو رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ﴾ (35-46:البقرة)

Target Text:

Pickthall (1969): Seek help in patience and prayer; and truly it is hard save for the humble-minded;

Who know that they will have to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are returning

Yusuf Ali (1983): Nay, seek (Allah's) help with patient perseverance and prayer: It is indeed hard, except to those who bring a lowly spirit, who bear in mind the certainty that they are to meet their Lord, and that they are to return to Him

Khan and Al-Hilali (1996): And seek help in patience and As-Salat (the prayer) and truly it is extremely heavy and hard except for Al-Khashioon (i.e., the true believers in Allah - those who obey Allah with full submission, fear much from His Punishment, and believe in His Promise (Paradise, etc.) and in His Warnings (Hell, etc.); (They are those) who are certain that they are going to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are going to return.

Khattab (2015): And seek help through patience and prayer. Indeed, it is a burden except for the humble; those who are certain that they will meet their Lord and to Him they will return.

Example Five

Source Surah: Chapter Albaqara (the heifer) (2): Verse (78)

Source Text in Arabic: ﴿ وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُّونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِيَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ﴾ (البقرة:78)

Target Text:

Pickthall (1969): Among them are unlettered folk who know the Scripture not except from hearsay. They but guess.

Yusuf Ali (1983): And there are among them unlettered people, who know not the Book, but they trust upon false desires and they but guess.

Khan and Al-Hilali (1996): And there are among them (Jews) unlettered people, who know not the Book, but they trust upon false desires and they but guess.

Khattab (2015): And among them are the illiterate who know nothing about the Scripture except lies, and ˹so˺ they ˹wishfully˺ speculate.

Sometimes the word is translated as 'certainty' and other times as 'doubt', i.e., a polyseme of two contradicting senses. Some Quran exegetes, like Mujahid, claim that whenever ظن 'zhanna' is used in the Quran it refers to certainty, though he interprets the very word in some Quranic verses as 'doubt'. This controversy could be sorted out by analysing the context and the primary senses vis-a-vis the specific ones. The above example demonstrates that translators are aware of the multiple senses of the Arabic word ظن and that they give different renditions on the basis of its respective context. Consider the following interesting example.

Example Six

Source Surah: Chapter Altaubah (the repentence) (9): Verse (103)

Source Text in Arabic: ﴿ وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلَوٰتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهم ﴾ (التوبة: 103)

Target Text:

Pickthall (1969): and pray for them. Lo! thy prayer is an assuagement for them

Yusuf Ali (1983): and pray on their behalf. Verily thy prayers are a source of security for them

Khan and Al-Hilali (1996): and invoke Allah for them. Verily! Your invocations are a source of security for them

Khattab (2015): and pray for them—surely your prayer is a source of comfort for them

Like its English counterpart, الصلاة (prayer) has a couple of meanings . However, in Arabic it has another less common sense of 'asking for forgiveness'. The above context does not allow for the most common meaning (i.e. a form of worship to activate a rapport with the almighty God). Alternatively, they resorted to the sense of 'invocation' which happens to be the second most common meaning. So translators when faced with a meaning which is not congruent with their perception of the verse they opt for secondary senses. This example shows that generally speaking translators abide by the exegetical interpretations yet they are actively involved in the decision-making process when they encounter a quandary such as the aforementioned instance.

Now Let us have a very telling example:

Example Seven

Source Surah: Chapter Almursalat (the emissaries) (77): Verse (33)

Source Text in Arabic: ﴿كَأَنَّهُ جِمَلَٰت صفر﴾ (المرسلات: 33)

Target Text:

Pickthall (1969): (Or) as it might be camels of bright yellow hue

Yusuf Ali (1983): As if there were (a string of) yellow camels (marching swiftly).

Khan and Al-Hilali (1996): As if they were Jimalatun Sufr (yellow camels or bundles of ropes)."

Khattab (2015): and ˹as dark˺ as black camels."

In this example the sparks that hellfire throws up is likened to camels or bundles of ropes subject to the interpretation that the translator chooses. The only translators above who have given expression to both senses are Khan and Al-Hilali (1996) who took extra care to stick closely to the statements given by exegetes however long this might render their interpretation or may break the flow of their translation. Khan and Al-Hilali's use of transliteration in the above example does draw the attention of readers to the subtle nature of these Arabic lexemes.

Elimam (2017, p. 63) finds that many Muslims are passionate about committing Arabic words to memory and Khan and Al-Hilali's employment of transliteration serves this purpose. In the same vein, Alturki (2021, p. 211) reveals that "apart from their gratuitous (at least for some readers) use of transliteration, Al-Hilali and Khan effectively mirror the polysemous nature of the divine designations. Their adherence to exegetic fidelity pays off here". This generalization should not apply across the board as they have settled on one sense of the word صفر despite the inkling of most exegetes to give it the sense of 'black' or 'yellow pigmentation'.

Although Pickthall (1969) sets out to stick to a literal translation, in the above instance he picks a sense (i.e. yellow hue) which totally rests on the exegetes' interpretation of the Arabic word. Also, Ali adopts a literal translation which is not in line with the sense given in the different exegetical sources. It seems that Ali does not resort to secondary senses unless the context perfectly allows such a concession. Khattab (2015) is the only translator who has let go of the common meaning to accommodate the secondary sense as stated by many exegetes.

Discussion

The first issue that catches the attention of any investigator of the translation of polysemy in the Quran is the misidentification of the phenomenon. First, they do not agree on a single definition for polysemy which has led to confusion whether certain instances constitute cases of polysemy or not. In the present paper, we have tried to adopt a unified definition for polysemy which takes into account all the probable cases of polysemy. Second, some researchers fail to spot certain instances of multiple senses due to the subtle and vague nature of some senses. Researchers have to strike a balance between vagueness and ambiguity. It is hoped that all the examples we have covered reveal multiple meanings that are clearly discernible to any serious researcher.

It is interesting to note that many researchers have failed to spot the contentious points that pertain to polysemy. The reliance on intuition when it comes it picking up the most appropriate sense for a given lexeme does not always pay off. Even the context does not often solve the quandary that encounters the translators. Quite repeatedly, we come across words with a number of senses that can coexist. Cherry-picking one meaning and excluding any other viable meaning can deprive the reader of an important insight into the overall denotation of the Quranic text. The inclination of translators to avoid overwhelming the readers with so-called superfluous details comes at the expense of being less faithful to the original text.

By faithfulness we mean that the target text "evokes in a receptor essentially the same response as that displayed by the receptors of the original message" (Nida & Taber, 1969,1982, p. 201). Selecting just one sense does not evoke in the target reader the feeling that the Quran in its inimitable eloquence is capable of imparting multiple senses each of which is as justifiable and as admissible as all the other senses. We have seen how in previous studies the only focus of most researchers is the inaccurate rendition of vague or ambiguous words which constitutes a major obstacle for translators. However, another equally cumbersome matter of contention is the amalgamation of different interpretations that caters for the needs of different sections of readership. As we have analyzed this stumbling block does not seem to occupy the minds of researchers and translators alike.

This seemingly inevitable loss of meaning can be resolved by resorting to compensation. Among the many types of compensation is the *compensation by splitting* which is resorted to if there is no target language item that subsumes the range of different meanings that the source language lexeme has (Dickins et al., 2002). A fitting example is the word الفجر which we have already cited. Since English does not have a lexical item that can encompass all the senses that Arabic can carry, a translator can split the word into different layers of meanings conjoined together (i.e., dawn, hell and creation). Any translation technique that is not applied consistent and systematically will only aggravate the situation and will render the translator powerless whenever he is torn between two or more equally congruent alternatives.

Conclusion and Recommendations

We can easily notice the quandary that translators of the Quran need to tackle when they engage in the rendition of the words of God. Perhaps they are not aware that they take the role of an exegete in elucidating the Quran by making an active choice from among a number of alternative interpretations. This puts an extra burden on the translators to have strong grounding

not only in Arabic but also in the different fields associated with the exegetical annotation of the Quran. Translators need to be aware that they need to decide which meaning is intended when faced with polysemous words. One way to remedy the situation is to add a bracketed explanation or footnotes where the target readership is alerted to the existence of alternative denotations of the polysemic words.

To assume that readers do not hanker for ancillary details is incompatible with the undertaking of the translator of the Quran who has to be faithful to the target especially with texts of the highest magnitude. Having stated that, we find some scholars who make a distinction between an interpretation and a translation. For example, Al-Zurqānī (1943, vol. 2, pp. 114-117) argues that a translation of the Quran has to be succinct so that it is faithful to the origin while an interpretation can encompass supplementary material.

I hope this study is going to be a significant contribution to the area of Quranic translation. I also hope that it is going to be of benefit to both researchers and future translators of the Holy Quran. Based on the findings of this study, future translators should do their best to encompass all admissible interpretations of the Quran in which the context does not conclusively establish which sense is intended. This will increase the accuracy of the translation and render it more reflective of the Arabic text. In this way, prospective readers will better appreciate the linguistic richness of the Quran.

Moreover, it is essential to acknowledge that this paper is an attempt to shed light on the best practices and strategies in overcoming some linguistic sensitivities when transferring the word of God into English. It is quite discernible that adopting a communicative approach to Quran translation which prioritizes natural language over literal faithfulness will make the Arabic Quran shine through the target text. More specifically, we can see that proponents of the communicative approach such as Khattab (2015) demonstrate superior performance due to their emancipation from the close adherence to the literal rendition of Arabic structures. Adopting this strategy can help in maintaining the original message integrity which is a hallmark of accurate and respectful translation.

Finally, translating the word of God is a highly sensitive matter. The function of the translator is trying his best to examine the context in which the word of God is mentioned and carefully choose the target language equivalent(s) as God intends it to be understood. I hope my study is going to be instrumental in achieving this objective.

Bio

Dr. Majed Alturki is an Assistant Professor of translation at the Department of Translation, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where he teaches Translation Theories, Islamic Translation, Medical Translation, Legal Translation, Interpreting Studies and Localization. He holds a BA with first class honours in English Literature from King Saud University (Saudi Arabia), an MA in Linguistics from the University of York (UK) and a PhD in Translation from the University of Leeds (UK). His research interests revolve around translation theories and strategies with a particular focus on Islamic Translation.

References

Abdelrazq, Y. I. (2014). *Problems of translating homonymy in the glorious Quran: A comparative analytical study* (Unpublished thesis).

Abdul-Raof, H. (2004). The Quran: Limits of translatability. In S. Faiq (Ed.), *Cultural encounters in translation from Arabic* (pp. 91–106). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Abdul-Raof, H. (2013). *Qur'an translation: Discourse, texture and exegesis*. London: Routledge.

Ahmad, A. O. (2023). Translating polysems in the Noble Qur'an: A comparative morpho-semantic analysis of 21st-century translation. *Tasambo Journal of Language, Literature, and Culture, 11*, 11–21.

Al-Asfahani, A. (1983). *Almufradaat fi ghareeb Al-Quran* [A dictionary of uncommon words in the Quran]. Beirut: Dar Alqalam.

Alazmi, O. (2009). *Selected English translations of the Quran: A critical and analytical study from 1930–2001* (PhD thesis, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi). Riyadh: Altoobh Bookstore.

Al-Hilali, M. T., & Khan, M. M. (1996). *Translation of the meanings of the Noble Quran in the English language*. Madina: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Quran.

Ali, A. Y. (1983). *The Holy Quran: Text, translation, and commentary*. Maryland: Amana Corp.

Al-Qurtubi, M. (1973). *Aljam' li ahkam Al-Quran* [A complete guide to Quran exegesis]. Egypt: House of Egyptian Books.

Al-Suyuti, J. (1986). *Almuzhir fi uluum alughah wa anwa'aiha* [The flowery book in linguistics and types of languages]. Beirut: Dar Almanshurat Al-Asreeh.

Al-Suyuti, J. (1999). *Alitqan fi 'uloum Al-Quran* [The perfect guide to the sciences of the Quran]. Beirut: Dar Alkitab AlArabi.

Al-Tabari, M. (1978). *Jame' albayan di tafseer Al-Quran* [A comprehensive illustration of Quran exegesis]. Beirut: Dar Alm'refa Publishing House.

Al-Turki, M. (2021). *The translation of God's names in the Quran: A descriptive study* (PhD thesis, University of Leeds).

Al-Zeini, I. (2009). The translation of Quranic ambiguity: A linguistic contrastive study. *3rd International Conference on Translation and Arabization in Saudi Arabia, Saudi Association of Languages and Translation*, 33–57.

Al-Zurqānī, M. (1943). *Manahil al-irfan fi 'uluum Al-Quran* [Springs of knowledge in Quranic sciences]. Cairo: Eissa Alhalabi and His Associates' Printing House.

Arberry, A. J. (1980). *The Koran interpreted* (Vols. 1–2). London: George Allen & Unwin.

Asad, M. (1980). *The message of the Quran*. Gibraltar: Dar Al-Andalus.

Baker, M. (1992). *In other words: A coursebook on translation*. London: Routledge.

Crystal, D. (1964). A liturgical language in a linguistic perspective. *New Blackfriars, 46*(534), 148–156.

Crystal, D. (1980). *A first dictionary of linguistics and phonetics*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.

Dickins, J. (2011). *Thinking Arabic translation: A course in translation method: Arabic to English—Supplement*. Retrieved from http://www.leeds.ac.uk/arts/download/2212nisuptotat2010allnew3911pdf

Dickins, J., Hervey, S., & Higgins, I. (2002). *Thinking Arabic translation: A course in translation method*. London: Routledge.

Elewa, A. (2004). *Synonymy and lexical collocation in classical Arabic: A corpus-based study* (Unpublished thesis). University of Manchester, England.

Elewa, A. (2011). *The grammar of translation: A five-level course in the theory and practice of translation*. Cairo: New Vision Press.

Elewa, A. (2014). Features of translating religious texts. *Journal of Translation, 10*(1). Dallas: SIL International.

Elimam, A. (2017). Translating the Qur'an into English: Target readers' expectations. *SKASE Journal of Translation and Interpretation, 10*(1), 85–76.

El-Magazy, R. (2004). *An analytical study of translating the Quran: Comparative analysis of nine English translations of Surah Al-An'am* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Portsmouth.

Hasan, M. (2013). *Bridging the linguistic and cultural gap between Arabic and English: Polysemy and culture-specific expressions in Qur'ān translation* (PhD thesis, University of Leeds).

Holmes, J. (1988). The name and nature of translation studies. In *Translated! Papers on literary translation and translation studies*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Hurford, J., Heasley, B., & Smith, M. (2007). *Semantics: A coursebook*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ibn Kathir, I. (1970). *Tafseer Al-Quran alatheem* [The glorious Quran interpretation]. Beirut: Dar Alfikr Publishing House.

Kalakattawi, F. (2005). *Lexical relation with reference to polysemy in translation*. Jeddah: College of Education.

Kembaren, F. R. W., Daulay, E., Lubis, M. H., & Siregar, R. F. (2024). Translation of Arabic polysemy in the holy Quran: A comparative analysis. *Scope: Journal of English Language Teaching, 9*(1), 177–184.

Khattab, M. (2015). *The clear Quran: A thematic English translation*. Canada: Siraj Publications.

Leech, G. (1969). *A linguistic guide to English poetry*. London & New York: Longman.

Levy, J. (1967). Translation as a decision process. In *To honor Roman Jakobson*. The Hague: Mouton.

Nida, E., & Taber, C. (1982). *The theory and practice of translation* (Original work published 1969). Leiden: E. J. Brill.

Pickthall, M. (1969). *The meaning of the glorious Quran: An explanatory translation*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

Shuttleworth, M., & Cowie, M. (1997). *Dictionary of translation studies*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.

Toury, G. (1995). *Descriptive translation studies—and beyond*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Tuggy, D. (1993). Ambiguity, polysemy, and vagueness. *Cognitive Linguistics, 4*(3), 273−290.

Ullman, S. (1962). *Semantics: An introduction to the science of meaning*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Yule, G. (1987). *The study of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zgusta, L. (1971). *Manual of lexicography*. Prague: Academia Publishing House.

Strategies and Sensitivities in Arabic Subtitling of Taboos in Horror TV Series

Abdulrahman Ibrahim A Aljammaz

Shaqra University,
Shaqra, Saudi Arabia

aaljammaz@su.edu.sa
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8285-3896

_____

الملخص

تستكشف هذه الورقة الترجمة العربية للمحظورات (taboos) في مسلسلات الرعب التلفزيونية من خلال دراسة كيفية قيام المترجمين بالتنقل بين التوازن الدقيق والحفاظ على التأثير العاطفي المقصود لهذا النوع من اللغة والالتزام بالمحاذير الدينية والثقافية العربية المرتبطة بالجمهور الناطق باللغة العربية. تنفذ الدراسة تحليلًا نوعيًا لمجموعة مختارة من النصوص من مسلسلات الرعب التلفزيونية باللغة الإنجليزية (ST) والتي تمت ترجمتها إلى اللغة العربية (TT) من خلال كل من المترجمين التجاريين ومترجمي الإنترنت (الهواة). اعتمد الإطار التحليلي بشكل أساسي على مفهوم جيدون توري لتوضيح كيف يمكن أن تؤثر الاستراتيجيات/المناهج المختلفة على التأثير العاطفي للمحظورات في نقل النص. يساهم هذا البحث في فهم كيف يمكن أن تكون الوظيفة المقصودة من TT مختلفة عن تلك التي يقصدها ST، وهو جانب من جوانب "نظرية Skopos". تبحث الدراسة في هذه الأسئلة البحثية: كيف يتعامل المترجمون العرب مع ترجمة المحظورات في مسلسلات/أفلام الرعب التلفزيونية، مع الأخذ في الاعتبار الحساسيات الثقافية والدينية، وما هي الاستراتيجيات المستخدمة للحفاظ على التأثير العاطفي المقصود للمحرمات. أُخضعت المحظورات التي تم تحليلها لهذه المعايير: يجب أن تكون اللفظة صريحة في النص الأصلي وأن تستخدم كمحظور وليست لسد فجوة المحادثة؛ وليست هناك حاجة لتحليل كل مثال على كل محظور إذا كانت متشابهة في السياق أو الوظيفة. خلصت الدراسة إلى أن المترجمين التجاريين ومترجمي الإنترنت يميلون إلى استخدام العبارات الملطفة والحذف عند نقل معظم المحظورات الإنجليزية. وقد وجد أيضًا أن مترجمي الإنترنت كانوا في بعض الحالات أكثر شجاعة لأنهم يميلون إلى الحفاظ على التأثير العاطفي المقصود للترجمة النصية من خلال ترجمة المحظورات.

Strategies and Sensitivities in Arabic Subtitling of Taboos in Horror TV Series

Abdulrahman Ibrahim A Aljammaz

Shaqra University,
Shaqra, Saudi Arabia

aaljammaz@su.edu.sa
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8285-3896

_____

Abstract

This paper explores Arabic translation of taboos in horror TV series by examining how translators navigate the delicate balance between preserving the intended emotional impact of this type of language and adhering to religious and Arabic cultural norms associated with the Arabic-speaking audience. The study implements a qualitative analysis of a select corpus of texts from a horror TV series in English (ST) which has been translated into Arabic (TT) by both commercial subtitlers and cybersubtitlers. The analytical framework relied mainly on Toury's notion of norms to illustrate how different strategies/approaches may affect the emotional impact of taboos in TT. This research contributes to the understanding of how the function intended by the TT may be different from those intended by the ST, which is an aspect of 'Skopos theory'. The study investigates these research questions: 1) how do Arabic translators handle the translation of taboos in horror TV series/movies, considering cultural and religious sensitivities? 2) What strategies are employed to maintain the ST's intended emotional impact of taboos? The taboos in the analyzed corpus were subjected to these criteria: they must be explicit in the ST and used as a taboo and not a conversational gap filler; there is no need to analyze each example of each taboo if they are similar in context and function. It was found that commercial subtitlers and cybersubtitlers tend to use euphemisms and deletions when rendering most English taboos. It was also found that cybersubtitlers were, in some cases, more courageous as they tend to keep some of the ST's intended emotional impact by translating taboos.

Keywords: *Arabic, AVT, horror, subtitling, taboo*

_____

Introduction

Horror movies and TV series as a genre are renowned for their ability to evoke fear through the employment of profanity or taboo language as a tool to intensify emotional impact. However, cultural, linguistic, and religious nuances can considerably affect the use of profanity in translated works, making the implementation of an appropriate plan and/or method for translating swearing in horror films a sensitive task. This is particularly difficult when translating between a language pair that differs on numerous linguistic and cultural levels, like English and Arabic. This language pair is deemed 'distant', and these differences between Arabic and English, which stem from the languages' different histories and familial origins (Raheem et al., 2023), can pose challenges in translation, communication, and cultural understanding (Elhadary, 2023). Examining subtitling, an audiovisual translation (AVT) medium is known for its exceptional ability to handle delicate linguistic and cultural elements—particularly when it comes to culturally specific taboos in genres like horror—should be beneficial when concentrating on this language pair, English/Arabic.

Since taboos vary among cultures, what is taboo in for one culture may not be in the eyes of another. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) define taboo or swearwords as "expressions whose use is restricted or prohibited by social custom" (p. 181). From a linguistic perspective, Allan and Burridge (2006, p. 1) include as taboo:

> bodies and their effluvia (sweat, snot, faeces, menstrual fluid, etc.); the organs and acts of sex, micturition and defecation; diseases, death and killing (including hunting and fishing); naming, addressing, touching and viewing persons and sacred beings, objects and places; food gathering, preparation and consumption.

Yule (2014) described taboo words as words and phrases that people in society use inappropriately.

For Arabic speakers, taboo refers to language, topics, or issues that are (a) prohibited, stigmatized, or forbidden, (b) related to social or religious teachings, or (c) considered offensive (Abi-Esber, 2017; Alsharhan, 2020; Khalaf & Rashid, 2016, 2019). Within the context of subtitling, taboo language is sensitive because subtitling as an AVT medium involves migration from verbal to written form. This is because of a belief that taboo's impact "…is more offensive when written than when verbalized, which in turn tends to lead to the systematic deletion and down-toning of most 'effing and blinding' in the subtitles." (Díaz-Cintas, 2013, p. 278). In Arab culture, jokes with sexual associations, or taboos, that are commonly used in Western productions are not favored on screens (Alharthi, 2016) due to the aforementioned shift a subtitled taboo naturally undertakes from spoken to written language. For the purposes of uniformity, from this point, this study shall adopt the term 'taboos' as encompassing swearwords, profane, or blasphemous references.

Furthermore, this study adopts and advocates for the term cybersubtitling instead of the more prominent but flawed terms: amateur subtitles, fansubs, or crowdsourced subtitles. Díaz-Cintas (2018) asserts that the term cybersubtitles includes the different varieties of subtitles online in a transparent way and these cybersubtitles may be requested, crowdsourced for example, or produced voluntarily. Moreover, individuals who produce cybersubtitles can be

either amateurs or professionals. What is referred to here as cybersubtitling belongs to the wider AVT family that includes many forms of AVTs such as dubbing, subtitling, scripting, and closed captioning (Díaz-Cintas, 2018), but the focus here shall remain on the subtitling domain.

As a term, cybersubtitling is certainly not the exclusive term used by AVT scholars; however, it is used here because it best employs reference to the web as opposed to, for example, presumptions about the skill of the subtitlers (Aljammaz, 2022). Díaz-Cintas (2018, p. 129) describes cybersubtitling as "…subtitling on the web…", which explains the inclusion of the word *cyber* to refer to the digital space of the internet. In contrast to other terms that assume the goals behind their generation, like volunteer subtitling or fansubbing, or terms that assume non-professionalism, like amateur subtitling, using the term "cyber" to refer to the internet thus links the subtitles to the location where they are created and consumed. Therefore, the term cybersubtitling is a much-appreciated deviation from other terms that are based on, incorporate, or suggest complex concepts such as professionalism, quality, or volunteerism all of which do not have an undisputed definition. In addition to its straightforward definition, cybersubtitles is a broad term to includes different types of subtitles that are all found on the internet, including 1) fansubs, 2) guerrilla subtitles, and 3) altruist subtitles (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2021).

Alternatively, this study uses the term commercial subtitles to refer to subtitles produced or commissioned through a subtitling agency, TV network, or media streaming service (e.g., Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+, etc.) with permission of the copyright holder(s). Such subtitles are intended for commercial use; however, the commercial facet in the adopted term refers to the environment and purpose for which these types of subtitles are produced and not the assertion that those who produced them received a monetary reward. This is based on the argument that some cybersubtitles may also receive payment to cybersubtitle as proven by previous research (e.g., Orrego-Carmona, 2015; Sajna, 2013). The term commercial subtitling evades implying that the producers of these subtitles as 'professionals', because it is a difficult criterion to measure as argued earlier.

To address these gaps, this study explores the following research questions: 1) how do Arabic translators handle the translation of taboos in horror TV series/movies, considering cultural and religious sensitivities? 2) what strategies are employed to maintain the ST's intended emotional impact of taboos?

Literature Review

For the past 20 years or so, AVT has been one of the most research-attracting areas of study in the field of TS, if not the most researched one (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2021). Subtitling has been, and remains, the focal point of this interest, as it is considered one of the most significant modes of AVT (cf. Bogucki, 2020; Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2021; Dwyer, 2017; Pedersen, 2017). Translating taboos is challenging in written forms of translation and the challenge is increased in subtitling. In addition to the nature of subtitling having spatial and textual constraints (Gottlieb, 1994) specifically, textual challenges in the form of dealing with culture-specific items (CSIs) (Pedersen, 2005, 2011; Zojer, 2011) including, taboos.

Pedersen's (2005, 2011) pivotal work on the classification of subtitling strategies for CSIs addressed the translation problem of CSIs, and taboos, for the subtitling medium. Pederson

proposed a model for subtitling strategies when dealing with CSIs. Pedersen's model includes retention, specification, direct translation, generalization, substitution, omission, or the use of 'official equivalent' (2005). Pedersen also investigated the constraints that may influence a subtitler's choice of strategy and suggested a few medium-specific constraints and paratextual considerations.

Subtitling, unlike other forms of written translation, does not provide easily accessible resolutions for terms that are difficult to translate. In his investigation, Zojer (2011) claims that written forms of translation benefit from the use of footnotes, glosses, and other translation strategies that help explain some taboos whereas in subtitling, such methods are not offered (Zojer, 2011). Furthermore, Zojer (2011, p. 400) postulates that "due to the enormous restrictions involved in the subtitling process and the shortened and often radically changed outcome, the status of subtitling as a 'proper' translation has not yet been universally accepted."

As for research within the scope of the English/Arabic language pair, earlier studies show varying approaches and strategies in the translation of taboos into Arabic but generally confirm that they are often toned down in Arabic commercial subtitles using authorization, or even deletion if space is limited. In their findings, Khalaf and Rashid's (2016) reported that the most common strategies used to alleviate swearwords' obscenity are deletion, change of semantic fields, register shift and the use of archaic words, euphemistic expressions, generalization and linguistic substitution, and ambiguity.

But more significantly, they observed that cybersubtitlers are "… abiding by norms in the target culture" (Khalaf & Rashid, 2016, p. 303). Abdelaal (2019) found that for commercial subtitlers and cybersubtitlers, translation by using euphemisms in the target text (TT) is common because people tend not to talk discuss, watch, or listen to sex-related media explicitly. This finding coincides with the aforementioned Arabic speakers' norm of opposing taboos when they appear on screens in writing. Khalaf and Rashid's and Abdelaal's studies, although valuable in their contribution, still require further investigation with specific consideration to the context of the AVT and/or genre of the production in question.

Similarly, Alharthi (2016) observed that paraphrasing, euphemizing, and generalizing are the most prevalent strategies used in the Arabic commercial subtitling for the American sitcom Seinfeld (David & Seinfeld, 1989–1998) with regards to humorous texts. Alharthi states that these strategies and approaches were implemented because humor in Seinfeld contains cultural references and linguistic nuances that are challenging to translate due to the differences between the source and target language from a cultural and linguistic point of view. Alsharhan (2020) investigated Netflix's no-censorship policy and found that many of the examined taboo instances were still euphemized despite Netflix's policy. Alharthi and Alsharhan's works further emphasize the need to extend the scope of investigation for taboos, which is what the current paper intends to achieve.

Consequently, taboo language in general and within certain texts in particular always requires special attention from the translator (Al-Yasin & Rabab'ah, 2019; Alsharhan, 2020; Khakshour Forutan & Modarresi, 2018) and possibly a different approach compared to that used for the translation of non-sensitive language. It is therefore intriguing to examine the translational approaches and/or methods and their possible impact on the resulting TT.

This paper investigates the intriguing phenomenon of Arabic horror translations of taboos, examining how translators navigate the delicate balance between preserving the intended emotional impact of this type of language and adhering to Islamic and Arabic cultural norms associated with the Arabic-speaking audience. This research contributes to the broader knowledge of translation theory, particularly in the context of culturally specific taboos in genres like horror. It also offers insights into the challenges faced and strategies employed by translators working with culturally divergent texts.

Methods

The study adopts a qualitative analysis of a select corpus of texts as a textual analysis of selected texts from a horror TV series in English (ST) translated into Arabic (TT) by both commercial and cyber subtitlers. The analysis will include a ST/TT comparison of commercial and cybersubtitlers' work using descriptive translation studies (DTS) (Toury, 1995) approach. This involves examining the translation of horror TV series/ movies, focusing on From (Griffin, 2022–Present), a TV series on Netflix's weekly top ten lists of the most watched TV and films in countries around the world (more on the ST shortly).

The analysis may resort to comparing translations made by Arabic cybersubtitlers and Arabic commercial subtitlers relying on Toury's notion of norms (1980, 1995) to illustrate how different strategies/approaches may affect the emotional impact of taboos in the TT. The aim is to respond to the study's research questions which investigate Arabic translators' translation of taboos in horror films and the strategies they employ to maintain the intended emotional impact of taboos. Answering these inquiries will contribute to the understanding of how the function intended by the TT may be different from those intended by the ST (Nord, 2016), which is an aspect of 'Skopos theory' (Vermeer, 1978).

Skopos theory first appeared in an article published by linguist Hans Josef Vermeer (1978) and suggests that it is the skopos (Greek for "purpose") of the translation process that informs the translator's choice of strategy: either to keep to the ST's form and style and 'document' any one of the ST features or characteristics, such as language, style, norms, genre conventions, worldview, etc. or to make the TT work as a functional communication medium that relies on the audience's knowledge presuppositions, their needs and expectations regarding language, style, norms, conventions, worldview, etc.

Keeping the data manageable is extremely important to a study like ours as it deals with very specific language and a technical AVT that requires attention to detail. Along these lines, this is why Díaz-Cintas describes how some studies adopting a descriptive approach to AVT are ostentatious as they try to analyze corpora of texts that are too vast (2004). As a result, the current study focuses on horror as a form of challenging content to keep the scope manageable, relevant, and concise. Furthermore, the choice of ST to be analyzed is deliberately kept precise as this allows further analysis of the nuances of translation and language rather than a massive general account of a translation.

From (Griffin, 2022–Present)

Following Díaz-Cintas' previously mentioned suggestion about keeping the text corpus manageable, a total of ten episodes comprising the complete first season of *From* (Griffin, 2022–

Present) were chosen to be analyzed for the textual analysis. The episode is from a show called *From* (Griffin, 2022–Present), an American science fiction horror TV series. The series reveals the mystery of a frightening town in Middle America that confines all those who enter. It follows the lives of the residents who endeavor to survive terrifying creatures and hidden secrets that appear at night from the surrounding forest. The reasons behind choosing this particular audiovisual content as a ST for the textual analysis are: a) it is recent, allowing a fresh perspective into the analysis instead of including outdated content that may reveal outdated approaches to translating taboos; b) according to Netflix's weekly top ten lists of the most watched TV and films, *From* (Griffin, 2022–Present) is on the list for Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, and Saudi Arabia and has remained on the list for at least twenty weeks; c) the show suits the current study's investigation being a horror genre; and d) the show has ample examples of taboos involving both cultural and religious sensitivities following a survey of the show's English script.

A total of ten episodes comprising the complete first season of *From* (Griffin, 2022–Present) were analyzed and several examples were chosen from these episodes to handle a manageable body of data. Taboos from these episodes were identified for the textual analysis becoming the scope of the analysis. This resulted in a total of 184 cases of taboos (see **Error! Reference source not found.** below). Due to our study's qualitative design, it is not possible to include the analysis of all these taboos. This led to the need for inclusion and exclusion criteria. The analyzed taboos must be explicit in the ST and used as a taboo word instead of a remark or a conversational gap filler. Additionally, if several examples of the same taboo word were used and translated in similar contexts, then there is no need to analyze each case. Finally, instances were chosen based on their relativity to the current study's aims.

Each episode was subjected to a word-by-word search to identify a list of predetermined taboos. These taboos include these words: *fuck*, *shit*, *ass*, and *damn*. These were chosen because they have sexual, blasphemous, or offensive connotations/denotations for Arabic and English speakers too. These words are regarded as taboo if translated literally into Arabic in certain contexts because they revolve around topics such as religious blasphemy or swearing. As mentioned earlier, for Arabs, jokes with sexual associations are not favored on screens due to the shift a subtitled taboo goes through from spoken to written language.

Analysis and Discussion

In this section, several examples of translated taboos are presented and analyzed. Taboo as a theme for my textual analysis includes a list of five taboo words mentioned earlier. Subtitling taboos in a certain way may entail a risk of societal condemnation of the commercial subtitler or cybersubtitler, especially if such taboos go against the viewers' beliefs. The upcoming examples reveal how translators negotiate these obstacles and address the current study's first research question, how do Arabic translators handle the translation of taboos in the horror genre, considering cultural and religious sensitivities? The textual examples also help in answering the second research question, what strategies are employed to maintain the ST's intended emotional impact of taboos?

Following a word-by-word search of all ten episodes of the first season of the horror TV series From (Griffin, 2022–Present), several taboo instances were identified (see Table 1 below).

Table 1

Total Taboos in the First Season of the TV Series "From" (2022–Present)

Taboo	Rate of occurrence
Fuck (or variants)	130
shit	28
Damn (or variants)	21
Ass (or variants)	5
Fuck (or variants)	130
Total	184

Further analysis followed and more than a dozen examples were chosen to be presented in the analysis here. The main criterion for inclusion and exclusion is avoiding repetition of the same taboo word that was used in a similar ST context and eventually translated similarly in all TT versions. Taboos were then examined and categorized according to their type and, more importantly, their translation and intended message were analyzed.

The following examples illustrate instances of taboos commercially subtitled and cybersubtitled. The examples include these taboos or a version of them: fuck, shit, ass, and damn. As previously mentioned, these taboos have sexual, blasphemous, or offensive connotations/denotations for Arabic and English speakers too. They are regarded as taboo if translated literally or to their formal Arabic equivalence in certain contexts because they revolve around topics such as religious blasphemy or swearing. Formal equivalence is described as a word-for-word translation that describes the translation of words and phrases in a literal way (Nida & Taber, 1969).

Table 2

Taboo Example 'fuck'

Context	One of the characters in the show wakes up another because they want to leave before dark.			
ST (episode 1) (00:05:02)	**Comsub. 1**	**Comsub. 2**	**Cybersub. 1**	**Cybersub. 2**
Frank! Get the fuck up!	"فرانك"! انهض!	(فرانك)، استيقظ	فرانك! **عليك اللعنة!**	(فرانك)، إستيّقظ
Back translation of taboo(s)	"deleted"	"deleted"	Curse you/damn you	"deleted"

Table 2 is an interesting example of the various approaches to translating the taboo English word 'fuck'. All subtitled versions but one chose to delete the taboo following the Arabic commercial subtitling norm for such a word. As for Cybersub. 1, they have adopted the substitution method to possibly tone down the obscenity and taboo's reference to vulgar connotations by replacing it with a taboo that has different and possibly less offensive connotations to Arabic speakers. Rendering the taboo ST to an Arabic equivalent that relates to 'curse' or 'damn' is viewed as a way of preserving the ST's intended message of conveying the

emotion of frustration, which is an emotion that is conserved in the Arabic version by Cybersub. 1.

A taboo carrying both cultural and religious sensitivities, 'fuck' and its variants are rarely translated in a way that delivers that word's English connotations. Particularly, only when it is translated to its formal equivalence which is labeled as word-for-word translation, that the taboo 'fuck' has a TT emotional impact that resembles that of the ST. The ST taboo 'fuck' and its variants are usually toned downed when translated into Arabic as reported by Alharthi (2016). Alharthi claims that the word 'fuck' is often subtitled in this way by most subtitlers:

Table 3

Total Taboos in the First Season of the TV Series "From" (2022–Present)

Taboo word	Arabic commercial equivalent (commercial norm)	Back translation of Arabic commercial equivalent	Approach
Fuck (sexual act)	يضاجع	To sleep with	Euphemism
Fuck you (insult)	تبأ لك	Could be 'damn', 'hell', or 'curse'	Euphemism
Fucking (Adjective)	لعين	Damn	Substitution

It is therefore refreshing that the Cybersub. 1 from Table 2 has attempted to keep some of the taboo's connotations and did not choose to use the most severe tone-down approach, deletion. Deletion would have severely altered the ST's intended message and, more importantly, its emotional effect on the viewer. In an ideal world, the taboo 'fuck' should have been translated into Arabic in a literal way, formal equivalence, that would have kept its ST's intended emotional impact but at least in our example from Table 2 some of its effect is preserved.

Table 4

Taboo Example 'fuck'

Context	One character is urging the other to hurry up and not be late.			
ST (episode 1) (00:05:16)	**Comsub. 1**	**Comsub. 2**	**Cybersub. 1**	**Cybersub. 2**
You nail the motherfucking windows shut, Frank!	تبًا. ستقتلك "لورين".	ستقتلك تبأ (لورين)	أوه ، اللعنة. سيقتلك لورين.	ستقتلك اللعنة (لورين)
Back translation of taboo(s)	Damn/hell/ curse	Damn/hell/ curse	Curse/damn	Curse/damn

Table 4 is another example of the taboo English word 'fuck'. In this example, however, all subtitles show an attempt to translate the taboo word and not omit it entirely as seen in the previous example. In this example, both commercial subtitlers have euphemized the taboo whereas both cybersubtitlers substituted the taboo word with another. It seems that both approaches have retained the intended ST message but the cybersubtitled versions have kept most of the ST's connotations in a less toned-down version compared to the commercial subtitlers.

Table 5

Taboo Example 'fuck'

Context	After realizing that Frank did not properly close the windows, another character is blaming him for that.			
ST (episode 1) (00:12:44)	**Comsub. 1**	**Comsub. 2**	**Cybersub. 1**	**Cybersub. 2**
You nail the motherfucking windows shut, Frank!	عليك إغلاق النوافذ **اللعينة** بالمسامير يا "فرانك"!	عليك أن تغلق النوافذ بالمسامير تغلق النوافذ بالمسامير **اللعينة** يا (فرانك)	علّيك أن تُغلق النوافذ بالمسامير تُغلق النوافذ **اللعينة** بالمسامير يا (فرانك)	عليكم أن تغلقوا النافذة بالمسامير أنت تغلق النافذة **اللعينة** بالمسامير يا فرانك!
Back translation of taboo(s)	Cursed/ demand	Cursed/ demand	Cursed/ demand	Cursed/ demand

Table 5 illustrates a similar example to what has been done in rendering the ST word 'fuck' as in the previous example from Table 4. Here the taboo word is a different variation and serves a different function. The ST word 'motherfucking' was used here as an adjective to express frustration and anger. Despite this variation, it seems that all translations followed the subtitling norm (Table 3) when it comes to the variants of the taboo 'fuck', and they all euphemized it in this example. All translators appear to agree that euphemism is the best approach in this case as opposed to translating the taboos literally, which would have conveyed the most emotional effect in the TT. This may stem from the view that the ST taboo here is serving as an adjective that describes a noun and should be rendered as so, albeit with a euphemized one.

Table 6

Taboo Example 'fuck'

Context	The characters are discussing a past incidence involving a child.			
ST (episode 3) (00:22:53)	**Comsub. 1**	**Comsub. 2**	**Cybersub. 1**	**Cybersub. 2**
- Holy fuck.	- يا للهول.	يا للهول	اللعنة	يا إلهي
Back translation of taboo(s)	Oh my	Oh my	Cursed/ demand	Oh my God

Table 6 shows an example where the taboo word 'fuck' was euphemized severely in all versions except one. Although Cybersub. 1's version was euphemized; it still showed an attempt to preserve the emotional impact of the ST.

Table 7

Taboo Example 'asshole'

Context	The characters are discussing a past incidence involving a child.			
ST (episode 1) **(00:45:31)** That asshole handcuffed to the car gives you any trouble, you cut him loose.	**Comsub. 1** إن تسبب لك ذلك **السافل** المقيد بالسيارة بأي مشكلات، فأطلق سراحه.	**Comsub. 2** إذا سبب لك ذلك المقيد **الوغد** بالسيارة أي مشاكل فيمكنك إطلاق سراحه	**Cybersub. 1** هذا **الأحمق** المقيّد إذا سبب للسيارة لك أي مشكلة قم بتقطيعه	**Cybersub. 2** إذا سبب لك ذلك المقيد **الوغد** بالسيارة أي مشاكل فيمكنك اطلاق سراحه
Back translation of taboo(s)	bastard/ scoundrel	bastard/ scoundrel	idiot	bastard/ scoundrel

The analysis moves on to another taboo, 'ass', and its variants. Table 7 demonstrates an instance where the translation euphemizes the ST taboo word 'asshole' and consequently alters the ST's message. The ST word 'asshole' was toned down in all versions of the Arabic translation in varying degrees.

Table 8

Taboo Example 'asshole'

Context	One character explains how his sister shot one of the creatures.			
ST (episode 2) **(00:29:29)** She never did have much patience for assholes.	**Comsub. 1** ظننت أن أختي كانت ستصدم ذلك **اللعين**.	**Comsub. 2** ظننت بأن أختي ستدهس **البائس**	**Cybersub. 1** ظننت أن أختي ستدوس فوق **ابن العاهرة**.	**Cybersub. 2** ظننت بأن أختي ستدهس **اللعين**
Back translation of taboo(s)	Cursed/ demand	The miserable	Son of a bitch	Cursed/ demand

Similar to Table 7, this is an example of the translation of the taboo word 'asshole'. Like the previous example, most versions were toned down except for Cybersub. 1 where they opted for a more derogatory TT compared to the others. For both examples from Table 7 and Table 8, it is difficult to measure which Arabic equivalent out of the above translations is more, or less, offensive or closer to the intended message. Still, it is noticeable that all versions have euphemized the culturally sensitive ST taboo.

Table 9

Taboo Example 'shit'

Context	As the characters drive, they are surprised by a tree in the middle of the road.			
ST (episode 1) (00:15:19) Shit.	**Comsub. 1** تبًّا	**Comsub. 2** بئسَا	**Cybersub. 1** اللعنة	**Cybersub. 2** تبًّا
Back translation of taboo(s)	Shame/ misery /curse	Shame/ misery /curse	Curse/damn	Shame/ misery /curse

As for the taboo 'shit', it seems that euphemism is a favorite choice as is the case with the previous examples. Table 9 illustrates an example of how the ST taboo word 'shit' was rendered in a similar euphemistic approach in all versions but in varying degrees. The version that stands out is Cybersub. 1's version as they used the Arabic equivalent اللعنة (English: curse/damn) which despite being euphemistic, still carries more taboo connotations than other TTs. The Arabic equivalent اللعنة moves away from the literal meaning associated with the ST taboo 'shit', which links the word to excrement or feces to a different taboo but remains a taboo, nonetheless. Cybersub. 1's translation remains within the realm of taboo by introducing the notion of cursing and/or damning, which is a religious taboo in itself to most Arabic speakers especially when it is noted that Arabs are largely Muslims (Khalil, 2013).

Table 10

Taboo Example 'shit'

Context	This is one of the characters reactions as they drive there vehicle over a spike strip.			
ST (episode 1) (00:49:08) Shit! Shit! Shit, shit, shit.	**Comsub. 1** تبًّا.	**Comsub. 2** بئسَا، بئسَا، بئسَا	**Cybersub. 1** اللعنة! اللعنة! تبأ ، تبأ ، تبأ ، تبأ ، تبأ ، تبأ.	**Cybersub. 2** سحقًّ! سحقًّ! سحقًّ، سحقًّ
Back translation of taboo(s)	Shame/ misery /curse	Shame/ misery	Curse/damn and Shame/ misery /curse	Damn/hell/ curse

This is another example of the previous ST taboo. In Table 10 the ST taboo 'shit' was translated following the subtitling Arabic norm to euphemize such taboo by all of the translations analyzed. As seen in Table 9, the ST taboo in the current example was not translated literally to its Arabic formal equivalence and is toned down. What is different about this example is that the ST taboo is repeated for maximum emotional impact, which is a feature that is important to convey in the translation. Despite the importance of repetition in this example, Comsub. 1 did not convey this linguistic feature, adding a further layer to the toning-down approach they adopted. Neglecting such an important linguistic feature enhanced the intensity

of the euphemism approach and further moved the TT's emotional impact away from the ST's intended one.

Table 11

Taboo Example 'damn'

Context	This is one of the characters' remarks as they try to cover and hide their vehicle.			
ST (episode 1) **(00:31:35)**	**Comsub. 1**	**Comsub. 2**	**Cybersub. 1**	**Cybersub. 2**
Last thing we need is a goddamn RV barreling through town.	لسنا نريد حافلة حفلات تسير في بسرعة عالية البلدة.	آخر شيء نريده هو مركبة ترفيهية تنطلق بسرعة عبر البلدة.	آخر شيء نحتاجه هو عربة سكن متنقلة **ملعونة** تتنقل عبر المدينة.	آخر شيء نريده هو مركبة ترفيهية تنطلق بسرعة عبر البلدة
Back translation of taboo(s)	"deleted"	"deleted"	Curse/damn	"deleted"

In a more religious sensitivity, the current example analyzes the taboo 'damn' and, more particularly, its severely religiously problematic version 'goddamn'. Table 11 demonstrates how the ST taboo 'goddamn' was translated in a similar euphemizing fashion as seen in all analyzed previous taboo examples. As is the case in previous instances, it is noticed that the norm is to either adopt euphemisms or deletion by most translators to Arabic as they render English cultural and religious taboos. According to Al-Adwan (2009) (as cited in Eldalees et al., 2017), deletion as a severe form of euphemizing is one of the persistent trends in subtitling English films and sitcoms into Arabic. It is however noticeable that cybersubtitlers seem to challenge such a norm and proceed to render the ST taboo in a less euphemistic sense. Specifically, Cybersub. 1's translation form Table 11 shows how they challenged the norm and did not shy away from the ST's religious tabooness. This is seen as yet another example of cybersubtitlers attempting to retain the ST's intended emotional impact of taboos.

Table 12

Taboo Example 'damn'

Context	One character agrees with another about being smart.			
ST (episode 5) **(00:21:44)**	**Comsub. 1**	**Comsub. 2**	**Cybersub. 1**	**Cybersub. 2**
You're goddamn right I am.	أنت محق تمامًا.	أنت محق تمامًا.	أنت محق تمامًا.	أنت محق تمامًا.
Back translation of taboo(s)	"deleted"	"deleted"	"deleted"	"deleted"

In this instance, the religious taboo word was euphemized to the extreme and was deleted completely. Both Tables 11 and 12 depict an instance of severe euphemism, indicating that for commercial subtitlers and cybersubtitlers religious taboo is the limit and it is usually either toned down or not translated completely.

Discussion

The study set out to respond to two research questions. First, how do Arabic translators handle the translation of taboos in the horror genre, considering cultural and religious sensitivities? Second, what strategies are employed to maintain the ST's intended emotional impact of taboos?

In answering the first question, the analysis shows that most taboos, whether of religious or cultural persuasion, are translated using an approach that tones down their tabooness. Euphemizing taboos is the method of choice found in the examined subtitles of the horror TV series, and this follows the subtitling norm as seen in Table 3. However, it's noteworthy to point out that in certain instances, as shown in Tables 8 and 10, the translation deviates from this standard, finally preserving certain elements of the banned term. Subtitling taboos by challenging subtitling and untimely societal norms in a certain way may entail a risk of societal condemnation of the subtitler, especially if such religious language or content goes against the viewers' beliefs.

Looking at Tables 4 and 5, they demonstrate that opting to render the ST taboo 'fuck' or its variants into an Arabic taboo related to the notion of damning, cursing, or hell is an obvious form of euphemism that alters the emotional impact of the ST's taboo. Describing something as 'fucking' is not as similar as describing it as 'damned'. There is a sexual taboo that seems to influence social and/or subtitling norms around subtitling the word 'fuck' and its variants. But for the TT taboo لعين (English: damned) there seems to be a different kind of taboo that is of less severity and therefore less emotional effect. Nonetheless, the TT taboo لعين still carries negative religious connotations and disregard for Islamic teachings, especially when it is noted that 'Arabs are mostly Muslims' (Khalil, 2013). Considering that the analyzed examples were produced by individuals who come from different educational, geographical, and professional backgrounds, their translational choices regarding religious terminology seem to be conditioned by their different individual dispositions rather than normative expectations, which are the norms anticipated by the audience.

In general, the textual analysis illustrates that taboos represent a challenge either due to subtitling or social norms and this is evident in how cybersubtitlers and commercial subtitlers deal with taboo language that has blasphemous or immoral references which may not be favorable to an Arabic-speaking viewer. Subtitling such content in a certain way may entail a risk of societal condemnation of the subtitler, especially if such language goes against the viewers' beliefs. The analyzed examples demonstrate how translators negotiate power relations and agency and also demonstrate how translators/translations influence target societies' evolvement (Williams & Chesterman, 2002) by producing TTs that may cause societal condemnation or risk to the translators in the way taboo language is subtitled.

The textual analysis also shows that cybersubtitlers are more willing to challenge Arabic subtitling norms compared to commercial subtitlers. This is demonstrated in instances where cybersubtitle examples maintained the English tabooness in Arabic while being more closely aligned with the ST's intended message. Norms are important in the field of Arabic subtitling, as demonstrated by earlier studies (e.g., Alharthi, 2016; Khalaf & Rashid, 2016). The current

textual analysis supports this finding when it comes to subtitling forbidden languages in the Arab world.

According to Toury (1995, p. 55), the concept of norms indicates "what is prescribed and forbidden as well as what is tolerated and permitted in a certain behavioral dimension". Although it might be difficult to determine overarching subtitling norms for taboos that can be applied throughout the Arab World, it can nevertheless be claimed that commercial subtitlers, when translating taboos related to swearwords and sex-related content, use an expression that is more euphemistic in the TT, while some cybersubtitlers do not necessarily adhere to this.

As for the second research question which deals with strategies employed to maintain the ST's intended emotional impact of taboos, the textual analysis reveals varying results. The previous examples of translations of taboos show that euphemism and deletion are frequently used when dealing with English religious and cultural taboos. When examining all the examples together, it is evident that in nearly every instance, avoiding translating taboos is preferred over maintaining the ST's intended emotional impact. However, some cybersubtitlers have challenged this norm of adopting euphemism and deletion by actively translating taboos, which resulted in a translation that keeps, at least to a certain degree, the ST's intended emotional impact that is necessary for a horror genre.

In the case of a TV series that belongs to the horror genre, the intended emotional impact of taboos is vital. The analysis demonstrates that a subtitling/cybersubtitling of taboos analyses the Skopos (Vermeer, 1978) or function of this delicate type of language and not just equivalence (Nida & Taber, 1969) at the word level. Having the function of the translation in mind, the textual analysis shows that the function of the translation as a horror text influences the emotional impact of the TT. As seen from the analyzed examples, when the function of the text is to insult, scare, or agitate the viewer using taboos, the TT should at least try to imitate such emotions.

As claimed by Cronin (2012), when viewers become subtitlers, they challenge previously held assumptions about translations being produced by agents to be consumed by an audience, and this also applies to forms of translation beyond AVT. Once a viewer becomes a prosumer, the notion of "target audience" changes: the translator no longer generates a target-oriented translation for an audience – the target audience instead produces their own "self-representation" (Cronin, 2012), and we believe that this is what is happening in the analyzed cybersubtitles. This is another vital aspect of Arabic cybersubtitling that warrants further investigation and ideally should include the cybersubtitlers themselves to get their input on the reasoning behind translational decisions. Self-representation is made possible by embracing a different view of agency and the empowering potential of translation as a mode of "personal expression" (Dwyer, 2012). Personal expression, self-representation, and/or agency are evident when both commercial subtitlers and cybersubtitlers defy conventionally agreed-upon norms of taboos from horror productions, as we have illustrated earlier.

In conclusion, it was found that all instances of Arabic translations of English taboos tended to tone down the examples of taboos analyzed in the current study by resorting to approaches such as euphemism or in severe cases, deletion. As mentioned earlier, English taboos are considered taboos when translated into their formal equivalent in Arabic. In other

words, English taboos have optimum emotional effects in Arabic if translated in a word-for-word approach. In our textual analysis, such an approach was not used in any of the examined translations. It was found in most analyzed instances of English taboos that commercial subtitlers tend to flatten religious and cultural taboos when rendering them into Arabic, which is a finding that correlates to previous research on the Arabic rendering of English taboos.

The case for cybersubtitlers is similar but they use less severe forms of euphemism as illustrated in the analysis. This suggests that cybersubtitlers are more courageous when it comes to translating ST taboos and this is interesting because it demonstrates a form of preserving the ST's intended emotional effect of taboos. This finding establishes that some Arabic cybersubtitlers are indeed challenging negotiated public narratives by breaking subtitling norms. This practice is a form of 'social agency' (Pérez-González, 2017), a practice that could be linked to frustration with commercial subtitling's handling of taboos or with how social norms dictate how certain language elements "must" be translated (Aljammaz, 2022), which is an interesting observation to report.

Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to answer two research questions asking about how Arabic translators handle the translation of taboos in the horror genre, considering cultural and religious sensitivities. It also intended to know what strategies are employed to maintain the ST's intended emotional impact of taboos. Despite an obvious lack of research on Arabic language subtitling (Abdelaal, 2019; Alharthi, 2016; Furgani, 2016; Khalaf & Rashid, 2016), previous studies show that taboos tend to be flattened by Arabic cybersubtitlers.

The study's findings are consistent with those of other studies that claim that taboos are usually euphemized or deleted when subtitled into Arabic (e.g., Alharthi, 2016; Khalaf & Rashid, 2016). Interestingly, our findings also show instances where cybersubtitlers go against the norm and do translate and therefore preserve some of the ST's intended emotional impact, which is a practice that has been proven about cybersubtitlers in previous studies (e.g., Aljammaz, 2023; Massidda, 2015).

This study has a few limitations, one of which is that it focuses on the English/Arabic language pair, limiting its scope. Another limitation is the lack of input from the commercial subtitlers and cybersubtitlers in question which could have contributed valuably to inquiries around the translation process and the reasoning behind adopting a translation method/approach over another.

Despite these limitations, our findings contribute to the broader knowledge of translation theory, particularly in the context of culturally specific taboos in genres like horror. They also offer insights into the challenges faced and strategies employed by translators working with culturally divergent texts. The findings of this research may have implications for the development of more effective translation strategies and approaches and ultimately develop guidelines for Arabic taboo translation. The study's methodology could be adapted to be used on larger-scale inquiries of a similar aim or on different genres such as taboos in humorous productions or expanding the idea of studying taboos within other language pairs.

Bio

Dr. Abdulrahman Ibrahim A. Aljammaz is an Assistant Professor of languages and translation studies at the University of Shaqra. He holds a master's degree in applied linguistics and a PhD in translation studies from Monash University, Australia. He worked, trained, and is certified as a translator/interpreter. Abdulrahman currently teaches subjects relating to linguistics, applied linguistics, language skills, and translation theory/practice. His research interests include translation studies, audiovisual translation, and the motivation behind translation. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8285-3896

References

Abdelaal, N. M. (2019). Subtitling of culture-bound terms: Strategies and quality assessment. *Heliyon, 5*(4), e01411. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2019.e01411

Abi-Esber, F. (2017). *Understanding the linguistic and cultural taboos of Lebanese Arabic speakers in Australia* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Western Sydney University. https://researchdirect.westernsydney.edu.au/islandora/object/uws:45571

Al-Yasin, N. F., & Rabab'ah, G. A. (2019). Arabic audiovisual translation of taboo words in American hip hop movies: A contrastive study. *Babel, 65*(2), 222–248. https://doi.org/10.1075/babel.00090.aly

Alharthi, A. (2016). *Challenges and strategies of subtitling humour: A case study of the American sitcom Seinfeld, with particular reference to English and Arabic* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Salford. http://usir.salford.ac.uk/40460/

Aljammaz, A. I. (2023). Unproclaimed motivation: A sociological analysis of interventionalist practices against censorship in non-professional Arabic subtitling. *Journal of Audiovisual Translation, 6*(1), 45–63. https://doi.org/10.47476/jat.v6i1.2023.198

Aljammaz, A. I. A. (2022). *Arabic cybersubtitling motivation: An exploration of translator and practice* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Monash University. https://bridges.monash.edu/articles/thesis/Arabic_Cybersubtitling_Motivation_An_Exploration_of_Translator_and_Practice/20438115?file=36565284

Allan, K., & Burridge, K. (2006). *Forbidden words: Taboo and the censoring of language.* Cambridge University Press.

Alsharhan, A. (2020). Netflix no-censorship policy in subtitling taboo language from English into Arabic. *Journal of Audiovisual Translation, 3*(1), 7–28.

Bogucki, Ł. (2020). *Palgrave handbook of audiovisual translation and media accessibility.* Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-42105-2

Cronin, M. (2012). *Translation in the digital age.* Routledge.

David, L., & Seinfeld, J. (Creators). (1989–1998). *Seinfeld* [Television series]. Columbia Pictures Television.

Díaz-Cintas, J. (2004). In search of a theoretical framework for the study of audiovisual translation. In P. Orero (Ed.), *Topics in audiovisual translation* (pp. xx–xx). John Benjamins.

Díaz-Cintas, J. (2013). Subtitling: Theory, practice and research. In C. Millán & F. Bartrina (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of translation studies* (pp. 273–287). Routledge.

Díaz-Cintas, J. (2018). Subtitling's a carnival: New practices in cyberspace. *The Journal of Specialised Translation & Interpreting, 30*, 127–149.

Díaz-Cintas, J., & Remael, A. (2021). *Subtitling: Concepts and practices.* Routledge.

Dwyer, T. (2012). Fansub dreaming on ViKi. *The Translator, 18*(2), 217–243. https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.2012.10799509

Dwyer, T. (2017). *Speaking in subtitles: Revaluing screen translation.* Edinburgh University Press.

Eldalees, H. A., Al-Adwan, A., & Yahiaoui, R. (2017). Fansubbing in the Arab world: Modus operandi and prospects. *Arab World English Journal for Translation & Literary Studies, 1*(1). https://doi.org/10.24093/awejtls/vol1no1.4

Elhadary, T. (2023). Linguistic and cultural differences between English and Arabic languages and their impact on the translation process. *International Journal of Language and Translation Research, 3*(2), 103–117. https://doi.org/10.22034/IJLTR.2023.175143

Furgani, K. T. (2016). *A study into the challenges of subtitling English into Arabic* [Doctoral dissertation, Liverpool John Moores University]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

Gottlieb, H. (1994). Subtitling: Diagonal translation. *Perspectives - Studies in Translation Theory and Practice, 2*(1), 101–121.

Griffin, J. (Creator). (2022–present). *From* [Television series]. MGM+.

Khakshour Forutan, M., & Modarresi, G. (2018). Translation of cultural taboos in Hollywood movies in professional dubbing and non-professional subtitling. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research, 47*(6), 454–473. https://doi.org/10.1080/17475759.2018.1480516

Khalaf, A. S., & Rashid, S. M. (2016). Attenuating obscenity of swearwords in the amateur subtitling of English movies into Arabic. *Arab World English Journal, 7*(1), 295–309.

Khalaf, A. S., & Rashid, S. M. (2019). Pragmatic functions of swearwords in the amateur subtitling of American crime drama movies into Arabic. *International Journal of Asia Pacific Studies, 15*(1), 97–131. https://doi.org/10.21315/ijaps2019.15.1.5

Khalil, M. H. (2013). *Between heaven and hell: Islam, salvation, and the fate of others.* Oxford University Press.

Massidda, S. (2015). *Audiovisual translation in the digital age: The Italian fansubbing phenomenon.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Nida, E. A., & Taber, C. R. (1969). *The theory and practice of translation.* Brill.

Nord, C. (2016). Function + loyalty: Theology meets skopos. *Open Theology, 2*(1). https://doi.org/10.1515/opth-2016-0045

Orrego-Carmona, D. (2015). *The reception of (non)professional subtitling* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Universitat Rovira i Virgili.

Pedersen, J. (2005). How is culture rendered in subtitles? In *Challenges of multidimensional translation: Proceedings of the Marie Curie Euroconferences MuTra.*

Pedersen, J. (2011). *Subtitling norms for television: An exploration focussing on extralinguistic cultural references.* John Benjamins.

Pedersen, J. (2017). The FAR model: Assessing quality in interlingual subtitling. *Journal of Specialised Translation, 28*, 210–229. http://www.jostrans.org/issue28/art_pedersen.pdf

Pérez-González, L. (2017). Investigating digitally born amateur subtitling agencies in the context of popular culture. In D. Orrego-Carmona & Y. Lee (Eds.), *Non-professional subtitling* (pp. 15–36). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Raheem, D., Benny, N., & Murthy, D. (2023). A comparative study of linguistic ideology in English and Arabic language. *International Journal of Literature, Language and Linguistics, 3*, 17–27. https://doi.org/10.52589/IJLLL-7FVNB8WN

Sajna, M. (2013). Amateur subtitling - Selected problems and solutions. *T21N - Translation in Transition, 3*, 1–18.

Toury, G. (1980). *In search of a theory of translation.* Tel Aviv University.

Toury, G. (1995). *Descriptive translation studies and beyond.* John Benjamins.

Vermeer, H. J. (1978). Ein Rahmen für eine allgemeine Translationstheorie. *Lebende Sprachen, 23*, 99–102. https://doi.org/10.1515/les.1978.23.3.99

Williams, J., & Chesterman, A. (2002). *The map: A beginner's guide to doing research in translation studies.* Routledge.

Yule, G. (2014). *The study of language* (5th ed.). Bell and Bain Ltd.

Zojer, H. (2011). Cultural references in subtitles: A measuring device for interculturality? *Babel, 57*(4), 394–413. https://doi.org/10.1075/babel.57.4.02zoj

Learning English in an Arabic context: A study of first-year Libyan university students' challenges in the learning of English

Dr. Entisar Khalifa Aljoundi

English language department, College of Humanities, Alasmarya Islamic University
Zliten, Libya

i.aljundi@asmarya.edu.ly
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3546-2729

Prof. Ayub Sheik

Language Education department at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa

sheika@ukzn.ac.za
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8633-3740

_____

الملخص

سعت هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد التحديات التي يواجهها طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL) في تطوير الكفاءة التواصلية في اللغة الإنجليزية للأغراض الأكاديمية في إحدى الجامعات الليبية. لقد تمت دراسة تحديات تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بشكل أساسي من قبل متعلمي اللغة العرب في بعض الدول العربية. ومع ذلك، لم يتم استكشاف هذا النوع من البحث بشكل كافٍ في ليبيا، ومن هنا جاءت هذه الدراسة لسد هذه الفجوة. استعرض هذا البحث تجارب الطلاب والمحاضرين وانطباعاتهم حول تدريس وتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية الأكاديمية في سياق لغة أجنبية. واعتمد البحث على منهج دراسة الحالة، واستخدم تصميمًا بحثيًا مختلطًا ومتقاربًا. تم جمع البيانات من خلال أساليب نوعية وكمية ضمن نموذج تفسيري. كما اعتمدت الدراسة على ثلاثة أساليب لجمع البيانات: المقابلات شبه المنظمة، ومجموعات النقاش المركزة، والاستبيانات. تشير النتائج إلى أن تحديات تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في ليبيا يمكن تصنيفها إلى أربع فئات: تحديات لغوية، ثقافية، مؤسسية، وبنيوية. فيما يتعلق بالتحديات اللغوية، اتفق معظم المشاركين على أن اللغة العربية واللغة الإنجليزية تختلفان لغويًا إلى حد كبير. أما التحديات الثقافية، فتتمثل في التباين بين الميول الثقافية للطلاب ومتطلبات فك رموز المعاني في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. وتتمثل التحديات المؤسسية في الوضع العام للتعليم العالي في ليبيا. وأخيرًا، تتعلق التحديات البنيوية بمدى انسجام البرنامج التعليمي ككل. تختتم الدراسة بتقديم مقترحات لتحسين الكفاءة التواصلية في اللغة الهدف في موقع البحث، بالإضافة إلى استكشاف كيفية تمكّن الطلاب من التغلب على تحديات تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية.

Learning English in an Arabic context: A study of first-year Libyan university students' challenges in the learning of English

Dr. Entisar Khalifa Aljoundi

English language department, College of Humanities, Alasmarya Islamic University
Zliten, Libya

i.aljundi@asmarya.edu.ly
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3546-2729

Prof. Ayub Sheik

Language Education department at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa

sheika@ukzn.ac.za
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8633-3740

_____

Abstract

This study sought to identify the challenges that EFL students faced in developing English language communicative competence for academic purposes at a Libyan university. The EFL challenges in learning English have been mostly studied by Arab learners in some Arabic countries. Such a line of research has been relatively unexplored in Libya; hence, this study addressed this gap. This research canvassed students' and lecturers' experiences and perceptions in the teaching and learning of academic English in a foreign language context. Within a case study approach, a convergent mixed methods research design was used. Data was collected through qualitative and quantitative methods in an interpretative paradigm. The study employs three data generation methods, a semi-structured interview, focus group discussion, and questionnaires. The findings suggest that this study can be classified into four categories of EFL Libyan learning challenges: linguistic, cultural, institutional, and structural challenges. Linguistic challenges, most participants agreed that Arabic and English are linguistically dissimilar. The cultural challenge manifests as a dissonance between students' cultural predilections and the decoding required for meaning making in English as a foreign language. Institutional challenges are described as the general position of higher education in Libya. Finally, structural challenges were related to the overall teaching program coherence. The study concludes by making suggestions to improve communicative competence in the target language at the research site, and to explore how students can overcome their English learning challenges.

Keywords: *learning English as EFL; lecturers and students' perceptions, EFL challenges; EFL language acquisition, Libyan context*

Introduction and Background of the Study

English is the language of international commerce and wider communication today. It has also become the preferred language of higher education in many countries. An interesting development is the growth of non-native speakers of English which have today come to outnumber native speakers of English. This changing demographic is also evident in Libya, the research site of this study. This must be understood in the context of globalization as Libyans seek to advance their linguistic dexterity to access educational and vocational opportunities.

In Libya, Arabic is the mother tongue, and English is studied as a foreign language (EFL) (El-Hawat, 2009; Kalid, 2017). Many challenges are experienced both in the learning of English and the use of English in higher education in Libya. Several studies such as Moghani and Mohamed (2003), Al-Hussein (2014), Azarnoosh (2014), Abuklaish (2014), Hawedi (2015), and Khalid (2017) have found that Libyan students suffer from low levels of English, a factor which serves as a disadvantage when they pursue higher education.

Moreover, the Libyan Higher Education Ministry Review Report, 2003-2016 (2016) also indicated that several areas of poor students' performance and academic difficulties reside in written, oral, and comprehension in English language subjects leading to poor performance and poor results. Therefore, the problem of this study is that Libyan students are confronted by challenges in English language learning, something that hinders their progress when they pursue higher education opportunities. According to Gadour (2006), Libyan students moving from school to university encounter several learning challenges in English learning; also, includes engaging with teaching and learning at university, which is entirely different from the school system.

The determination to adopt English as a foreign language for teaching and learning in Libya has presented several linguistic-related problems in an Arabic-speaking country. It has thus become crucial to investigate reasons for the widely known weak performance of Arabic speakers learning English. This study is concerned with the field of language acquisition. More specifically, this study seeks to explore the challenges that first-year university students face in learning English at a university in Libya and the imperative reasons these challenges impact effective academic performance. Consequently, the focus of this study is on the challenges Libyan, Arabic speakers face in learning English as a foreign language.

The main purpose of this study is to identify the problems existing with lecturers and students by gathering data, evaluating the potential of the problems, providing a set of suggestions to reduce the deficiencies, and describing the prospects of teaching and learning English in a Libyan university. As the research exposes challenges concerning Libya's cultural, social, and national aspects, it can let the educationists determine innovative forms to improve the EFL teaching and learning process. This research used the case study approach to understand a single case and explain the phenomenon of learning English at the selected university. This approach will require an in-depth investigation of all the interlinking or interdependent parts of the emerging patterns.

This study aims to answer the three main research questions underlying the current investigation, which are:

- What are the challenges that EFL students face in learning English at a Libyan university?
- Why do students have these challenges?
- What are EFL lecturers' perceptions of students' challenges in learning English at a Libyan university?

Literature Review

Recently, and with the spread of global English as a basic tool for communication, commerce and worldwide interaction, more interest has been focused on the concerns, issues and needs for English studying (Kassem, 2014). Studies on the EFL and ESL challenges in the learning of English constitute a wide ranging and growing trend in current international research. Previous works on EFL English learning in Arabic countries include Al-Johani (2009), Jdetawy (2011), Alam Khan (2011) and Alrashidi and Phan (2015) state that Arab learners encounter many challenges when they learn English in both speaking and writing. The known issues confronted primarily by Arab learners in Jordan, Sudan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt such as mistakes engaged concerned with articulation, morphology, understanding of the usage of syntax, and spelling, and even most Arab learners have difficulty representing themselves skillfully either when encountered with academic subjects or communicating daily issues (Alam Khan, 2011; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015).

For instance, the learners in Jordan, English learning in their home country, where the Arabic language is their native language. The only chance to learn English is through formal education which is inside the lecture hall where the English lecturers are native Arabic speakers (Kassem, 2014). Another study conducted in Jordan by Al-Jamal and Al-Jamal (2014) showed a low speaking proficiency level among EFL undergraduates and the most pronounced difficulties were communication in L1, lack of time, and large classes. it was also observed that their compositions were littered with grammatical errors. Similar problems were also reported in Sudan, as most students enrolled in English classes usually commit serious syntactic errors in the English composition passages. It was noted that most learners were weak in the following areas: tenses, verb structure, and subject-verb agreement (Alam-Khan, 2011).

In the Saudi Arabia context, the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has experienced significant growth over the years. Currently, the Education Policy in Saudi Arabia requires that all students learn at least one foreign language. This initiative aims to help students connect with various cultures, promote the values of Islam, and contribute positively to society (Alharbi, 2019). As English is the only foreign language offered at public universities in the Kingdom, numerous studies have explored the impact of EFL education and the challenges associated with learning and teaching English as a foreign language (Alam Khan, 2011; Alharbi, 2019; Al-Nafjan, & Alhawsawi, 2022; Almesaar, 2024; Ebrahim & Afzal, 2015; & Jabeen, 2023).

Ebrahim and Afzal (2015) indicated that some issues and challenges must be addressed in EFL teaching in Saudi Arabia. Since Saudis speak their native language at home and during their interaction with their friends, peers, and classmates, there is no opportunity to learn English

through day-to-day interaction (Alam Khan, 2011; Ebrahim & Afzal, 2015). Jabeen (2023), in her study on the teaching of foreign languages in early grades, highlights a lack of professional development opportunities for EFL teachers. This includes insufficient training programs, workshops, and seminars. As a result, these teachers are not receiving adequate exposure to modern teaching methods, advanced technologies, and diverse learning styles. Therefore, due to the rapidly evolving economy of Saudi Arabia, there have been shifts in the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) within the country. The review encompasses studies that examine the current landscape of the EFL sector in Saudi Arabia, as well as those that explore the challenges faced by EFL education and teachers in the region (Al-Nafjan, & Alhawsawi, 2022). Currently, the people of Saudi Arabia view English as the universal language of modernization, science, and high economic status, making it essential for the job market (Alharbi, 2019).

As can be noted from the discussion above; the EFL challenges in learning English have been mostly studied by Arab learners in Jordan, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. Such a line of research has been relatively unexplored in Libya; hence the focus of this study was directed at Arab-speaking learners of English in Libya. As Khalid (2017) argues the literature on EFL difficulties in learning of English language in developing countries such as Libya is very limited. Moreover, the study aims to explore Libyan learners' challenges in learning English at first-year university and their strategies to overcome these challenges.

Previous works on EFL English learning in Libya such as that of Youssef and Bose (2015) investigated Libyan students' motivation and attitude toward learning English as a foreign language in High School. They suggest that it would be helpful for Libyan teachers to develop their teaching methods to improve their students' English learning ability. This study should also help Libyan teachers to understand their students' motivation and attitude better and to find an appropriate way of teaching English.

Another study conducted by Hamed (2018) investigates the most common types of linguistic errors in the compositions written by forty Libyan students at the pre-intermediate level in the Language Centre at Omar EL-Mukhtar University, EL-Beida, Libya. His findings revealed that substance errors were the highest number of errors, followed by grammatical errors, syntactic errors, and lexical errors. The results also showed that spelling, capitalization, tenses, punctuation, articles, varied words, subject-verb agreement, and prepositions were the most common linguistic errors in the learners' writings. These mistakes could be due to over generalization in the target language, emerging from ignorance of rule restriction and inadequate application of rules, and the effect of their first language (Arabic) negative transfer.

The current study is expected to address a gap in the literature on the Libyan teaching and learning of English at the University entrance level. I support the idea that quality classroom teaching has the most influence on successful outcomes for learners. As noted from the literature above, the EFL challenges in the learning of English have been studied mainly by Arab learners in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Sudan, and Palestine. However, it has been relatively unexplored in Libya; hence this study seeks to address that gap. Therefore, this gap serves as a warrant for this study.

Theoretical Framework

Krashen's (1981) Second Language Acquisition theory is chosen as the theoretical framework for this study as it attempts to respond to the vital theoretical question of how we acquire language. It is considered the most effective and extensively known theory that accounts for second and foreign language acquisition. Schulz (1991) affirms this theory is foremost from the immediate pedagogic extrapolations created in the supposed natural method. Krashen has always been interested in classroom language learning and teaching. The use of Krashen's framework will enable the researcher to explore the challenges that EFL students face in learning and acquiring the English language at Libyan University.

The theory details the important five hypotheses about Second Language Acquisition. First, *the Acquisition-Learning Distinction hypothesis* states that adults have two distinct and independent ways of developing competence in a second language. The first way is language acquisition, a process similar to the way children develop ability in their first language. Another way to develop proficiency in a second language is achieved through language learning.

The second hypothesis is *that the Natural Order Hypothesis* is about acquiring grammatical structures that proceed in a predictable probable order. Third, *the Monitor Hypothesis* suggests that acquisition and learning are used in particular ways. Generally, the acquisition is responsible for our utterance, and our fluency and learning change in the form of our utterance. The fourth hypothesis is that *the Input Hypothesis* attempts to answer the critical question in this theory: how do we acquire language? It says we acquire by "going for meaning" first, and as a result, we acquire structure. Lastly, *the Affective Filter Hypothesis* hypothesis states how affective factors relate to the second language acquisition process.

Language acquisition means picking up a language including implicit learning, informal learning, and natural learning (Krashen, 2009). Hence, to develop competence in a second language is by language learning. Learning entails knowing about a language, such as grammar or language rules and some synonyms, etc. Some second language theorists have assumed that children acquire, while adults can only learn (Krashen, 2009). Therefore, this research looks at the challenges that EFL learners face when they learn and use the English language.

Research Methodology

Research Design

In this approach to the research study, the interpretive paradigm is looked at in terms of human behaviour based on the participants that construct and understand it (Cohen et al., 2011). The researcher considers the interpretative paradigm more applicable and effective in this study because it seeks an actual reality in a specific situation. This approach allows the researcher's focus to be on understanding what is happening in a given context. Moreover, this study uses a convergent mixed-method (qualitative and quantitative) study investigating the challenges EFL students face in learning English at a Libyan University.

Convergent mixed methods collect qualitative and quantitative data, merge the data, compare the results, and explain any differences (Creswell, 2020). A primary purpose of this design is that one data collection form provides strengths to balance the weaknesses of the other method and that a complete understanding of a research problem results from collecting both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2020). The study further employs the case study approach since it aims to develop an in-depth understanding of students' views on their

challenges in learning English. Christiansen et al. (2010) define a case study as an in-depth study of one individual, a group of individuals or an institution.

Participants

For this study, purposive sampling has been used to make samples of the larger population. Sampling involves making decisions about the people, setting, events, or behaviour to observe (Cohen et al., 2011). This study was conducted mainly at the Faculty of Arts and in the other two faculties (Education and Law), which are a substructure within the College of Humanities. The School of Arts and the two faculties are located at a Libyan university, situated in Zliten city in the north of Libya. It is purposively selected from first-year students between 18 to 19 years old from a total of three faculties at the university.

The researcher sampled six lecturers and twelve students to get their experiences and perceptions of the challenges they face in learning English in Libya. Two lecturers were selected from each of the three faculties resulting in a total of six lectures in all. These lecturers specialise in English language modules and have sufficient experience (more than four years). Four students were selected per faculty, and this resulted in twelve learner participants in all. The researcher tried to balance gender. She selected six female lecturers, except two males, while all twelve students were females from the three faculties. Moreover, the questionnaire was distributed randomly to another 30 students around the university to gain more information.

Data Collection

An interview schedule, questionnaires, and a focus group discussion were employed to collect data from the participants. Therefore, the questionnaire requires personal responses to twenty-six questions on their challenges in learning English. The individual interview was semi-structured. There were twelve interviews because each of the six learners and six lecturers was interviewed separately to find their views and experiences on their challenges in learning English.

They ranged from thirty to forty minutes; these were conducted in an isolated venue in the English department where the possibility of being interrupted was minimal. The conversation was recorded using an audio-recording instrument. Focus group discussion usually produces both qualitative and observational data where analyses can be required. It was two focus groups, one with the six lecturers and the other with the other six students. The main methods of data collection during a focus group discussion include audio and tape recording and note-taking.

Data Analysis

For qualitative data analysis, the constant comparison method of employed to analyse data in this research (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 557). The first step in the analysis process was to initiate the coding of all research data. Charmaz (2006) asserts that coding can be seen as the basis for an analysis that paves the way for a much more intensive study. Coding involves breaking data into concepts and categories and categorising data sections with a short name summarising each section.

The researcher first read and re-read data collected through interviews and questionnaires to code the data and find common responses, which ultimately generate themes

that emerge from the responses given. Thematic analysis is the way of analysing facts and figures according to similarities and differences across a data set. The written transcriptions contained the information received from the interviews and the questionnaires, and the researcher interpreted the verbal and written answers to find out the recommendations, beliefs, opinions, and feelings of all the research participants. An audiotape was used to record the responses and the language challenges in English learning conducted in the faculties. This allowed the researcher to review the transcriptions to ensure accuracy.

For quantitative data analysis, the responses to the questionnaire surveys were manually decreased, coded, and categorised in the Microsoft Excel manuscript according to the predetermined classifications (Sarantakos, 2005). Figures and tables were used, which show how the data was reduced, coded, and presented in a bar chart and the percentage calculation of each item.

Validity and Reliabilities Issues

To ensure validity in this study, first I selected an appropriate methodology for answering the research questions. I used three data creation methods, namely: semi-structured interview, focus group discussion, and questionnaire, to get views of lectures and the learners on their challenges in learning English. It enabled me to understand the observable fact under investigation by approaching it from different angles.

I ensured the authenticity of research results through triangulation. According to Cohen et al., (2011), using various instruments to collect data (triangulation) enhances validity. The second was by employing the member validation techniques to check on findings. Participants in this study were given a chance to confirm the transcribed findings to increase the study's validity. The third way was through common inference descriptors, which involve recording observations in terms that are as concrete as possible, including verbatim accounts of what transpired during the question and answer session.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthy research should utilise suitable research tools to meet the given objectives of the investigation (Sarantakos, 2005; TATIRA, 2018). They suggest several essential elements to a case study design that can be integrated to improve overall study reliability. The reason for utilising this technique was to guarantee that enough detail was provided so that readers could measure the trustworthiness of the work. To achieve this, I ensured that research questions were written, objectives were clearly stated, and meaningful analysis of data.

The case study design was suitable for all the research questions. Purposeful sampling strategies were suitable for the study. Additionally, data were generated and managed systematically. To address credibility in this study, I used an audio recorder, and a field note to record what my participants were discussing during the session. I took the data transcripts back to the participants to double-check the data with the participants for accuracy.

Ethical Issues

This study took ethical considerations into account. This involves getting the participants' permission and gatekeepers, maintaining the dignity and welfare of participants by maintaining anonymity or confidentiality (Cohen et al., 2011). First and foremost, permission

was sought and obtained from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, and the ethical clearance reference number for the current study is HSSREC/00001455/2020. Also, a permission letter to carry out this research at the university was obtained. This study did not raise any issues regarding the target population as all the participants (lecturers and students) were over 18. No sensitive and personal nature was kept on an individual, and the study did not induce any psychological stress or anxiety.

The participants were provided with complete information about the research objective, and all those included in this research were asked to read and understand the enclosed research information sheets. Lastly, the participant's anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed with the use of pseudonyms (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007). Also, I assured the participants that the information would be protected and that I would protect their identity should I attempt to publish the results of my study.

The Findings of the Study

Qualitative Data Findings

This section presents the results gathered from EFL participants through two types of qualitative data collection: an individual interview and a focus group discussion. Accordingly, the findings will be presented separately in two sections; and every section is divided into another two sections, one for EFL students and the other for EFL lecturers. Each section will provide a brief introduction to the data, a description of the data analysis process, a presentation of the findings and, finally, a summary dissection and conclusion. The first set of data is presented from the individual interview process.

Individual interview qualitative data analysis (semi structure interview)

This section provides the results of twelve interviews between six EFL students and six EFL lecturers. The reason for applying individual interviews in a qualitative study is well approved and acknowledged (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Cohen & Crabtree, 2006; Khalid, 2017). It is known to be an appropriate method for obtaining valuable information that exposes participants' experiences and perceptions.

1. **The challenges that EFL students face in learning English at a Libyan university**
The initial sources of data for this study are six interviews with six EFL students, and the findings are expected to contribute to the response to the main research questions.

▪**Previous challenges related to the school (before entering university)**
Many participants indicated that their poor English language level is one of the issues they face in terms of English language learning during their university studies. They stated that many of the language fundamentals important to their progress in their education program are missing. Students assign their weaknesses in English to many factors.

> *Teaching the English language is supposed to begin in the pre-school*
> *at five years old. At this age, the learner will be familiar with the basics*
> *of English such as letters and names of living creatures, vegetables and*
> *fruit. I mean, topics like these will encourage and assist learners to*

learn any foreign language unlike us, who did not learn English adequately in the first years of our education. **(S1, S4, S5, S6)**

- **Deficiency of English language courses at schools:** Some participants indicated that they had no English preparatory work that much. They did not obtain any English language courses at school, the before university stage.
- **English teachers at high schools:** Some participants stated that the low quality of school education influenced the key issue behind their low English proficiency. The students affirmed that some teachers were not qualified to teach the basic English skills to the students.
- **English language skills and challenges:** Generally, the students indicated that they are weak in all the English skills (writing, speaking, listening, and reading). Consider the following responses:

  The difficulty we mainly face is related to listening and understanding lectures because there are some lecturers whose English is weak, which makes it difficult for them to convey their thoughts properly and has a massive impact on us as students. We face these problems from both local and foreign lecturers. **(S1, S3, S5)**

  - **The effect of the Arabic language on English learning:** Many students indicate that Arabic is an essential language to their studies because most of their modules or subjects are in the Arabic language, which is their mother tongue. It is easier for them to understand English lectures when it is explained in Arabic. Thus, they use coding switching between English and Arabic languages during English lectures.
  - **Practicing and using the English language in daily life:** As mentioned in the literature review chapter, it is not common for people to speak another language in Libya. Thus, the participants indicated that they do not use the English language in their daily lives, in public or even on campus.
  - **The university's responsibility towards its students:** According to the participants, it is clear that they feel that the university is disappointing them in many aspects. Consider the following reply:

    Entering university does not add much to my English learning, it becomes worse than before. The university even does not support us in many aspects, such as I cannot find a relevant book about English learning in the university library... **(S1)**

2. The EFL lecturers' perceptions of students' challenges in learning English at a Libyan university

The sources of data for this study are six individual interviews with six EFL lecturers, and the findings are expected to contribute to the response to the main research questions. From these individual interviews, let us explore the challenges from the lecturers' perspectives.

- **Previous challenges of English learning and its impact on entering higher education:** The most common problem stated by the lecturers is that students' English language knowledge is very limited, thus their preparation for the requirements of higher education is

inadequate. They considered that the students were not qualified for university studies. Some lecturers explained that the students' language weaknesses, were due to their insufficient preparation at school, before entering university, and some lecturers responded as follows:

- **Lecturers' responsibility towards the students' challenges**

  Lecturers have a responsibility towards their students, in that they should assist them in overcoming their English learning challenges. It has been shown that the low proficiency of lecturers, and the additional load on them of giving their specialist knowledge to the students in English, can be a significant challenge for these lecturers. Lecturers deal with these challenges in the following ways:

  1- **Assessment and Exams Formulate:** One of the instruments to assess students' level in foreign language learning, is exams. In this regard, lecturers indicated that they use some methods to adapt to the students' weak English of level and are designed in a way to limit their answers and essay writing for longer length tests and exams.

  2- **Utilizing English and Arabic languages as code-mixing**: Most lecturers present different attitudes towards using the Arabic language in the lecture to explain their subject. One of them indicated that he used Arabic in the lecture to help the students understand the subject matter correctly:

     Even me, who I am a faculty lecturer, often find it hard to explain and reach the meaning in English, and it is easy for me to use my mother tongue. **(L1)**

  3- **English language courses at the university:** In addition, the lecturers assert that the university should provide some courses aimed at improving students' level in English:
     There are no English courses at the university to assist EFL students in improving their English level. These courses should be free and during their study time. **(L1, L2, L3, L5)**

  4- **Lecturers' proficiency and accent:** Some lecturers expressed their concerns about other lecturers' accents and pronunciations. Some have a different English accent which is very hard to follow, and most of the students complain about this issue:
     Most of the students have complained that they have some issues with some lecturers because their accents are not clear, and they could not figure out what they explained. **(L2, L4)**

Focus Group Discussion, why do students have these challenges

This section provides the second source of data for this study and the findings of twelve focus group interviews between six EFL students and six EFL lecturers interviews. In this case, focus groups are expected to provide valuable data, particularly when participants are allowed extended periods to reflect on their own experiences while other participants speak.

1. Data analysis of students' focus group discussion

This source of data is a focus group discussion for the other six EFL students, and also, the findings are expected to contribute to the response to the main research questions. It is clear from the students' interview responses that they had many challenges that arose

when they moved to higher education, and they mentioned many reasons behind these challenges. Let us explore more challenges of the students' perceptions, and they may be similar or differ from the challenges we explored in the individual interview.

- **Teaching the English language subject as one subject a year:** students assert that in our school the English language is taught as one subject between ten Arabic subjects in schools and only in one class a week, other students have complained that the English subject teaching at school was very simple English and teachers taught them the basic of English language only:
- **Students' feedback:** The students indicated that there is no chance for them to give any feedback for their studies or evaluate their teacher's performance:
  The other challenge for us is that lecturers never ask us for feedback, and even the university never asks. There should be an evaluation model that can be used by students to assess their lecturers' performance and their studies. **(S1, S2, S3)**

2. Data analysis of lecturers' focus group discussion

This is the last source of the qualitative data analysis is a focus group discussion for the six lecturers, and also, these findings are supposed to contribute to the response to the main research questions. From these lecturers' focus group discussions, we may explore new challenges that may differ from the previous challenges that we discovered before from the previous qualitative data analysis. In the following, I demonstrate every challenge that is supported by the discussion of the relevant lecturers:

- **University administration and financial support:** Other issues raised by some lecturers are the way the university works. They indicated that its system makes the educational process more difficult. One of these problems is a lack of money:
  The university's financial office refused the budgets assigned by the government to this institution, as they were claiming needed more money.
  (L1, L2, L3, L5)

- **Consistency in university education:** Despite these challenges facing the lecturers, they describe another issue is the lack of consistency in university education among Libyan universities:
  There is no education stability in this university, the continuous opening and closing of the university. There is a delay in exams, which negatively impacts the students' language learning and lecturers' delivery because they cannot do the teaching correctly, as they have to keep starting and stopping every time. **(L2, L4, L5)**

- **Lectures' training centre:** All lecturers stated that there should be training for themselves to recognize the importance of the teaching method. Also, to make them aware of some teaching issues they encounter, and to avoid these issues.
- **Lack of cooperation with other universities:** Some lecturers asserted that the lack of cooperation between their university and other universities made it hard for them to

expose other universities' experience, as this will develop their teaching abilities, and it will assist the student in learning a foreign language.

- **Political influence and English cancellation**: Because of Libyan foreign policy, that made many decisions related to the teaching English cancellation. This decision has had a negative impact on the student's level of English skills:
  One of the main reasons behind the students' poor English level is the cancellation of the English language; because of the political factors when the language was cancelled from education for a long time. **(L2, L4, L5, L6)**

Quantitative Data Findings

This section presents the quantitative data findings from the open-ended questionnaire to answer the three main research questions of this study. The questionnaires were distributed randomly to the 30 students who responded to the 26 questions about their English learning challenges. The findings are later triangulated and discussed with other research findings.

The data findings' presentation is based on seven themes generated from the data and related to the target research questions. The themes are as follows:

1- English practice and environment.
2- Learning four English language skills.
3- Practicing English language at school before entering university.
4- Using Arabic language as a first language.
5- University responsibility and its support in learning English.

1-English Practice and Environment

Items 1, 5, 8, and 9 of the questionnaires gave the respondents a chance to express their views concerning their English practice's environmental impacts. They indicated that there were not many chances for students to practice English. The participant's level of English is affected by many other factors: cultural and social barriers, lack of free time to spend learning English, or not using English in daily life.
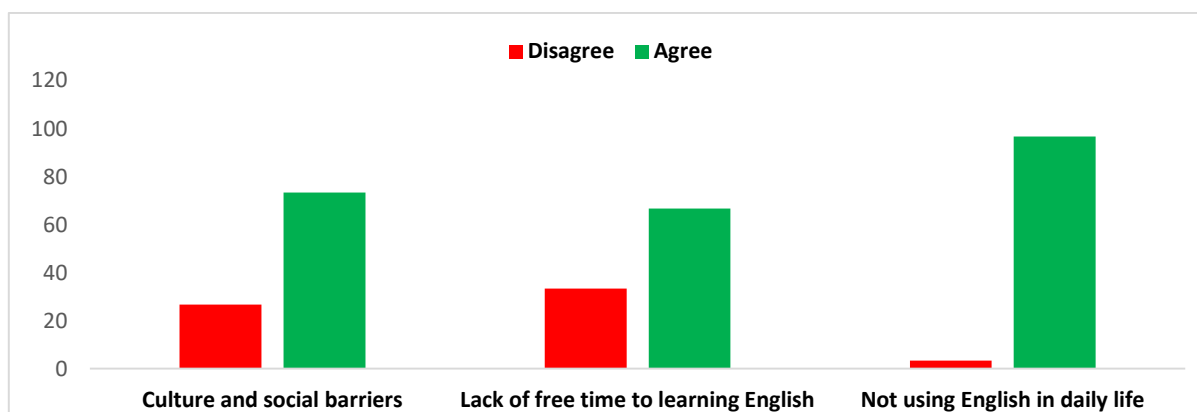

Graph 1. English Practicing and Environment

As shown from the above results, most students do not have time to practice English in the classroom, and English is not used daily. Furthermore, there are no efficient ways to practice English during the day to improve their language skills. Also, there are various social barriers and environmental factors that affect their practicing English in the classroom.

2-Learning Four English Language Skills

In terms of the participants' English language skills, Items 1 and 6 of the questionnaires required the participants to list their challenges with English skills. They were also given a chance to determine and rank some other challenges pertaining to their English skills, such as limited knowledge of pronunciation and spelling, limited vocabulary knowledge, limited grammar knowledge, weakness in the four language skills in general, or other aspects that impact their language in academic performance. The graph below reveals the challenges they mainly encountered:
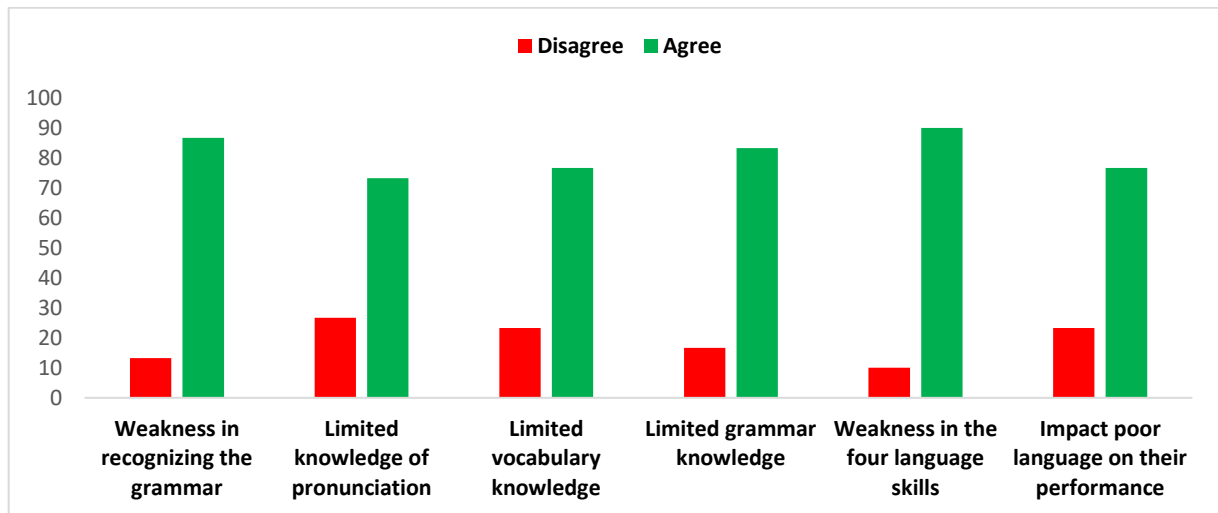
Graph 2. Learning Four English Language Skills

As can be seen from the above findings, the student's English skills are limited. They lack grammar comprehension, little pronunciation knowledge, limited vocabulary knowledge, a lack of basic English skills (reading, listening, writing, and speaking), and a lack of influence on English performance. As a result of the student's English skills level being weak, the problems are mainly related to students' poor writing skills, including spelling and grammar mistakes.

3-Practicing English Language at School before Entering University

Items 1 and 9 of the questionnaires asked the participants for their views about their English learning challenges before entering higher education. The data indicated that they face many challenges towards their English learning at school, such as not having an effective teaching system throughout academic education. Including, a lack of motivating teachers, unsatisfactory teachers' feedback, exams methods and design to tolerate learners' mistakes, and lack of cooperation from the school to assist learners in practicing English. They indicated that their preparation for the requirements of higher education is weak. The graph below reveals the challenges they encountered:
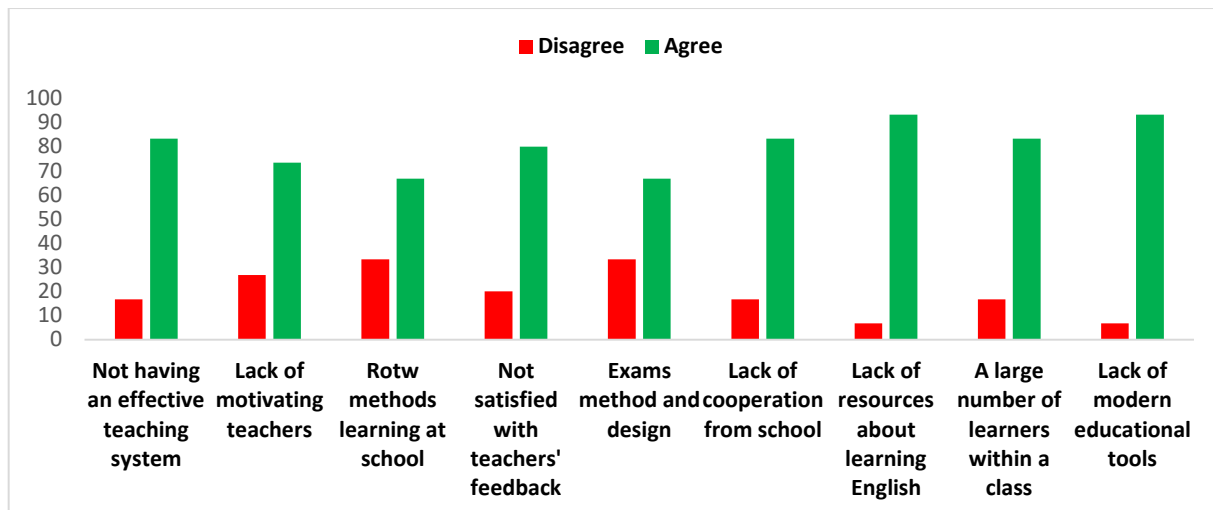
Graph 3. Practicing English Language at School

The participants' responses to the possibility of using English in the school atmosphere showed that students lack an appropriate instructional structure. Including a lack of inspiring teachers, rote methods of learning at school, and frustration with instructor input, and tests. As well as a lack of school collaboration, a lack of resources for learning English, and a high number of learners within a classroom, including a lack of modern educational tools.

4-Using Arabic Language as a First Language

It is expected that many students indicated that Arabic is essential to their studies, given the problems they face using English (Khalid, 2017). Items 1, 2 and 7 of the questionnaires requested the participants present their views about using Arabic with English. The data indicated that they use Arabic language in their daily lives. Using Arabic language and code-mixing, social and cultural influences force speakers to use Arabic. Lecturers are using the Arabic language with English during lectures and transferring the style of Arabic writing.
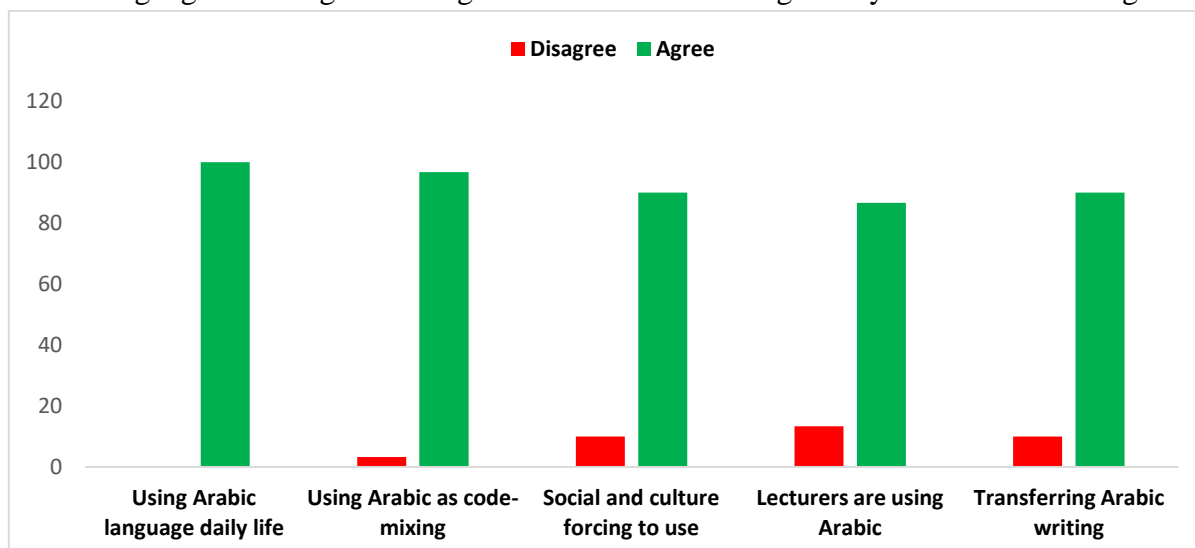

Graph 4. Using Arabic Language as a First Language

As can be seen, all participants recognize that interpreting English with Arabic during English lessons negatively affects them. English language teachers typically intend to concentrate on using English in their classrooms. However, they face a significant challenge:

the lack of contact between teachers and their learners since they have trouble interpreting what they consider to be a difficult foreign language.

5-University Responsibility and Support in Learning English

It is evident that the participants feel that the university is letting them down in various ways. Items 1, 3, and 4 of the questionnaires asked the participants for their views about these challenges because of the university system, such as lack of motivational support. There is also a lack of resources and lack of continuous exposure to the English language during academic life. Students are not satisfied with exams methods. There is a lack of modern educational tools such as modern computers and accessibility for English language courses at universities.
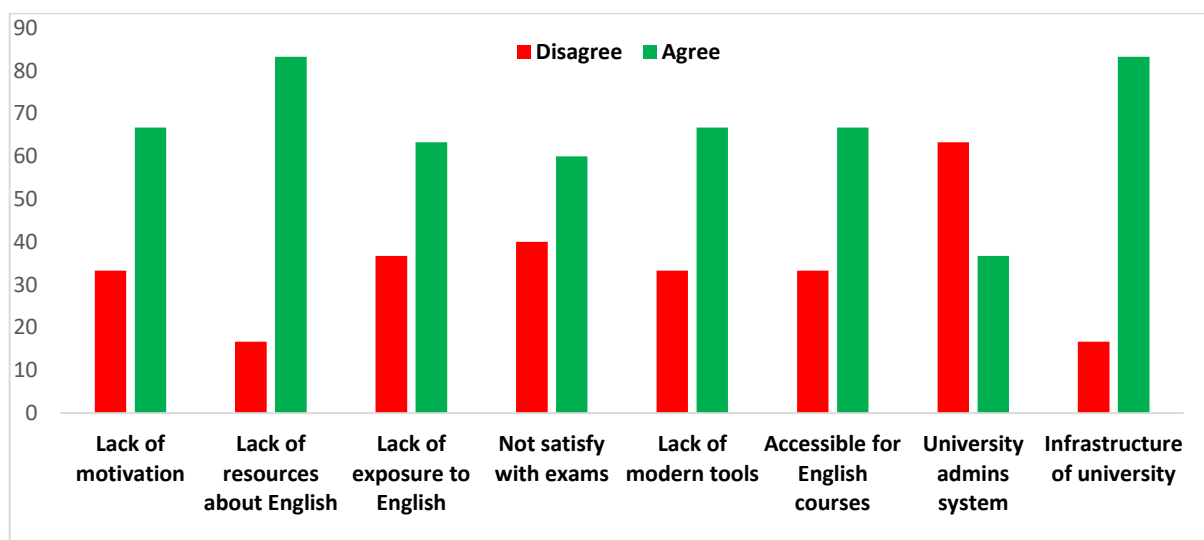
Graph 5. University Responsibility and its Support in Learning English

Educational infrastructure-buildings, classrooms, labs, and equipment are crucial components of schools and universities' academic environments. It is clear that high-quality facilities, among other advantages, encourage improved teaching, increase student grades, and decrease dropout rates. There have been various problems impacting vast numbers of lecturers in diverse educational settings, such as speaking teaching, inspiration, learning distinction, teaching in large classrooms, and discipline.

Discussion

This discussion of findings is from individual interview methods, focus group discussion, and questionnaires on students' and lecturers' experiences and perceptions of their challenges in English language acquisition. The discussion is analysed in three sections according to the three research questions.

Section one: What are the challenges that EFL students face in learning English at a Libyan university?

In the Libyan EFL context, the participants encounter many challenges in learning English at university. These challenges emanate from school based English instruction, which is rudimentary at best. Khalid (2017) indicated that learners do not gain much from their pre-

university learning in terms of English skills. Consequently, it is suggested that the school curricula be revised to enhance the teaching of English. This problem is also manifest in other Arabic speaking countries.

According to Alanazi and Widin (2018), teaching English and learning language skills pose challenges in Saudi Arabia. The EFL learners have a low communicative ability due to many conditions. The participants complained about the lack of motivating teachers to practice English in the class, as they were not satisfied with teachers' feedback. Moreover, Alahmari (2021) indicates in his study that elementary learners of English as EFL rely more on content forms than on functional forms in their English language productions. Consequently, it is understandable that they had difficulties at the university regarding their language skills.

Also, they mentioned in the qualitative and quantitative findings the Arabic language's effect on their English learning. Despite the degree of similarity in some linguistic structures between English and Arabic such as the existence of the relative clauses in the two languages, negative transfer can take place. The major obstruction to second-language acquisition stems from interference emanating from the first language. This is seen in the following:

1. English is in the Latin alphabet and is written (and read) from left to right. Arabic uses Arabic script and is written from right to left.
2. In Arabic, adjectives come after the noun they qualify, whereas in English they come before the noun.
3. There are numerous grammatical constructions that appear in English but do not exist in Arabic. One important aspect is the verb to be. It exists in Arabic but is used less frequently than in English.
4. English has about three times as many vowels sound as Arabic, which makes English vowel sounds problematic for Arabic learners.
5. Also problematic, is that some English sounds do not exist in Arabic. For example, there is no /p/ and /v/ sound in Arabic
6. In addition, English has more consonant clusters than Arabic. As a consequence, this creates problems with pronunciation. For example, Arabic does not have three-segment initial consonant clusters like spr, and skr.

Rajab et al. (2016) indicated that the ignorance of the difference between Arabic and English in terms of linguistic systems makes learning writing and speaking skills more difficult in Libya. This lack of awareness of Arabic and English's different characteristics and features is likely to confuse the EFL Libyan students, leading them to fall back on their L1 to imitate some of its features and structures and employ them in L2 writing, (Aljoundi, 2015; Rajab et al. 2016). Palestinian learners usually change the stylistic features of their first language; Arabic, to the target language; English, as Abu Rass (2015) indicated. For these reasons, Arabic speakers face specific challenges in English learning (Qutob, 2020).

Some students think that when lecturers use Arabic and code-switching, it might help them to understand everything said or explained in the lecture, but this will not improve their English learning significantly. This concurs with Van Wyk and Mostert (2016) who assert that the mother tongue should not be ignored for second language learners to reach adequate

proficiency but should be used judiciously. The participants also indicated that they do not use the English language in their daily life. It is rare to get a chance to speak English, so they rely on themselves to improve their English. Similarly, in Saudi Arabia, Ebrahim and Afzal (2015) indicated that since Saudis speak their native language at home and interact with their friends, peers, and classmates in Arabic, there is no chance to practice English in a day-to-day setting.

Most of the participants considered their experience at university as disappointing. They indicated that the university does not appear to spend any effort to develop and provide the necessary services to improve their English level. In Libya, the university does not provide a language laboratory for students to practice language skills. It does not provide them with useful English resources and references that the students need in a library. It is apparent from the study's qualitative and quantitative findings that acquiring communicative competence in the target language is hampered by the factor enumerated above.

Section two: What are EFL lecturers' perceptions regarding students' challenges in learning English at a Libyan university?

To understand the current social reality, it is essential to explore lecturers' perceptions of their learners in an EFL context (Moloi, 2009). Many lecturers mentioned that students encounter critical problems in their first years in adjusting adequately to the course requirements, which requires them to have good English language competence. Similarly, as the students mentioned earlier, some lecturers claimed that this was due to a history of poor English language preparation emanating from schools. A similar problem presents in Iran where Akbari (2016) found that most students cannot express themselves in English competently after studying English in junior and high school for seven years.

The qualitative and quantitative data findings indicated that there are four significant areas of writing challenges for Libyan students including firstly, they cannot write within a restricted time. Secondly, they cannot compose academic writing using English. Thirdly, they are incapable of employing the grammar rules in writing an essay. Lastly, they are unable to develop a properly structured essay. These shortcomings are linked to late exposure to learning the English language. Lecturers indicated that most students' issues are related to the four main language skills (writing, listening, reading, and speaking). Solak and Bayar (2015) studied English language learning and teaching challenges at a university in Turkey. They suggest that teaching and improving the four language skills should focus on authentic usage rather than grammar teaching.

To develop students' writing ability, lecturers also have to assist students in learning grammar and vocabulary. Muth'im and Latief (2014) found that in Indonesia, English lecturers teaching writing realized that giving feedback should help students overcome their writing problems. It is assumed that the students' feedback from their teachers makes them more focused and concentrated on what is being taught.

The latest methods of employing educational technology and devices to enhance learning should be introduced besides innovative classroom teaching to relieve boredom and stimulate the learners' interest. AlShebeeb and Alshehri (2024) demonstrate that the potential of AI-based platforms can improve language teaching and assist in developing complete

language learning policies that promote effective communication in today's interconnected world.

To conclude this section, most lecturers and students concurred about EFL students' challenges in English learning. It is suggested that training programs must be mandatory for every teacher at all levels of teaching. The language should not be used as a simple course syllabus to educate but as an effective communicative tool with practical value for actual life situations. They indicated that the university does not appear to spend any effort developing and providing the necessary services to improve their English level as there were no English language courses or language centers available for them. Both the lecturers' and the students' views aligned, so this confirms the validity of the research data.

Section three: Why do students have these challenges?

The participants stated many reasons behind the challenges they experienced:

Some students noted a shortage of English language teachers, with some schools lacking any English instructors, resulting in no English instruction whatsoever. When they compared school English with university English, it became apparent that school English acquisition is too simplified and not adequate for students to fulfil the needs of academic discourse at university (Khalid, 2017). Especially, they Acquired the English language at a late stage of their education. However, teaching young learners in foreign languages requires a distinct set of skills (Jabeen, 2023).

The participants complained that teachers were not motivated to practice English in class and were not satisfied with their feedback. This indicates that trained teachers who are experienced, skilled, and qualified are required to motivate English language practice. Jabeen (2023) asserted that a few factors contributing to the gap between EFL teaching policies and their effective implementation include outdated teaching methods, insufficient training for both pre-service and in-service teachers, and limited awareness of contemporary teaching trends and techniques. Therefore, to ensure that English learners become proficient users of the language, EFL teachers need ongoing professional development and training, as well as EFL teaching certification. This will better equip them to handle the daily challenges of teaching English effectively (Jabeen, 2023).

A lack of university infrastructures, such as language laboratories, library services and other complementary equipment specific to English teaching. Uddin (2017) states that most universities have their libraries, but none have English journals, computers, and audio-visual aids. As there is no teaching training centre at the university or the school to develop their teaching methods. Youssef and Bose (2015) suggest that it would be helpful for Libyan lecturers to develop their teaching methods and to improve their English learning ability.

Another reason mentioned in qualitative and quantitative findings is the Arabic language's effect on their English learning. The students' environment impacts their English practice because Arabic is an essential language for use and they do not use English in their daily life, as there is a lack of free time to spend learning the English language. Cultural and social barriers are also evident, social and cultural demands force students to use the Arabic language in their daily lives.

The preservation of Libyan culture will rely heavily on preserving the Arabic language. They think that using foreign textbooks with foreign culture may impact on their cultural and religious beliefs. Almesaar (2024) suggested that foreign language textbooks should be carefully designed to genuinely reflect foreign cultures while also providing a solid foundation of local culture for study. It is evident that English textbooks in Saudi Arabia have been especially careful in addressing the intricacies of foreign cultures.

The cancellation of the English language from education for an extended period because of political conflict was disabling for students. The viewpoints of El- Hawat (2009), Al-Hussein (2014); Abuklaish (2014); and Khalid (2017) about the political decision to stop teaching the English language in all sectors, negatively impacted the educational sector in Libya. The government ought to keep its political affairs distinct from its decisions related to the education sector. It also should consistently advance and incorporate EFL teaching in all educational spheres and levels.

Conclusion

The aim of this case study research project was to investigate and explore the challenges that first-year university students face in learning English in Libya and the reasons these challenges impact effective academic performance. The qualitative and quantitative findings in this study can be classified into four categories of EFL Libyan learning challenges: linguistic challenges, cultural challenges, institutional challenges, and structural challenges (Bradford 2016). Linguistic challenges are those related to language issues confronted by both lecturers and students.

Most participants (lecturers and students) agreed that Arabic and English are linguistically dissimilar. The cultural challenge is described as a mismatch between students' culture's characteristics and expectations and the foreign language, and how students' environment impacts their English practice. Institutional challenges in this study are described as the general position of higher education in Libya, and the problems students encounter when joining this education system. Lastly, structural challenges were related to overall teaching program coherence. They included the lack of fundamental curriculum design standards and poorly clarified policy of English language teaching and learning.

Furthermore, there are some implications for future research, Students, lecturers, parents, and the community should understand the impact of culture on language and, where possible, put aside cultural barriers. One of this study's findings indicated that a cultural challenge is a mismatch between students' cultural characteristics and expectations and the foreign language and how students' environment impacts their English practice. So, we need further research to address this issue. Also, it is needed concerning the specific English language situation in other departments to explore how students can overcome these challenges.

Based on the findings of this small-scale study in Libyan universities, it suggests pertinent aspects for further research; investigation of English language challenges is still new in the Libyan universities' settings. This work may be a starting point for reconsidering and developing the English language curriculum at Libyan schools and universities. It could also create other research opportunities to investigate language use or other areas of English language teaching at

universities. Moreover, to understand and evaluate English language use in the university, there is a need for more investigation of each discipline's language requirements.

From the study findings, the following series of recommendations have arisen: When designing an English language curriculum, lecturers have to consider students' needs. It is recommended that the English language be used in computer science (as an example) as the primary communication tool to perform various activities. The curriculum should be designed specifically for each field, not only the same generic design for all study fields. It should also correspond with what the students learn in their academic and professional areas.

As Libyan students are classified as EFL students, learners do not communicate with native English speakers. Therefore, English language teaching methods should be changed from traditional passive lectures to active group learning to be easily exposed to English language use. The curricula should focus on students' challenges and provide ways to accelerate the acquisition of English language competence by eliminating these challenges.

Furthermore, lecturers should recognize the role of oral language in enhancing students' reading abilities. When students have a strong foundation in listening and speaking, their reading and writing skills tend to advance as well. They need to adopt various strategies that foster these skills. As a result, the university ought to establish a centre for communication skills and a language laboratory to support students in acquiring and learning the language effectively.

The limitations of this research study stem from several reasons, such as, for example, the sample size, time, and language. The major limitation of this research is common to all applications of the mixed methods approach. Regardless of in-depth focus and rich information, it was time-consuming, especially during data analysis. The number of participants was limited by the small number of faculty members as there were only three departments in three faculties that participated in the study. Moreover, it was not easy to collect my data because of the COVID-19 epidemic, as everything was closed, especially during the lockdown. However, during the data collection phase, I tried to obtain all the information needed. The findings may not be generalizable because the study is mainly concerned with three faculties in one Libyan university. Lastly, the researcher could not find relevant studies or resources for this study in Libya because there is limited research on English teaching studies at Libyan universities.

Acknowledgments

ORCID

Dr. Entisar Khalifa aljoundi: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3546-2729

Prof. Ayub Sheik: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8633-3740

Disclaimer

I hereby declare that this research paper is based on my PhD thesis, which can be found on the Edgewood Campus at the University of KwaZulu-Natal website.
https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/items/0e0210d7-c6d1-42f4-bd3d-1565f011f211
https://hdl.handle.net/10413/22665

Bio

Dr. Entisar Khalifa Aljoundi is a senior lecturer at the English language department, College of Humanities, Alasmarya Islamic University, Zliten, Libya. Also, she is a post-doctoral researcher at the Linguistics department at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. Her research predilections are EFL language acquisition research, and cognitive and Psycholinguistics research.

Prof. Ayub Sheik is the Head of the Department of Language Education at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa. His research predilections are academic literacy for postgraduates, the teaching of poetry and the supervision of postgraduate students in Education. His book, Wopko Jensma: a monograph: The interface between poetry and schizophrenia was published by Brill in 2024.

References

Abuklaish, A. (2014). Investigating the language needs of undergraduate science students in Libya [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Southampton]. UK. https://www.academia.edu/63362851

Abu Rass, R. (2015). Challenges face Arab students in writing well-developed paragraphs in English. *English Language Teaching, 8*(10), 49-59. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1079082.pdf

Akbari, Z. (2016). The study of EFL students' perceptions of their problems, needs and concerns over learning English: The case of MA paramedical students. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 232*, 24-34. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.10.006

Alahmari, M. (2021). Self-regulation and linguistic competence in language learning: A socio-cultural theoretic perspective. *Journal of Research in Language & Translation, 1*(1), 17-33. https://doi.org/10.33948/JRLT-KSU-1-1-2

Alam Khan, A. I. (2011). Challenges of teaching/learning English and management. *Global Journal of Human Social Science, 11*(8), 69-80. https://globaljournals.org/GJHSS_Volume11/9-Challenges-of-Teaching-Learning-English-and-Management.pdf

Alanaz, M. J. M., & Widin, J. (2018). Exploring the role of teacher talk in Saudi EFL classrooms: Importance of F-move in developing students' spoken skills. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ, 9*(1), 307-320. https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no1.22

Alhabahba, M. M., Pandian, A., & Mahfoodh, O. H. A. (2016). English language education in Jordan: Some recent trends and challenges. *Cogent Education, 3*, 1156809. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/297895153

Alharbi, Y. G. (2019). A review of the current status of English as a foreign language (EFL) education in Saudi Arabia. *Global Journal of Education and Training, 1*(2), 1-8. www.gjetonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/vol2-Issue1-Paper1.pdf

Al-Hussein, S. M. A. (2014). Teaching English as a foreign language in Libya. *Scientific Research Journal (SCIRJ, 2*(11), 58-64. https://portal.arid.my/Publications/d034ac9f-0b7c-4b.pdf

Al-Jamal, D. A., & Al-Jamal, G. A. (2014). An investigation of the difficulties faced by EFL undergraduates in speaking skills. *English Language Teaching, 7*(1), 19-27. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1075655.pdf

Al-Johani, H. M. (2009). Finding a way forward: The impact of teachers' strategies, beliefs, and knowledge on teaching English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia [Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Strathclyde].

Aljoundi, E. K. (2015). Idea generation and planning time in second language academic writing: An empirical investigation at Howard College Campus [Master's dissertation, University of Kwazulu-Natal]. https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/handle/10413/13671

Almesaar, O. (2024). English language in Saudi Arabia: Vision 2030 in the historical prism of a clash between cultures. *Frontiers in Communication, 9*, 1205167. http://dx.doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2024.1205167

Al-Nafjan, E. F., & Alhawsawi, S. (2022). A scoping review of research on tertiary English writing in the Saudi context. *Ampersand, 9*, 100090. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.amper.2022.100090

Al-Omairi, M. (2020). The use of vocabulary learning strategies by EFL and EAP undergraduate university learners in the Iraqi context. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ): Special Issue on the English Language in Iraqi Context*, 111-120. https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/elt2.7

Alrashidi, O., & Phan, H. (2015). Education context and English teaching and learning in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: An overview. *English Language Teaching, 8*(5), 33-44. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276163401

AlShebeeb, A., & Alshehri, A. (2024). Leveraging AI for vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation enhancement. *Journal of Research in Language and Translation, 4*(1), 86–108. https://doi.org/10.33948/JRLT-KSU-4-1-5

Azarnoosh, M. (2014). When learning English is compulsory at school. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature, 3*(6), 102-112. https://www.academia.edu/79078494

Barrios, T. B., & Garay, N. G. (2020). Suggestions to increase oral participation in an at-risk Chilean public primary EFL classroom. *Arab World English Journal, 11*(1), 12-28. https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no1.2

Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report, 13*(4), 544-559. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228621600

Bradford, A. (2016). Toward a typology of implementation challenges facing English-medium instruction in higher education: Evidence from Japan. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 20*(6), 339-356. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301887658

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage.

Christiansen, I., Bertram, C., & Land, S. (2010). *Understanding research*. UKZN Faculty of Education.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education* (7th ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203720967

Creswell, J. (2020). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Pearson Education.

Maree, K., & Van der Westhuizen, C. (2007). Planning a research proposal. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (pp. 24-44). Van Schalk Publishers.

Sarantakos, S. (2005). *Social research* (3rd ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.

Solak, E., & Bayar, A. (2015). Current challenges in English language learning in Turkish EFL context. *Participatory Educational Research (PER, 2*(1), 106-115. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273903502