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Journal Policy

Found in 2023, BRU ELT Journal is a peer-reviewed and open-access electronic journal with the main aim to publish fully refereed high-quality original research articles in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) around the world for the benefit of English language teachers and researchers. The journal welcomes articles from local and foreign academics, researchers, graduate students, and policymakers. All articles are required to be in English.

The Thai Journal Citation Index Center (TCI) requested cooperation from journal editors in the selection of a specific journal's sub-areas stored in the TCI database. As a result, each journal is permitted to select 1-5 sub-areas for the papers published in the journal. In this regard, the "BRU ELT JOURNAL" would like to declare that beginning with the 1st Volume, 1st Issue (January-April 2023), articles covering the main subject area, Social Sciences, will be accepted for publication. Furthermore, these articles must be pertinent to the subject areas of Arts and Humanities, and they must cover these two sub-subject areas: 1) Language and Linguistics, and 2) Literature and Literary Theory.

BRU ELT Journal accepts articles relevant to the following themes: English as an International Language, World Englishes (WE), Teaching and Learning English as a Second Language (ESL), as an Additional Language (EAL) or as a Foreign Language (TEFL), ESP and EAP, Applied Linguistics and Corpus Linguistics, Approaches and Methods in English Education, Culture and Literature in English Education, English Language Curriculum and Teaching Materials, Language Learning and Acquisition, Language Testing and Evaluation, Life-long Language Learning, Multimedia and ICT in ELT, Teacher Training and Education, Interpretation and Translation Studies, and Discourse and Interlanguage Pragmatics.

The journal is published three times a year: January-April, May-August, and September-December. However, BRU ELT JOURNAL, with no more than two (2) issues per year, might be published as a special issue upon joining in the special academic events of national and international conferences held both in Thailand and other countries.

All articles in this journal must be reviewed by at least three (3) external peer reviewers in the relevant fields from different institutes. More importantly, the authors' and reviewers' identities are concealed from each other (Double-blind peer review) in order to have the articles with high quality and academic standards. The articles submitted for publication in this journal have not already been published *elsewhere* or are not under consideration by peer reviewers for publication in other journals. The authors must strictly comply with the reference system and the criteria for the publication of academic or research articles set by the journal.

Turnitin is used to check all submitted manuscripts for plagiarism, and the similarity score for plagiarism check is not more than 20%. We use the American Psychological Association (APA) style citation system, 7th edition, and you can discover more information at: www.apa.org.

Editor's Note

The BRU ELT Journal's primary objective is to disseminate original research articles of exceptional quality within the domain of English Language Teaching (ELT). These articles are expected to be pertinent to two specific sub-fields, namely Language and Linguistics, and Literature and Literary Theory. In relation to this matter, the articles falling within the following subsequent subjects have been deemed acceptable: English as an International Language, World Englishes (WE), teaching and learning English as a Second Language (ESL), as an Additional Language (EAL) or as a Foreign Language (TEFL), ESP and EAP, Applied Linguistics and Corpus Linguistics, Approaches and Methods in English Education, Culture and Literature in English Education, English Language Curriculum and Teaching Materials, Language Learning and Acquisition, Language Testing and Evaluation, Life-long Language Learning, Multimedia and ICT in ELT, Teacher Training and Education, Translation Studies, and Discourse and Interlanguage Pragmatics.

There are six articles from three countries have been published in this current issue, two from Myanmar, three from the Philippines, and one from Yemen. Each of these articles have already been blind-reviewed by three peer reviewers from various institutes. Moreover, Turnitin was used to ensure that each article's plagiarism or similarity index was less than 20%. The articles published in BRU ELT JOURNAL also have DOIs (Digital Object Identifiers), which are utilized to uniquely identify an article via URL. This will help a reader in locating the cited article.

In closing, I would like to sincerely express my gratitude and appreciation to all those who have contributed, including authors, external reviewers, editorial board, and readers, for their valuable academic aid and support. The viability of BRU ELT JOURNAL is highly dependent on their continued scholarly contributions.



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Akkarapon Nuemaihom
Editor-in-Chief

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Teaching Speaking Skills through Self-Learning Modules: A Case of a School in a Hinterland

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Abstract

Teaching speaking skills during pandemic times seemed challenging not only for the learners but also among the teachers. This study explored the experiences of junior high school teachers in a hinterland school who taught speaking skills through the use of Self-Learning Modules (SLM). The case study identified six language educators who were purposefully chosen based on the following criteria: they are licensed language educators; they are currently teaching in the Department of Education, and they have expressed willingness to participate in the study. To understand their experiences, a Qualitative Case Study research design was employed. In-depth interviews were conducted to gather the data. The responses were analyzed through Braun and Victoria Clarke's six-phase approach to coding and theme development. From the responses of the participants, three themes emerged namely: teachers as collaborators of the educational process, teachers experiencing complexities of teaching speaking skills, and teachers' developmental strategies. These themes reflect the complex situation of teaching speaking skills among teachers in a hinterland school. Facilitating learning in speaking skills during the pandemic is a confluence of challenges and job fulfillment. Further empirical investigation may be conducted to verify the findings in other hinterland schools.

Keywords: self-learning modules, adaptability, resiliency, modular

Introduction

The public health emergency brought about by COVID-19 calls for the Department of Education (DepEd) to be innovative and resourceful in delivering quality, accessible, relevant and liberating education. In response to this emergency, DepEd developed the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) to ensure that learners are provided with opportunities through different learning delivery. By its legal mandate, DepEd has promulgated issues on flexible learning and materials, specifically, DepEd Order No. (DO) 21, s. 2019, or the Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Program. These policy guidelines aim to set the standards and specifications for providing learning resources in implementing the BE-LCP. In response to this, DepEd has endorsed the use of Self-Learning Modules (SLMs) in education, which has brought changes in the landscape of language learning and has set English learning proficiency even more challenging, as observed. Hence, this awakened significant inquiries in the teaching and learning process, quality of instruction, the layout of knowledge, and the social role of education in times of crisis. SLMs are often

noted as an alternative learning approach that will aid students as they manage the transition to flexible teaching and learning. The current situation transformed the students into researchers by making them learning outside the school boundaries, reinforcing their critical thinking, self-learning, and bringing about a change in their achievement of high educational outcomes (Grow, 1991). For the Former DepEd Secretary Leonor Briones, SLMs caters to the needs and situations of learners.

When the pandemic began, numerous educators who had experienced teaching English through SLMs changed their methodology of conveying guidance and adapted to the need of ensuring students' progress in their speaking skills and abilities.

The abrupt change of the mode of instruction using SLMs has been difficult for the educators because it affects the students' performance. The researcher observed in her school, that the quality of modules can affect the students' learning and acquisition of speaking skills. If the modules clearly contain contextualized communicative directions that the students can follow so that they can apply it in a relatable setting or scenario, then students can probably learn to become fluent and articulate in speaking. However, this can only be achieved by improving the quality of modules that students can easily follow and navigate so that their theoretical learning can be translated to practical use.

Modules must not only teach the rules of grammar, but most of all, it should contain sample communicative discourses that students may use to practice orally. Also, it must have clear directions that students can easily follow for transfer of learning. However, the problem comes when there is less exposure to two-way transactional communication between and among students and teachers. Teaching speaking must involve exchanges of discourse, interactive conversations, and constant feedback to improve the articulation of ideas when expressed orally. This study explored experiences of teachers on facilitating the teaching of speaking using SLMs during pandemic times when movements and face-to-face interactions were restricted.

Framework

This study is grounded on the following theories: Constructivist Theory, Independent Learning Theory or Self-Directed Learning Theory, and Speaking Theory. According to constructivism theory, the greatest way to gain knowledge is through a process of contemplation and active mental construction. (McLeod, 2019). It makes sense of how individuals secure information and retain it. It claims that rather than passively absorbing information, learners learn best when they actively engage in possibilities for progress. As students and teachers work together to create information, learning is inherently a social cycle anchored in a social environment. Furthermore, constructivist theories take into account the extraction of sensory stimuli as well as its evaluation, interpretation, and backward arrangement. This idea also suggests that people gain knowledge and meaning from their interactions. Given that discernment is a result of mental development, this is one way to approach teaching and learning. Students therefore acquire knowledge by relating new information to what they already know. On the other hand, Independent Learning Theory (Knowles, 1975) or Self-directed Learning (SDL) Theory, portrays a cycle wherein people step up, regardless of the aid of others in determining their educational needs, forming learning objectives, recognizing sources, and carrying out suitable learning techniques, and assessing learning results. As indicated by this theory, students become progressively

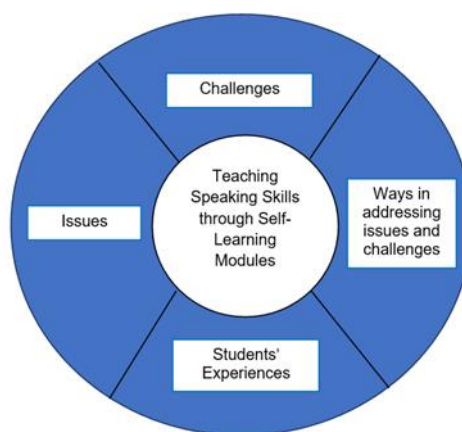
independent as they mature. "SDL can be considered as advancing without help from anyone else (auto-arrangement), instead of learning through the activities of others (hetero-development)" (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2012). Subagia (2020) has depicted three principal objectives for SDL: to improve students' capacity, cultivate groundbreaking learning, and advance emancipatory knowledge and social activity. Despite the potential use of distance learning during the time of pandemic, quality of instruction, independence, hidden costs, time, family support, misuse of technology, and the attitudes of teachers, students and administrators were some of the seen drawbacks. On the context of online based learning, found out that online-based platform for learning is new to students and they lack the elementary computer skills while others were newcomers in the internet. Supervisors for distance learning also faced a lot of concerns like time constraints, official restrictions, irregular contacts and technology itself. On modular based learning, noted that teachers failed to provide written or oral feedback on the assessment of learning especially in large classes/sections. They further noted that modular instruction is below expectation. Likewise, narrated that modular approach had some challenges especially on getting engage students who lack interest in studying. They further noted that modular approach lacks the adequate supply of facilities at the required quality and quantity. Nevertheless, the literature of studies holds insufficient data on the ways how students cope with these problems encountered in distance learning. Reinforcing Vygotsky's Social Constructivism Theory, Kearsley and Schneiderman's (1998) Self-directed Learning Theory asserts that students' must take the initiative and responsibility for their own learning in order to engage in self-directed learning. The decision of what is worthwhile learning is left up to the individual. Learning that is self-directed can take place inside and outside of official educational institutions. When educators are involved, they should act as facilitators rather than carriers of knowledge. According to Chandler (2016), the conception of some personal control over either one or both of the preparation (objectives) and administration (support) of the growth opportunity is typical for most conceptualizations. Subagia (2020) likewise highlights that a definitive objective of independent learning is not entirely independent learning since it involves a degree. Independent learning does not altogether rely upon the open door yet and the capacity to go with learning choices.

As for Garrison (2017), it ought to be viewed as a cooperative cycle between the educator and the student in an appropriate learning circumstance. According to a fundamental perspective, lessening self-course to an issue of outside control is inadequate. Subagia (2020) asserts that because of our interdependence, knowledge is socially determined. The theory likewise hypothesizes three means to accomplish commitment: an accentuation on a more extensive acknowledgment of the associated, cooperative parts of independent learning, and in order to generate and affirm substantial and beneficial learning results, students are convinced to assume private responsibility and joint control of the mental (self-observing) and logical (self-administration) processes.

The first is Piaget's hypothesis of the mental turn of events, and the other is Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of the mental turn of events. Candy (1991) contends that the connection of these hypotheses to independent learning is self-evident. Concerning Piaget, interest is the way to get information and learn new things in a meaningful manner. Piaget's constructivist hypothesis of improvement is the possibility that further developed types of discernment are built by the person through a course of independent" or "self-directed" movement, as per Knowles (1975). Regarding Vygotsky and the idea of a platform, Candy (1991) emphasized the educator's job in elevating a climate helpful for independent learning. Despite the potential use of distance learning during the epidemic, some downsides were observed, including quality of education, independence, hidden costs, time, family support, availability of resources, and the attitudes of teachers, students, and administrators. Teachers failed to provide written or spoken feedback on learning assessment in modular-based learning, particularly in big classes/sections. Similarly, it was stated that the modular approach had significant difficulties, particularly in engaging students who were disinterested in studying. They also stated that the modular method does not provide an enough supply of amenities in the requisite quality and quantity. Nonetheless, the research literature contains scant evidence on how students cope with the issues experienced with modular learning.

Figure 1

Visual Representation of Prevailing Themes on the Teachers Educational Experiences Using Self-Learning Modules



Objective of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to describe the issues and challenges of English teachers in teaching English speaking skills through Self-Learning Modules. There is ample evidence demonstrating the failure of schools for students at-risk. The use of a constructivist approach in service-learning in an alternative mode of learning was examined in an effort to determine whether self-learning modules' participation contributes positively to academic, personal, and civic gain for students, and to examine student and teacher views regarding the overall outcomes of self-learning modules in teaching speaking skills.

Methods

Qualitative research begins with assumptions and the use of interpretive/theoretical frameworks that inform the study or research problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry such as the collection of data in a natural setting, sensitivity to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is both inductive and deductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and its contribution to the literature or a call for change (Creswell, 2013, p. 44). Qualitative research is a mature field of study with its own literature base, research journals, special interest groups, and regularly scheduled conferences. Indeed, staying current is a daunting task for any single individual (Van Maanen, 2011). The qualitative, interpretive, or naturalistic research paradigm defines the methods and techniques most suitable for collecting and analyzing data. Qualitative inquiry, which focuses on meaning in context, requires a data collection instrument that is sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data. Humans are best suited for this task, especially because interviewing, observing, and analyzing are activities central to qualitative research (Merriam, 2016).

Result and Discussion

This study explored the exceptional case of how teachers facilitate teaching of speaking during pandemic times using only the SLMs. Studying the underpinnings of how senior high school teachers experience teaching of speaking without the actual interaction or face-to-face engagement with their students revealed significant challenges and ways of coping of teachers in a very challenging situation. A qualitative framework was utilized to design the study. Case study methods guided the data collection and analysis. The results presented in this chapter describe the experience of the case. To study about the case of these teachers in the hinterland, the research framework has been established based on this central question: How do the teachers facilitate the development of students' speaking skills using self-learning modules? Chapter Four presents' findings and discussion that emerged from the data that were collected through multiple sources.

Primary Participants

There were six primary participants in the study. These participants were chosen to take part in the ongoing endeavor given the following criteria: they ought to have extraordinary knowledge, experience, and interest in the phenomenon under study (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011; Patton, 2015), they ought to be tenured English educators who had experienced self-learning modules as an instruction. They were chosen purposefully, and they came from the same school.

Participant 1 is Mari. She has been teaching in DepEd for five years and ten months. She's currently the Reading Coordinator of the said school.

Participant 2 is Cris. She has been teaching in DepEd for four years and seven months. She's currently the LRMSD Coordinator of the said school.

Participant 3 is Liza. She has been teaching in DepEd for twelve years. She's currently the NDEP Coordinator of the said school.

Participant 4 is Shine. She has been teaching in DepEd for sixteen years nine months. She's currently the ACAD Coordinator and SBAC of the said school.

Participant 5 is Jen. She has been teaching in DepEd for nine years nine months. She's currently the School Paper Adviser of the said school.

Participant 6 is Rick. He has been teaching in DepEd for twelve years and four months. He's currently the SHS Coordinator at the same time the School's Prefect of Students' Discipline Coordinator.

My primary participants consisted of six high school English teachers from a hinterland school in Southwest II District. To identify common patterns with great variation between each of the three cases, the case study component of this piece of research utilized maximum variation sampling (Patton, 1990) for selecting interview participants. Patton (1990) defines maximum variation sampling as "purposeful sampling [that] aims at capturing and describing the central themes or principal outcomes that cut across a lot of participants or program variation" (p. 172). Maximum variation sampling (Patton, 1990) yields, "high-quality, detailed descriptions of each case, which are useful for documenting uniqueness and important shared patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity" (p. 172).

Secondary Participants

The secondary participants consisted of seven high school students from a hinterland school in Southwest II District. The secondary participants provided me with additional data. I interviewed seven Junior High School learners for a period lasting one hour. I met with each learner in a classroom as this was convenient and comfortable for them. Each of the seven learners were selected purposively and based on the fact that they were mentioned by one or more of the primary participants as being influential in the utilization of self-learning modules.

Presentation of Findings

The findings are presented based on the central research question: How do the teachers facilitate the development of students' speaking skills using self-learning modules? The data that were gathered based on the various sources are presented here in themes and categories. From the categories, three themes emerged: 1) Teachers as Collaborators of the Educational Process; (exploring innovative and creative activities, monitoring students' progress), 2) Teachers Experiencing Complexities in Teaching Speaking; (limited availability of resources, inappropriate module activities, and parents' non-observance of getting and retrieval of modules); and 3) Teachers' Developmental Strategies (family involvement, developing new routine and strategies in answering the modules, and utilization of self-learning modules).

Theme One: Teachers as Collaborators in the Educational Process

The narrative of the participants revealed their experiences as hinterland teachers. Facilitating the development of students' speaking skills using the self-learning modules during the pandemic times requires the roles of the teachers as collaborators. From the stories of the participants, teachers as collaborators in the educational process mean exploring innovative and creative activities and monitoring students' progress. These are the categories that defined teachers as collaborators. As collaborators in the educational process, all of them were determined to deliver quality

instruction to their students despite the hurdles of life that they have gone through caused by the pandemic. Category 1. Exploring innovative and creative activities for the students. The narrative of the participants revealed that teachers explored innovative and creative activities. Students in today's society face many stresses from a variety of sources that have a major impact on their psychosocial adjustment and academic performance in school. Category 2. Monitoring Students' Progress The narrative of the participants revealed that teachers constantly monitored the students' progress specifically in learning English speaking skills through self-learning modules. Some students possessed competence or attained some levels of mastery and some were effective in a task or activity since they took it religiously.

The participants even shared that they tried varied teaching strategies that they never experienced before such as the use of MS Teams presentations and even how to use online platforms such as Google Meet though they also emphasized the difficulties of these platforms since most of the students don't have internet connectivity. As much as they could, they took risks for their learning by being productive despite the distance. For example, one of the participants said: "I surveyed to assist students' needs and constant follow up on their progress." (Teacher-Participant 4, IDI, Transcript no.1, page no. 1, line no. 31). In another conversation, the participant added: "Students sent me part of modules that are difficult for them to read and understand, through video calls I help them and let my students read them and speak up their ideas through "Question and Answer" between us. However, those who can't access the internet we do it through phone calls." (Teacher-Participant 2, IDI, Transcript no.2, page no. 2, line no. 79).

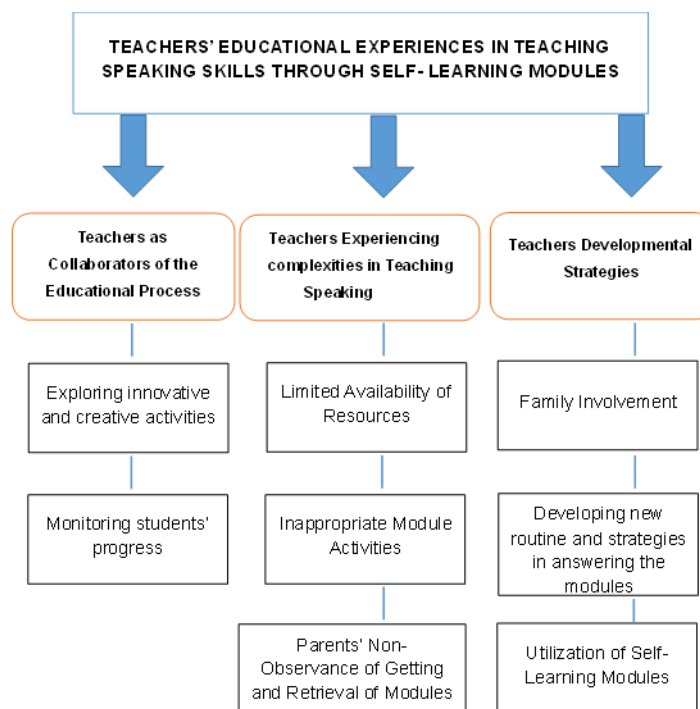
Theme Two: Teachers Experiencing Complexities in Teaching Speaking

The narratives of the participants revealed that the teachers had undergone a lot of obstacles during their self-learning module experience. It was indicated that some hurdles and setbacks happened during those dire times. There were negative feelings that emerged; feeling unmotivated and even frustrations. The transcript of their interviews showed the three categories of obstacles during the pandemic times. Category 1: Limited Availability of Resources The COVID-19 pandemic was a painful example of a natural disaster with such a large global health impact. (Salehi et al., 2020). Every aspect of daily life, including how people work, live, shop, interact with one another, plan for the future, and even educate themselves, has been dramatically and quickly impacted (Lee et al., 2020).

Summary of Findings

Figure 2

The Structural Representation of Prevailing Themes on the Teachers' Educational Experiences Using Self-Learning Modules



Three (3) themes and eight (8) categories emerged, specifically from the utterances expressed by the teachers about their educational experiences in teaching English speaking skills using self-learning modules. These are as follows, in no particular order: Theme 1 Teachers as Collaborators of the Educational Process Categories: 1.1. Exploring innovative and creative activities and 1.2. Monitoring students' progress Theme 2 Teachers Experiencing complexities in Teaching Speaking 2.1 Limited Availability of Resources 2.2. Inappropriate Module Activities 2.3. Parents' Non-Observance of Getting and Retrieval of Modules Theme 3 Teachers Developmental Strategies 3.1. Family Involvement 3.2. Developing new routine and strategies in answering the modules 3.3. Utilization of Self-Learning Modules

The summary of findings presented in this section provides answers to the central research question which were done through in-depth interviews with six language educators, and focus group discussions participated in by the seven students. From the analysis of the study, three main themes emerged to characterize the teaching and learning process of English teachers and students from the hinterland during the pandemic. English Language teachers' theoretical and practical bounds are stretched by the need to manage the transition to flexible teaching and learning. High-quality education through self-learning modules is based on the relationship between teachers and students and the support of parents and other stakeholders.

1. Teachers as collaborators of the educational process unveils their exploration of innovative and creative activities and monitoring of their students.
2. In discussing teachers experiencing complexities in teaching speaking skills, the teacher-participants acknowledged the limited availability of resources, inappropriate module activities, and parents' non-observance of getting and retrieving the modules.
3. The teachers' developmental strategies in teaching speaking through self-learning modules include the involvement of family, developing new routines and strategies in answering the SLMs, and utilization of self-learning modules.

Implications and Conclusions

In this study, children participate in creative and sensory activities tailored fit to their interests. However, facilitating learning during the pandemic is extremely difficult as it requires eliciting students' participation in various activities that should be found in SLMs with high cognizance of the contextualized communicative directions, judicious interactive conversations, and constant feedback to ensure articulation of ideas when expressed by the students orally. Furthermore, Piaget's theory of Constructivism, as cited by Martin (2021) saw students as actively constructing their understanding of the world for themselves and as active seekers of solutions to problems despite the hurdles they encountered during those times. Students learn best when they participate in growth opportunities instead of latently getting data. In this study, English language teachers served as collaborators in the educational process in which students take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes. Based on the given findings, the educational experiences of the teachers in the teaching of English-speaking skills using self-learning modules are challenging. Educators face challenges while engaging in the educational process. As a result, educators become aware of and sensitive to the needs, circumstances, and worldviews of learners from the hinterland. Despite the shortcomings mentioned, educators respond imaginatively to the pedagogical challenges they faced by employing various instructional approaches to provide the students in their classes with quality education. This finding supports the theoretical implications advanced by Piaget and Knowles as regards Constructivism and Independent Learning Theory. Facilitating learning in the new normal necessitates English educators to streamline the use of self-learning modules through creative scaffolding, collaborating, as well as adjusting in their teaching most especially their implementation of contextualized communicative discourses. English educators become more cognizant and deeply aware of the student's needs and interests.

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The Teaching-Testing Nexus: Embracing the Challenges and Opportunities for Optimal Learning Outcomes

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Abstract

This paper adopts a new approach to analyze the interrelationship between teaching, learning, and testing, comparing the dynamic between these significant pedagogical elements. The paper examines how the quality of teaching influences student learning and performance on tests, and how well-designed tests can support and enhance the learning process. Furthermore, the study investigates how testing can be used as a tool to shape and guide teaching strategies, and how teaching can in turn shape testing practices. Drawing on a range of theoretical and empirical literature from the fields of educational psychology, assessment, and instructional design, the paper offers insights into effective teaching and testing practices that promote student learning and engagement, with a special focus on the challenges and limitations of different approaches. The review concludes that a balance between teaching and testing is critical to achieving optimal learning outcomes, and that teachers should adopt student-centered strategies that encourage active engagement with the materials and foster a deep understanding of key concepts. Finally, the paper proposes a conceptual framework for understanding the interplay of teaching and testing, offering practical recommendations for educators to navigate this dynamic educational phenomenon.

Keywords: assessment, feedback, interplay, teaching-testing nexus, learning outcomes

Introduction

The interplay between teaching and testing has long been a topic of debate in the field of education. While these two concepts are often seen as distinct and separate, they are in fact interdependent and closely connected. In order for effective learning to occur, teachers must not only provide instruction but also evaluate student understanding through testing. Similarly, effective testing depends on the quality of teaching that has taken place leading up to the assessment (Chappuis et al., 2012). This study has been devoted to explore the dynamics of the interrelationship between teaching and testing, highlighting the factors that effectively contribute to their interplay and the ways in which operative teaching and testing practices can be optimized to promote student learning and achievement. Hence, it could be argued that assessment practices play a crucial role in shaping the teaching and learning process in education.

The interplay between teaching and testing has been the focus of educational research for decades, with a growing recognition of the importance of assessment practices that promote deeper learning and engagement. The relationship between teaching and testing has undergone significant changes over time, with traditional testing practices giving way to more student-centered, formative assessment practices that support the development of essential skills and competencies (Wenglinsky, 2001). This review paper examines the evolution of research on the interplay between teaching and testing, looking at the key findings and implications of research conducted during different phases of research.

The Interplay of Teaching and Testing

The interplay of teaching and testing refers to the relationship between the instruction provided by a teacher and the evaluation of students learning through testing. Effective teaching involves not only imparting knowledge and skills to students, but also assessing their understanding and progress through various forms of testing. Testing can provide valuable feedback to both students and teachers, helping to identify areas where additional instruction or practice may be needed. However, excessive testing or a focus solely on test scores can also have negative consequences, such as teaching to the test or creating undue stress for students.

There are several stages of teaching and testing interplay. The first is planning which involves setting learning objectives, designing lesson plans, and selecting appropriate assessment methods. The second is the stage of instruction during which the teacher delivers the lesson, using various teaching strategies and techniques to facilitate learning. Consequently, assessment comes at the third stage that involves evaluating students learning through various testing techniques, such as quizzes, exams, and projects. The fourth is the stage of feedback in which the teacher provides feedback to students on their performance, highlighting areas of strengths and weaknesses. Last, but not least, the stage of reflection comes to reflect on the effectiveness of the teaching and testing methods used, and making adjustment as needed to improve student learning outcomes. These stages are cyclical and continuous, as teachers in sequence plan, teach, assess, provide feedback, and finally reflect on their instructional practices to improve student learning (Wenglinsky, 2001).

Based on the review of literature, the interplay of teaching and testing could be divided into three major phases namely: the foundational phase, the transitional phase and the current phase (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Phases of Teaching and Testing Interplay



The three phases of teaching and testing will be discussed in more details in the following subsections.

1. The Foundational Phase (1900s – 1990)

The foundational phase of research on the interplay between teaching and testing began in the early 1900s and continued through the 1990s. During this phase, the focus was on the development and use of traditional testing practices, such as standardized tests and summative assessments (Abrams, 2004; Tayeb, 2019). The primary goal of these assessments was to evaluate student performance and assign grades or rankings based on their scores. The research conducted during this phase of research focused on the technical aspects of testing, such as test construction, reliability, and validity (Madsen, 1983). The emphasis was on ensuring that tests were accurate and could be used to make reliable and valid decisions about student performance.

Research during the foundational phase of research also focused on the use of norm-referenced tests to compare student performance to a group of peers. These tests were designed to rank students in order of their performance, with the top performers receiving the highest grades and the bottom performers receiving the lowest grades. The research conducted during this phase based on the assumption that student performance was normally distributed and that a bell curve could be used to rank students based on their scores.

While the research during the foundational phase provided a foundation for later research on the interplay between teaching and testing, it has been criticized for its narrow focus on testing and its limited understanding of the complexities of the teaching and learning process. This research did not consider the impact of testing on the teaching and learning process, nor did it consider the wide range of factors that can influence student performance, such as motivation, engagement, and socio-economic background.

Despite its limitations, the research conducted during the foundational phase of research on the interplay between teaching and testing provided important insights into the technical aspects of testing, such as test construction, reliability, and validity. This research laid the foundation for later research that focused on more student-centered, formative assessment practices that promote deeper learning and engagement. The research during this phase also highlighted the importance of using assessments that are aligned with learning objectives and that provide accurate and reliable information about student performance.

2. The Transitional Phase (1990s – 2010s)

The transitional phase of research on the interplay between teaching and testing began in the 1990s and continued through the 2010s. During this phase, there was a shift towards more student-centered, formative assessment practices that promote deeper learning and engagement. This phase of research emphasized the importance of feedback, personalized learning, and formative assessment practices that support the development of essential skills and competencies (Popham, 2008).

Research during the transitional phase of research explored the relationship between teaching and testing, highlighting the need for assessments to be aligned with learning objectives and focused on supporting student learning. This research also emphasized the importance of feedback in the assessment process, emphasizing the need for timely and constructive feedback that supports student learning and engagement (Long & Doughty, 2011).

During the transitional phase, researchers also explored the potential of peer and self-assessment as a means of promoting deeper learning and engagement. The importance of involving students in the assessment process was recognized, allowing them to take ownership of their learning and engage in self-assessment and peer-assessment activities.

The research conducted during the transitional phase of research on the interplay between teaching and testing provided important insights into the potential of formative assessment practices to support student learning and engagement. This research highlighted the importance of using assessments that are aligned with learning objectives and that provide accurate and reliable information about student performance. The transitional phase research also emphasized the importance of feedback, self-assessment, and peer-assessment in promoting deeper learning and engagement (Zhang & Zheng, 2018).

Despite the progress made during the transitional phase of research, there were still limitations and challenges to be addressed. One of these limitations was the challenge of assessing higher-order thinking skills, such as critical thinking and problem-solving. Another challenge was the need to address equity and diversity in assessment practices, ensuring that assessments were fair and accessible to all students.

3. The Current Phase

The current phase of research on the interplay between teaching and testing emphasizes the potential of innovative approaches to assessment that leverage technology and support the development of essential skills and competencies. Researchers are exploring the use of emerging assessment technologies, such as adaptive testing, learning analytics, and digital portfolios, to support personalized learning and provide timely and constructive feedback to students. These technologies allow for more individualized and tailored assessment experiences, where students can receive feedback that is specific to their needs and learning goals (Zhang & Zheng, 2018).

The current phase of research is also focused on the importance of involving students in the assessment process. Researchers recognize that students who are actively involved in the assessment process are more likely to take ownership of their learning and engage in self-assessment and peer-assessment activities. This phase of research is exploring the use of technology to provide opportunities for student involvement in the assessment process, such as through the use of student-generated rubrics and self-assessment tools.

Another key focus of the current phase of research is the development of culturally responsive assessments. There is a growing recognition of the need for assessments to be culturally relevant and responsive to the diverse needs of students (Tayeb et al., 2014). Researchers are exploring the potential of culturally responsive assessments to ensure that assessments are fair, valid, and reliable for all students, regardless of their cultural background or language proficiency.

The current phase of research is also addressing the need to assess higher-order thinking skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. These skills are increasingly important in the 21st century, where complex problem-solving and innovation are critical to success in many fields (Ramos & Inocian, 2022). Researchers are exploring the use of performance-based assessments, such as project-based assessments and performance tasks, to assess these skills. These assessments are

designed to allow students to demonstrate their understanding and application of knowledge and skills in real-world contexts.

Despite the progress made during the current phase of research, there are still challenges to be addressed. One of these challenges is the need to ensure that assessment technologies are accessible and equitable for all students. Researchers are exploring the use of universal design for learning (UDL) principles to ensure that assessments are accessible to students with diverse learning needs. Another challenge is the need to develop appropriate assessment models that can effectively assess essential skills and competencies required in the 21st century (Ramos & Inocian, 2022). Researchers are exploring the potential of innovative assessment models that can effectively assess these skills while still providing valid, reliable, and fair assessments.

Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, it could be argued that the interplay of teaching and testing is a multifaceted relationship which is vital and essential in education. While teaching is the process of transferring knowledge and skills to students, testing is the process of evaluating the level of understanding and mastery of those skills and knowledge. Hence, teaching and testing are seen as two proactive pedagogical elements which are entwined but each has its own objectives. Consequently, they require a clear understanding of the objectives of each one and to ensure that both lead the success of students in their learning. It is important to mention that teachers must provide an appropriate level of instruction and resources to equip students to master the test. In other side, testing helps to identify strengths and weaknesses and as such informs the usability and effectiveness of instruction. Teachers use test scores to inform their teaching methods, reinforce areas of strength, and increase areas that students are struggling with. Therefore, it is always argued that continuous assessment, through testing, sharpens the teaching process and ensures optimal learning for students. In conclusion, effective teaching and testing are crucial to the success of education. Accordingly, teachers need to effectively teach the required skills and knowledge, while testing evaluates the students' mastery level of those skills and knowledge. When used correctly, testing results inform teaching strategies and lead to the improvement of student learning.

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English Conversational Skills of Grade 11 Students as Predictors of Their Performance in Oral Communication

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Abstract

Conversation is embedded in speaking activities and performance tasks in any subject area. However, students struggle to engage in conversations, especially if the English language is used as the medium of instruction, affecting their performances. This study examined the Grade 11 students' conversational skills in terms of attentiveness, composure, coordination, expressiveness, and grammar as predictors of their performance in oral communication. A quantitative descriptive correlational design was used. Twenty-seven Grade 11 students were chosen via the purposeful sampling method. In data collection, the researcher video-recorded a conversation between each student and the researcher. The conversations were assessed by the researcher and interrater using the Conversational Skills Rating Scale. The semester grade of the students' oral communication performance was also taken and analyzed through descriptive statistics. A regression analysis was done to determine if the participants' conversational skills predicted their performance in oral communication. Data reveal that participants' conversational skills were generally good which implies that students have sufficient conversational skills but still need to be developed. Moreover, participants' conversational skills significantly influence their oral communication performance and among the five skills, expressiveness stands out as having a significant influence on their performance in oral communication. It is recommended that teachers implement engaging speaking activities in the teaching of oral communication.

Keywords: conversational skills, oral communication, predictors

Introduction

English is now the primary language for worldwide communication and, as such, is integral to information and knowledge in the fields of commerce, technology, education across many disciplines, health, and science. Interactions with global communities have led to an emphasis on English as the dominant language. English is learned in the contemporary world for its obvious practical importance, as a way to connect at the international level, and as a means to optimize one's access to different opportunities in the employment sector (Estanislao, 2013). Thus, students must acquire English oral communication skills, specifically conversation skills, as they should be able to communicate effectively in their personal lives, future workplaces, social contacts, and political initiatives and to keep up with the globally competitive world.

Most people communicate through conversation in their daily lives. Conversation refers to two or more people exchanging words on a common topic (Heo & Lee, 2012). It differs from other types of interactive oral speech as it is spontaneous, the subject is unpredictable, and the characters may be familiar and improvised (Cestero, 2017). Giving and taking turns and the capacity to handle conversation subjects are vital for a good conversation. (Choi & Lee, 2013). A conversation not only consists of words but also actions, gestures, and other forms of nonverbal cues that all contribute to the meaning of the words said.

Conversations involve speaking. Akkakoson (2016) posited that, among other language skills, speaking is assumed to be the most stressful. Due to a lack of sufficient knowledge on how to carry out conversations, a shortage of opportunities to speak the target language, and limitations in the use of a second language, students speaking competence declines over time. Cabigon (2015) cited in his article in the Philippine Daily Inquirer that the quality of English is deteriorating in the Philippines and that there is an increasing number of unfilled jobs that require certain levels of English communication skills.

To combat the existing problem, the Department of Education embedded in the K–12 curriculum the teaching of communication and included the subject of oral communication in context to expose learners to different speaking activities and techniques to become good speakers. Most activities that students undertake in this subject are speaking activities, of which a big part is engaging in conversations. Therefore, students should have adequate conversational skills to be able to perform well in the different oral communication tasks.

However, the researcher observed that students find it hard to converse and express their thoughts and ideas using English. Students perform poorly in several of their classes due to poor oral communication skills. They cannot answer in straight, spontaneous English when asked a question, and it is even more challenging when one wants to have a conversation with them. This observation was also evident in the study by Separa et al. (2019), which showed that many college students in the Philippines are still not comfortable using the English language, especially when required to do recitations, reports, oral presentations, and even engage in casual conversations.

The biggest challenge for teachers is finding effective ways to teach students to converse effectively and acquire adequate conversational skills for them to be able to perform well in different subjects, especially in Oral Communication. The implications of conversational skills in terms attentiveness, coordination, composure, expressiveness, and grammar as predictors of the performance in oral communication of high school students are yet unexplored. It is due to this premise that the researcher investigated the conversational skills of Grade 11 students as predictors of their performance in Oral Communication.

Research Objectives

This study intends to determine if the conversational skills of the Grade 11 students predict their performance in oral communication. Specifically, it aims to know the participants' level of English conversational skills considering attentiveness, composure, coordination, expressiveness, and grammar; the participants' performance in oral communication; and if the participants' conversational skills significantly influence their performance in oral communication class activities.

Methodology

This research employed the quantitative descriptive correlational design which was complemented with data emanating from a video recording of a conversation of each student which the researcher and interrater assessed using the Conversational Skills Rating Scale (CSRS) along with their semester rating of their performances in Oral Communication class. Twenty-seven Grade 11 students participated in this study. Frequency distribution, mean score, mean percentage score and regression analysis were used to analyze the data.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents the frequency, percentage, and mean distribution of the participants' conversational skills in terms of attentiveness. Results reveal that their level of attentiveness was good, as indicated by the overall mean of 2.72. Looking closely at the figures, it can be seen that 37.04 percent of the students had good attentiveness skills. This implies that students have sufficient but neither noticeable nor excellent skills. Students have the necessary attentiveness skills but still need to be developed. Although some students care about, are interested in, and pay attention to a conversation partner, there are still others who lack this skill and need further exposure to conversations to develop it.

Table 1

Frequency, Percentage, and Mean Distribution of the Participants' Conversational Skills (Attentiveness)

Range	Description	Frequency	Percentage
4.51-5.00	Outstanding	1	3.70
3.51-4.50	Very Good	5	18.52
2.51-3.50	Good	10	37.04
1.51-2.50	Fair	9	33.33
1.00-1.50	Poor	2	7.41
Total		27	100.00
Overall Mean		2.72	
Interpretation		Good	
SD		0.90	

In the specific indicators, the highest rating is concerning *leaning toward the partner* (M=3.00). Students faced their speaking partners but others showed hesitations when conversing since they were conversing with the researcher who was not in their age group or already had a higher degree or status in life. This result was supported by the Communication Accommodation Theory (Giles, 1973) which stated that individuals adjust their conversation while talking with someone who they believe had higher standards and other traits than them and individuals utilize communication to express their opinions toward one another, and as such, it served as a barometer of the extent of social distance between them.

Speaking about self was rated next to the highest ($M=2.91$) which implies that students were able to share information or talk about themselves. Students would answer questions about themselves but this was limited to questions about personal information. When they were asked to share an experience, they hesitated to answer. This was because they didn't have to think of an answer when giving information about themselves. If the researcher would ask to share an experience or an opinion about a certain topic, some of the students only shared shallow information and would not elaborate it further and some would just even smile and not answer. According to Brown (2001) in Harris (2019), the most difficult aspect of speaking for students was the interactive element of communication. People engage in a process of meaning negotiation as they communicate, especially when talking. As a result, students frequently struggle with how to express themselves, when to speak, and other aspects of dialogue.

Among the indicators, *encouragements or agreements* ($M = 2.44$) got the lowest rating. Students would not provide verbal reinforcements to their partner, including verbal affirmations. Instead of saying something, they would just smile or nod in response to statements. They would prefer to respond silently through nonverbal language. Chowdhury et al. (2017) found that silence indicated that the next speaker required more time to respond to the previous speaker's turn and that silence, particularly a long one, indicated hesitation or indecisiveness in a speaker.

Speaking about the partner ($M = 2.52$) was rated next to the lowest. Some students made no comments or inquiries about the partner. This implied that students did not comment on the ideas presented by their speaking partner or give their own opinion about what was said. The same result was found in a pretest conducted by Kaboyashi (2013) that showed common issues in speaking, such as students not helping each other to communicate, like no rephrasing comments.

Table 2 presents the frequency, percentage, and mean distribution of the participants' conversational skills in terms of composure. The findings show that the pupils maintained good composure, as evidenced by the aggregate mean of 3.02. The statistics show that 10.4%, or 10 out of 27, of the pupils demonstrated good composure. The necessary skills that must be cultivated are already present in students. While most students make an effort to appear assertively or confidently and avoid anxiety cues, some nonetheless exhibit uneasiness during conversations.

Table 2

Frequency, Percentage, and Mean Distribution of the Participants' Conversational Skills (Composure)

Range	Description	Frequency	Percentage
4.51-5.00	Outstanding	2	7.41
3.51-4.50	Very Good	6	22.22
2.51-3.50	Good	10	37.04
1.51-2.50	Fair	8	29.63
1.00-1.50	Poor	1	3.70
Total		27	100.00
Overall Mean		3.02	
Interpretation		Good	
SD		0.82	

The indicator of *unmotivated movements* ($M = 3.20$) got the highest mean and is interpreted as good, which implies that students avoid movements that show unmotivation or uninterest in their speaking partners. However, there are still students who are fidgety when talking. They tend to keep playing with an object or moving their bodies. A similar result in a pretest conducted by Kaboyashi (2013) showed common issues in speaking, such as students displaying unfriendly body language.

The second highest indicator is *posture* ($M = 3.13$). This implies that students maintain good posture and a good distance from their speaking partners. According to Hidayat (2015), the forms of posture strongly reflect the self-confidence of locators and interlocutors. Matsumoto & Hwang (2013) also added that we perceive a person as authoritative when they are calm and confident because they are practically presenting the finest version of themselves. Nasir (2015) opined that each body posture reflected the person's occupation or emotional state and was influenced by a variety of elements such as social position, current energy level, training, and others.

However, the indicator of *eye contact* ($M = 2.85$) got the lowest rating. This implies that students avoid eye contact with their speaking partners. This may be because they were not confident when speaking. Crozier (2002), as cited by Rahim and Quraishi (2019), concluded in their study that shy children and adults made less eye contact and touched their faces and bodies more frequently with their hands.

Vocal confidence ($M = 2.87$) also got a low rating. Students' voices are occasionally nervous, shaky, breaking in pitch, and/or equivocal in tone or volume. Students' voices trembled a few times, but they managed to calm them down. Their voices mostly trembled when they started talking but faded when they had composed themselves. The same results were presented by Hulu (2018), where the majority of the respondents' voices slightly trembled at the beginning of their presentation.

Table 3 presents the frequency, percentage, and mean distribution of the participants' conversational skills in terms of coordination. The data showed that the students' coordination was good, with an overall mean of 3.22. This implies that students have a smooth entry and exit from talks and a smooth transition between turns in a conversation, a new topic discussion, etc. Although students' coordination level is good, they still need further practice to develop this skill. Looking closely at the figures, 48.14 percent got a good rating.

Table 3

Frequency, Percentage, and Mean Distribution of the Participants' Conversational Skills (Coordination)

Range	Description	Frequency	Percentage
4.51-5.00	Outstanding	2	7.41
3.51-4.50	Very Good	7	25.93
2.51-3.50	Good	13	48.14
1.51-2.50	Fair	5	18.52
1.00-1.50	Poor	0	0
Total		27	100.00
Overall Mean		3.22	
Interpretation		Good	
SD		0.78	

The indicator that has the highest mean is *the interruption of partner speaking turns* ($M = 4.69$). This means that the students let their partners finish talking first. In conversations where the speakers knew each other and possessed equal power, the interruption may reflect the membership of the speakers (Lestary et al., 2017). Although letting the speaker finish first had a positive implication, so did interruptions. According to Lestary et al. et al. (2017), the occurrence of interruptions can be used as a marker for lively conversations, which means that the participants engaged actively during the talk.

Next to the highest is the *speaking rate* ($M = 3.33$). The data revealed that students' speaking pace was, in only a small number of instances, difficult to comprehend or disruptive to the normal flow of partner responses. Some of the students talked slowly because they were finding the right words to say. This slow pacing disrupted the flow of normal responses as others still needed to wait for the speaker to finish the sentence. Students should respond with proper pacing to have interactive communication. Thornbury (2005), cited by Harris (2019), stated that interactive communication referred to a candidate's ability to interact with the interlocutor and the other candidates by initiating and answering properly and at the appropriate pace and rhythm to fulfill the required tasks.

The indicator on *maintenance of topics and follow-up comments* ($M=S.59$) got the lowest rating. Many students provided no extension of topics once initiated. In a study conducted by Mofarah (2019), it was evident that students' inability to communicate in the English language fostered frustration and exacerbated anxieties about entering into any conversation initiated by others. They would not add anything to continue the flow of conversation.

The indicator *asking questions* ($M=2.72$) had a low rating as well. Only a few students also asked questions and the others would just answer and not ask. A similar result in a pretest conducted by Kaboyashi (2013) showed unnatural conversational techniques where one student took the role of interviewer and the other student would just reply to their questions.

Table 4 presents the frequency, percentage, and mean distribution of the participants' conversational skills in terms of expressiveness. Results reveal that students got an overall mean of 3.07, which was interpreted as good. This means that students had good gestural and facial animation. The student's expressiveness skill is enough to engage in effective conversation but is not outstanding, so it still needs to be developed. It can be seen from the data that 37.04 percent are on the level of good.

Table 4

Frequency, Percentage, and Mean Distribution of the Participants' Conversational Skills (Expressiveness)

Range	Description	Frequency	Percentage
4.51-5.00	Outstanding	3	11.11
3.51-4.50	Very Good	5	18.52
2.51-3.50	Good	10	37.04
1.51-2.50	Fair	8	29.63
1.00-1.50	Poor	1	3.70

Table 4 (Continued)

Range	Description	Frequency	Percentage
	Total	27	100.00
	Overall Mean		3.07
	Interpretation		Good
	SD		0.98

As regards the specific indicators, the highest rating is for *smiling and/or laughing* ($M = 3.59$). This implies that students can express themselves in a nonverbal way and smile or laugh in response to humorous stimuli. According to Glenn (2003), cited by Chen (2016), laughter was treated simplistically as a response to humor and thus implied a casual, stimulus-response relationship from a humorous event to the perception of humor to laughter.

Facial expressiveness also got a high rating ($M = 3.19$), which implies that students show expressions on their faces. This meant that students' facial expressions varied depending on the topic, and once they understood what the topic was for, they were able to react to it. According to Xu et al. et al. (2017), facial expressions can display personal emotions and indicate an individual's intentions in a social situation.

The indicator on *articulation (clarity of pronunciation and linguistic expression)* ($M = 2.83$) got the lowest mean. Errors in pronunciation were noticeable in the student's conversation. This meant that students still lacked the linguistic skills to converse effectively. The same observations were presented by Protacio (2021) that students had been struggling to speak English as the medium of instruction and communication since they had difficulties and confusion as to the appropriate production of the speech sounds.

The second-low indicator was *the use of eye contact*, since this indicator is redundant. It already appeared under *composure* and was also the lowest indicator.

Table 5 presents the frequency, percentage, and mean distribution of the participants' conversational skills in terms of grammar. Results reveal that their grammar level is good as indicated by the overall mean of 2.81. Looking closely at the figures, it can be seen that 44.44 percent of the students' grammar level is good. This implies that students can construct correct sentences when they share their opinions and respond to questions asked during the conversations but there are also a few who find it difficult to construct correct sentences.

Table 5

Frequency, Percentage, and Mean Distribution of the Participants' Conversational Skills (Grammar)

Range	Description	Frequency	Percentage
4.51-5.00	Outstanding	1	3.70
3.51-4.50	Very Good	4	14.82
2.51-3.50	Good	12	44.44
1.51-2.50	Fair	7	25.93
1.00-1.50	Poor	3	11.11

Table 5 (Continued)

Range	Description	Frequency	Percentage
	Total	27	100.00
	Overall Mean		2.81
	Interpretation		Good
	SD		0.87

The indicator on *meaning of sentences is clear and understandable* ($M = 2.94$), and *correct sentence structure* ($M = 2.93$) got the highest mean. This indicates that students can construct sentences correctly and grammatically arrange the words to form correct sentences. The two indicators are closely related. If one can construct sentences with the correct structure, then, the meaning of those sentences will be clear and understandable. According to Faradiba et al. et al. (2018), it is vital to make a good sentence while writing or speaking, for it will make the sentence easier to understand.

Among the indicators, *proper usage of the tenses and aspects of the verb* ($M = 2.54$) is the lowest. This indicates that most students do not mind the tense of the verb they use while speaking. A similar result was found by Aditya & Chairuddin (2020), where the students had difficulties using the correct tense in conversation and tended to use only one tense in all situations.

The indicator of *correct subject-verb agreement* ($M = 2.80$) also got a low rating. This implies that students can relay the messages that they want to their speaking partners and that their sentences are somehow complete and not fragmented, but they do not mind its subject-verb agreement rules. According to Tafida & Okunade (2016), subject-verb agreement problems are becoming increasingly widespread, and it appears that many people are either uninformed of the rules or dismiss the importance of grammatical rules as long as they can convey their message.

Problem 2. What is the participants' performance in Oral Communication?

Table 6 presents the frequency, percentage, and mean distribution of the participants' performance in oral communication activities. Results reveal that their level is proficient as indicated by the overall mean of 85.87. This implies that students perform well in the different performance tasks and activities in the Oral Communication subject. Looking closely at the figures, it can be seen that 48.14 percent are approaching proficiency. This means that students have acquired the skills needed to perform well in their oral communication class. This must be the outcome of their constant practice inside the classroom, especially during their Oral Communication class where students are encouraged to talk and converse with their classmates and teachers using the English language.

Table 6

Frequency, Percentage, and Mean Distribution of the Participants' Performance in Oral Communication Activities

Range	Description	Frequency	Percentage
90% and Above	Advanced	6	22.22
85%-89%	Proficient	7	25.93
80%-84%	Approaching Proficiency	13	48.14
75%-79%	Developing	1	3.70
74% and Below	Beginning	0	0
Total		27	100.00
Overall Mean		85.87	
Interpretation		Proficient	
SD		4.55	

The similar conclusion was drawn from Palmero's study (2019), which indicated that students' oral communication competency in English was excellent in both verbal and non-verbal domains (4.09 and 3.98, respectively). Contrary to Andes' (2019) findings, which indicated that students' average oral communication ability rating was 77 percent, or fair in a descriptive sense, this isn't the case. This indicates that in order to improve their oral communication skills, children must be exposed to more communication situations. These barriers can be psychological, educational, or linguistic.

Problem 3. Do the participants' conversational skills significantly influence their performance in oral communication?

Ho: The participants' conversational skills do not significantly influence their performance in oral communication.

Table 7 presents the regression analysis of the implication of participants' conversational skills on their performance in Oral Communication. Data reveal that the whole model is significant ($F = 32.37$, $p = .000$) with 85.8 percent of the variability in their grades as being accounted for by a combination of the components of their conversational skills. Thus, this allows for the rejection of the null hypothesis. Only the remaining 14.2 percent may be attributed to other factors not covered in this study. This implies that conversational skills significantly affect the students' performance in Oral Communication. When students have a high degree of conversational skills, they would also have a high-performance rating in the different activities in Oral Communication given the fact that these activities focus on speaking.

Table 7

Regression Analysis of the Grade 11 Students' Conversational Skills as Predictors of their Performance in Oral Communication

Conversational Skills	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	74.93	1.86		40.23	.000
Attentiveness	1.80	1.47	.351	1.223	.235
Composure	1.41	1.69	.278	.831	.415
Coordination	-3.23	1.72	-.546	-1.88	.074
Expressiveness	3.07	1.00	.659	3.06**	.006
Grammar	.995	1.14	.190	.873	.392
Model Summary					
R = .941	R ² = .885	Adjusted R ² = .858	F = 32.37**	p = .000	

Note. significant at 0.01 level

The findings find resonance with Mahmud's (2014) assertion that students with good actual communication skills perform better in academics. This can be applied to how oral communication abilities are regarded as important contributors to academic performance. However, this is in contrast with the findings of Shah et al. et al. (2020), where it was found that students' communication skills had statistically no effect on their academic achievement.

Specifically, among the components of conversational skills, it is expressiveness that stands out as having a significant influence on their performance in oral communication, indicating that for every unit increase in their expressiveness, there is a corresponding 3.07 increase in their performance ($B = 3.07$, $t = 3.06$, $p = .006$). This implies that students know how to express themselves well, especially with the use of gestures, facial expressions, and smiling or laughing, and that it is through expressiveness that students can better convey what they want to say. In the same way, students show understanding of what the other person is talking about in the conversation, specifically through their facial expressions.

The same result was yielded by Sathik & Jonathan (2013), in which it was found that facial expressiveness is the most frequently used nonverbal communication mode by the students in the virtual classroom, and facial expressions of the students are significantly correlated to their emotions, which helps to recognize their comprehension of the lecture. The other conversational skills (attentiveness, composure, coordination, and grammar) were not influential enough and not as evident since students still need more time to develop them, unlike expressiveness, which is already innate in humans to express, especially using nonverbal cues, and developed over time through interactions.

Recommendations

From the major findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are hereby endorsed: that,

1. language teachers may design an intervention and/or innovation and continue to find effective techniques and strategies to develop further the students' oral communication skills. They are also encouraged to attend seminar workshops or even enroll in post-graduate studies to enrich their teaching skills and oral communication skills to better facilitate learning in oral communication and attain excellent student outcomes.

2. future researchers may replicate the study in other grade levels to validate the result, considering more participants across disciplines. They may also venture into the implications of the students' conversational skills on their performance in other subject areas.

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Pedagogical Authority Practices of English Language Teaching in the Pandemic Time

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Abstract

A well-thought-out pedagogy is important to develop the quality of teaching and the way students learn. This study explores the practices of pedagogical approach in English language teaching by using pedagogical authority (PA), which has three dimensions: didactic (teaching particularly in having moral instruction), pedagogic (relating to teaching), and deontic (expressing responsibility or commitment) in university context of Myanmar. The author surveyed six female teachers and conducted in-depth written interviews to gain a comprehensive understanding of their emotions and experiences. The participants had different durations of teaching experience. The study was conducted in the department of English at five different Arts and Science universities during the 2021/2022 academic year. According to the interview responses of English language teachers who have variable degrees and length of teaching experience, the study found different PA practices demonstrating the three dimensions. Findings show that language teaching during and after the pandemic covered all the three dimensions of PA practiced in university contexts. It suggests the presence of three types of interaction or relation from which pedagogical authority comes: didactic interaction, pedagogical interaction, and deontic interaction. PA is established during the teacher-student interactions which is also thought to increase the quality of teaching and learning processes. It was also found that didactic and pedagogic interactions were identified as very important aspects of virtual classrooms in the early time of the Pandemic, while pedagogic and deontic were found to be more frequent in face-to-face classrooms of post-pandemic time. The findings of this study will support language teachers to rethink their teaching practices in the new post-pandemic time. Additionally, it will contribute to available practices for language teaching during urgent situations.

Keywords: English language teaching, pandemic time, pedagogical authority (PA)

Introduction

Generally defined as the theory and practice of teaching, pedagogy refers to the methodology and process of how instructors approach teaching and learning using a specific curriculum with specific goals in mind. Pedagogical practices are practices educators have that support students' lifelong learning. Pedagogical Authority (PA) is created in classrooms, in teacher-student interaction and in the spirit of their physical presence, confidence, appreciation, responsibility and respect. PA is an interactional construct created during teacher-student interactions which is also thought to increase the quality of teaching and learning processes.

According to Harjunen (2009), three dimensions of PA were practiced in only university contexts.

It suggests the presence of three types of interaction or relation from which pedagogical authority comes: didactic interaction (teaching particularly in having moral instruction), pedagogical interaction (relating to teaching), and deontic interaction (expressing duty or obligation). Data collected from teachers' interviews are investigated and how they establish this view of authority. Didactic interaction means the teacher's efforts to facilitate learning and guide students toward learning resources that lead to high levels of autonomy and motivation. Pedagogical interaction refers to the personal or kind relationship between teachers and students, whereas deontic interaction refers to managing the classroom and dealing with unexpected situations. Studies have highlighted the importance of encouraging language learners to increase their level of autonomy amongst these learners, particularly in virtual learning environment. (Chen & Kent, 2020; Inayati et al. 2021; Villamizar & Mejia, 2019). However, concerning the implementation of PA, a few studies have investigated the encouragement of English language learners in online contexts.

More research on pedagogical authority resulting from these relations in classroom settings is needed to account for the critical educational events.

Pedagogical Authority (PA)

Authority, a fundamental part of the teaching–studying–learning process, is a challenging and poorly understood component of classroom life. It can be said that pedagogical authority is constructed in classrooms, in teacher–student interaction and in the spirit of their physical presence, confidence, appreciation, responsibility and respect, and in the way they both relate to the content and norms. Based on the tradition and classroom interaction, there are three types of interaction or relation from which pedagogical authority comes: didactic interaction, pedagogical interaction, and deontic interaction (Andriivna et al., 2020). Depending on how these relations are played in the classroom, they may develop into pedagogical authority. The availability of various educational platforms and social networks, which took place in face-to-face classrooms, made teaching and learning effective and increased students' motivation and confidence, owing to the richness of teaching materials and information resources (Fitria, 2020), which fits under the didactic interaction. Medina (2021) has emphasized the advantages of relationship in the classroom (i.e., the second dimension: pedagogic interaction). Finally, a few studies have addressed the issue of class management either before or after the pandemic (i.e. the third dimension: deontic interaction) (Ishino & Okada, 2018).

Challenges of Transitioning from Face-to-face Teaching to Online Teaching

Teachers who suddenly switch to online teaching may be confused about what and how to go about things. With no clear timetable, lesson plan, books and resources teachers may find it challenging to decide what activities to do, how to engage and motivate students. Chung and Choi (2021) recognized the challenges of transitioning from face-to-face teaching to online teaching during the growing phases of the pandemic which led to less interaction. Harjunen's (2009, 2011) components of the three PA dimensions do not represent a novelty in the field of language teaching

and learning. In the past, several studies have investigated the encouragement of English language learners in online contexts. Studies have highlighted the importance of encouraging language learners to increase their level of autonomy amongst these learners, particularly in virtual learning environment. (Chen & Kent, 2020; Inayati et al. 2021; Villamizar & Mejia, 2019). Concerning the implementation of PA in online environments, technologies seem to reduce teachers' presence and in essence, the importance of PA practices since students can gain knowledge from other sources.

Research Objectives

According to the researchers' knowledge and experience of language teaching policies and approaches in Myanmar, there is no direct mention of PA. Some studies stress the need for language learners' empowerment through the implementation of critical thinking pedagogies (Alzahrani & Elyas, 2017). New English language course books for universities are designed by well-known publishers (MacMillan, Oxford University Press, and Cambridge University Press), which locate the emphasis on thinking skills as well as the 21st century skills. Teachers' training courses focus on implementing thinking skills pedagogy; therefore, teachers may practice PA unconsciously because this term is not directly referred to in the Myanmar policy of language education, even though its three dimensions are addressed in the literature. The present study answers the following questions:

- 1) What PA practices are presented in language classrooms as reflected by EFL teachers in the early time of Pandemic?
- 2) What PA practices are offered in language classrooms after returning to campus as reflected by EFL teachers in the post Pandemic time?
- 3) What might prevent or help the implementation of PA practices in transitioning from face-to-face teaching to online teaching during the COVID pandemic?

The COVID-19 pandemic in Myanmar is part of the worldwide pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The virus was confirmed to have reached Myanmar on 23 March 2020. On 31 March 2020, the Committee for Coronavirus Disease 19 (COVID-19) was formed by President to combat the spread of COVID-19 in the country. Although the government rapidly implemented containment measures and public health responses, the country had experienced one of the most severe COVID-19 outbreaks in Southeast Asia by late 2020. The UN raised concerns about Myanmar's vulnerability to the pandemic due to its weak healthcare infrastructure. So, the period between March 2020 to late March 2020 has been regarded as early time of Pandemic in Myanmar.

Methodology

This is an exploratory case study design which adapts the qualitative approach. The researcher was interested in exploring PA practices to acquire a deeper insight into EFL teachers' experiences during COVID pandemic. The motivation for an exploratory case study approach was provided by the lack of previous research on the comprehensive implementation of PA that includes the didactic, pedagogic, and deontic dimensions in EFL classrooms, combined by the changing contexts explained in the introduction due to the pandemic in Myanmar.

Participants and Research Context

The sampling technique chosen for this research was convenient sampling. Six female teachers accepted to participate and signed the consent forms. The participants had different durations of teaching experience. Two participants were senior teachers with Ph.D. degree holders. Teacher participants from the department of English participated in this study. During the interview, they provided qualitative comments regarding pedagogical authority practices of English language teaching in the Pandemic time.

Table 1

Teacher Participants and Their Duration of Teaching Experience (n=6)

Sr No	Teachers	Educational Qualification	Gender	Teaching experience
1	A	M.A. (English)	Female	17 years
2	B	M.A. (English)	Female	17 years
3	C	M.A. (English)	Female	16 years
4	D	Ph.D.	Female	27 years
5	E	Ph.D.	Female	20 years
6	F	M.A. (English)	Female	11 years

The study was conducted in the department of English at five Arts and Science universities during the first semester of 2021 to the second semester of the academic year 2022 when the Ministry of Education announced that university students should return to campus because of the low number of COVID cases in Myanmar.

Methods

To determine the teachers' practices for their learners' empowerment through a PA lens, interviews were considered more appropriate for this study than the scale measures that require teachers to have prior knowledge about the PA concept and practices. Interviews are an appropriate method when there is a need to collect in-depth information on people's opinions, thoughts, experiences, and feelings. Interviews are useful when the topic of inquiry relates to issues that require complex questioning and considerable probing. Teachers were asked to reflect on their online teaching experiences in relation to Harjunen's (2009) three dimensions of PA. They were given guiding questions to enable the writing of the reflections. The interviews were conducted at the end of semester 1, in which teachers were asked to evaluate the entire experience of online teaching and in-campus teaching after return, considering their reflections.

Data Analysis

The present study clearly adapts the concept of PA into the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) pedagogy, as a form of pedagogy practices, and thus will classify language teaching practices under the three components of PA to provide a comprehensive collection. Content analysis was used as a qualitative method of data analysis in this research. Some interview data help the researcher count instances of codes. The analysis helps researchers with large amounts of textual data, as content

analysis is useful for determining how words and word patterns are used in context. The interview protocol framework is comprised of four-phases: Phase 1: Ensuring interview questions align with research questions, Phase 2: Constructing an inquiry-based conversation, Phase 3: Receiving feedback on interview protocols and Phase 4: Piloting the interview protocol and the research questions. After that, interview data were coded for significant characteristics that reflect the PA interaction's three dimensions: didactic interaction, pedagogical interaction, and deontic interaction.

Results

The PA concept with its three dimensions provides a complete interactional practice of empowering learners during the COVID pandemic. The following data responses reflect PA practices during the time of COVID.

Phase 1: PA Practices of English Language Teaching in the Early Time of Pandemic

Phase 1 explores whether teachers find online platforms useful for engaging students and to continue with the blended mode for successful teaching and learning experiences even after the pandemic ends. In the early time of the pandemic, teaching was fully online. The study found various pedagogical authority practices representing the three dimensions in this stage based on the interviews with language teachers who have varying degrees and length of teaching experience. Language teaching during the early time of the pandemic covered nearly all the three dimensions of PA. However, didactic, and pedagogic interactions were found more frequently in language classrooms during the early time of the Pandemic. Sample responses of the participants on three dimensions are as follows.

Didactic Interaction

In didactic method of teaching, the teacher gives instructions to the students and the students are mostly passive listeners. It is a teacher-centered method of teaching and is content-oriented. Neither the content nor the knowledge of the teacher are questioned. The instructor participants agreed that virtual learning environments offered their students with some chances to practice critical thinking skills while also showcasing more autonomy. The reflective questions and sample responses were as follows:

1) What motivational strategies do you use with your students to engage them with blended learning?

"I could construct relationship and show real interest to be enthusiastic and professional. I try to show a high level of skills and interest in my subject. I encourage my students a sense of belonging, community, and safety. I also highlight the long-term effects of learning and the future benefits." (Teacher A)

2) How do you make sure that you have addressed your students' needs?

"Some strategies for studying current knowledge of the students such as end-of-topic tests, questionnaires, mini-quizzes, creating concept maps, knowledge grids, asking key questions or discussing contextual awareness etc were used." (Teacher B)

3) What do you do to develop the thinking skills of your students?

“To increase critical thinking skills of my students, I often ask questions. It is seen that students were uncertain to ask questions in the classroom. So, I let them participate in discussions. Also let them practice active learning and study with the help of examples.” (Teacher C)

4) How do your above-stated online practices differ from in-class practices after returning to campus?

“In our situation, online learning delivers the content through text, images, or videos, and the students are asked to complete an online assessment or other activities. The teaching can be set at any specific time, but there's limited interaction. On the other hand, traditional learning has a fixed schedule and place.” (Teacher D)

Responses of the participants suggest the presence of didactic interactions in the early time of the pandemic. They discussed that they have some didactic interactions by using moral instructions relating to their teaching. Depending on how these relations are enacted in the virtual classroom, it may change into pedagogical authority. According to them, the teachers try to facilitate learning and guide students toward learning resources that lead to high levels of autonomy and motivation.

Pedagogical Interaction

Pedagogical values refer to the worldviews, beliefs, perspectives, and biases about teaching and learning that underpin our specific educational practice. Students are provided choice of readings, assignments, and assessment tools in a class. It refers to a pedagogy that places students at the centre of the teaching-learning process. Students are more active and participative, and the process turns knowledge into a negotiation between teachers and students. The reflective questions and sample responses were as follows:

1) How do you build rapport with your students and emphasize mutual respect in your online teaching?

“I usually emphasize mutual respect in my online teaching. In the classroom, we treat each other with dignity and respect, listen to each other's points of view, recognise that there may be disagreement, keep discussion and comments on the topic.” (Teacher E)

2) How do your above-stated online practices differ from in-class practices during the pandemic and after returning to campus?

“According to my experience, face-to-face learning methods usually only involve traditional learning materials such as textbooks and lecture notes. An online learning session is more interactive in comparison, with many different types of training.” (Teacher F)

Responses of the participants suggest the presence of pedagogical interactions in the early time of the Pandemic. They discussed that they have pedagogical interactions by building rapport with their students and emphasizing mutual respect in online teaching. Depending on how these relations are enacted in the virtual classroom, it may change into pedagogical authority. Teacher participants show the personal or kind relationship between teachers and students.

Deontic Interaction

Deontic authority is an interactional achievement, claimed, displayed, and negotiated at the level of the turn-by-turn sequential unfolding of the interaction. The reflective questions and sample responses were as follows:

1) What do you do with your students to make them feel they are responsible learners and citizens (e.g., following university rules, class attendance rate, and submitting assignments on time)?

“One of the most effective ways to help students take responsibility for their learning is through goal setting. When students set goals and achieve those goals, they build self-confidence and become more willing to try again. But it was not easy to make them feel they are responsible learners and citizens in following university rules, class attendance rate, and submitting assignments on time in the virtual classroom situation.” (Teacher A)

2) What strategies do you adopt for managing the classroom when things go wrong or when you need to decide?

“Teachers should implement such classroom management strategies for the best chance of succeeding at managing their classrooms as: leading by example, allowing students to participate in rulemaking, and holding students accountable for breaking rules. But we could not do most of them in online teaching.” (Teacher B)

3) Do you think that students should take part in these decisions? Explain your answer?

“Learning decision making skills to make their own choices helps students to be more independent, responsible, and confident. It gives them a sense of control over their lives, reducing anxiety and promoting resilience. Furthermore, it encourages self-exploration and helps them to set their values. But we could not do most of them in online teaching. I don’t think that students will not take part in these decisions in the virtual classroom situations.” (Teacher C)

4) How do your above-stated online practices differ from in-class practices during the pandemic and after returning to campus?

“We find online platforms are not effective for engaging students in a relationship characterized by equal power and therefore, we couldn’t stay with the blended mode for successful teaching and learning experiences even after the pandemic ends.” (Teacher D)

Responses of the participants suggest the presence of a few deontic interactions in the early time of the Pandemic. They discussed that they have a few deontic interactions as there are many challenges in following university rules, class attendance rate, and submitting assignments on time with blended mode. Apart from the effective use of technology, factors such as the availability of suitable facilities, infrastructure, and the financial state of the students also play an important role in online learning. Depending on how these factors are enacted in the virtual classroom, it may change into pedagogical authority. According to the discussion, teachers try to manage the classroom and dealing with unexpected situations.

Phase 2: PA Practices of English Language Teaching in the Post-Pandemic Time

After returning to campus, when teaching in face-to-face classrooms of post-pandemic time, the study found various pedagogical authority practices representing the three dimensions in this stage. Language teaching after the pandemic also covered nearly all the three dimensions of PA. However, pedagogic, and deontic interactions were found to be more frequent in the face-to-face classrooms of post-pandemic time.

Didactic Interaction

Didactics tends to be teacher centered. A common didactical strategy is a teacher presenting a lecture directly to their students. Pedagogy, however, is learner-centered and involves coming up with teaching strategies that focus on how specific students learn in different ways. The reflective questions and sample responses in phase 2 were as follows:

1) What motivational strategies do you use with your students to engage them in teaching face-to-face classrooms of post-pandemic time?

"Teachers play a vital role in creating an environment that supports students' learning. They often do this through their support for students' autonomy. But the pandemic's "no clear end in sight" and "uncertainty about the future" may be partly to blame to decreased motivation. Students need to lay out smart goals and plan specific daily tasks." (Teacher E)

2) How do you make sure that you have addressed your students' needs?

"These strategies may be helpful for meeting all students' needs. But I am not sure.

- i. *Collaborate with colleagues.*
- ii. *Cultivate consistency.*
- iii. *Develop a student-centered mindset.*
- iv. *Set aside time to focus on study skills and extra support.*
- v. *Use multiple forms of assessment.*
- vi. *Draw on other professionals' expertise.*

Partner with families." (Teacher F)

3) What do you do to develop the thinking skills of your students?

"We should build in opportunities for students to find connections in learning. We also should encourage students to make connections to a real-life situation and identifying patterns is a great way to practice their critical thinking skills. However, developing the thinking skills of our students using real-world scenarios is not easy during the class hour." (Teacher A)

4) How do your above-stated online practices differ from in-class practices after returning to campus?

"The classroom environment is usually more dynamic and allows active debates and participation, whereas online learning may not have this much engagement. Online classes usually have one-way communication, in which the teacher provides required materials and instructions to the students." (Teacher B)

Pedagogical Interaction

Pedagogy is the combination of teaching methods (what instructors do), learning activities (what instructors ask their students to do), and learning assessments (the assignments, projects, or tasks that measure student learning). The reflective questions and sample responses were as follows:

1) How do you build rapport with your students and emphasize mutual respect in your teaching?

“In my opinion, rapport is the relationship that the learners have with the teachers and vice versa. It is a class where there is a positive, enjoyable, and respectful relationship between teacher and learners and between learners’ themselves. I make my classroom a place they want to be. I provide ample praise, encouragement, and affection, so much so that they feel genuinely liked, cared about, and important to me. I demonstrate genuine respect through the things I say and do, and I will earn their respect in return.” (Teacher C)

2) How do your above-stated in-class practices differ from online practices during the pandemic and after returning to campus?

“The classroom environment is usually more dynamic and allows active debates and participation, whereas online learning may not have this much engagement. Online classes usually have one-way communication, in which the teacher provides required materials and instructions to the students.” (Teacher D)

Deontic Interaction

Someone’s “deontic authority” is their right to determine others’ future actions. It can be acquiesced to or resisted. We will deal with occasions when the participants agree about who has the right to determine the future actions in question. We will call this “deontic congruence.” These cases represent the most common sequences of our data collection. They offer the basis by reference to which we subsequently analyze the instances of “deontic incongruence.” The reflective questions were as follows:

1) What do you do with your students to make them feel they are responsible learners and citizens (e.g., following university rules, class attendance rate, and submitting assignments on time)?

“Strategies include, but are not limited to, question-and-answer sessions, discussion, interactive lecture (in which students respond to or ask questions), quick writing assignments, hands-on activities, and experiential learning were often used.” (Teacher E)

2) What strategies do you adopt for managing the classroom when things go wrong or when you need to decide?

“Classroom management techniques can help prevent disruptive behaviour from occurring in the first place. Setting clear expectations for student behaviour – When students know what is expected of them, they are more likely to behave appropriately.” (Teacher F)

3) Do you think that students should take part in these decisions? Explain your answer?

“Learning decision making skills to make their own choices helps students be more independent, responsible, and confident. It gives them a sense of control over their lives, reducing anxiety and promoting resilience. Furthermore, it encourages self-exploration and helps them to solidify their values.” (Teacher A)

4) How do your above-stated online practices differ from in-class practices during the pandemic and after returning to campus?

“Online learning is more flexible. In addition, as one can attend virtual classes anywhere and anytime, students don't have to travel. At the same time, the physical classroom method involves in-person teaching and hands-on training from a professional, which is also necessary for specific situations.” (Teacher B)

In phase 2, responses of the participants suggest the presence of a few didactic interactions in the post Pandemic. They discussed that they have a few didactic interactions as there are many challenges on availability of various educational platforms and social networks which fits under the didactic interaction. Depending on how these factors are enacted in the face-to-face classroom, it may change into pedagogical authority. According to the discussion, teachers try to manage the classroom and dealing with unexpected situations.

Phase 3: Challenges of Transitioning from Face-to-face Teaching to Online Teaching

While it was more than two years removed from the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, teaching and learning are forever changed. The pandemic caused a rush to remote and online teaching that many of teachers were not prepared for. However, at the same time, it necessitated to be flexible, creative, and explore pedagogical techniques that teachers would not previously engage with or prioritize. Now that it was moving into post-pandemic teaching, educators need to remember certain things for their instructional approach. Participants' interview responses in phase 2 include the following.

- i. *“My students were reluctant to participate during the early period of the pandemic. The students had some pressure because they knew the teacher was there for monitoring.”* (Teacher C)
- ii. *“In a virtual classroom, teachers and students have fewer opportunities to interact. Without careful planning, they have fewer opportunities for academic discussions and cooperative learning.”* (Teacher D)
- iii. *“Some significant challenges to blended learning models include the expense of technology, inadequate training, technological issues, the need to adapt content for blended learning, decreased motivation, and weakened relationships between students and teachers.”* (Teacher E)
- iv. *“Face to face class meetings occur at a specific time in a specific location according to a set schedule. When in class, the instructor typically sets the pace. Online learning is up to the student to set their own pace for much of the work that needs to be completed in an online course.”* (Teacher F)

- v. *“This lack of motivation stems directly from the many other challenges that online students face, including a lack of interaction with peers, difficulty learning in a virtual format and distracting home environments.” (Teacher A)*
- vi. *“Communication barriers exist in any communication process. They are greater in distance education due to physical distance between members, insufficient technology skills, difficulties using media, need for more human interaction, time constraints and restrictions, and lack of experience with distance education.” (Teacher B)*

According to the data analysis some teachers highlighted the students' reluctance to participate as a common challenge related to online participation. The increased use of online learning makes students rely on technology instead of interacting and communicating with others. It decreases the growth of communication skills and results in increased social isolation. Face-to-face interactions are mainly synchronous, meaning they occur naturally. The listener students have direct receipt and a quick response. Online communication can be synchronous with rapid-fire responses, but it can also be asynchronous. Some challenges mentioned by the participants are inability to submit on time, difficulty in reading and comprehension, personal teenage problems, poor Wi-Fi connections, and inability to comprehend the lessons.

Discussion

Concerning the implementation of PA in online environments, technologies seem to minimize teachers' presence and in essence, the importance of PA practices since students can obtain knowledge from other sources. It was also observed that online teaching can be a manageable environment because of the flexibility of asynchronous tools, availability of learning materials, and setting out discussions and exams. However, they also discussed the negative aspects of online education including technical problems, lack of motivation, distractions at home, social isolation, lack of technology skills, and digital readiness. On the other hand, positive outcomes of online education were also identified: easy access anytime and via mobiles, which then boosted the confidence of shy students. On the contrary, it was suggested that it was the institution's policy that shaped the positive experiences of online teaching and learning.

PA Practices during COVID Pandemic

In response to research question 1 (What PA practices are available during the COVID pandemic?), the results showed that the teachers were indeed applying PA practices without admitted conscious knowledge of the PA approach. The interview responses present some PA practices.

In-Class PA Practices after Return to Campus in the Post Pandemic

This sub-section addresses the results of questions (2):

2) What PA practices are available in language classrooms after returning to campus as reflected by EFL teachers in the post pandemic?

Teachers were instructed to speak about their experiences of practicing PA in classrooms after returning to campus and compare these experiences with their PA practices in the online environment during the pandemic. After returning to campus,

teachers continued to apply PA practices. They agree that their teaching practices have not changed much, but they do believe that in-class teaching creates a stronger bond with students due to physical presence and interaction.

Challenges of Transitioning from Face-to-face Teaching to Online Teaching

This sub-section addresses the results of (3):

3) What might prevent or facilitate the implementation of PA practices in online and on-campus language classrooms during the pandemic?

They find that in-class learning is a more fertile learning environment for practicing the target language than in virtual learning environment. Not even a single teacher found significant differences between their PA practices in online or on-campus classrooms. However, they did highlight some challenges and advantages of each teaching mode, such as the efforts and flexibility of timing. One participant reveals that PA practices in virtual learning environment do not differ much from in-class practices, but he would rather say online teaching requires a double effort to engage all students in the learning process.

Research Question 1: What PA practices are presented in language classrooms as reflected by EFL teachers in the early time of pandemic?

The findings show that each phase of PA implementation during the pandemic has its advantages and disadvantages, whether fully online mode or blended in-campus mode. Regarding the first research question asking about practicing PA during the full online shift, teachers practice PA in online classes to different levels. Also, online environments were found to provide a fertile space for learners to practice critical thinking. The study found various pedagogical authority practices representing the three dimensions in the two stages. According to the findings, language teaching during the pandemic covered nearly all the three dimensions of PA. PA is created during teacher-student interactions which is also thought to increase the quality of teaching and learning processes. It was also found that didactic and pedagogic interactions were identified as very important aspects of virtual classrooms in the early time of the Pandemic. This finding is in agreement with Al-Nofaie's (2020) study. Giving students more space for thinking and expressing themselves had their reflections on their increased motivation and autonomy in online learning, which supports similar findings by (Andriivna et al., 2020; Fitria, 2020; Maican & Cocorada, 2021). This finding suggests that the features of virtual learning environment that increase the levels of students' autonomy and critical thinking should continue after the pandemic ends. Deontic interactions were not apparent in the participants' experiences as teachers faced some challenges during full online teaching, such as poor internet connection.

Research Question 2: What PA practices are offered in language classrooms after returning to campus as reflected by EFL teachers in the post pandemic time?

The findings confirm that it is possible to implement the PA practices efficiently after the pandemic. However, when it came to comparing in-class and online teaching, the teachers were in favour of face-to-face interactions that occur in real classes, and they related their preference to physical presence and interactions (Chung & Choi, 2021). Regarding classroom management, teachers experienced a difference between deontic interactions in online and in-class contexts. Some researchers have acknowledged the issue of time flexibility (Khafaga, 2021). In general, the teachers' appreciation of online teaching experiences in which they managed to implement PA practices encouraged them to continue with blended teaching after returning to campus. This indicates that virtual learning environment and face-to-face teaching need to be combined after the pandemic ends for sustainable teaching practices. Notably, PA practices, whether implemented online or in blended teaching, are not impervious to limitations, such as technical issues related to the speed of the internet, teachers limited or no understanding of the value of PA, and critical pedagogy in their classrooms. Based on the interviews with English language teachers who have varying degrees and length of teaching experience, the study found various pedagogical authority practices representing the three dimensions in the two stages. According to the findings, language teaching after the pandemic covered nearly all the three dimensions of PA. It was also found that pedagogic and deontic interactions were identified as very important aspects of face-to-face classrooms of post-pandemic time. The personal or kind relationship between teachers and students and managing the classroom and dealing with unexpected situations are found in the participants' discussions.

Research Question 3: What might prevent or help the implementation of PA practices in transitioning from face-to-face teaching to online teaching during the COVID pandemic?

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it uses the practices of PA to provide a more holistic approach to implementing critical pedagogy that combines a supportive learning environment, students' needs, and balanced student-teacher relationships to increase learners' awareness of their agency, which has been identified as a gap in the literature. In addition, it reveals some practical aspects for utilizing both virtual and face-to-face teaching for sustainable EFL education by comparing PA practices during fully online teaching and face to face teaching. Thus, the study expands available literature on PA for other disciplines, more particularly during emergencies. The findings of this study may help enhance the awareness of language teachers of PA as a comprehensive practice of critical pedagogy during the pandemic and post-pandemic times. It may also inform future ELT classroom researchers who can then expand the scope of this study to include gender differences in practicing PA, age, and contexts with a wider sample. Therefore, future findings could lead to the design of a teaching guide for language teachers who teach during emergencies and for those who teach blended courses. Despite the merits of applying PA in EFL classrooms, the implementation of the three dimensions of PA can propose some challenges for EFL teachers. The component of each dimension requires teacher training to acquire the

skills needed for online and on-campus teaching. One limitation of this study is its inability to provide a generalizable finding due to the small number of participants; however, it is hoped that future studies investigate PA practices with a larger sample size to design a teaching guide for language teachers interested in critical pedagogy approaches or those who must teach during emergencies.

Implication

According to Saini et al. (2020), pedagogical discussions on foreign language classrooms in the post-COVID time have been encouraged. The academic year 2021/2022 is marked with the decision made by many universities across the world to return to campuses fully or partly. Reopening universities was challenging since there were no risk-free strategies (Wrighton & Lawrence, 2020). Social distance was necessary in order to avoid infections, and this affected the quality of communication, particularly in large classrooms where teachers had to speak louder (Tran et al., 2021). Thus, this study aims to produce the attention of language teachers towards the importance of PA and the qualities it can bring into virtual or face-to-face classrooms, as the literature suggests. Factors that prevent or support the practices of PA for successful PA implementation, whether in online or on-campus classrooms, were identified in this study. In Myanmar, the return has been gradual since many universities have adopted the blended teaching mode. At most universities, on-campus lectures were activated more than the online mode in post Pandemic time. The researcher was interested in knowing whether teaching staff at the department of English at university were in favour of online teaching that was experienced during COVID lockdown or on-campus teaching that has been experienced after their return to campuses in terms of applying PA practices. It was found in this research that language teaching during and after the pandemic covered nearly all the three dimensions of PA. Identifying aspects of PA practices and the challenges of its implementation and blended environments for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs will not only deepen our understanding of successful teaching practices for educational sustainability but also widen the scope of critical pedagogy practices in EFL classrooms, since the PA concept fits under the critical pedagogy of language teaching. Like other global educational contexts, the transition to emergency online teaching in Myanmar was also full of challenges in the early stages of the pandemic. According to the findings, teachers and students have been trying to build a positive view because of its ease of use. The current study has also highlighted the importance of empowering language learners to increase their level of autonomy amongst these learners, particularly in virtual learning environment.

Recommendations

This case study explores the implementation of the three dimensions of PA during the COVID pandemic and looks at two stages of teaching during the pandemic: The early stages of the COVID pandemic where teaching was fully online and after returning to campus in which teaching followed the on-campus mode. This study identifies various PA practices representing the three dimensions of PA in virtual learning environment during the early stage of COVID. A general finding was that the virtual learning environment provided a rich space for practicing critical thinking. However, there are common disadvantages that might lead to some disturbances, such as technical issues. Regarding PA practices after returning to campus, the participating

teachers continued to implement PA practices, as there were practices that represented the three dimensions of PA. Comparing the full online teaching experience and on-campus teaching experience through PA practices, the participants valued the aspects of didactic and pedagogic interactions of PA practices that occurred in both online and on-campus; however, they revealed that physical interaction remains a very significant aspect of pedagogic and deontic interactions in post Pandemic time. It was found that students' level of autonomy and increased motivation was more important in the virtual learning environment mode of teaching as compared with the on-campus mode. Further studies should expand the scope of critical pedagogy in EFL classrooms via introducing the PA dimensions for comprehensive implementation. It is hoped that the findings of this study will encourage EFL researchers to think of novel teaching practices, more particularly for teaching blended courses and teaching during the time of emergencies.

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Translation and Direct Writing Methods on the Compositions of Grade 9 Students in the Northern Philippines

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Abstract

This research aimed to analyze the composition writing skills of Grade 9 students in the Northern Philippines using translation and direct writing methods through the quasi-experimental research design. The questionnaire and four compositions were instruments of the study. Rubric, mean, Pearson product-moment correlation, and t-test were the statistical tools employed. Results show that the respondents performed better using the translation method than direct writing in the narrative, expository, descriptive, and argumentative compositions. The content, organization, and mechanics of those who translated their compositions from their mother tongue (Ilokano) to their second language (Filipino) were found more proficient than those who used direct writing. More so, they are proficient in descriptive compositions. Sex, educational resources, and leisure activities have significant relationships with the respondents who translated. Furthermore, a significant difference was found between the respondents who directly wrote and those who translated. Those who translated have compositions that are more substantial and more organized to generate ideas than those who used direct writing. Based on the results, it is recommended to use the first language to generate and conceptualize ideas and after which, translate it to the second language. Students should be trained more on Ilokano language use.

Keywords: Filipino language, Ilokano language, writing skills,
components of writing, Kto12

Introduction

The field of education is currently facing globalization. Countries all over the world make connections with each other to address the needs of the fast-changing world. To make connections, individuals should have the ability and competence to use macro-communication skills. Thus, everyone should be equipped with the necessary communication skills such as listening, speaking, listening, and writing.

Schools serve as training grounds for learners to achieve the necessary communication skills and to foster competence in the field of work. However, it is still a challenge for schools in the Philippines to provide the average competence needed for learners to become responsible, productive, and self-fulfilling individuals (Unciano, 2020). And one of the 21st century skills that are expected for each learner to be

equipped and to become holistic is effective communication skills which is also the end- goal of the teaching of languages in the curriculum in the K12 Program.

Writing as a Language Macro Skill

Of the four macro-skills, writing is the last and most complex macro-skill because it entails the use of the brain and the hand to construct ideas (Gandeza, & Unciano, 2021). It includes cognitive, affective, physiological, and social processes that make this skill difficult to acquire (Genc-Ersoy & Gol-Dede, 2022). This serves as an extension of the language that the students have achieved in listening, speaking, and reading (Peck and Buckingham, 1976 as cited by Ulit, 2009). This is an expressive skill that requires a careful choice of words so that the receiver will be able to comprehend the message that the writer wants to convey (Arrogante, 2007). Concerning this, through writing, a person expresses their goals, aspirations, feelings, imagination, and opinions towards another (Royo, 2011, as cited by Jocson et al. 2005). It is one of the four macro skills that need to be developed by the students. This involves physical and mental activity because this requires hands and minds to formulate ideas (Bernales et al., 2002). This is a process that starts first in the mind as an idea before it is written which only humans can do (Arrogante & Garcia, 2004; Mendoza & Romero, 2007).

In the Philippines, in the teaching of English and Filipino, the four macro skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are still the focus in the learning of the language. Grammar, fluency and learning strategies were added domains in the curriculum of languages so that the ultimate goal of communication would be met- and that is to create Filipino who have functional literacy (Kto12 Curriculum Guide Filipino, 2016). Of the four macro skills, writing is the skill which the students performed least and one of the most neglected macro skills. Thus, this dilemma needs to be addressed and the inclusion of the mother tongue is eyed to be the solution to this problem.

In the classroom, writing offers pedagogical benefits because this involves skills such as critical, creative, and analytical thinking of the students. It increases the ability of individuals for the sharing of knowledge, giving inspiration, problem solving and reflection, and dissemination of information to the readers (Defazio et al. 2010; Kazemian, et al. 2021). It enables individuals to accomplish their goals in life and it can become beneficial to the intellect and emotions of individuals (Smith, 2010). Furthermore, it can lead to success in the workplace (Walsh, 2010).

Among the four macro skills, writing is challenging to teach students (Tumangan, 1977). Furthermore, Gentry (2017) pointed out that learners cannot write because teachers have little training in teaching writing and are not confident to teach the skill (Gentry 2017). Learners are hard up in writing because they lack vocabulary (Indrasari, 2018) and constructing their concepts (Du & List, 2020).

In other words, writing is challenging to teach for this skill needs organized ideas that widen the vocabulary of the students. This is a challenge to the language teachers to teach academic writing to the students. Most teachers have clamors regarding teaching writing to the students. Thus, it is picked as the focus of this research because this is empirically found to be tough to teach and to learn.

There are four discourses in writing a composition. Arrogante (2007) explains each of the discourses. Narrative discourse usually narrates an experience in the life of a person that is based on a true-to-life story or a story which is a product of imagination. In a descriptive discourse, the writer usually writes in a creatively about

what things trigger his/her senses. In the expository discourse, the writer shares and explains information regarding any event or issue that is happening in society. The argumentative discourse emphasizes the stand of the writer regarding a dispute and proves it true by providing facts and evidence that would support her claim.

Use of the Mother Tongue

So that a learner can write, the basic prerequisite skill is the knowledge of the language that he/she will be using. As far as this research is concerned, the researchers integrated the use of their mother tongue for the students to write their ideas in the first language. This is the essence of the translation method. The inclusion of mother tongue-based education or the usage of the first language is based on the Republic Act No. 10533 otherwise known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 in section 4 (<https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2013/05/15/republic-act-no-10533/>). The provision states that the mother tongue or first language is the first language that the learners have learned.

On the other law, Republic Act No. 10157 or the Kindergarten Act (<https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2012/01/20/republic-act-no-10157/>) provides that “the state shall hereby adopt the mother tongue based-multilingual education (MTB-MLE) method. The mother tongue of the learner shall be the primary medium of instruction for teaching and learning at the kindergarten level.” (This provision of the Kindergarten Act served as the foundation of the inclusion of the first language in the curriculum particularly in the teaching of the four macro communication skills of the students. The implementation of the MTB-MLE started at the Kindergarten level and ended at the Grade three level. Thus, it is only for four academic years of the students in elementary and after the third grade, the mother tongue would disappear as the students shift to their second language (Filipino and English).

Though the limitation of the teaching of the first language is only up to Grade 3, the use of the mother tongue in the formulation of ideas is proven to be effective even at the secondary level. Torrijos (2009) analyzed the cross-linguistic influence of second language acquisition in writing. He investigated the importance of the first language of the students in writing in the second language. He found out that translation is a significant determinant in the process of acquiring a second language. Stapa & Majid (2012) found in their study that there was an improvement in the writing skills of the students who used their first language in the formulation of ideas in the second language. In another study, Wang & Wen (2002) and van Weijen et al (2009) found out that the students used their first language in writing the composition in the second language.

Limitations of Writing Methods

In addition, there are also research studies on the use of translation methods and direct writing methods. The studies proved that the formulation of ideas in the first language and then translating it to the second language is more effective than the direct writing of ideas in the second language (Lifang, 2008; Kobayashi & Rinert, 2008; Karim & Nassaji, 2013). Thus, translation is proven to be an effective method in the formulation of ideas in the second language.

However, the studies on translation and direct writing methods are limited only to foreign studies and in the English language. There is no study conducted on the use of translation and direct writing methods in the Philippines. This is the reason why the researchers conducted research to determine which of the two writing methods would be of great help in writing compositions. Another thing, it was also an attempt to use the Ilocano language as the first language (L1) to be used in the teaching of writing in high school and to fill in the research gap that the mother tongue is limited only to the Grade three level.

Among the four macro skills, students were found to have difficulties in writing and constructing sentences into paragraphs. This is observed in the Filipino language class of Grade 9 Junior High School students in a secondary school in Ilocos Sur, Philippines. Language teachers of the school where the study was conducted shared the same observations and experiences regarding the writing skill level of the students. In this research, the researchers compared the two methods of writing composition- translation and direct writing methods.

Significance of the Study

The result of the study would give ideas and understanding to the teachers, students, administrators, and researchers about the significance of the first language and second language. This could help also in the production of instructional materials under the K12 curriculum. Further, this would motivate school authorities and the Department of Education to give utmost importance to the usage of the first language or mother tongue in a multilingual country like the Philippines.

Objectives

This study aimed to analyze and compare the level of composition writing skills using the translation method (L1 to L2) and direct writing method (L2) of the Grade 9 Junior High School students in one secondary school in Ilocos Sur, Philippines. Specifically, it sought to answer the level of the writing skills of the students in writing narrative, expository, descriptive, and argumentative; the level of the writing skills of the students in writing in terms of content, organization, and mechanics using the translation and direct writing methods. Further, it investigated the factors that show a significant relationship in the level of composition writing skills of the students using the translation and direct writing method; and found a significant difference in the level of the composition writing skills of the students using the translation and direct writing methods.

Methodology

This study employed a correlational and quasi-experimental research design. In the correlational research design, the researchers determined the significant relationship between the variables and the level of writing skills of the respondents using the translation and direct writing methods. On the other hand, in the quasi-experimental, the researchers tested the two writing methods in writing compositions.

Correlational is a design in quantitative research that seeks to find the existence of a relationship between variables and determine the degree of the said relationship (Prieto, et al., 2017). On the other hand, quasi-experimental research design is a design that is used to test the relationship among the variables involved. It is a

design that examines the causal relationship among the variables (Rogers & Revesz, 2020).

The respondents of the study were Grade 9 students in one secondary school in the Northern Philippines. The total enumeration of the two sections was the respondents of the study. There were 112 respondents – 56 males and 56 females.

In the writing of the compositions, the students had the freedom to choose the topic they would want to write. The written compositions were evaluated. But before the evaluation, the rubric used was discussed by the teachers so that the students would be guided on the evaluation criteria of the composition.

To evaluate the written compositions of the students, a self-made rubric validated by the evaluators in the field of language was used. The written compositions of the respondents were evaluated through the rubrics which were based on the K-12 curriculum program in Filipino. The written composition of the students had undergone five evaluations- 1) self-rating wherein the respondents evaluated their own written compositions; 2) Peer rating, wherein the peers of the respondents evaluated their written compositions and; 3) three expert evaluators wherein the written compositions were evaluated by another three teachers. The result was correlated with the socio-demographic profile and attitude of the students in writing the composition.

Rubric, mean, t-test and Pearson product-moment correlation were utilized as statistical tools for the study. The rubric was utilized to determine the level of the composition writing skills of the students using the translation and direct writing methods. Mean was utilized the composition writing skill level of the students. The t-test was used to determine the difference between the level of composition writing skills of the students who used the translation method and the direct writing method. Lastly, Pearson Product correlation was used to analyze the relationship of factors to their writing skills using the translation method and direct writing method.

Results

This part presents the analysis and interpretation of the gathered data. The researchers used tables to present the data to facilitate comprehension and administer appropriate interpretation of the data.

Table 1

Level of the Composition Writing Skills of the Respondents through the Translation and Direct Writing Methods

	Translation		Direct Writing	
Composition	Mean	DR	Mean	DR
1. Narrative	3.70	P	3.64	P
2. Expository	3.77	P	3.56	P
3. Descriptive	3.82	P	3.60	P
4. Argumentative	3.75	P	3.51	P
Total	3.76	P	3.55	P

Norm: 4.21 – 5.00	A	Advance
3.41- 4.20	P	Proficient
2.61-3.40	AP	Approaching Proficiency
1.81-2.60	D	Developing
1.00-1.80	B	Beginning

Table 1 shows the level of composition writing of the respondents. It can be gleaned from the table that the respondents are proficient both in translation and direct writing. However, the translation method got a higher score (3.76) than the direct writing method (3.55). This implies that the first language of the respondents which is Ilocano is effective in writing the second language which is Filipino.

Table 2

Mean Rating of the Respondents Based on the Components of Writing

Component	Translation	DR	Direct Writing	DR
Content	3.83	P	3.64	P
Organization	3.72	P	3.57	P
Mechanics	3.73	P	3.45	P
Total	3.76	P	3.55	P

Norm: 4.21 – 5.00	A	Advance
3.41- 4.20	P	Proficient
2.61-3.40	AP	Approaching Proficiency
1.81-2.60	D	Developing
1.00-1.80	B	Beginning

Table 2 shows the mean score of the respondents based on the three components of writing. Based on the table, all of the respondents are proficient in terms of content, organization, and mechanics using the translation and direct writing methods. However, it can be gleaned from the table that the writing components of the respondents using the translation method ($x=3.76$) are better than those using the direct writing method ($x=3.55$). This implies that using the mother tongue (Ilocano) as the base language could result in better performance in writing in terms of content, organization, and mechanics.

Table 3*Socio-demographic Factors of the Respondents*

Socio-demographic factors	Frequency	Percentage
1. Sex		
Female	56	50
Male	56	50
2. Place of Residence		
Town Proper	22	20
Near the field	56	50
Near the sea	34	30
3. Educational resources	Mean	Description (Frequency of Use – Always, Sometimes, Never)
computer	2.27	Often
Radio	2.17	Often
Television	2.83	Always
Internet	2.39	Always
Books	2.38	Always
Newspaper	1.93	Often
magazines	1.98	Often
4. Leisure Activities	Mean	Description (Likelihood – very like, like, unlike)
listening to music	2.77	Very like
singing	2.29	Like
story telling	2.26	Like
watching movies	2.34	Like
browsing and reading social media	2.36	Very like
chatting with classmates	2.58	Very like
reflecting	1.99	Like

Table 3 (Continued)

Socio-demographic factors	Frequency	Percentage
Communicating through social media	2.24	Like
listening to news reports	2.33	Like
playing with peers	2.51	Very like
planting plants	2.16	Like
roaming	2.49	Very Like
drawing and designing	2.06	Like
dancing	2.07	Like
Problem-solving	2.08	Like

Table 3 shows the socio-demographic profile of the respondents which is composed of sex, place of residence, educational resources, and leisure activities.

It can be gathered from Table 3 that in terms of sex variables, there is an equal number of males (56) and females (56).

In terms of place of residence as a variable, it is shown in the table that 56 or 50% of respondents reside near the field, 34 or 30 % reside near the sea, and 22 or 20% reside in the town proper. This means that more respondents are residing in the rural areas than in the urban area.

In the educational resources, it is shown that the most frequent educational resources utilized by the respondents at home are television ($x=2.83$), internet ($x=2.39$), and books ($x=2.38$). This means that the respondents are more likely to watch television, browse the internet, and read books.

In the leisure activities, the table shows that listening to music ($x=2.77$), browsing and using social media ($x=2.36$), chatting with classmates ($x=2.58$), playing with peers ($x=2.51$), and roaming ($x=2.49$) are among the most leisure activities that are very like by the respondents.

Table 4

Factors Showing Significant Relationship to the Level of Writing Skills of the Respondents Using the Translation Method

Factors	Narrative	Expository	Descriptive	Argumentative	Total
Sex	-.349*	-.234	-.364*	-.267*	-.334*
Place of Residence	-.083	-.101	-.081	-.076	-.093
Educational Resources	.257	.347**	.345**	.390**	.372**

Table 4 (Continued)

Factors	Narrative	Expository	Descriptive	Argumentative	Total
Leisure Activities	.176	.241	.312*	.330*	.298*

Table 4 shows the relationship between sex and the three compositions (narrative, descriptive, and argumentative) that the respondents have written using the translation. Based on the table, sex has a significant relationship with the composition writing level of the students who used translation (-.344*). This implies that females favor more the translation method than males. Females are good at writing narrative, descriptive, and argumentative essays when using their first language which is Ilocano, and translating it to their second language which is Filipino.

Educational resources used by the respondents show a significant relationship also in writing expository (.347**), descriptive (.345**), and argumentative (.390**) compositions. Overall, educational resources (.372**) are a factor in writing compositions. Television, the internet, and books are among the educational resources that the students utilize. This further means that frequent use of educational resources results positive effect on the composition writing skills of the respondents.

Leisure activities of the respondents were found to be significantly related to the level of writing skills of the respondents in descriptive (.312*), and argumentative (.330*) compositions. Overall, leisure activities (.298*) are a factor so that the respondents can write in descriptive and argumentative compositions using the translation method. This implies that the experiences of the respondents in their leisure activities can be the source and content of their writing. This further means that respondents were able to write because of the activities that made them happy.

Table 5

Factors Showing a Significant Relationship to the Level of Writing Skills of the Respondents Using the Direct Writing Method

Factors	Narrative	Expository	Descriptive	Argumentative	Total
Sex	-.136	-.115	-.275*	-.261	-.226
Place of Residence	.107	.124	.107	.075	.110
Educational Resources	.129	.137	.195	.026	.125
Leisure Activities	.016	-.100	.009	.004	-.015

Table 5 shows the factors that have a significant relationship using the direct writing method. Based on the table, sex is significantly correlated to the descriptive composition of the respondents. This means that females are better writers than males when it comes to direct writing method.

Table 6

Difference between the Composition Writing Skill of the Respondents Using Translation a (L1-L2) and Direct Writing Methods

Composition	Translation	Direct Writing	Mean Difference	T	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Narrative	3.70	3.53	.170	1.836	p >.05	Do not Reject Ho
Expository	3.77	3.56	.207	2.386	p <.05	Reject Ho
Descriptive	3.75	3.51	.299	2.894	p <.05	Reject Ho
Argumentative	3.82	3.60	.237	1.926	p <.05	Reject Ho
Total	3.76	3.53	.228	2.476	p <.05	Reject Ho

Table 6 shows the difference between the composition writing skills of the respondents using the translation and direct writing methods. Based on the table, a significant difference has been found between the two methods of writing. Respondents write proficiently more using the translation method on the expository (t-value=2.386, p=<.05), descriptive (t-value= 2.894, p=<.05) and argumentative (t-value=1.926, p=<.05) compositions. In general, the translation method is more effective than the direct writing method. This implies that when the respondents used their mother tongue first and translated their thoughts later into the second language, it resulted in better writing elements (content, organization, and mechanics). Mother tongue plays a pivotal role in writing different compositions.

Discussion

Writing is a significant macro-communication skill that students need to learn. Equipping students the necessary writing skills will assist them not only academically but more so in the job that they will be taking someday. As such, writing is a fundamental skill at this time because of the lucrative benefits this skill would contribute to the different fields. Aside from the writing skills is the language that the students will use to express themselves more effectively and efficiently.

In the study, it was found that those who have translated their compositions using their mother tongue (Ilokano) to the second language (Filipino) are more proficient than those who directly write their thoughts in the second language. Gandeza & Unciano (2022) in their study on writing on personal narratives as a pedagogical intervention, found that personal narratives provide a smooth flow in the construction of concepts, develop learners' logical and critical thinking, and develop

the ability to reason. Horner and Tetreault (2016) highlighted in their research that the translation method can lead to the mastery of the target language of the learners.

Unciano (2020) in the Kto12 training program of teachers particularly on the performance of the Grade 9 learners found that the performance of the learners in the subject Filipino is higher than the other subjects.

Torrijos (2009) also supports the result of the study. It was found that translation is an important determinant in the acquisition of a second language. Walter and Dekker (2008) mentioned also that the mother tongue serves as the foundation of the students in acquiring another language. Further, Cummins (2000) believed that the first language can be used in the acquisition and learning of the second language. Hurley (2000) stressed that those learners who acquire two languages gain academic competence when they go to school.

As to the individual writing components which are content, organization, and mechanics, those who utilized translation were found to be more efficient than those who used direct writing methods. Karim and Nassaji (2013) found that the first language helps the learners in writing in the second language in terms of content and organization. Second language acquisition happens through communication of the persons who use the target language to express themselves. Ismail and Alsheikh (2012) and Tavakoli et al., (2014) found also that the students benefit from translation in the generation of ideas and better-writing organization. Most of the respondents preferred translation rather than direct writing. Murtisari (2016) emphasized in her study that translation as a method of writing, can increase the vocabulary and grammar skills of the learners.

In the study, sex is found to have a significant relationship with the writing skills of the respondents. The finding is supported by the study of Adeyemi (2008) which presents that females are more good writers than males. Weatherall (2002) emphasized that the language of females is direct, clear, and concise. The finding is supported by the study of Kamari et al. (2012). They found out that the writing skills of females are superior to males in terms of descriptive composition writing.

Educational resources are also found to have a significant relationship with writing skills. Hasby and Sugianto (2022) found that watching movies is effective in improving grammatical competence, vocabulary, sentence patterns, various languages, and motivation. In addition, Attiyat (2019) claimed that books through pleasure reading enhance the writing skills of the respondents by writing their own experiences, inspiring them, widening their vocabulary, and improving their grammar. Habibi et al. (2015) found out also in their study that the integration of reading books into writing improves the writing skills of the learners. Laila et al. (2021) found out that textbooks based on local wisdom improve the reading and writing skills of students. Rachman et al. (2020) also found in their research that internet usage produces and increases the quality of writing works because of its benefits to the writer. Additionally, Mohamed and Ayeche (2011) stressed that learning from the Internet can increase skills and knowledge and can assist in the development of writing skills.

Apart from the sex and educational resources, leisure was also found to be related to better writing skills because respondents can write proficiently. According to Thadani (2022) and Devi (n.d.), leisure activities relieve stress, boost concentration, improve reading and writing skills, and increase communication skills. In another finding, Mareque et al. (2019) in their research stressed that students participating in leisure activities are more creative than those who are not.

Clayton (2022) mentioned the benefits of leisure activities such as providing a sense of purpose, improving individual moods, increasing productivity, increasing a sense of empowerment and self-value, and providing different experiences.

Yerlisu et al. (2010) emphasized in their study that one of the benefits of leisure or recreational activities is working more efficiently. When learners are engaged in leisure activities or in activities that they like to do voluntarily, they become efficient in their other activities. Since writing is both a skill and an activity, the writing skills of the respondents become more efficient.

Cummins (2000) believes that children who learn their first language also learn the necessary skills to acquire the second language. Kobayashi & Rinnert (2008) mentioned that those students who composed first in their first language and translated later into their second language are better than those students who used the direct writing method.

Stapa & Majid (2012) and Karim & Nassaji (2013) found in their study that those students who used the translation improved their writing skills because they composed first using their first language.

Further, Krashen (1987) stressed in his natural order hypothesis that whatever language learners have acquired, it can help in the acquisition of a second language.

Ismail and Alsheikh (2012) found in their study that most of the respondents preferred translation rather than direct writing. Beiler & Dewilde (2020) found in their study that translation served as the key to aligning students' communicative resources to write in English as an additional language. In their study, they concluded that it could develop learners' competence in writing and prepare them to write in context. Horner and Tetreault (2016) highlighted in their research that the translation method can lead to the mastery of the target language of the learners.

In general, the result of the study highlights the importance of translation as a method in the generation of ideas for the content and better writing organization. The result can also address the dilemma of non-enrolment in the school because learners' first language is utilized, and it can aid them in writing.

Recommendations

Writing is a significant and fundamental skill that should be learned by everyone. Using the first language (Ilokano) facilitates the writing process to the second language (Filipino) through the translation method. Therefore, the translation method (use of the first language in writing and translating it to a second language) should be practiced. Mastery of this will help in writing compositions in other languages including the English Language.

Use the first language to generate ideas and translate them into the second language. Provide multiple topics for the students to write. Experiential learning may be an engagement to come out with authentic writing outputs.

Another is giving more exposure to students and practice to further academic activities and writing while keeping themselves healthy as they engage in meaningful and relevant co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Moreover, teachers of writing should attend seminars and workshops and engross themselves in different writing genres and styles that may help in the facilitation of the teaching of writing. Finally, administrators should encourage and support all sectors of society regarding the use of the mother tongue in communication and make a successful transition to a second language (as in the case of the Philippines and other countries with similar language situations to foreign languages, especially the English language.

Institutionalize the use of the local and national languages (Ilokano, Filipino, and English) either as a subject or a program at all levels. There should be a more comprehensive curriculum for the teaching of writing using the mother tongue and Filipino and other foreign languages for effective learning and to give a more productive way of life.

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Influence of Schema Activation on Undergraduate Students' Reading Comprehension of Poetry in English

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Abstract

This research explores the impact of schema activation on the reading comprehension of English poetry among undergraduate students in Myanmar Universities. The study investigates how activating students' prior knowledge and cultural schema enhances their understanding of poetic texts. Through a mixed-methods approach, the research examines the effectiveness of schema activation techniques in improving comprehension and engagement with poetry. The findings contribute to the pedagogical strategies for teaching literature in English as a foreign language, specifically within the unique cultural and educational landscape of Myanmar.

Keywords: schema activation, reading comprehension, undergraduate students, poetry

Introduction

Reading comprehension plays a crucial role in the academic success of undergraduate students, especially when it comes to comprehending complex literary texts such as poetry. However, the ability to effectively comprehend poetry in English may pose significant challenges for undergraduate students in Myanmar universities, considering the unique cultural, linguistic, and educational background of these students. To overcome these challenges, it is vital to explore the potential influence of schema activation on undergraduate students' reading comprehension of poetry in English. Schema activation refers to the process of activating background knowledge or pre-existing schemas to facilitate comprehension and meaning-making. This research aims to the impact of schema activation on undergraduate students' reading comprehension of poetry in English in Myanmar universities, focusing on the role of cultural and literary schemas, reading strategies, and language proficiency. The findings of this study will contribute to a better understanding of how schema activation can enhance reading comprehension skills in the context of poetry, providing valuable insights for educators, curriculum developers, and language practitioners in Myanmar and other similar educational settings.

Literature Review

Reading comprehension is an essential skill for undergraduate students studying poetry in English at Myanmar universities. In order to enhance their comprehension, it is important to activate their schema or prior knowledge. In 1966, Ausubel pointed out that learners can learn best when the new material being taught can be anchored into existing cognitive information in the learners. Rumelhart (1980) said that schemata can represent knowledge at all levels-from ideology schema and cultural truths to knowledge about the meaning of a particular word, to knowledge about what patterns of excitations are associated with what letters of the alphabet. Windonson (1983) claims that effective comprehension depends on reader's ability to relate what is being read to a familiar pattern or schema. Background knowledge of students can be enhanced by the teacher. We have schemata to represent all levels of our experience abstraction. Finally, our schemata are our knowledge. All of our generic knowledge is surrounded in schemata. Grabe (2006) stated that literature offers several instructional implications, revealing that activating background knowledge and training students to use reading strategies can be potential components in developing successful readers. Danning 2007 prove that students may not always be able to identify their own knowledge gaps. This idea is proved by the scholar Ambrace et al in 2010. Students are better able to learn if they have sufficient and accurate existing knowledge. Keun (2011) demonstrated that schema activating tasks helped learners' reading comprehension, guessing skills and also positively improved their perception towards learning English reading. Even though schema relevant to the topic of the reading passages can positively relate to reading comprehension ability, learners with L2 knowledge tend to be text-bound and have difficulty in activating their background knowledge (McNeil,2011). Students in Myanmar are willing to study English poems with the guidance of their teacher. They want to be provided with common knowledge about the targeted culture and traditions. They want to access the schema activation in comprehending reading English and American poetry.

Schema activation, an encoding strategy, involves activating relevant prior knowledge so the new knowledge can be connected to it. It has a positive influence on memory of humans and it is very popular in psychology and in education, especially in reading. Written text does not carry meaning itself and it can only provide direction for learners as to how they should retrieve or construct meaning from their own previously acquired knowledge (An, 2013). Poetry is one of the most useful transmitters of cultural knowledge of different nations. It really helps readers understand different cultures and ideologies, different social behaviour, and opens eyes towards a new world. Students have still difficulty in grasping meaning of poetry texts. Only the schema activation can make foreign students easy in comprehending reading poetry. This study examined how does schema activation influence on undergraduate students' reading comprehending poetry in English.

Methods

This study was conducted between July and September 2022. The total number of participants were 15. The participants were randomly selected. They were second year students specializing in English. The number of males was 3 and that of female was 12. We used a mixed method to gather data. The research consisted of two parts. The first part was questionnaire survey with 9 close-ended questions and 1 both closed and open-ended and the second part was interview surveys with 3 open-ended questions.

3.1 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to investigate the influence of schema activation on undergraduate students' reading comprehension of poetry in English in the context of Myanmar universities.

The objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To examine the existing literature related to schema activation, reading comprehension, poetry instruction, and English language learning.
2. To explore the theoretical framework and theories that underpin the relationship between schema activation and reading comprehension in language learning contexts.

Results

Data analysis of the study showed that students prefer schema activation in reading poetry. This section presents the key findings from the study examining the influence of schema activation on undergraduate students' reading comprehension of poetry in English in Myanmar universities.

The study revealed a positive relationship between schema activation and reading comprehension. Students who actively activated their prior knowledge and experiences related to the poem's themes, settings, and linguistic elements demonstrated higher levels of comprehension. It also found that the cultural and educational context of Myanmar universities played a significant role in schema activation. Students who had prior exposure to and familiarity with English poetry in their cultural upbringing demonstrated higher levels of schema activation and subsequently better reading comprehension. The study identified several challenges faced by undergraduate students in activating their schema for poetry in English. Limited exposure to and understanding of English poetry, as well as the lack of available resources and support, hindered students' ability to activate their schema effectively.

Overall, the findings of this study highlight the importance of schema activation in enhancing undergraduate students' reading comprehension of poetry in English in Myanmar universities. The results suggest the need for targeted instructional strategies, resources, and support to help students effectively activate their schema and improve their comprehension abilities.

Table 1*Student's Responses on the First Question of Background Knowledge*

Sr No	Item 1	Responses			Calculation		Interpretation
		No, never	Yes, sometimes	Yes, often	Mean	SD	
1	Do you have a problem comprehending the implications or associations evoked by the title of the poem in the English or American poem?	6.67%	73.33%	20.00%	2.13	0.50	Yes, sometimes

NOTE:

1.00-1.66=No, never

1.67-2.33=Yes, sometimes

2.34-3.00=Yes, often

According to the questionnaire survey, item 1 showed that students sometimes have a problem comprehending the implications or associations evoked by the title of the English and American poem (Mean=2.13).

Table 2*Representation of the Students' Responses on the Second Question of Background Knowledge*

Sr No	Item 2	Responses			Calculation		Interpretation
		No, never	Yes, sometimes	Yes, often	Mean	SD	
2	Do images and illusions as they are constructed in the English, and American poem cause a problem with the comprehension of the poem?	13.33%	73.33%	13.33%	2.47	0.72	Yes, sometimes

NOTE:

1.00-1.66=No, never

1.67-2.33=Yes, sometimes

2.34-3.00=Yes, often

According to item 2, students occasionally thought that images and illusions cause a problem in comprehending of a poem. (Mean=2.47).

Table 3*Students' Responses on the Third Question of Background Knowledge*

Sr No	Item 3	Responses			Calculation		Interpretation
		No, never	Yes, sometimes	Yes, often	Mean	SD	
3	Do you have a problem identifying with the author or persona, his life, his background?	6.67%	20.00%	73.33%	2.67	0.60	Yes, often

NOTE:

1.00-1.66=No, never

1.67-2.33=Yes, sometimes

2.34-3.00=Yes, often

Item no.3 highlighted that the participants often have any problem identifying with the author or persona, his life and his background (Mean=2.67).

Table 4*Sample Response on the Third Open-ended Question of Background Knowledge*

Sr No	Item 4	Responses			Participants	Please share your own opinions and views to express any problems or weaknesses in your comprehension of English and American poems.
		No, never	Yes, sometimes	Yes, often		
4	Does your teacher usually introduce some common knowledge about English and American conventions, customs, habits,	0.00%	26.67%	73.33%	1.	As undergraduate student in Myanmar University, I would like to express my opinions and views on the challenges I face in comprehending English and American poetry. I believe that understanding poetry

Table 4 (Continued)

Sr No	Item 4	Responses			Part icip ants	Please share your own opinions and views to express any problems or weaknesses in your comprehension of English and American poems.
		No, never	Yes, someti mes	Yes, often		
	historical background, and so on aimed at improving and guiding the students' reading?					from these English-speaking countries poses several problems and weaknesses for us, primarily due to differences in habits, customs, conventions, culture, and historical background.
	Please share your own opinions and views to express any problems or weaknesses in your comprehension of English and American poems.				2.	One of the main challenges we encounter is the language barrier. English and American poetry often use complex vocabulary, metaphors, and cultural references that are unfamiliar to us. This lack of familiarity makes it difficult to fully grasp the meaning and depth of the poems, hindering our ability to appreciate the writer's intended message. Additionally, the unique structure and style of these poems can be confusing, as they often deviate from the traditional poetry forms prevalent in our own culture.
					3.	In my opinions, cultural differences play a significant role in our struggle to comprehend English and American poetry. The themes and symbols employed in these poems are deeply rooted in the cultural and historical contexts of their respective countries. As students from Myanmar, we may not have the same historical knowledge or social context that would allow us to fully appreciate and understand the underlying themes and messages within these poems.

Table 4 (Continued)

Sr No	Item 4	Responses			Part icip ants	Please share your own opinions and views to express any problems or weaknesses in your comprehension of English and American poems.
		No, never	Yes, someti mes	Yes, often		
						4. Another aspect that contributes to our challenges is the difference in literary conventions and stylistic preferences. Our education system and literary traditions have primarily focused on local literature, which has its own set of conventions and styles. Therefore, when we encounter English and American poetry, we are not accustomed to the unique literary techniques and structures used, making it harder for us to engage with and analyse the poems effectively.
						5. "I feel that one of the biggest problems we face in understanding English and American poems is our limited exposure to different cultures and contexts."
						6. Sometimes, I find it difficult to grasp the deeper meanings in English and American poems due to differences in historical backgrounds and cultural references.
						7. One weakness I notice among many of us is the tendency to interpret English and American poems solely from our own cultural perspectives.
						8. Limited access to English resources and literature is a major hurdle for us in comprehending English and American poems effectively.

Table 4 (Continued)

Sr No	Item 4	Responses			Part icip ants	Please share your own opinions and views to express any problems or weaknesses in your comprehension of English and American poems.
		No, never	Yes, someti mes	Yes, often		
						9. I feel that our education system should include more diverse poetry from different cultures to expand our understanding and improve our comprehension of English and American poems.
						10. Sometimes, the use of metaphor and symbolism in English and American poetry can be challenging for us to decipher due to cultural differences.
						11. Our traditional language structures and poetic forms are quite different from those used in English and American poetry, making it difficult for us to fully grasp their essence.
						12. I believe that incorporating more interactive and immersive activities, such as poetry readings and discussions, can greatly enhance our understanding of English and American poems.
						13. There is a need for more comprehensive language classes that focus specifically on the comprehension and analysis of English and American poems
						14. Sometimes, the historical and cultural contexts of English and American poems are quite different from what we are used to, which can lead to misinterpretation or incomplete understanding.

Sr No	Item 4	Responses			Participants	Please share your own opinions and views to express any problems or weaknesses in your comprehension of English and American poems.
		No, never	Yes, sometimes	Yes, often		
						15. We need more resources, such as annotated editions or translations, that help bridge the gap in cultural and historical knowledge necessary for understanding English and American poems.

Sr No	Item 5	Responses			Calculation		Interpretation
		No, never	Yes, sometimes	Yes, often	Mean	SD	
5	Do you find a problem with reading the English and American poem due to the different linguistic deviation and sentence structure?	0.00%	73.33%	26.67%	2.27	0.44	Yes, sometimes

Table 6

Language Differences Analysis in Terms of Differences in the Myanmar and English Rhetoric

Sr No	Item 6	Responses			Calculation		Interpretation
		No, never	Yes, sometimes	Yes, often	Mean	SD	
6	Do you find a problem reading and understanding the English and American poem due to differences in the Myanmar and English rhetoric?	0.00%	20.00%	80.00%	2.80	0.40	Yes, often

NOTE:

1.00-1.66=No, never

1.67-2.33=Yes, sometimes

2.34-3.00=Yes, often

Item no. 6 showed that differences in the Myanmar and English rhetoric formed a problem in reading English poetry (Mean=2.80).

Table 7

Language Differences Analysis in Terms of Linguistic Choices in the Poem

Sr No	Item 7	Responses			Calculation		Interpretation
		No, never	Yes, sometimes	Yes, often	Mean	SD	
7	Do you find a problem comprehending the English and American poem due to linguistic choices in the poem?	0.00%	73.33%	26.67%	2.27	0.44	Yes, sometimes

NOTE:

1.00-1.66=No, never

1.67-2.33=Yes, sometimes

2.34-3.00=Yes, often

Similarly, item no. 7 showed that linguistics choices in the poem made students find problem to comprehend the English and Myanmar poem due to reading poetry (Mean=2.27).

Table 8

Students' Responses on Their Openness to Schema Activation Strategies about the Title or Topic of the Poem

Sr No	Item 8	Responses			Calculation		Interpretation
		No, never	Yes, sometimes	Yes, often	Mean	SD	
8	Would you want an elaborate discussion about the title or topic of the poem to build or guide your reading?	0.00%	13.33%	86.67%	2.87	0.34	Yes, often

NOTE:

1.00-1.66=No, never

1.67-2.33=Yes, sometimes

2.34-3.00=Yes, often

Item no.8 showed that students want an elaborate discussion about the title or the topic to build or guide their reading.

Table 9

Students' Openness to Schema Activation Strategies about the Title or Topic of the Poem

Sr No	Item 9	Responses			Calculation		Interpretation
		No, never	Yes, sometimes	Yes, often	Mean	SD	
9	Would you want to discuss and explore key words in the poem related to necessary background knowledge?	0.00%	26.67%	73.33%	2.73	0.44	Yes, often

NOTE:

1.00-1.66=No, never

1.67-2.33=Yes, sometimes

2.34-3.00=Yes, often

This study aims to highlight the positive influence of schema activation on undergraduate students' reading comprehending poetry in English. Students sometimes have difficulty in comprehending English poetry without accessing schema activation. Students' willingness to discuss and explore key words in the poem can be seen in item no.9(Mean=2.73).

Table 10

Students' Openness to Schema Activation Strategies about Schema Activation Classes for the History Part in the Poetry Class

Sr No	Item 10	Responses			Calculation		Interpretation
		No, never	Yes, sometimes	Yes, often	Mean	SD	
10	Would you want schema activation classes for the history part in the poetry class to provide you with information which fills in your lack of social, cultural, and religious knowledge necessary for understanding the English poem being studied?	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%	2.67	0.47	Yes, often

NOTE:

1.00-1.66=No, never

1.67-2.33=Yes, sometimes

2.34-3.00=Yes, often

According to item no.10, students want schema activation classes for the history part in the poetry class to provide them with information which fills in their lack of social, cultural, and religious knowledge necessary for understanding the English poems. (Mean=2.67).

Conclusion

5.1. To examine the existing literature related to schema activation, reading comprehension, poetry instruction, and English language learning.

The present study was intended to identify the influence of schema activation on students' reading comprehending skills for poetry. The findings showed that students rely on schema activated by their teachers to overcome difficulties in reading poetry texts. Although their teacher guided them to access schema activation, they still had difficulties to comprehend even titles of poetry. This may be for the facts that students are not familiar with cultures and traditions of the writer and they had poor linguistic competence.

In the name of Instructional strategies for schema activation, the study highlighted the importance of employing effective instructional strategies to facilitate schema activation. Providing pre-reading activities such as brainstorming, group discussions, and visual aids proved to be effective in helping students activate their schema and enhance their comprehension of poetry in English. The very important idea was found that individual differences, such as language proficiency, prior knowledge, and motivation, influenced students' ability to activate their schema. Students with higher language proficiency and greater prior knowledge of English poetry demonstrated better schema activation and reading comprehension.

This exposure can be facilitated through incorporating more international poetry into our curriculum and providing access to a wider range of literature resources. Additionally, workshops and discussions focused on analysing and understanding these poems would greatly benefit us in enhancing our comprehension skills. Furthermore, it is important to foster a comprehensive understanding of the cultural and historical contexts from which these poems arise. Incorporating lessons on English and American history, as well as cultural studies, would help the students gain the necessary background knowledge to interpret the poems accurately. To bridge the gap in comprehension, we also encourage collaboration with English-speaking students or professors who can provide insights and explanations into the nuances of English and American poetry. Engaging in discussions and sharing different interpretations can help them develop a more informed understanding of the poems.

5.2 To explore the theoretical framework and theories that underpin the relationship between schema activation and reading comprehension in language learning contexts.

As this research delved into the pivotal role of schema activation in enhancing the reading comprehension of English poetry among undergraduate students in Myanmar universities. The findings of this study provided empirical evidence that strategically activating students' prior knowledge and cultural schema significantly improved their ability to understand and engage with poetic texts. The results underscore the importance of incorporating schema activation techniques into pedagogical approaches for teaching literature in English as a foreign language within the Myanmar context. As the students demonstrated heightened comprehension and increased engagement, educators should consider integrating these strategies into their instructional practices. This research contributes to the broader field of language education by highlighting the efficacy of tailored pedagogical methods that account for learners' cultural backgrounds and prior experiences. Ultimately, this study advocates for a more nuanced and culturally sensitive approach to teaching English poetry,

fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of both language and culture among undergraduate students in Myanmar universities.

Recommendations

The study identified several areas for future research. These include examining the long-term effects of schema activation on reading comprehension, investigating the effectiveness of different instructional strategies for schema activation, and exploring the impact of technology-mediated instruction on schema activation and reading comprehension. Ultimately, this study advocates for a more nuanced and culturally sensitive approach to teaching English poetry, fostering a deeper appreciation and understanding of both language and culture among undergraduate students in Myanmar universities.

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Authors

Win Kyi Kyi Naing is an accomplished educator and scholar in the field of English Literature. She holds the esteemed position of Associate Professor within the English Department at Pyay University, operating under the purview of the Ministry of Education in Myanmar. With an impressive teaching career spanning more than 19 years, Win Kyi Kyi Naing has consistently demonstrated her dedication to fostering a rich educational environment for her students. Her expertise in the realm of Literature has not only provided valuable insights to her pupils but has also contributed significantly to the academic community. Win Kyi Kyi Naing's commitment to academic exploration is exemplified by her extensive publication record. She has authored five noteworthy academic papers, each contributing to the body of knowledge within the field. Her research reflects a deep-seated curiosity and a desire to delve into the intricacies of literature, further enriching the academic discourse. As an Associate Professor, Win Kyi Kyi Naing continues to inspire and guide students while actively engaging in scholarly pursuits. Her dedication to the study of Literature and her contributions to academic literature make her an invaluable asset to both Pyay University and the wider academic community in Myanmar.

Aye Aye Mar is a dedicated educator and scholar, serving as a Tutor within the English Department at Banmaw University, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education in Myanmar. With a fervent passion for academia, Aye Aye Mar has established herself as a formidable presence in the educational landscape. Her commitment to the advancement of knowledge is exemplified by her prolific publication record, with numerous academic papers to her credit. Through her scholarly contributions, she has enriched the academic discourse and fostered a culture of intellectual exploration. Aye Aye Mar's pursuit of academic excellence extends beyond her written work. She actively participates in International Conferences and webinars, showcasing her dedication to staying informed about the latest developments in her field. By engaging with fellow academics on a global platform, she not only expands her own horizons but also brings valuable insights back to her local academic community. Her passion for Assessment and Testing is a driving force in her academic journey. Her expertise in this domain makes her an invaluable resource for her students and colleagues alike. Aye Aye Mar's devotion to her role as a Tutor, her extensive academic contributions, and her active engagement with the broader academic community make her a prominent figure within Banmaw University and a valuable asset to the Ministry of Education in Myanmar.

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Department(s), faculty (s), affiliation(s), city(s), country(s) and e-mail address (10 points, left aligned)

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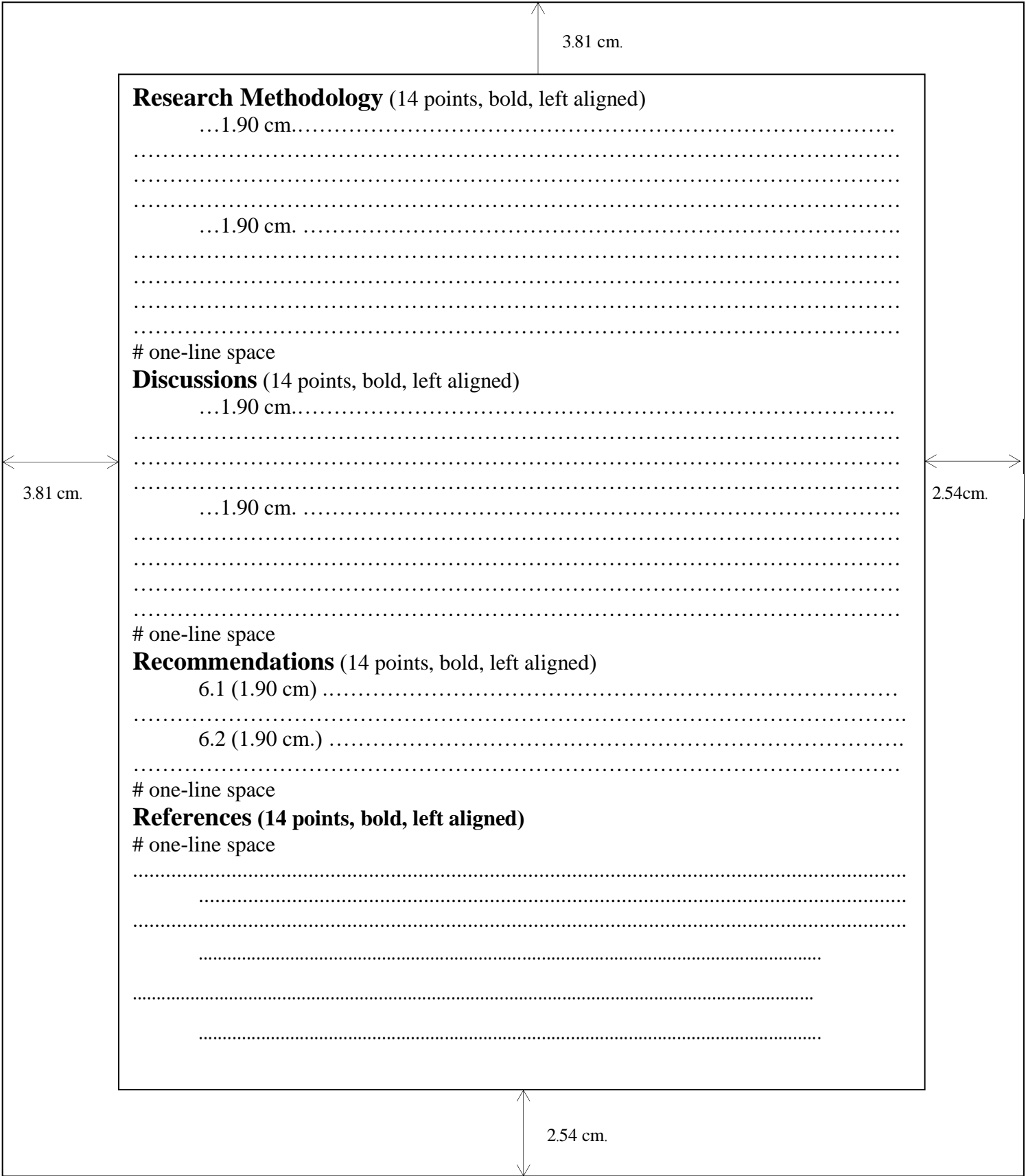
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