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CONTENTS

Expectations and Challenges of Non-native University Writers at the Outset of Discipline-specific Study

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Abstract

Little is known about how best to prepare non-native students matriculated at universities in the United States to succeed in discipline-specific writing. While some studies have suggested differences in the types and volumes of writing across disciplines, such studies have compared very few disciplines simultaneously and have not always examined the disciplines most commonly studied by international students. Thus, this study seeks to fill an important gap in the literature by examining the perspectives of university professors regarding their expectations and purposes for student writing as well as their observations about the greatest writing challenges their students face within five of the most popular disciplines for international students at the undergraduate level. These include business, biology, computer science, engineering, and psychology. Results suggest meaningful differences across disciplines in terms of writing volumes, purposes, and expectations though no differences were observed across fields for the most prevalent writing challenges. This paper also discusses the possible need for non-native writers to have additional opportunities to continue to develop their discipline-specific writing skills along with more feedback. While additional discipline-specific writing instruction may not always be feasible, we encourage program administrators and practitioners to consider tailoring writing instruction to meet the needs of learners preparing for various fields of study.

Keywords: Discipline-specific writing, English as a Second Language, Writing expectations and challenges

Introduction

More than three decades ago, Horowitz (1986) argued that we cannot fully grasp what we need to teach our writing classes unless we understand what our

students are being asked to write once they leave our classroom. This observation is as cogent today as it was then. What we teach our students must be relevant to the ways they will need to use the language. However, in the case of teaching English as a second language (ESL) students bound for undergraduate studies in various disciplines, knowing what learners need to do with their writing may not be as straight forward as it appears.

Some might think of university writing as simply what is taught in first-year composition courses such as essays and term papers. While this is certainly descriptive of some university writing, it is not universally applicable across a college campus. Writing in university courses may be as diverse as the disciplines that require writing (e.g., Ferris, 2015; Johns, 1981; Leki, 2007; Stoller & Robinson, 2015). The need for resources such as *Write Like a Chemist* (Robinson, Stoller, Costanza-Robinson, & Jones, 2008), *Writing Like an Engineer* (Winsor, 2013), and *The Writers Guide to Psychology* (Kaufman, 2010) demonstrate that writing can serve many purposes and may take on multiple forms. Understanding writing expectations and student challenges in the various disciplines is essential if practitioners are to provide the specific instruction ESL students need prior to admission and the support they need once they have been matriculated.

The ultimate intent of this study is to help practitioners involved in writing instruction to better prepare ESL students to meet the writing expectations of their professors at the beginning of study within their chosen field. According to Chow and Bhandari (2011), over 80% of the 764,495 international students studying in the United States in 2011 spoke English as a second or foreign language coming from countries such as China, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and Japan. Since little data are available regarding the writing expectations and challenges these ESL students face once they step into their chosen fields, this study was designed to reduce the gap in our understanding about how best to prepare and to continue to support ESL learners for the discipline-specific writing they will encounter in their first semester of undergraduate study within their chosen disciplines. Given that international students tend to favor certain disciplines over others (Chow & Bhandari, 2011), we determined to conduct a study examining the perspectives of university professors regarding their expectations and purposes for student writing as well as their observations about the greatest writing challenges their students face within five of the most popular fields of study

for international students (Chow & Bhandari, 2011). Thus, this study examines perspectives about student writing within five disciplines including business, biology, computer science, engineering, and psychology. This study should be beneficial to TESOL practitioners, intensive English programs, those who teach English for academic purposes, and many others interested in the success of ESL writers on university campuses.

Review of Literature

While the U.S. has numerous English language programs that seek to provide their students with the skills they need to successfully engage the curricula at English-medium universities, Moran (2013, p. 1) suggests there is "little empirical evidence" informing "the content and curricular goals of such programs." In addition, scholars have described university approaches to writing for matriculated students as "poorly addressed," without being adequately "systematic" or "coherent" (Garbati, McDoland, Meaning, Samuels, & Scurr, 2015, p. 4). Such claims suggest that we need much more understanding of the writing challenges and expectations ESL students will face as they transition from intensive English programs into discipline-specific study at English-medium universities. While some research regarding expectations and challenges in university writing has provided important insights, much more research is needed to contextualize previous work and to address the many questions that have not yet been fully answered.

We begin by considering relevant findings of recent research. Some studies have shed light on the volume and types of writing done by under graduate students. For example, Garbati et al. (2015) examined 215 syllabi and conducted faculty surveys and focus groups emphasizing undergraduate university writing in history, kinesiology, and business. They noted that on average students could expect to write approximately 2.5 assignments per course or about 12 assignments per year. These assignments varied in their number of pages and their purposes which ranged from testing student content knowledge to providing students with opportunities to "develop, refine, and practice necessary writing skills" (p. 7). Such findings are consistent with those of Graves, Hyland, and Samuels (2010) who analyzed 179 syllabi for undergraduate writing assignments from 17 different disciplines. They also found students write about 2.5 assignments per course and that nearly half of those assignments were just four pages or less.

However, writing does not appear to be equally distributed across disciplines. For example, Garbati et al. (2015) found that history students wrote almost twice as much as those studying kinesiology or business. Similarly, Graves et al. (2010) observed that their humanities students wrote more than twice as many pages compared to their students in social science programs. Though the groupings are somewhat different, Moran (2013) also gathered syllabi and surveyed professors and students. She observed that students in the humanities, arts, and social sciences were given significantly more writing assignments than those in math, engineering, or other sciences. She also found that writing for the psychology courses included much more variety compared to the writing done for the chemistry classes. Thus, while some students have considerable opportunities to engage in course-related writing, others may produce very little if any writing during a particular course. Such discrepancies have important implications for TESOL practitioners as they prepare ESL students for writing within specific disciplines as they begin their study.

Types of writing also appear to vary across contexts though categorizing them can be challenging. Attempts to classify university writing range from Horowitz' (1986) seven categories, to Carter's (2007) four meta genre's, Gardner and Nesi's (2012) 13 genre families, and Hardy and Friginal's (2016) four dimensions. One of the most prevalent types of writing is the research paper. Horowitz (1986) found it to be the most common type of writing for the undergraduate students he observed. This seems fairly consistent with findings from Graves et al. (2010), though the actual percentage of the assignments that could be termed research could range from 31% to 63% depending on the specific definition used. Conversely, Melzer (2009) reported that only 6% of the assignments he analyzed were research-based term papers though this smaller proportion may have been due to the large number of assignments he was unable to successfully categorize. Gardner and Nessi (2012) point out the problems associated with attempts to categorize similar writing assignments when there may be important differences across those assignments in various contexts. Melzer (2009, p. 252) further suggests that it "cannot be classified as a genre since research writing varies to such a degree from discipline to discipline and even from instructor to instructor." This is an area that needs additional study if we are to better grasp the kinds of writing ESL students are expected to produce.

In addition to the more obvious types of writing that would be expected in undergraduate study, such as research papers, some scholars also note the prevalence of what could be described as short answer writing often associated with assessments. These might be described as open-ended responses requiring just one or two words or phrases. In one study Melzer (2003) observed that 23% of the course assignments he examined were made up of short answer question types. In another study, he found that 21% of the assignments were short answer (Melzer, 2009). Some researchers have noted that the short answer response was the only type of writing done in some of the courses they examined (e.g., Melzer, 2009; Moran, 2013). Other scholars have appropriately highlighted the inherent challenge in attempting to categorize this type of writing. For example, Graves et al. (2010) suggested that it should not be considered under the traditional definition of writing and Melzer (2009, p. 256) described short answer writing as the "one school genre that resists the application of current genre theory." Despite its anomalous nature, if short answers make up a substantial amount of student writing, it seems that they need to be prepared to write effectively in this context.

In many recent studies, there seems to be a gap between the writing skills professors expect and the writing that students produce, suggesting that many students are unprepared to successfully engage in the kinds of writing required as they transition to study within their chosen disciplines. For example, Soter and Smith (2016) who examined the business writing of undergraduate students noted that students often struggle despite completing multiple composition classes beforehand. While business professors assume that students new to the discipline will have the skills needed to write effectively in their courses, they are frequently disappointed to find that their students "show incredible weakness in writing" (p. 2) including problems with grammar, spelling, coherence, transitions, clarity, and so forth. These observations of students who are unprepared to write effectively seem consistent with the findings of other researchers examining a variety of disciplines (e.g., Garbati et al., 2015; Moran, 2013; Perin, 2013).

In addition to expectations associated with linguistic accuracy, other unmet expectations of professors appear to be discipline-specific. For example, Moran (2013) noted that while psychology professors want students to demonstrate course content, synthesize ideas, and connect them to relevant theory, chemistry professors emphasize that their students need to write with the detail and clarity that

would allow for replication of their lab work and experiments. In chemistry, the emphasis is largely on effectively capturing procedures and discussing the analysis and results appropriately. Beyond such differences, Moran (2013, p. 84) also noted that while many professors claim that students simply need general academic writing skills to be successful in their classes, many frustrations over student writing are actually due to expectations that are "implicitly discipline-oriented" in ways that may go "beyond the instructor's awareness." If true, expectations associated with linguistic accuracy as well as discipline-specific conventions need to be made much more explicit for students much earlier.

Additional observations from the literature have to do with other kinds of differences across disciplines. For example, Garbati et al. (2015) noticed that the history and kinesiology professors spent more time teaching students about writing within the discipline than the business professors. In doing so, emphases varied such as careful attention to grammar in history and a focus on APA style in kinesiology. Though all of the professors felt quite confident in their own professional writing within their discipline, they varied a great deal in their preparation and confidence to be able to successfully teach their students how to write effectively within the discipline. Thus, the learning experience associated with writing with various disciplines and which aspects of writing are most important may vary widely for students.

Relevant to preparation to teach writing within a discipline is the nature of the writing feedback teachers provide. The literature shows some variation across contexts in terms of feedback provided by professors. Graves et al. (2010) noted that a majority of the syllabi they analyzed included no information about specific learning goals associated with writing assignments, the rubrics that would be used to evaluate the writing, or anything about feedback procedures. Moreover, Garbati et al. (2015) lamented that some kind of writing feedback was only seen in about 5% of the courses they examined. Melzer (2009) observed that nearly 13% of the professors in his study collected at least one rough draft and provided some kind of feedback to help the students improve the quality of their final draft. In their study, Graves et al. (2010) noted that about 14% of the assignments they analyzed included some form of feedback based on written notes or meetings with the professor or teaching assistant. Each of these scholars mentioned the potential benefits of utilizing more nested writing assignments where students could "submit com-

ponent parts of an assignment and receive feedback about their writing as they work toward a final product" (Garbati et al., 2015, p. 2).

This brief review of literature has provided insights regarding undergraduate writers in university contexts. Generally, there seems to be a substantial gap between the kind of writing skills professors expect and the quality of the writing students produce. Despite this gap, many professors feel poorly qualified to help students improve their writing. Others feel too overloaded with other priorities to provide the additional writing instruction and feedback the students need. While a few studies have reported on various types of writing and their distribution across the disciplines, there are confusing inconsistencies in how writing assignments have been categorized, making it difficult to aggregate information across multiple studies. At least some research has been conducted in a number of disciplines such as business, chemistry, history, kinesiology, and psychology as well as broader categories such as humanities and social sciences.

While such studies have provided very useful information, not all of these fields are those most commonly pursued by ESL students transitioning from intensive English study to the university. Moreover, since the findings appear in different studies with varying methods, it is difficult to make appropriate comparisons across disciplines. Therefore, the intent of this study was to examine the perceptions of professors across five of the most common disciplines for ESL students (Chow & Bhandari, 2011) to determine how well their students are prepared to engage in discipline-specific writing at the outset of their study. This research focuses on the beginning of study within specific fields as a way of determining the effectiveness of intensive English programs and TESOL practitioners in preparing students for discipline-specific writing. With this in mind, the following research questions were articulated.

Research Questions

To what extent do each of the following differ across initial discipline-specific courses within each field?

1. The number of pages and types of writing.
2. The importance of various aspects of writing such as use of genre, word choice, specific types of vocabulary, and linguistic accuracy.

3. The percentage of writing that receives feedback from professors and that may be resubmitted.
4. The main purposes for writing.
5. The greatest writing challenges.

Method

An essential aspect to understanding the challenges international students face while studying in the US is knowing where and what they are studying. We used *Open Doors* (Chow & Bhandari, 2011) which provides statistical information about international students in the US, to identify colleges and universities that have the highest percentages[1] of international students. According to *Open Doors'* data, over 81% of all international students studying in the US in 2011 were studying in three types of institutions that offer undergraduate degrees: Doctoral (64%), Masters (17%), or Baccalaureate (4%) degree granting institutions. As such, we focused our data collection on these three types of institutions. Thirty institutions that enroll the largest numbers of international students were selected for the study through a stratified selection process (10 PhD granting institutions, 10 MA granting institutions, 10 BA granting institutions). We also identified the five disciplines that were the most popular among international students according to Open Doors (Chow & Bhandari, 2011). These included biology, business, computer science, engineering, and psychology.

Our original goal was to obtain data from at least 20 institutions per discipline. However, the 30 institutions originally identified did not provide an equal distribution of the disciplines of interest. They included biology (30), business (27), computer science (27), engineering (13), and psychology (30). Therefore, our original list of institutions was expanded with additional schools reporting the highest proportions of international students—this was particularly necessary for engineering since some of our originally selected schools did not have engineering programs.

For each discipline at each institution, one class was chosen that represented the most essential beginning course for that field. In many cases, the most appropriate

[1] These included schools such as the Illinois Institute of Technology (52% international students), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (33%), Carnegie Mellon University (33%), and so on.

course was obvious while in other cases we needed to consult with department personal to help determine which course to use. We excluded one-credit survey courses and prerequisites. Our selections included courses such as Psychology 101 or Biology 105. In some cases, course types varied across institutions. For example, the initial class chosen for business included courses in business management, economics, and accounting depending on the institution.

Instrument

Following an extensive review of the literature, an on-line survey using research software developed using Qualtrics (2015) was designed to elicit data from professors that would help answer the research questions. It includes items about the types and amounts of writing included in the respective courses along with questions about the writing purposes and the greatest writing challenges observed in each course. These questions were specifically used to provide TESOL practitioners with insights that could inform their teaching (see Appendix A for the complete survey). Once the instrument had been developed, it was piloted with faculty members at three institutions that were not included in our final survey population. Minor adjustments were made to the survey following the pilot process before being sent to the target institutions. The survey and data elicitation procedure was approved by our university institutional review board.

Participants

Participants in this study were professors targeted because they taught specific introductory courses within the selected disciplines at the institutions of interest. To facilitate participation, prospective respondents were identified at each institution based on the courses they taught. This process included searching online course catalogs as well as phone conversations with department staff and professors to locate the most appropriate individuals to complete the survey. They were contacted by phone and invited to participate. The specific intent of this study was to glean insight that could help TESOL practitioners better prepare ESL writers as they transition to their first semester of study. Nevertheless, no mention of this ESL learner focus was made to the participating professors since we did not want this focus to be a source of distraction that might impact any of their responses. The 182 individuals who agreed to participate were then sent the survey via an email link. Nevertheless, to help ensure an adequate response rate, there was some

overlap of professors within a given discipline at a particular institution. A total of 157 surveys were completed and returned. We attribute the very high return rate (86%) to the extensive effort taken to make personal contacts with potential participants. Data analyzed from the completed surveys represents 114 university departments across the five disciplines. In cases where multiple individuals provided quantitative data for a single discipline within the same institution, responses were averaged. The breakdown for participating professors and institutional departments is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Breakdown of Professors by Department

Disciplines	Professors	Departments
Biology	37	24
Business	35	24
Computer Sci	23	21
Engineering	34	24
Psychology	28	21
Totals	**157**	**114**

Analyses

A number of analyses were needed in order to answer the research questions. These include one-way, two-way, and multivariate analyses of variance along with chi square analysis depending on the specific question and the type of data elicited. In addition to the objective survey items, respondents were presented with a number of open-ended questions inviting them to identify their perceptions of the purposes and challenges of student writing in their courses. Responses from these items were reviewed and coded by each of three researchers based on commonalities across answers to determine patterns and emerging themes (Pell Institute, 2017; Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003). The analysis of each researcher was then reviewed by another to verify the accuracy of the coded themes. This process continued until there was complete agreement in the research team on the assigned codes.

Results

This section provides results of analyses designed to answer the research questions for writing at the beginning of study within each discipline. It includes in-

formation about the volume and types of writing, the relative importance of various aspects of writing, the percentage of writing that receives feedback from professors and that may be resubmitted, the main purposes for writing, and the greatest writing challenges students face.

The Volume and Types of Writing

The first research question addressed the volume and types of writing across the five disciplines. This section reports on four areas designed to help answer this question. These include differences in the volume of writing categorized as research and non-research, the percentage of various writing response types used in exams, and the percentage of writing that may be written by hand. While this question may seem unusual for university writing, its purpose was to help clarify the contexts in which students write as a means of helping TESOL practitioners to better prepare students for the university writing they will do in their first year of study within the field. Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for the volume of research and non-research writing by discipline.

Table 2. Pages of Research and Non-Research Writing by Discipline

	Research		Non-research	
Discipline	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Biology	30.14	14.18	45.80	20.36
Psychology	26.00	23.74	43.15	32.29
Engineering	19.71	10.59	33.88	19.06
Business	17.21	13.49	24.62	14.40
Comp Sci	4.80	3.35	9.67	7.78

Results show that not all disciplines produced the same number of pages of research writing, $F(4,45) = 2.90$, $p = .032$. This category of research writing included research proposals, reviews of literature, case studies, and various forms of field and lab research. The only statistically significant difference across the disciplines was that biology students produced more written pages than computer science students ($p=.029$, $d=2.24$)[2]. Nevertheless, relatively large standard deviations[3] reveal substantial variability within the respective disciplines.

[2] Effect sizes are reported as Cohen's d, where small is .2 to .49, medium is .5 to .79, and large is $\geq .8$.

[3] A test of homogeneity of variance suggested differences were marginal but adequate between biology and computer science, Levene's = 2.456, p=.059, so data was not transformed for this analysis.

Similarly, different fields produced different numbers of pages of other types of writing as well, $F(4,62) = 5.795$, $p < .001$. This included various forms of writing such as summaries, analyses, book reviews, email and chatting, explanations of mathematical problem solving, technical writing and reflective writing kept in journals or notebooks. Students in biology courses produced significantly more non-research pages of writing than students in business ($p=.04$, $d=1.201$) or computer science ($p=.001$, $d=2.344$), and students in psychology courses produced significantly more pages of this kind of writing than those in computer science ($p=.004$, $d=1.43$).

In order to further address the first research question, the percentage of various writing response types used in exams was also analyzed. These included short answers, one-paragraph responses, multiple paragraphs, and a full paper. Responses are summarized in Table 3. Overall there was a significant interaction for discipline by writing assessment type, $F(12,436)=3.715$, $p<.001$. Though meaningful differences were not observed across discipline for the paragraph and the full paper, statistically significant differences were observed for the short answer, $F(4,109)=2.572$, $p=.042$, and multiple paragraph writing, $F(4,109)=5.467$, $p<.001$. There was a greater percentage of short answer writing in assessments in engineering than in psychology ($p=.036$; $d=.877$). In addition, business included a higher percentage of multiple paragraph writing than in computer science ($p=.007$; $d=.842$) or engineering ($p=.001$; $d=.978$).

Table 3. Writing-Based Assessment Types by Percentage

	Short		Paragraph		Multi Para		Full Paper	
Discipline	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Business	39.52	40.42	15.51	19.56	27.22	37.95	1.09	5.33
Psychology	33.73	37.12	11.50	18.11	19.08	27.16	2.35	8.87
Biology	45.25	35.31	19.45	20.16	9.53	15.15	4.94	16.14
Engineering	67.05	38.84	10.45	17.00	0.83	4.08	5.00	17.19
Comp Sci	51.84	40.27	24.48	29.15	3.85	10.06	0.79	3.64
Means	47.72	39.48	16.19	21.31	12.14	24.30	2.90	11.77

The final element of the first research question dealt with the amount of writing within each discipline that is allowed to be written by hand. Results are summarized in Table 4. As was the case with many of the preceding questions, statistically significant differences were observed across discipline, $F(4,70)=3.408$, $p=.013$. Yet,

the only statistically significant pairwise difference showed that students produced more hand writing in engineering than in psychology (p=.003; d=1.58).

Table 4. Percentage of Writing Allowed to be Handwritten by Discipline

Discipline	***M***	***SD***
Engineering	61.67	40.38
Business	46.52	38.72
Biology	44.27	39.72
Computer Sci	29.75	25.53
Psychology	15.38	31.07

The Importance of Various Aspects of Writing

The second research question addressed the relative importance of various aspects of writing. These five aspects of writing were defined for the respondent in the survey and were operationalized as genre ("the specific patterns and structure of the writing in the discipline"), word choice ("writers use vocabulary accurately to convey meaning with precision"), academic-level vocabulary ("words are academic and less colloquial or conversational"), discipline-specific vocabulary ("students use the specific vocabulary of the discipline"), and linguistic accuracy ("grammar, mechanics such as spelling, punctuation and so on"). Results are summarized in Table 5.

Though there were no statistically significant differences across the several fields for discipline-specific vocabulary or genre, significant differences were observed across discipline for word choice, $F(4,102)=4.939$, $p=.001$, linguistic accuracy, $F(4,102)=4.51$, $p=.002$, and academic vocabulary, $F(4,102)=6.0$, $p<.001$. Word choice was more important in business than in engineering ($p=.005$; $d=1.172$) or computer science ($p=.002$; $d=1.094$). Academic vocabulary was more important in biology than computer science ($p<.001$; $d=1.276$). Academic vocabulary was also more important in business than computer science ($p=.003$; $d=1.240$). Finally, linguistic accuracy was more important in psychology than computer science ($p=.009$; $d=1.017$) and more important in business than computer science ($p=.011$; $d=.932$).

Table 5. Importance of Writing Features across Discipline

	Discipline Vocabulary		Word Choice		Linguistic Accuracy		Academic Vocabulary		Genre	
Discipline	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Biology	3.06	0.83	2.77	0.90	2.43	0.74	2.82	1.04	2.27	1.02
Business	3.35	0.76	3.24	0.84	2.83	0.98	2.66	0.85	2.29	1.14
Comp Sci	2.78	1.30	2.08	1.20	1.88	0.94	1.58	0.75	1.98	1.24
Engineering	2.87	1.02	2.24	0.89	2.21	0.94	2.33	1.02	1.71	0.90
Psychology	2.83	0.89	2.73	0.98	2.88	0.92	2.40	0.75	2.18	1.10
Means	2.98	0.98	2.62	1.03	2.45	0.96	2.38	0.98	2.09	1.08

Writing Feedback and Resubmissions

The third research question addressed the extent to which writing receives feedback and is allowed to be resubmitted after revision. Results show that nearly 41% (SD=35.21) of student writing receives no feedback and that there are no significant differences across the disciplines for the percentage of writing that receives feedback. Furthermore, nearly 83% (SD=26.35) of student writing may not be resubmitted after revision. No significant differences were observed across discipline for the percentage of writing allowed to be resubmitted.

The Main Purposes for Writing

The fourth research question addressed the main purposes for writing within the first-semester of discipline-specific courses. These data were collected using an open-ended question type where participants wrote their responses. Table 6 displays theme descriptors tallied according to frequency of mention. It also breaks down percentages by discipline along with frequencies indicated parenthetically for each field. Describing the most frequently mentioned writing purpose, professors used language such as, “the main purpose of writing is to demonstrate knowledge” (engineering) and students need to “demonstrate understanding of material covered in lectures and explored in the weekly reading assignments” (biology). Other professors provided additional comments such as “in the process of demonstrating that knowledge, the student comes to know that they still need to develop their knowledge. Without the demonstration there is less motivation to do the learning” (business). Additional purposes mentioned frequently include synthesizing knowledge, reinforcing learning, report writing, argument development, applying knowledge, genre development, problem solving, and so on.

Table 6. Writing Purposes by Discipline

Theme References (N=17)		Disciplines (N=5)				
Descriptors	Total	Biology	Business	CScience	Engineering	Psychology
Demonstrate knowledge	75	25%(19)	17%(13)	16%(12)	21%(16)	20%(15)
Synthesize knowledge	31	42%(13)	13% (4)	3% (1)	13% (4)	29% (9)
Reinforce learning	22	27% (6)	14% (3)	14% (3)	18% (4)	27% (6)
Report writing	22	32% (7)	9% (2)	–	50%(11)	9% (2)
Argument development	18	39% (7)	11% (2)	11% (2)	6% (1)	33% (6)
Apply knowledge	17	6% (1)	29% (5)	6% (1)	12% (2)	47% (8)
Genre development	16	31%(5)	6% (1)	31% (5)	6% (1)	25% (4)
Solve problems	12	–	17% (2)	25% (3)	58% (7)	–
Analysis	9	–	44% (4)	–	22% (2)	33% (3)
Clarify thoughts	7	57% (4)	14% (1)	14% (1)	–	14% (1)
Communicate effectively	7	43% (3)	–	43% (3)	14% (1)	–
Critical thinking	6	–	67% (4)	17% (1)	17% (1)	–
Evaluate others work	5	20% (1)			20% (1)	60% (3)
Develop writing skill	5	20% (1)	40% (2)	–	–	40% (2)
Communication with teacher	4	–	25% (1)	25% (1)	–	50% (2)
Research writing	4	75% (3)	–	–	–	25% (1)
Collaborative writing	3	33% (1)	33% (1)	–	33% (1)	–
Total	**263**	**71**	**45**	**33**	**52**	**62**

In an effort to check for systematic differences for these writing purposes across the disciplines included in Table 6, a chi-square analysis[4] was used. While most comparisons across discipline were negligible, statistically significant differences were observed for three of the 17 writing purposes identified in Table 6.

[4] Standardized residuals (R) are used to show statistical significance (i.e., p=.05 where an absolute value of at least 1.96 is observed and p=.01 where an absolute value of at least 2.58 is observed).

The first and perhaps most meaningful of these was synthesizing knowledge, $\chi 2$ (4, N= 31) = 14.645, p=.005. These results[5] indicate that the mention of synthesizing knowledge was significantly more frequent in biology than in the other disciplines and that it was mentioned significantly less frequently in computer science compared to the other fields. The second statistically significant comparison was observed for report writing, $\chi 2$ (3, N= 22) = 10.364, p=.016. This analysis[6] shows that comments about report writing by engineering professors were statistically more frequent than comments from professors in other disciplines. The final comparison was for applying knowledge, $\chi 2$ (4, N= 17) = 10.941, p=.027. This result[7] suggests that applying knowledge as a writing purpose may be more prominent in psychology than the other disciplines.

The Greatest Writing Challenges

The final research question addressed the various types of writing challenges that students encounter within the five fields examined in this study. Professors responded to the open-ended prompt, What are the greatest writing challenges your students face? Three researchers carefully analyzed these responses and identified common[8] themes. Unlike the writing purposes, there were no statistically significant differences across disciplines in the frequency with which these challenges were mentioned. Table 7 presents the 17 themes that were identified along with percentages and frequency counts indicated parenthetically. Since no differences were identified across discipline, the information is presented in a single column.

[5] Biology R=2.731, psychology R=1.125, business R=-.884, engineering R=-.884, computer science R=-2.088).

[6] Engineering R=2.345, psychology R=1.492, biology R=.640, business R=-1.492, no cases for computer science.

[7] Psychology R=2.495, engineering R=1.302, business R=.868, computer science R=-.759, biology R=-1.302).

[8] Though most descriptors used in Table 7 were drawn from the respondents' own language, some were chosen by the researchers to represent a concise, overarching theme, such as the term genre.

Table 7. Overall Writing Challenges

Theme References (N=17)	Total
Genre	15.53%(32)
Clarity	10.19%(21)
Grammar	10.19%(21)
Organization	8.25%(17)
Concise	7.28%(15)
ESL	7.28%(15)
Basic writing	6.80%(14)
Critical thinking	6.31%(13)
Mechanics	5.34%(11)
Vocabulary	4.37%(9)
Writing process	3.40%(7)
Relevance	2.91%(6)
Synthesize	2.91%(6)
Understanding content	2.91%(6)
Citation/paraphrase	2.43%(5)
Time	1.94%(4)
Motivation	1.94%(4)
Total	100%(206)

The most frequently mentioned challenge was associated with the genre of the respective disciplines. Earlier we defined genre as "the specific patterns and structure of the writing in the discipline." It might also include the appropriate use of discipline-specific vocabulary or, defined more broadly, any number of features associated with academic writing. One psychology professor used the following description regarding student difficulty with genre:

> They seem to struggle with the scientific genre. Many seem to have learned in high school to use big words whenever possible in ways that can really confuse both them and their reader. I find I have to work hard to convince them that their goal in scientific writing is to educate and convince their audience; not to impress. This clarity and directness is challenging for them.

Other professors expressed similar concerns. For example, several biology professors lamented that their students lacked the ability to utilize "scientific language" or a "scientific writing style," as opposed to a "conversational tone" and that they struggled to effectively "show scientific reasoning" or appropriate "sci-

entific arguments." Similarly, one psychology professor described what was termed "practicing voice" so students could "sound like a psychologist."

Other recurring challenges include problems with clarity, troubles with grammar, difficulties with organization, a lack of concision, and a variety of other challenges associated with language, critical thinking, mechanics, and so on. Just a few observations may be instructive. For example, a biology professor lamented the following about clarity in his student writing

> [S]ome write as stream of consciousness, in a hurry to get enough words out to fill the page limit. They don't appear to consider writing to be a way to clarify thoughts, but as a form of painting and the goal is to fill the page.

In addition, an engineering professor shared the following about the importance of accuracy:

> Just today, I chose not to interview a candidate for a summer internship position at the company I currently work for because the email this candidate sent me revealed a significant weakness in both expression and grammar, and that skill is very important to the engineering research work I am looking to have the summer intern work on.

Discussion

This study addressed a number of research questions based on the perceptions of professors teaching students in the first semester of study within five of the most common disciplines for ESL learners in the United States.

One overarching question driving this study is whether a generic approach to writing instruction may be appropriate for English language learners who are transitioning into a university where English is the medium of instruction. Results showed differences in the volume and types of writing across the fields examined in this study. On average biology and psychology professors required more writing than their counterparts in business and computer science. These findings of different volumes and types of writing across disciplines seem consistent with previous research (e.g., Garbati et al., 2015; Graves, 2010; Moran, 2013), though this study adds additional disciplines that have not previously been studied carefully.

For research writing, biology students produced an average of more than six times the writing produced by the computer science students or just over 25 more pages during the course. Psychology students produced an average of nearly 20 more pages of research writing than the computer science students. The differences across disciplines shown in this study seem striking. Another noticeable finding had to do with research writing. While many scholars identified research writing as the most common type of writing assignment (e.g., Graves et al., 2010, Horowitz, 1986), the pages of research writing in this study trailed behind other types of writing across each of the disciplines. Furthermore, only a few of the respondents mentioned the importance of research writing in terms of one of the purposes for writing within the course. This lack of emphasis on research writing could be related to the fact that this study focused exclusively on students who were just starting their study within specific fields, or it might be due to the different data collection methods used across studies.

This discrepancy regarding research writing could also be related to something much more deeply entrenched in the respective fields that make it difficult to communicate effectively about what is meant by the notion of research writing. For example, Melzer (2009) claimed:

> the difference among disciplines—and even instructors within the same discipline and subdiscipline—in terms of the purposes and audiences for research writing, research methods, what counts as evidence, how research papers are structured, and the persona the writer is asked to take on make it difficult to generalize about the research paper (Melzer, 2009, p. 255).

With such uncertainty, the importance and prevalence of research-based writing at the beginning of study within a specific discipline may be worth additional examination.

For non-research based writing, biology students produced 4.7 times more writing compared to computer science students or just over 36 more pages during the course. Since these differences are fairly dramatic, it seems that students intending to study fields such as biology and psychology would benefit from extensive instruction and practice that will prepare them well for producing quality writing at higher volumes.

The discipline also seems to impact the volume of writing that may be handwritten. Handwriting is much less common in computer science and psychology though perhaps for different reasons. While handwriting in psychology may be inconsistent with the professional standard of writing expected for most types of assignments, for computer science, it might simply be a matter of inconvenience for students or professors to deal with hard copies when so much of their work takes place in a digital environment. On the other hand, the fact that nearly three fourths of the writing in engineering is allowed to be handwritten may also be a reflection of the specific types of writing done within the field. For example, much of the writing done in engineering is infused with detailed calculations and mathematical solutions to problems. Such writing is done easily by hand but becomes much more cumbersome in an electronic format. While many programs that prepare ESL students for university study have planned or plan to move to paperless submissions of student work, it may be beneficial to continue to allow at least some handwritten work for students who plan to study engineering.

At the same time, it seems that students in all fields can expect to do a substantial amount of *short answer* writing on exams. Whereas Melzer (2009) seemed surprised that 21% of all writing in his study was assessment-based short responses, respondents in this study reported that more than a third of exam writing is short answer regardless of the field. In discussing short answer writing, however, Melzer (2009, p. 256) laments that "it is unfortunately the genre with the least social context that predominates." Despite special challenges associated with helping students to write short answers well, this finding carries important implications. In addition to the rhetorical and grammatical features needed to produce quality writing in paragraphs or essays, students may benefit from explicit instruction on how to effectively present phrases or clauses that under other circumstances may not be considered grammatically well formed, complete, or appropriate by themselves. The accurate spelling of crucial terms may also become more important than it may be within larger pieces of writing that provide the reader with more context.

There are additional areas in which a specific discipline seemed to influence the relative importance of other aspects of writing. Though no differences were observed for discipline-specific vocabulary and genre, differences across the fields were observed for word choice, linguistic accuracy, and academic vocabulary. Word choice or the accurate use of vocabulary needed to convey meaning with

precision was more important in business than engineering or computer science. Similarly, academic vocabulary (as opposed to words that are more colloquial) was more important in biology and business than in computer science, and linguistic accuracy (e.g., grammar, mechanics such as spelling, punctuation and so on) was more important in psychology and business than computer science. These findings suggest that professors within specific fields may have different expectations regarding certain aspects of writing within the discipline.

There are some additional observations worth discussing regarding these various aspects of writing. Although there were no significant differences across the respective fields in terms of the relative importance of discipline-specific vocabulary or genre, on average, the professors who participated in this study suggested that discipline-specific vocabulary was *important* in their courses while genre was merely considered *somewhat important* (d=.85) This observation about genre—defined as the specific patterns and structure of the writing in the discipline—may seem unexpected since one might suppose genre to be more important in discipline specific writing. One explanation could be associated with what Moran (2013, p. 84) described as expectations for "discipline-oriented" writing that go "beyond the instructor's awareness." She described some professors whose frustrations with their student writing arose from an absence of certain genre-related features though they claimed such discipline specific features were not needed in the course. While discipline-specific vocabulary could be considered a component of genre, it is possible, that genre as defined here may not be as important as other aspects of writing.

For example, one explanation for the lower valuation of genre in their introductory courses may be that the purpose of writing within these disciplines during the first semester of study has much more to do with mastery of the basic concepts within the discipline than actually learning the skills needed to write like a professional within these respective fields. This assumption seems consistent with observations regarding writing purposes and the way professors manage student feedback. Some of the most frequent writing purposes include demonstrating knowledge, synthesizing knowledge, and reinforcing learning. Such purposes seem to suggest that writing at this level focuses on student mastery of basic concepts and the professor's ability to use writing to assess that mastery. Thus, these purposes seem primarily focused on *assessing content through writing* rather than simply *assessing writing* or *assessing language through writing* as described by

Weigle (2013). These findings could have important implications for TESOL professionals as they teach their students how to use writing to effectively demonstrate and synthesize knowledge.

These findings seem to suggest that much of this writing seems more summative than formative. For example, findings from this study suggest that 20% of the respondents provide no feedback for student writing and that a third of the writing overall receives no feedback from professors. Only 20% of the student writing examined in this study may be resubmitted during the course, an amount somewhat larger than the nearly 13% reported by Melzer (2009). If writing development for students takes place incrementally over the course of a student's entire tenure at the university, as Haswell (1991) has claimed, then it may be beneficial for universities, departments, and faculty to consider ways to provide more writing instruction and feedback along the way. One way to increase feedback may be through the use of more nested writing assignments where students submit incremental drafts and receive useful feedback throughout the writing process (e.g., Garbati et al. 2015; Graves et al. 2019; Melzer, 2009).

The final research question in this study addressed writing challenges. Since there were no differences across the disciplines, these findings may be equally applicable to students studying in any field. Interestingly, the most frequent response related to student struggles was labeled "genre" by the researchers. One reason this seems problematic is the fact that genre was indicated by the respondents as the least important of the six aspects of writing. Although technically these results address different questions, the responses seem inconsistent. One reason for this result could be that while professors generally feel that genre only has marginal importance, they note that it is one of the students' greatest struggles. Another possibility is that professors appropriately recognize student writing challenges but that they do not ascribe these difficulties to problems associated with the genre-based features of the writing within the field.

Taken together, the findings of this study should be useful for curriculum developers, program administrators, and practitioners who teach writing to students who plan to study at universities in the United States. Some of these results provide insights that seem applicable to all students regardless of discipline. Other findings suggest the possible benefits of tailoring writing instruction to meet the unique needs of learners within specific fields.

An example of how these findings might inform curriculum and pedagogy is drawn from our past teaching experience at one of the institutions surveyed for this study. The university is a BA granting institution where approximately 45% of the students are ESL learners. This school has an intensive English program that helps students prepare for their discipline-specific studies before being fully matriculated into the university. Nearly 60% of these ESL students go on to study business. Data gleaned from this study about features unique to business students such as short answers, multi-paragraph, and analysis writing tasks, could be incorporated into the IEP writing curriculum to better prepare students bound for business degrees.

Similar findings can also be gleaned to inform curriculum developers and writing teachers for the other fields being studied. Students planning to study psychology can expect to encounter much multi-page as well as short answer writing much of it genre specific and most of which will need to be linguistically accurate. Students planning to study engineering in the future can expect that many of their writing experiences will be done by hand, short answers will be quite common, and linguistic accuracy and discipline specific vocabulary will be likely expectations. Similar to psychology, students studying biology will demand much linguistically accurate, multi-page (36 pages per semester) and short answer writing. Students planning to study computer science can generally expect to do much less writing than in other disciplines. However, the writing they can expect will generally be short answer or paragraph in length and will need to be lexically and linguistically accurate. In addition, students bound for any of these disciplines might be informed of the challenges that genre, clarity, and grammar will present as they move toward their selected fields of study.

Limitations and Future Research

Although this research provides many useful insights about writing within the first semester of study within five popular disciplines for ESL students, there are a number of limitations that should be considered. First, this study intentionally limited its examination of writing to first-semester courses within five common fields. No attempt was made to examine writing courses outside of these disciplines such as courses associated with general education requirements. In future research, it could be helpful to identify the writing purposes, expectations, and challenges

raised by those who teach required writing courses that are not part of study within a specific discipline to determine how well they align with the views of the professors within the disciplines examined in this study. Moreover, data from this study was gleaned from a single survey without follow-up interviews. Additional interviews in future study could help clarify responses and strengthen results.

Future research could also examine additional disciplines beyond those analyzed in this study and could pose similar questions of professors toward the end of the student's baccalaureate experience. This could help determine whether perceptions of writing expectations, purposes, and challenges remain constant or whether meaningful differences emerge over time. This study has highlighted a number of areas where writing expectations, purposes, and challenges varied depending on the discipline. Such findings could suggest that discipline-specific writing instruction could be more helpful to learners than generic approaches. Future research should examine the efficacy of such approaches empirically.

Conclusion

This study examined a number of research questions associated with the perceptions of professors in the first semester of study within five of the most common disciplines for ELLs in the United States. Our findings seem consistent with the observation of Downs and Wardle (2007, p. 558), "writing is neither basic nor universal but content- and context-contingent and irreducibly complex." The results produced a variety of insights that may help writing teachers regardless of the student's chosen field. They also provided a variety of data suggesting that a one-size-fits-all approach to writing instruction may not be the most effective way to prepare ESL learners who plan to study at universities in the United States. While specialized writing instruction designed specifically for students within certain fields may not always be feasible or necessary, such an approach may be more effective. Where contexts may allow, we encourage program administrators and practitioners to explore the possibility of tailoring writing instruction to meet the unique needs of individual learners.

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Appendix A

This survey will focus on one introductory, undergraduate course.

Course:

Please limit your responses to this course.

How important are the following language skills for student success in your course?

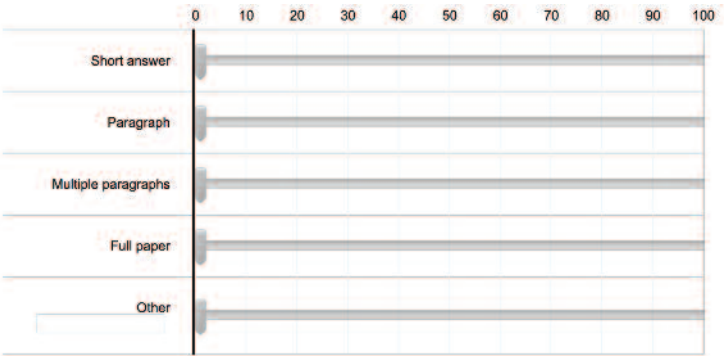
	Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
Reading	○	○	○	○
Writing	○	○	○	○
Listening	○	○	○	○
Speaking	○	○	○	○

Please indicated the kinds of writing done in your course and the importance of each.

	Research				Approximate number of pages
	Not part of course	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	for the course
Library research	○	○	○	○	
Review of Literature	○	○	○	○	
Laboratory research	○	○	○	○	
Field research	○	○	○	○	
Research proposals	○	○	○	○	
Other	○	○	○	○	
Other	○	○	○	○	

	Other types of writing				Approximate number of pages
	Not part of course	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	for the course
Summary/Synopsis	○	○	○	○	
Technical writing	○	○	○	○	
Journal (e.g., reflection/reaction)	○	○	○	○	
Email/chat	○	○	○	○	
Math problem solving	○	○	○	○	
Other	○	○	○	○	
Other	○	○	○	○	
Other	○	○	○	○	

To help us understand the importance of writing on your exams, please consider your typical exam and indicate the approximate percentage of your entire exam that is made up of the each of the following types of writing:



What are the main purposes of writing in your course? (e.g., demonstrate knowledge, report information, synthesize ideas, argue or persuade, reinforce learning)

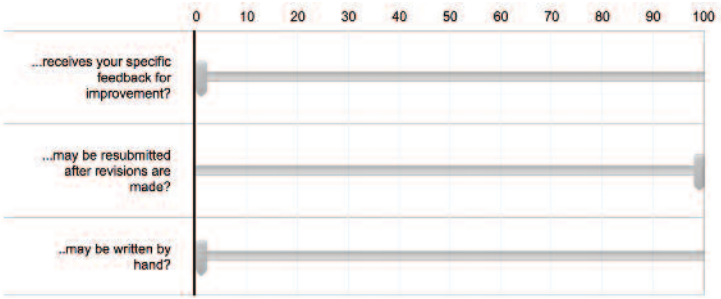
What are the greatest writing challenges your students face?

How important are each of the following in the writing of your students?

	Not important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very important
The Genre (i.e., the specific patterns and structure of the writing in the discipline)	○	○	○	○
Word Choice (Writers use vocabulary accurately to convey meaning with precision)	○	○	○	○
Academic-level Vocabulary (words are academic and less colloquial or conversational)	○	○	○	○
Discipline-specific Vocabulary (Students use the specific vocabulary of the discipline)	○	○	○	○
Linguistic Accuracy (i.e., grammar, mechanics such as spelling, punctuation and so on)	○	○	○	○

Drag the lever to display the most appropriate percentage to complete the statements.

Approximately what percentage of the writing your students submit...


0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100
...receives your specific feedback for improvement?
...may be resubmitted after revisions are made?
..may be written by hand?

Submit

The L2 Motivational Self: A Case of College Students at Ibra College of Technology

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Abstract

Stemming from the seeming lack of motivation of EFL students at Ibra College of Technology, the present study explores the L2 motivational self system of Omani college students by means of Dornyei's (2009) framework. It particularly underscores the degree of existence or absence of the L2 self among the study participants. With the use of grounded-theory, four students in the general foundation revealed information about the factors that contribute to the use of their ideal self, ought-to self, and L2 learning experience as their source of motivation. Findings reveal that the students' reasons, such as complacency with regard to their way of life in Oman and convenience in speaking their L1, act as hindrances to gain motivation to learn English. Moreover, the students reported that people around them do not have a huge impact on their English language learning journey, but they expressed use of ideal self with regard to obtaining a job. Findings are indicative that to a certain extent, the students make use of their ideal self and ought-to self as a source of motivation. Pedagogical and theoretical implications are also provided in the present study.

Keywords: motivation; L2 self; L2 motivational system; L2 motivational self-system; ideal self, ought-to self

Introduction

The previous decades have witnessed the development of models pertinent to motivation in second language learning. Consequently, there has been a plethora of empirical studies that have been conducted to highlight the importance of motivation in L2 learning. Quite evidently, this phenomenon is due to the commonly accepted notion that motivation serves as a driving force in language learning taking into consideration the undertaking of L2 learners in achieving their goals. As

Dornyei (2001) states, it is a factor that may greatly influence the L2 learner's achievement.

Since Gardner and his associates' early studies (e.g. Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Gardner, Smythe, & Brunet, 1977) on motivation in language learning, other prominent scholars have joined the conversation. For instance, Gardner and Lambert (1972) proposed the motivation theory which underscores the value of integrativeness or the instance when the learner shows an openness and identification with the target language community and their culture. Weiner (1985) later suggested the Attribution Theory that assumes that people try to determine why people do what they do such as in the case of L2 learning, that is, interpret causes to the behavior. Another is Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory which proposes that motivation and personality address three universal, innate and psychological needs, i.e., competence, autonomy, and psychological relatedness. In a more recent study, Dornyei (2005, 2009) introduced the L2 Motivational system which is a reconceptualization of Markus and Nurius' (1986) possible selves and Higgins' (1987) ought selves. Dornyei's recent framework is composed of three facets: namely the Ideal L2 self, the Ought-to self, and L2 Learning experience.

According to Dornyei (2009), the ideal self is a representation of the instrumental and integrative motivation as it represents the ideal image a learner would like to have in the future. For instance, if a learner wants to become a fluent L2 speaker who engages in interaction with foreign friends, the image formed out of this desire is a fluent speaker, which as a whole might act as a strong motivator. Moreover, the ought-to self, from that of Higgins (1987) concept, is concerned with the attributes that the learner ought to possess to meet the expectations of extrinsic factors such as family, praises and rewards. Meanwhile, the L2 learning experience is centered on situation specific motives (e.g. curriculum, the L2 teacher, learning materials) that are said to have influence on motivated behavior (Papi, 2010).

Since the conception of the L2 Motivational Self System, a number of scholars have tested the applicability of the framework in various learning conditions. Some of these studies aimed to validate the existence of L2 self in EFL learners (e.g. Kim, 2009a; Chen, 2012; Kim, 2012; Papi, 2010; Chen, Warden & Chang, 2005; Tuan, 2012; Taguchi, Magid & Papi, 2009; Lamb, 2012; Cruz & Al Baushi, 2018). There are also studies that have emphasized the importance of specific L2 self di-

mensions. For instance, Kim and Kim (2014) revealed that ideal self has a positive impact among Korean contexts in the Korean context in which it posited that more manifestation of the Ideal L2 self leads to higher level of English proficiency. Also, Taguchi et al. (2009) demonstrated positive correlation of Ideal L2 self with integrativeness and emphasized L2 learning experience as an important factor in L2 self motivation. In contrast, studies like that of Islam, Lamb and Chambers (2013) and Papi's (2010) claim that ought-to self does not act as a strong contributor in motivating learners if compared to ideal self, although according to Taguchi et al. (2009), results may differ in Asian contexts due to family and school pressure.

L2 motivational self studies have also become learner specific. For example, Al-shehri (2009), Rajab, Far and Etemadzadeh (2012), Madkhali (2016), Al-shahrani (2016), Moskovsky, Assulaimani, Racheva and Harkins (2016) and Alqahtani (2017) focused their studies on Arab learners and revealed the dominance of ideal self. While the said studies have considerably contributed to the rich literature on L2 motivational self, the present study acknowledges the view that more empirical studies have to be conducted as there is constant change in learning conditions and English education policies on a global perspective. One that can be cited is the case of English language learning in the Arab nation of the Sultanate of Oman.

Education in the Sultanate of Oman was revolutionized in 1970s following the reign of its leader Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said. Part of this education reform included English language education. Several government agencies oversee higher education in Oman, and among them is the Ministry of Manpower which is in-charge of seven Colleges of Technology, which have English courses in both the General Foundation and Post Foundation programs. For several years now, moves such as construction and provision of school facilities and hiring of expats as staff have been done to aid in improving the education in the said Islamic nation. However, despite the massive efforts of the Omani government to improve the educational system in the Sultanate, the motivation of students to learn English appears to be an issue. Al-Mahrooqi and Denman (2014) state that there are factors that are social and cultural in nature cause of the lack of motivation of Arab students in learning English. Sivaraman, Al Balushi and Rao (2014) add that Omani students need to be further motivated in their English language learning endeavors. With these observations at hand, the students of Ibra College of Technology (ICT)

are not spared from this motivational issue. In a preliminary interview, both expatriate and local teachers indicated that there are indeed students who do not seem to be motivated to learn English. According to Donald Domalaon (personal communication, January 28, 2018) a lecturer at the ICT, "there are students who are not very much into it; they do it simply for their marks." Another lecturer, Jehad Al Harthy (personal communication, January 28, 2018) stated, "there are students who are motivated to learn, but what is surprising is that the number of those who do not have the motivation is not far behind."

In literature and firsthand accounts, motivation is a preponderant concern in English language learning for Omani students as well as teachers. It is then this study's objective to use Dornyei's (2009) L2 self motivation framework to obtain information on the L2 motivation of Omani college students. More specifically, the study not only attempts to validate the existence of L2 self among Omani learners but it also captures the factors from a few perspectives that lead to the status of their L2 motivation. In cases where there are L2 self dimensions present among the learners, it is the study's aim to determine the superior contributor in the students' L2 motivation.

Method

Four college students in the general foundations program (GFP) of ICT were randomly selected to participate in the study (see Table 1). Considering Slavoff and Johnson's (1995) suggestion that participants in studies on English language learning must have at least three years of exposure to English classes, it was affirmed that the selected participants in the present study fit the criterion as all of them took English classes in primary and secondary school. Moreover, the participants claimed that they have had no experience studying abroad but have been taught by Omani and native and non-native expat teachers. At ICT, they have at least 18 hours of classes in English per week regardless of their level in the GFP. All of them agreed to have their first names mentioned in the study.

Table 1. Profile of Study Participants

	Name	Age	Gender	Specialization	Town
S1	Saleem	20	M	IT	Sur
S2	Fatma	18	F	Business	Jalan
S3	Abdullah	20	M	Engineering	Jalan
S4	Ahmed	19	M	Engineering	Bidiya

The study adhered to Dornyei's (2001) principle that a deep interview with a language learner provides relatively rich data in order to achieve the study objectives; hence, the employment of qualitative approach. A semi-structured interview from previous studies (i.e. Chen, 2012; Cruz & Al Balushi, 2018) was adopted and modified, based on the goals of this study, and then translated to Arabic. The questions were validated by a Tunisian ICT lecturer with a PhD in Applied Linguistics, whose participation later allowed for the analysis of inter-rater reliability. The questions were divided into three sections. The first section focused on the participants' ideal self; these questions determine the participants' future image as an L2 learner. The next part concentrated on ought-to self or questions that intended to obtain information about the way they imagine their environment to be towards them with respect to their L2 learning. The third part sought details about their L2 learning experience or those related to the sources of motivation in the environment.

The pilot interview and the interview proper were conducted in the post-midterm period of the second semester of academic year 2017-2018 (i.e. February-March 2018) upon the approval of the ELC administration. The two participants in the pilot study were two males in the bachelor's level. Both interviews were audio recorded, and all questions were answered with sufficient details. The questions were asked in Arabic by an Omani lecturer to make the process more convenient for the participants. However, three students still opted to give some of their responses in English. A portion of the responses underwent thematic analysis approach based on Corbin and Strauss (2007) and the analysis was then validated by the inter-rater. The interview proper with the study participants was conducted two days after the participants were asked for their available time. On the day of their respective schedules, the participants came to a classroom dedi-

cated to the data gathering process. On average, the interviews which was carried out in a span of three days, lasted 22 minutes. Similar to other L2 self motivation studies such as Kim's (2009b), additional related questions were asked to gain more detailed responses. After two days, transcription and translation of the responses were conducted. Validation of the transcribed and translated responses by the second rater took place after 12 days. There was at least 95% agreement between the researcher and the other rater in terms of the transcription and translation of the responses and the analyses. Thematic analysis or open coding by the researcher and its validation by the second rater occurred in a span of three weeks. Aside from studies on L2 self, scholarly studies on the nature of Arabic students were used for analysis concerning the students' behavior (e.g. Al-Rabaani, Al-Salmi, & Al-Salmi 2016; Elyas & Picard, 2014; Eaton & Dembo, 1997).

Results and Discussion

To address the objective of obtaining information on the L2 self, statements that pertain to the students' acknowledgement of factors relating to L2 self were sought. Findings demonstrate the manifestation of ought-to L2 self among the participants. All the students stated that their marks in their quizzes and major examinations are what pushes them to study English.

Excerpt 1

S1: Our midterm and final is important to us. Our exams like IELTS and it is difficult. I need to know speaking, reading, writing, listening in English.

S2: If I want to take advance diploma, I need high marks.

S3: I do not want to repeat Level 2 so I need to pass this for one time.

S4: I don't want to fail in this class.

Although the responses of the participants appear to be instrumental in nature, it must be noted that their need to pass their examinations have the features of the ought-to self. Dörnyei (2009) stated that when the idealized image is associated with being professionally successful, the imagined self is concerned with the ideal self. On the other hand, if the instrumental motives are linked to prevention focus such as avoidance of failure in examination, the source of motivation is the ought-to self. The participants were unanimous in voicing out academic concerns as the reason they are learning English, and this is indicative of the Omanis and other L2

learners' similar perspective with regard to learning English. Koreans for instance in Cruz and Al Balushi (2018) were engrossed with their L2 learning, and one of their common reasons was because their parents provide the schooling expenses, thus, they reported that they do it partly for their parents' efforts. The case, however, is different with Omani students at ICT as they do not pay for their tuition fee and they are provided with a monthly stipend by the Ministry of Manpower. This situation may have contributed to a more self-focused response by the participants in which they were merely attributing their academic success for themselves, as there were no mention of other persona in their responses but themselves. The participants were then sought for opinion on their parents' appraisal for them in relation to their English learning sojourn. Most of them responded that their parents appear to be somewhat relaxed with unfavorable situations that arise regarding their English education.

Excerpt 2

S1: It is fine if I do not learn English well or if my marks are not very good… my parents will not be angry.

S2: My parents say that I should learn something or learn that… but if I fail, it is okay.

S3: I do not want to fail. Last semester I failed in English. My father was angry. But no problem, he said to study again.

S4: They do not speak in English also so maybe if I fail, there is no problem.

Although the responses of the participants appear to be instrumental in nature, it must be noted that their need to pass their examinations have the features of the ought-to self. Dörnyei (2009) stated that when the idealized image is associated with being professionally successful, the imagined self is concerned with the ideal self. On the other hand, if the instrumental motives are linked to prevention focus such as avoidance of Dornyei (2009) mentioned that when learners attempt to prevent their parents from being disappointed due to academic failure, it is a form of L2 ought-to self with a prevention focus. The participants' responses demonstrate that to a certain extent, they use their ought-to self regarding prevention of failure in their exams, but their parents, perhaps one of the primary considerations in the L2 ought-to self dimensions, appear to be minor considerations in this respect. In a study by Al-Rabaani, Al-Salmi and Al-Salmi (2016), it was noted that there are Omani parents who appear to not show apprehension whenever their children do

something unfavorable, and this may imply that there are Omani students who learn for themselves and their individual goals rather than for the approval of other people such as their family, or in other words, intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). When further asked about the people that matter when it comes to their L2 learning, the participants mentioned their teachers and future managers to be significant people who are supposed to show their approval of them. Excerpt 3 shows these statements.

Excerpt 3

S1: If I work in a company, maybe the manager of company will need to speak in English when he talk to me.

S2: I study English because I want my teacher to give me high mark and it is good if they know I am good.

S3: My teacher in speaking… should think I'm good and smart student.

S4: When I find job, and my boss is not Omani, I should speak English with him.

With reference to Excerpt 2 and Excerpt 3, it seems evident that to a certain degree, the Omani learners attribute their L2 learning motivation to their teachers and future superiors in their future profession more than their parents. Asian parents are known to involve themselves in the education of their children (Eaton & Dembo, 1997); however, student responses imply that this is not the case for the Omanis. This is not to say that the Omani parents are not concerned with their children's education, but in Al-Mahrooqi, Denman and Al-Maamari (2016) and Al-Harrasi and Al-Mahrooqi, it was found that Omani parents cited personal reasons such as the unimportance of parental involvement in school matters, the perception that their influence does not make a difference, and the belief that the teachers are the best people to handle their children's education for their non-involvement in their children's academics. It should also be said that a number of Omani parents of the current generation are known to be not proficient in English primarily because of the EFL environment, which means that there is comparatively lesser input. It may be then safe to say that the ought-to self of the learners is in use when it comes to their teachers, the people who teach them in the classroom, and managers, the people who are in charge of promotion and salaries, but their parents are not key motives.

When asked further about their L2 ought-to self, the Omani learners believe that they will still earn the respect of other people around them regardless of their proficiency in English.

Excerpt 4

S1: Everyone will still respect me if am not very good in English… we can live good life if I speak Arabic.

S2: If I do not learn English, I can still have business... my family will think I am successful.

S3: English is important but I can graduate without much knowledge in English. I think most subjects in diploma do not need English.

S4: Here in Oman, speaking Arabic is no problem.

The responses in Excerpt 4 establish that while the Omani learners appreciate the value of English in their academic and professional endeavors, they still insinuated that English is not what they only need to gain the approval and respect of their environment. Moreover, it may seem that there is some form of resistance from the Omani learners to embrace English and make it part and parcel of their life. Elyas and Picard (2010) said that learners may show this kind of behavior due to certain beliefs and values deeply rooted from their Islamic orientation. Additionally, these learners may have a strong belief that Arabic language is central to their identity as Muslims and that English is a mere accessory to their goals. Based on the notion that the ought-to self also refers to attributes that L2 learners believe they ought to have to meet the expectations of the people around them, it is possible that the learners feel less demand from their significant others or family with regard to L2 their learning. The situation refers to the learners' lesser use of extrinsic forms of their ought-to self.

Excerpt 5 shows the responses of the participants when they were asked about their L2 learning and their future job. It can be seen how the participants show their desire to find a job in the future. Another thematic category from the responses is that they prefer to stay in Oman when they land in a job.

Excerpt 5

S1: I want to work… here in Oman… my family is here.

S2: Finding a job… maybe in Muscat… or in my village…here everything is good….

S3: Have good job…I don't want to work in another country… Oman is fine.

S4: Search for job in Oman… life in Oman is good.

The satisfaction of the students with their country is apparent in their responses. The participants cited their family and their perception about the quality of life in Oman. In several periodicals (e.g. "Oman 7th globally", 2015; "Oman ranks 2nd", 2017), it is mentioned that Oman is one of the top countries where people enjoy a good quality of life. Some criteria used to describe quality of life were healthcare, pollution, safety, and purchasing power. This desire of the participants to stay in Oman may lessen their need to study English (Arabic is the first language of Omanis). Although the workforce of Oman is currently dominated by expats, a good number of them speak Arabic (e.g. Indians, Pakistanis, Bengalis, Egyptians, and Iranians), which practically implies that learning English, despite its perceived importance for learners at the moment of their academic career, may be of less use in the longitudinal aspect. Chen, Warden and Chang (2005) emphasizes that the lack of need from the environment for learners to be exposed to and use the target language is typical in Asian EFL contexts which affects the L2 motivational self of the learners. The concept of integration states that learners are driven to learn English for integration with a speech community speaking the target language (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), and for the participants in this study, there appears little reason to integrate themselves in an English-speaking community since the people around them, even the expatriates, can conveniently speak their first language and have similar cultures. Dornyei (2009) emphasized that integration is applicable in a multicultural society, but apparently, in the case of Oman, this may not be entirely true.

The participants were asked further about the use of English in their future job. Unanimously, they acknowledge the use and usefulness of English in their profession. Again, they are aware of the presence of expatriates in Oman. In Excerpt 6, the participants also suggest that they are motivated to learn English because of increased competition.

Excerpt 6

S1: I need to get a job and good salary.

S2: Before I have my business, I need to have money…I want work in company to get money

S3: We need to do learn English because finding job is difficult. There are many Indians are here in Oman so I must have more skills like speak in English.

S4: It is difficult to find job now. Everyone thinks English is very important to find a job… I also need to learn English because if not, I cannot find a good job with good salary.

Similar to previous studies (e.g. Cruz & AL Balushi, 2018; Kim, 2009b), it was shown how the ideal self of students from this part of the Arabian peninsula is driven by their desire to obtain employment. As it is, this aim is a global phenomenon given that good command of English is a basic qualification for young professionals. The students seem to have realized that competition is tough among job seekers since English is usually the medium of communication especially in multinational companies or where there are expatriate employees such as in Oman. Apart from the consistent participants' use of the word "job" in all parts of the interviews, they cited salary, competition and struggle in finding a job as additional motives for learning English. Such statements can be attributed to instrumentality (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Kim (2009b) suggests that the learners could be expressing something about their motive and not their motivation. He adds that there is a need to verify the learners' level of participation with reference to the participants' comments which apparently remain to be seen, at least in a sociocultural perspective. While it is safe to say that the participants may be motivated to learn English for their future job, the participants could be speaking in reference to an imagined self of having a job, or preventing themselves from failing a job interview. Both of these are attributed to ideal self or those that may pertain to growth and aspirations (Higgins, 1987 in Dornyei 2009) and ought-to self or those that may refer to prevention focus (Dornyei, 2009), respectively.

Another noteworthy observation from the students' statements in Excerpt 6 is they intend to be good at learning English to find a job, although this contradicts their statements in Excerpt 4 where they expressed strong inclination towards their L1 based on Excerpt 4. Understandably, the students may be utilizing the instrumentality of their ideal self as they desire a future image in which they are able to use their L2 to acquire a job, which comprehensively is a form of aspiration. On the other hand, their preference for Arabic is purely for convenience since not all transactions in Oman are conducted in English.

In relation to their job, the participants were asked about what they imagine themselves doing with their job in connection to learning English, and they mentioned the need for English communication with foreigners. These narrations are seen in Excerpt 7.

Excerpt 7

S1: speak English with people from other country… people working in company.

S2: maybe customers are from different country.

S4: can speak to other people who don't understand Arabic…like American who work in company.

The participants' descriptions in Excerpt 7 show their evident use of their ideal self. Categorically, the responses may be in accordance to what Ueki and Takeuchi (2012) stated regarding ideal self that focuses on specific situations. One of the tenets of ideal self is that the learner imagines himself or herself engaging in communicative events with foreigners, and this has been a fixture in studies that explored the L2 self of learners (e.g. Cruz & Al-Balushi, 2018). In their self image of learning English and being able to find a job, an inevitable scenario is dealing with foreigners who do not speak Arabic, since as mentioned, Oman has a workforce dominated by expatriates. In this case, the result is not distinct in previous studies (e.g. Taguchi, 2013) in which learners still have high utilization of ideal self in the manner of "communicating with foreigners in English" (p. 182) despite the learners' non-commitment to learn the language.

When asked about their learning experience, the participants mentioned three different things: their teacher, the prescribed textbook, and their curriculum. Excerpt 8 shows their narrations.

Excerpt 8

S1: My teachers are very good… they are number 1… they teach me many things.

S2: The teachers in college help me to study writing and listening.

S2: The books is so very boring… I always go out of classroom.

S3: Everyday same same… reading, listening… I want to sleep.

S4: The book… I do not like it. It is very difficult… I cannot write in the book.

S4: I do not learn many things because I cannot understand the teacher when she talks.

It can be seen that the participants have inconsistent views about their teacher. S1 and S2 expressed their satisfaction with their teachers, but S4 lacked positive words for his teacher, specifically when it comes to pronunciation. In terms of their prescribed textbook, the participants are unanimous in saying that they are not in favor of it for several reasons; some reasons cited were boredom, repetitiveness and limitations in their usage of the book. It has to be noted that the textbooks in the General Foundation Program of ICT and other Colleges of Technology come from an outsourced publishing company. The students loan the book for a semester and return it for utilization by another student in the proceeding semester. With this, the students are not allowed to write on their books, and they are encouraged to use pencil so that erasures can be done when they have to return the said materials. S3 also mentioned the repetitive nature of their lessons. This is because the students are trained every day to pass an IELTS type of exam with focus on the four macro skills (i.e. listening, speaking, writing, reading). For four to five days a week, the teachers provide them activities that ensure their familiarization in the said type of examination. With the collective responses of the four participants, the value of L2 Learning Experience seems incongruent with previous literature (e.g. Islam et al., 2013) and it can be thematically considered as the participants' dissatisfaction with their L2 learning experience. Dornyei (2009) stresses the importance of 'executive' motives in the form of L2 learning experience to maintain a learner's self image. However, as Dornyei himself mentioned the necessity of elaboration of this construct, other considerations regarding the L2 learning experience aside from teachers, curriculum and peer group may have to be explored to strengthen a position.

Excerpt 9

S1: Before I did not like to study English. Now, because I need to pass my exams, I like to study more. After graduation I think I will study English.

S2: In school, we did not know that English is very important. Now, in college, everything is in English so I need to learn English.

S3: Maybe now I want to learn English. But in the future, maybe not anymore. When I have my business, then it is fine if I do not speak English.

S4: Because all lessons are using English, I want to learn English. I cannot be Engineer if I do not learn it. When I was young, I thought I can be Engineer if I speak Arabic only. Now, I really like to be very good especially in speaking.

During the interviews, there were inquiries about the participants' view about their desire to learn English then and now, and possibly in the future. Their responses are indicated in Excerpt 9. For S1, S2, and S4, their motivation to learn English became greater due to certain realizations on the use of English, while S1 and S3 stated the possibility that his motivation to learn the language may be nonexistent when the time comes that he has no use for it. The responses are suggestive of the dynamic nature of L2 motivation. While this aspect is not a component of the L2 motivational self system, the statements are patterns that naturally emerged which deserve to be mentioned. Dornyei (2009) himself has recognized that motivation's dynamism displays continuous shift and fluctuation within a process-oriented approach. This is to acknowledge the possible diverse factors and conditions that prompt behavioral changes vis-à-vis the learners' motivation. With the interweaving of the responses in the interviews, it is apparent that their jobs and the environment are prominent factors in the motivational changes.

As can be seen in the data report, the participants had the motivation to learn English primarily because of their desire to obtain a job, and this is consistent in establishing L2 ideal self as the most important factor for learners in the L2 Motivational Self System based on previous studies. (e.g. Islam et al., 2013). However, aside from foreseeing themselves interacting with foreigners, it is apparent how much of their narratives and elaborations seem to say that the participants' ideal state is limited to this aspect, and the participants themselves mentioned a variety of reasons that are socially driven, e.g., the convenience of using their L1 and their confidence with the quality of life in Oman.

Moreover, the study has gained further attestation that ought-to self is not much of a source of motivator for L2 learners even if the prevention focused ought-to self was the notable in the responses. Although studies like that of Taguchi, et al. (2009) found the ought-to self as a credible self image in the Asian context, the participants, who are Omanis and Asian by virtue of their location, do not exhibit much concern about pressure from significant people around them once they fail to excel in learning English. Despite their use of prevention focused ought-to self,

this particular finding is deemed inadequate for generalization. An Omani lecturer, Dr. Thuraya Al-Riyami (personal communication, April 08, 2018) expressed hesitation to entirely agree with the participants' claims. "It depends on the background of the parents because some of them, especially those who come from remote areas, did not have formal education", says Dr. Al-Riyami. Considering this issue at hand, if the extrinsic motivation and ought-to self are two interchangeable concepts (Dornyei, 2009), then it is safe to say that there is a need to improve the promotional aspect of the ought-to selves of the participants.

This study also demonstrates that the learning experience does not generate sufficient motivation for the learners. In Dornyei (2009), it was mentioned that the L2 learning experience refers to the immediate learning environment and experience that the learners are exposed to, examples of which include the teachers, curriculum, peers and experience of success (Papi, 2010). It could easily be understood that this dimension is not a form of self-image but the learners' satisfaction from the learning environment, thereby making the situation prompt the improvement of the learner's attitude in learning. The participants demonstrated some inconsistencies in their views regarding their learning experience. The fact is that they have various teachers as mostly expatriates comprise the teaching workforce in the college, and as they are exposed to different teachers, they are able to generate their opinions about their mentors. It goes without saying that their opinions are products of various aspects; hence, further empirical data may be needed to dig deeper on teachers as a learning experience. Moreover, the students' expression of dissatisfaction with the book may imply that revisions are necessary, as teachers are compelled to use such. In addition, it seems difficult to affirm that the external factors, i.e., the learning environment, are internalized and eventually turn into intrinsic motivation, which, according to Noels (2009), is closely associated to L2 learning experience since the participants stated negative feelings about their environment. As a whole, the inability of arriving at clear conclusions regarding the L2 learning experience is a consequence of varying responses of the participants, and this is suggestive that further elaboration on L2 learning experience is imperative.

It is then this study's additional goal to propose some parameters on the coverage of the L2 learning experience. In 1994, Dornyei conceptualized what he believed was relevant to the learners' environment, namely course-specific

motivational components, teacher-specific motivational components, and group-specific motivational components. Course-specific motivational components are related to materials used in the classroom, syllabus, and the classroom activities. Teacher-specific motivational components are related to the personality of the teachers, as well as their behavior and beliefs about teaching. Group-specific motivational components are related to the communication among the learners. Indeed, these components of the learners' environment are substantial elements in the L2 learning environment. Taking into consideration the temporal aspect of a learner's experience additional components may be added. For instance, facilities in this generation is as important as the other components due to the learners' penchant for technology and visual aid varieties. According to education scholars (e.g. Blair, 1998; Chan, 1996), there is likelihood that well-designed school facility may have positive effects on the learners. In the present study, the participants may have missed mentioning the use of facilities perhaps because the college has adequate facility that other glaring factors such as their teachers and teaching materials were instead mentioned. Furthermore, the classroom itself may directly influence the learner's motivation as its design or set up affect the learning atmosphere in any given condition. Furthermore, there might be a need to formulate intangible components related to the learning experience that do not overlap with previously stated components. Although this idea may still be far-fetched, non-classroom induced aspects such as the internet may be of consideration as part of the learning experience. In Cruz and Parina (2018) it was mentioned how virtuality has become a learning factor for Korean learners. With the rapid development of technology outside the classroom, it is possible that it may also be considered a part of the students' learning experience.

Conclusion

With the dearth of studies on motivation in language learning in the Sultanate of Oman, Dornyei's (2009) L2 self framework was used in this study to provide information on the L2 motivation of Omani learners at the ICT. In the study, it was attested that much work is still needed on examining L2 motivation in relation to factors such as learning context. Based on grounded theory, it was found that there are seemingly incongruent findings as far as the present study and the previous literature are concerned. While the Omani L2 learners demonstrated the use of ideal

self as the dominant form of their L2 motivational self, there are certain factors (e.g. long term goals) that allude to exceptions on its full utilization. It was also deduced from the students' accounts that they do not seem to capitalize on ought-to self and L2 learning experience, which results from specific sociocultural orientations and learning situations. The study also saw the interplay of the learners' L2 learning goals and their motivation which Gardner (1985) has earlier described. The study also strengthens this generation's awareness of the salience of English with regard to professional aspirations. With the continuously evolving shifts in environment such as globalization and the complexities of the learners' psychological profile, the study paves way for more explorations on L2 motivation. It also confirmed the dynamic and unpredictable nature of the learners' L2 motivation, a case which has been gaining attention from recent studies that describe how motivation can shift from time to time or context to context. It would then be noteworthy to conduct a follow up on the participants' motivational self as they progress in their college life. Although this study is not longitudinal in character, students indicated that their motivation had shifted and they foresee further changes post-graduation. With this, socio-cultural theory was indeed found useful in explaining the learners' L2 motivation since they are exposed to various societal fixtures overtime.

Pedagogically, it was noted how the influence of teachers can be maximized to put emphasis on the role of motivation in their L2 goals. Perhaps expatriate and local teachers at ICT can consider using their learning experience to heighten the motivation of the students in learning English. This strategy may be of help in guiding the students to imagine themselves as a member of a globalized speech community while and after achieving their learning goals. It may also be helpful if teachers and ELT professionals alike can maintain the motivation of the students given the fact that Omani students, and EFL learners in general, find English difficult to learn.

Results-wise, the findings in the study cannot be generalized due to the employment of the grounded theory approach, in which a relatively smaller number of participants were tapped to share their insights about the study's foci. However, the personal narratives of the participants were able to provide valuable and specific information that is similar to quantitative data. Nevertheless, it is also acknowledged that a mixed method approach could provide a broader perspective

of the L2 motivational self of Omani learners. A longitudinal approach may also be plausible for future research of identical nature as it should be noted that there are certain unmentioned factors that may influence the level of L2 motivation of the learners of the current generation. For instance, it is interesting to note how the current Omanization program, a policy implemented by the government of the Sultanate of Oman which aims to replace expatriate workers with trained Omani personnel (Al-Lamki, 2000) may affect the learners' motivation to be proficient in what they now consider as a very important language. With the priority in employment given to the Omani citizens, the question about the students' desire for language achievement is something worthy of empirical investigation. Most importantly, it is the researchers' desire to improve the L2 learning experience domain of the L2 motivational self.

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A Case Study in the Administration and Operation of an L2 Conversation-Partner Program

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Abstract

This article is the first part of a two-part series on L2 conversation-partner programs. It describes a particular, university-based conversation-partner (Study Buddy) program that provides opportunities for English language learners to work together in dyads with learners of other languages in a way that allows both members of the pair to improve their skills in the language they are learning. More particularly, it details the aims, procedures, and results of a needs analysis and evaluation of the Study Buddy Program. It concludes with three recommendations: (1) revise the pairing process, (2) provide written guidelines for participants, and (3) plan activities beyond the initial orientation. While the details of the program are particular to it, many of the lessons learned from this case study may be generalizable to other L2 conversation-partner programs in other settings.

Keywords: ESL, foreign language learning, conversation partners, Study Buddy, program evaluation, peer tutoring

Prologue: Comments from Students Who Participated in the Program

> "This program is really fun. I got a text from my Study Buddy a couple hours after our last session because he was so grateful for my help. That was a small gesture but made me really, really happy and even more grateful for this service opportunity. I really think you can find joy in teaching/learning new languages. I love it."
>
> "I really enjoy having someone I can meet with to discuss questions I have about the Korean language. It's also nice because they have experience learning a language—I feel as though we are in the same boat!"

In these two quotes, students who participated in Brigham Young University's (BYU) English Language Center's (ELC) Study Buddy program express their joy

in making friends across cultures, in learning the particulars of a second language from native speakers, and for the opportunity to develop their own language skills. Those are the goals of the BYU Study Buddy program, which are summed up in this quote, "I really like this program because it's a way to serve others, teach your native language, and you receive the same help; I also feel that I can have a new friend."

Introduction

Many universities and other language-learning centers offer conversation support to those learning a second or additional language. The services offered may range from simply providing tutors for students, to conducting larger scale conversation programs that supplement classroom learning (see Appendix A for information on some example institutions). This support is available to enable learners to communicate better and increase their confidence in using their new language. BYU's ELC is one of those institutions that has chosen to offer a conversation program. This program is called the Study Buddy program and the participants are coined Study Buddies.

While the program has been popular and beneficial, year after year, problems have arisen with the Study Buddy program, and the disgruntled students have shared their frustrations with administrators and other students. For instance, on occasion, one of the Study Buddies decides to no longer meet, leaving the other student without a partner. One of several reasons may be given for why one of the members stopped coming. Perhaps one of them no longer has time to participate, or participants may feel uncomfortable with their partner. Additionally, they may feel like their partner is not helping them as they expected. In some cases, Study Buddies just don't know what to talk about or how to go about providing feedback to their partner. These disappointments led the ELC administrators to approve an evaluation of the Study Buddy program.

Project Aims

The purpose of the project reported here (in two parts) was to make the Study Buddy program better so students would have more positive experiences, and fewer negative ones. In order to achieve this aim, the project was broken into three sections:

1. An evaluation and needs analysis of the existing Study Buddy program,

2. The design and development of the *Study Buddy Map: An English Language Tutoring Tool,* and
3. The implementation and evaluation of the same tool.

Part 1 of this report details the process by which the first step was carried out. Part 2 describes how a product to support Study Buddies was designed in a materials development course, and how a pilot version of the product was evaluated and revised.

Evaluation and Needs Analysis of the Study Buddy Program

An evaluation and needs analysis of the Study Buddy program was conducted by the main author of this report at the English Language Center under the direction of the ELC's curriculum coordinator.

Program History, Administration, and Operation

The BYU Study Buddy program has been around for many years, and it is definitely an institutional fixture. The program facilitates the pairing of an ELC student with a native-English-speaking matriculated BYU student who is learning the ELC student's native language. The program has traditionally been run by the office manager at the ELC. She advertises the program to the ELC students and to the language departments on the BYU campus. She also conducts a training and pairing meeting. Students from both the ELC and BYU are invited to attend an orientation meeting that usually occurs on the second Thursday after classes have started each semester. During the meeting, the office manager covers some basic expectations to help the students make the most of the experience. For example, she mentions that the paired Study Buddies should spend equal time communicating in English and the other language. She also recommends that the pair set up a regular weekly meeting time and place.

Following this meeting, the ELC students are sent to various rooms depending on their first language, and there they meet the native English speakers who are learning the ELC students' native language. For example, all the native Spanish speakers and the native English-speakers learning Spanish meet in one room, select a partner, and decide when and where to meet. After that, there is no ongoing accountability to staff at the ELC. However, several BYU language course instructors

include a course requirement that students participate in and report back on their experiences using the Study Buddy program.

Other Programs and Modes of Operation

Many educational institutions use native speakers to help their English learners become more comfortable with the local culture and language. Their programs go by several names but a common title is Conversation Partner. Typically, a campus program will provide mentors or volunteers to work with international students (see Appendix A for links to school programs referred to below). They are encouraged to meet on a regular basis, such as once or twice a week, and to spend time learning about each other's culture and language. Some campuses, like Baruch College, have club events for group participation. Other institutions, like the University of Colorado Denver, have drop-in hours for conversation time. Utah Valley University draws on students in volunteer programs. The volunteers meet in the ESL classroom with the international students for an orientation and then commit to spend time outside of class for regular conversation. Southeast Missouri State University gets its volunteers from campus as well as the local community. A contrasting type of program is one where trained tutors are paid to partner with international students, as can be found at Dartmouth College, Stanford University, and the University of Oregon.

The programs most like the Study Buddy program at BYU's ELC are those that pair international students with US-born students who want to practice their foreign language. The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) has a program like this and uses it to benefit both types of students. The administrators take applications online, assign partners, host an orientation and occasional conversation events, encourage regular partner sessions, and invite participants to showcase their progress at the end of the semester. UIC is not alone in using this conversation-partner format. Colorado State University, Indiana University, Texas State, and many other schools have comparable programs. The campus programs reviewed also have websites tied to an application process, providing information about how the program works, as well as tips or guidelines for novice tutors.

Initial Program Evaluation Design

The project reported in this series of articles included two evaluations. The initial evaluation was of BYU's Study Buddy program. As stated previously, this program has been in existence for many years, but there were no formal written guidelines on how the program was managed or even who was in charge. For that reason, the ELC curriculum coordinator asked that an evaluation be conducted to determine the impressions of the administrators and the students. It was also the administrator's intent to gather information about and compare similar programs at other institutions, as well as to examine published research on the topic, to see if the ELC Study Buddy program was functioning at its highest potential. This initial evaluation provided information on how the program was functioning and how people were reacting to it so that changes could be made to make it more effective, if possible.

Participants

Participants for the first evaluation came from four different groups. The four groups were (a) the administrators of the ELC and professors who teach in the TESOL MA program, (b) students who voluntarily joined the Study Buddy program, (c) the principal researcher, who volunteered as a Study Buddy during the semester, and (d) a university-prep level listening/speaking class of 16 students who were asked to participate in a focus-group discussion concerning the program. They all willingly answered the surveys or responded to the interview questions.

Instruments Used in the Initial Evaluation

The main purpose of the initial evaluation was to establish how well the Study Buddy program was working and what, if any, improvements needed to be made. With that in mind, the participants shared their viewpoints through (a) interviews, (b) surveys, (c) participant observation by the researcher who took part in the program as a Study Buddy, and (d) a focus group discussion.

Interviews. The first group of participants interviewed by the principal researcher consisted of three ELC administrators, the ELC office manager, and three TESOL professors, who had an interest in the success of the program because it involved the students under their supervision. All were asked general questions, in a semi-structured format about their perceptions of the Study Buddy program,

what they thought it should be doing, and what they expected from it. They were also asked for specific changes that they thought would make the program better.

Surveys. The second group of participants consisted of the 110 students in the Study Buddy program. As participants in the program, they would obviously have opinions regarding how well it worked or if it needed improvements.These students freely gave their email addresses to the researcher during the initial orientation meeting and were sent a series of three surveys throughout the semester, which they willingly answered. Fifty-four participants responded to the first survey, 47 answered the second survey, and 36 gave responses to the third survey. The numbers of respondents decreased as participants dropped out and stopped meeting with their Study Buddy.

The following eight questions were created for the surveys, which were administered using Qualtrics®, an online survey tool:

1. Rate the following items regarding the Study Buddy orientation.
   a. The information provided was helpful.
   b. It was easy to find a Study Buddy.
2. What are your expectations of the Study Buddy program this semester?
3. What other comments, questions, or suggestions do you have about the program?
4. How many times have you met with your Study Buddy so far?
5. Do you still intend to meet with your Study Buddy this semester?
6. During your meetings, what percentage of the time do you spend speaking English?
7. How often did you meet with your Study Buddy this semester?
8. How were your expectations of the Study Buddy program met this semester?

The questions were spread out over three different surveys. The first three questions were asked on the initial survey. The first question used a five-point Likert scale, and questions 2 and 3 were open-ended and allowed respondents to answer as much or as little as they wanted. This survey was emailed to participants the week after the orientation meeting.

The second survey was emailed five weeks into the semester and asked questions 4 through 6 to determine what progress had been made so far, as well as re-

peating question 3, which allowed participants to respond with comments of any kind.

The third survey was emailed to participants a couple of weeks before the end of the semester and asked questions 6-8 to determine what progress had been made throughout the semester. It also repeated question 3, which again allowed for comments of any sort. The purpose of repeating question 3 was to give the participants an opportunity to praise, complain, or give suggestions regarding the Study Buddy program.

Participant Observation. The primary researcher joined the Study Buddy program in an effort to gain an insider's perspective on the functioning of the program. This experience allowed for a first-hand understanding of participants' satisfaction with the program, as well as their frustrations, experienced throughout the semester.

Focus Group. The fourth group of participants took part in a focus group where they could discuss the Study Buddy program as they had experienced it or how they expected it to work. The participants were part of a university prep course offered at BYU's intensive English program. Most of the ESL learners either currently were Study Buddies, or had been Study Buddies in a previous semester.

Findings

By using the different types of participants and instruments throughout the evaluation of the Study Buddy program, we hoped to get a variety of perspectives in order to find ways to improve the program. The subsections below discuss these perspectives from (a) the administrators and professors, (b) the students in the program, (c) the participant observer, and (d) the students in the focus group.

Interviews

The first group of people to be interviewed were the three ELC administrators and the ELC office manager. They all agreed that the Study Buddy program was a welcome fixture at the school and that it seemed to be well liked by the students. There did seem to be some variation, though, in their thoughts about who was in charge of the program and how it was administrated. Although the ELC currently hosts the orientation meeting at the beginning of the semester, other stakeholders on the main BYU campus have historically carried out that role. As much as the groups

both want to be involved in the program, neither of them wants it to be an administrative burden that takes away from their other duties. In other words, there was a consensus among those interviewed that the Study Buddy program should be as self-running as possible. It ought to to attract the right kind of people so it is easy to facilitate and requires little administrative monitoring. With the right kind of instruction at the beginning, and training to help guide the partners, the program should be able to operate through the semester with minimal administrative oversight.

The second group of people to be interviewed were three professors who teach in the TESOL MA program. Their perspectives were more geared towards the students who were involved as Study Buddies and the need to give those students authentic language experiences. They agreed that the program should be well defined and simple for students to participate in. They also agreed that the program should be self-motivating in a way that it wouldn't need the students to rely on someone to micromanage their learning. The students should have clear guidelines and expectations and then be able to work out the particular operational details according to their own needs. One professor pointed out that the term Study Buddy implies an expectation and has an emphasis on sharing. This is a program where both partners benefit, so they need to find a purpose and negotiate feedback as they set ground rules.

Survey Questions

After the interviews were conducted, survey questions were distributed to the students who came to the orientation meeting and left their email addresses with the researcher. This section will walk through their responses to each of the survey questions for each of the three surveys.

Survey 1—Orientation and Study Buddy Pairing. Students were given a survey at the beginning of the program and were asked to rate their orientation experience and outline their expectations and understanding of the program. Participants used a five-point Likert scale to evaluate (a) the initial orientation meeting and (b) how easy it was to find a Study Buddy. Table 1 shows the tallies for these two questions. Over 90% of the respondents generally indicated that the orientation meeting was successful in providing helpful information, but there was less agreement regarding the ease of finding a partner. Those who did not find a partner were more likely to indicate that it was not easy to do so, which explains some of the variability in the responses.

Table 1. Rating of Study Buddy Orientation

Question	Stongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
The information provided was helpful.	21 39.62%	27 50.94%	0 0.00%	4 7.55%	1 1.89%	53
It was easy to find a Study Buddy.	19 35.85%	13 24.53%	3 5.66%	7 13.21%	11 20.75%	53

Participants also responded to open-ended questions regarding their expectations and comments about the Study Buddy program. The data were analyzed using a simplified grounded theory approach. Two researchers looked at the data independently to identify themes through open coding. Categories evolved and changed as the data were evaluated until core themes were identified. The analysis resulted in three themes: *improving speaking skills, making friends, and finding a partner.*

The most frequent theme (63% of the comments) was that of wanting to *improve speaking skills* in the target language. For example, one respondent said, "I want to be able to practice speaking the language I am studying in school to get more practice and be able to speak more fluently and more like a native speaker. Through practicing with a native speaker, I feel that my ability to speak more fluently will increase." Another student noted, "I am really excited about study buddy because I want to improve my English skills."

Making friends and helping others was another common theme (36% of the comments). Some of the key words in these responses were *friend, friendship, serve, and help.* One student summed these points in the following response, "I want to make new friends, I want to be helpful to someone, I want to be more comfortable in speaking Spanish."

Finally, the last identified theme was *finding a partner* (11% of the comments). This theme was most often associated with disappointment that respondents did not find a Study Buddy. In fact, 44% of the students who responded to the open-ended question on the survey mentioned the difficulty for them or for others of finding a speaking partner.

Another set of themes from these two survey questions were suggestions for improving the program. Respondents said that meeting throughout the semester

would be beneficial in helping participants stay active in the program and feel more comfortable getting to know other people. One student said, "I don't know if you have any activities for the Study-Buddies, but if you did that would be a good way to meet up and break the ice a little more." A second suggestion revolved around knowing what to do when meeting with a Study Buddy. One student mentioned that, "An outline or guide would be nice to have so I know what to do."

Survey 2—Mid-semester. A second survey, that was distributed five weeks after the orientation, gave students an opportunity to report about the frequency and quality of the actual Study Buddy sessions at that point. Participants were asked for the number of times they met with their partners. Table 2 shows that almost half of the participants reported meeting nearly once a week.

Table 2. Number of times participants met (from Survey 2, after six weeks)

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all	14	30.43%
1-3 times	10	21.74%
4-7 times	21	45.65%
8-11 times	0	0.00%
12 or more times	1	2.17%
Total	46	100%

When asked if they would continue to meet with a Study Buddy, only 13 of the 46 respondents answered, and more than half of them indicated that they would not continue to meet.

Participants were also asked to indicate the percentage of time they had spent speaking English. Table 3 shows the percentage of time the partners spoke English early in the semester and again near the end of the semester.

Table 3. Percentage of time spent speaking English—Surveys 2 and 3

Time	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
Survey #2 (at six weeks)	0.00	80.00	47.31	15.45	238.73	35
Survey #3 (end of semester)	8.00	100.00	53.16	17.66	311.94	31

Survey 3—End of Semester. In the third survey, students were asked some of the same questions as in the second survey. Table 3 shows the responses to Survey 2 (at six weeks) and Survey 3 (end of semester) regarding the time they spent speaking English. In general, this number went up.

In terms of the frequency with which partners met together, it might be expected that the numbers would increase over time. However, as shown in Table 4 (compared with the numbers in Table 2), those who reported meeting fewer times decreased and those who reported meeting more often increased. There was a lot of variation, but of those responding, more than three fourths said they met more than three times.

Table 4. Times Study Buddies met over the semester

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all	5	14.29%
1-3 times	3	8.75%
4-7 times	5	14.29%
8-11 times	13	37.14%
12 or more times	9	25.71%
Total	35	100%

The third and final survey culminated by soliciting explanations of how well participants' expectations of the program were met. Some of the students elaborated on ways that their expectations were met, but most simply answered yes (their needs were met) if they had a partner (89% of the comments), and *no* (their needs were not met) if they did not receive a partner (11% of the comments).

To sum up, from the responses to survey questions, we learned that the Study Buddy program was working quite well for those who had a partner, but that getting

a partner could be challenging. This difficulty seems to be a common limitation such programs and overcoming it may require more support from outside the program.

Participant-Researcher's Findings from the Field Experience

The primary author of this report participated in the Study Buddy program for a semester in order to gain insights into the advantages and challenges of the existing program. As for the benefits, she discovered that working with a conversation partner to practice a second language helped with vocabulary acquisition and fluency in a way that didn't happen in a class. Also, she explained that it was enjoyable meeting with her Study Buddy partner on a regular basis, and both participants reported feeling that they improved in their language ability (English and Spanish) throughout the semester. The challenges encountered were figuring out what to talk about after the initial getting acquainted routines, and also staying on track after switching languages. Distractions were frequent and the pair reported often lapsing into English during their meetings, since it was the language in which both partners shared a high level of fluency.

Focus Group

The focus group consisted of 16 university-prep level students in a listening/speaking class at the ELC. They were asked to participate in a class discussion about the Study Buddy program, and all consented and participated. Questions were asked by the evaluator as well as the teacher of the class, who was familiar with the program. Open-ended discussion was encouraged and all comments were welcomed and recorded. Most of the students in the group knew what the Study Buddy program was and several had had a Study Buddy in the past. In this focus group though, only three participants (19%) currently had a partner at the time the group met.

When asked as a group what they expected to gain from having a Study Buddy partner, the students responded that they hoped for speaking practice, making friends, receiving help with writing and classwork, and visiting for a couple of hours while each person spoke his/her second language the whole time. They were asked to imagine having a Study Buddy and then asked what they would talk about. Responses included getting help with pronunciation, fluency, and areas of weaknesses. These comments spurred a discussion about weaknesses in their language

and their hope that the partner would be honest with helpful feedback, be encouraging, be respectful, and not be afraid to point out mistakes. They also discussed the need to share resources so they could improve, set goals, review things they had studied, as well as prepare for future sessions, and get help with homework, vocabulary, and class lessons.

When asked about their opinions on receiving feedback and correction, the students commented that they wanted as much feedback as possible. They knew that when they speak to people and are not understood, then what they said is wrong and they want to correct it. They wanted their interactions with other students to be a learning experience with corrections and translations, which is an advantage of learning each other's language. In general, the class agreed that correction was a high priority when working with a Study Buddy and this could best be done as they read together or spoke together.

When asked if it would be helpful to have outlines, goals, or lessons to guide them during their Study Buddy sessions, the students talked about the need for some very foundational topics that are needed for people new to a culture. They noted that there are many things that need to be learned when people first start acquiring a language or adjusting to a culture, like talking on a phone, leaving messages, working machines, putting gas in a car, and buying things as simple as food or as difficult as insurance. They agreed that having lists of topics would be helpful for them and outlines of how to apply those lists would help them remember what people should know.

Other topics brought up during the class discussion included finding a better way to match up partners for the Study Buddy program. For several students in the class, arranging partners or keeping a partner very long, had been a bad experience, so they recommended using technology to help. Some liked the idea of video conferencing for meetings and others encouraged more advertising on campus as ways of helping everyone get a partner. Focus group participants also expressed a need for follow-up of some kind so the Study Buddy partners don't just quit, but have accountability and commit to a certain number of meetings. Several focus group members also recounted situations where the native-English-speaking students just needed a foreign language partner for a few visits to fulfill a class assignment, and they did not want to commit to the whole semester.

Strengths and Weaknesses

It appears that the Study Buddy program has survived all these years because there are some very powerful strengths that have helped it endure. These strengths were pointed out by the stakeholders as…

- an excellent way for students to gain authentic language experience,
- an opportunity to learn about another culture while making a new friend, and
- a built-in tutor source for individualized needs as they arise.

Another strength in the program that wasn't explicitly mentioned during the interviews, but was implied throughout the surveys, is…

- the growth of students while in the tutoring position.

The students on the learning side of the partnership, at any given time, benefit from the language help they receive, but as has also been noted while giving service, the students on the teaching side are also gaining benefits. Because of this, the program offers a win-win situation in more ways than one. As one student said, "Great program, I hope it keeps being available!"

As helpful as the Study Buddy program was, it is apparent from the evaluation conducted over the course of a semester that there were weaknesses that were limiting its productivity and effectiveness. For all the students who found good partners and had a great experience, there were as many who were left disappointed at not receiving a partner or meeting regularly. In addition, the attrition rate was high in this program. Frustration was also expressed among students about not really knowing how to best use their time during their conversation sessions, and a lack of directed facilitation that would have helped to keep them involved. In an attempt to create an easy-to-run program, administrators may have taken the hands-off approach a little too far.

Recommendations for Program Improvement

Taking into account the comments made in the evaluation surveys, interviews, and focus group, along with the researcher's participant observations, the following recommendations were offered in order to improve the Study Buddy program.

Revise Partner Pairing Procedure

It was recommended that the ELC revise its partner-pairing procedure—from allowing students to pair up at an orientation social, to instead using a process followed by other campus conversation programs. Several universities around the United States require their partners to register through an online form and then the program coordinates the pairing. This matching ensures that those who are excited about the program enough to register on time are given priority over those who don't. This process also helps collect data on the participants in case one partner loses the contact information of the other or a substitution needs to be made. This process would benefit those who have had the problem expressed by one student who said, "I never got a buddy, never heard anything more about the program after attending the meeting. I would love to know what's going on."

Provide Written Guidelines

It was recommended that a partner guide be made available for the Study Buddy participants that outlines the expectations of the program, tips and procedures, and possible ideas and structure for conversation sessions. This guide needs to provide content that is relevant for students at different proficiency levels and teaching experience levels. It also needs to be easy to use and fairly inexpensive, so the students will take advantage of its resources. This suggestion was solidified after receiving comments like, "Sometimes we wondered what to talk about or what to do so having guidelines would be nice," and "It would be nice to have practice prompts that we could just reference. That way we could just dive into practicing with each other."

Plan for Activities Beyond the Orientation

It was recommended that the ELC organize other activities beyond the original orientation meeting in order to prevent some of the participant attrition, and to maintain a higher level of enthusiasm. A newsletter with spotlights of Study Buddies and ideas for activities could be emailed throughout the semester. There could be regularly scheduled labs or socials for partners to meet other participants and showcase their new skills. These could include a story-telling festival, a karaoke night, and/or a potluck dinner. Social media resources and/or an announcement board for upcoming activities could also encourage ongoing participation.

These extra, but minimal-effort measures, might go a long way to encourage participation and be reminders for otherwise distracted students. Many students support these suggestions with the following comments; "Please check how the program is going on sometimes because I think all students are very busy. So, it would [be] better for you guys to help those people like me and my study buddies," "my suggestion is to follow up the program at least monthly," and "maybe we can have some activities to show the progress that we made during the semester."

Conclusions of the Study Buddy Program Needs Analysis/Evaluation

Our recommendations for improving the Study Buddy program can be outlined as a threefold solution: (a) revising the pairing process, (b) providing written guidelines for participants, and (c) planning activities beyond the initial orientation meeting. Since the needs analysis/evaluation was completed, these recommendations for improving the Study Buddy program have been implemented. The partner pairing system was revised to allow students to register for the program and be placed with a Study Buddy. This pairing process is now ongoing and doesn't depend on attendance at the orientation meeting. A *Study Buddy Map* that provides written guidelines for program participants was created (see Part 2, forthcoming). In addition, two social events were added to the semester calendar for Study Buddy partners to attend together, and a newsletter was designed to email to the participants in hopes of encouraging them and providing ideas for activities that they can do together. We also recommended that the foreign-language faculty provide added support to the Study Buddy program by encouraging their students to invest more time throughout the whole semester, instead of dropping out after a short time. This change should help reduce the attrition rate and the longer contact time will benefit the language learners.

We hope that our experience with BYU's Study Buddy program can serve as a useful, enlightening case study for other language programs interested in developing and implementing a similar program. As with all case studies, there are limits on the generalizability of our case. However, those limits will need to be determined by the other institutions.

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Appendix A

University Conversation Program Links Investigated

Baruch College

https://www.facebook.com/BaruchCPP/

Facebook page provides activity notices, hashtags, and announcements.

Colorado State University

https://writing.colostate.edu/guides/teaching/esl/conversation.cfm

Program matches partners for dual language exchange.

Dartmouth College

http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/tutors/flcpprogram/

Tutor clearinghouse describes paid tutor positions and provides online pledge and recommendation form.

Indiana University

https://ois.iu.edu/connect/get-involved/partners.html

Program matches partners for dual language exchange.

Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey

http://www.miis.edu/academics/language/programs/english/conversation-partners

Program is for ESL and graduate students only. Application needed.

Mississippi State University

https://www.international.msstate.edu/conversation_partner/

American students fill out form and wait to hear from the coordinator.

Pierce College

https://www.pierce.ctc.edu/ie-student-activities

Program matches partners for dual or single language learning. Meetings occur weekly in groups or at a convenient time for partners.

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

http://globalservices.rutgers.edu/content/Center_Staff_Services_and_Programs/Core_Cultural_Programs_of_the_Center/International_Friendship_Program_IFP/English_Conversation_Programs.html

Participants can have partners paired by the program or can meet own partner at weekly gatherings. Partners can practice just English or choose to be paired for dual learning.

Simon Fraser University

http://www.lib.sfu.ca/about/branches-depts/slc/eal/conversation/registration-form-eal-esl-students

Program finds partners who meet weekly on campus. Partners forfeit opportunity to participate if they miss a week without notification.

Stanford University

https://vptl.stanford.edu/students/tutoring-foreign-language-practice/become-tutor/become-language-conversation-partner

Program offers paid positions for student conversation partners.

Southeast Missouri State University

http://www.semo.edu/international/iep/current_students/conversation_partners.html

Assigned partners from community or university meet 2-4 hours per week with international students.

Texas State

http://www.txstate.edu/ie/services/tsie/cpapp.html

Program matches partners and provides conversation circles for presentation and more practice.

University of Colorado Denver

http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/internationalprograms/oia/esl/life/conversation/Pages/default.aspx

Conversation club meets twice a week for drop in discussions.

University of Houston

http://www.uh.edu/class/lac/language-resources/conversation-partners/

Both languages trade, online database helps pair partners, emails info.

University of Idaho

https://www.uidaho.edu/academic-affairs/ipo/intercultural-programs-events-and-activities/programs/become-a-conversation-partner

Provides online application to help find English partner.

University of Illinois at Chicago

https://www.ois.uic.edu/programs/conversation_partners

Both language partners trade. School provides Conversation Cafes for regular meetings and an end of program presentation.

University of Iowa

https://clas.uiowa.edu/esl/other-programs/campus-conversation-partners

Online brochure, tips, conversation topics, and other links.

University of Kansas

http://www.kumc.edu/office-of-international-programs/academic-english-requirements/conversation-partners.html

Program takes applications to pair partners.

University of Michigan

https://lsa.umich.edu/lrc/language-learning/conversation-partners.html

Help find conversation partners for either language.

University of Montana

http://www.umt.edu/global-engagement/english-language-institute/academics/conversation-partners.php

Open to the public, practice English with a partner and attend optional group activities.

University of North Texas

http://international.unt.edu/ieli/intensive-english-language-conversation-partner-program

Volunteers are trained and lead group discussions in English.

University of Oregon

https://aeitutoring.uoregon.edu/conversation-partner-login

Program offers paid positions for tutor/conversation partner. Online handbook.

University of Pennsylvania

https://www.elp.upenn.edu/conversationpartners

Program matches partners for dual language exchange.

University of Southern California

https://www.uvic.ca/international/home/global-community/conversation-partners/

Program includes one-on-one partners, fees charged go to the tutoring partner.

University of Victoria

https://www.uvic.ca/international/home/global-community/conversation-partners/

Program matches partners for dual language exchange.

Western Oregon University

http://www.wou.edu/internationalsupport/student-services/conversation-partners-2/#ffs-tabbed-11

Program matches partners for dual language exchange. Arranges a welcome party in week 3, conversation meetings weeks 4-10, and celebration dinner and slide show at end of year.

Increasing English Learners' Positive Emotional Response to Learning Through Dance

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Abstract

This study investigates dance as an English Second Language (ESL) curriculum enhancement. The curriculum utilizes kinesthetic learning, which is a method seldom incorporated in formal academic classrooms (Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2011) despite evidence suggesting that it benefits all students, including those without kinesthetic learning preferences (Schumann, 1997). Supporters believe that the benefits of incorporating movement in the classroom include increased student enjoyment, motivation, and confidence in learning. However, these beliefs are merely anecdotal at present. This study analyzes quantitative questionnaires and qualitative feedback from 26 students who participated in a 4-week long Dance ESL curriculum to determine whether dance-based learning can boost students' positive emotional responses to learning. We conclude that movement may have some merit as a curricular supplement by increasing positive emotional responses and vocabulary retention in an ESL setting.

Keywords: enjoyment, flow state, intrinsic motivation, anxiety, kinesthetic learning, English Second Language, English Foreign Language, dance, vocabulary learning, vocabulary retention

Introduction

Student motivation and anxiety can be strong indicators of a student's overall academic success (Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Cohen, 1993; Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2011). Intrinsic motivation in particular can encourage students to persevere (Rockafellow & Saules, 2006) while anxiety can shut learning down (Mori & Mori, 2011). English language teachers have been interested for years in increasing motivation and reducing classroom anxiety and have recently adopted digital game-based ap-

proaches (e.g., Brom, Šisler, Slussareff, Selmbacherová, & Hlávka, 2016) and multimedia learning techniques (e.g., van der Meij, 2013) in an effort to do so.

While many curricular innovations seem to cater to aural and visual learners, relatively few innovations target kinesthetic learners (Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Cohen, 1993; Haley, 2004; Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2011). This may be in part due to legitimate classroom constraints or possibly to an association with Total Physical Response (TPR) methods popularized in the 1970s and now overlooked because of weak theoretical underpinnings. Nevertheless, theories of movement suggest mental processes can be aided by learning through experience (Moreno, 2005). Moreover, implementing kinesthetic learning methods in addition to typical visual and auditory methods in the ESL classroom can boost student enjoyment and motivation while decreasing anxiety, which can ultimately lead to greater student accomplishment in English (Schumann, 1997).

Dance in particular may serve as a useful kinesthetic tool in English language teaching because of its broad appeal and relatively easy access. Dance has proven benefits such as increasing happiness and reducing stress due to increased endorphins (Richards et al., 2015) as well as preparing student's brains for learning by increasing blood circulation to oxygen-absorbing brain cells (Bell, 1999). Recently, dance has been used in some programs to augment typical academic classes in an effort to incorporate more kinesthetic learning. However, the benefits of dance in an academic classroom are merely anecdotal at this point. Although teachers of dance-enriched academic curricula report improvements of student confidence and engagement (Bell, 1999; "A Body in Motion," 2015; Hill, 2015; "Moving and Grooving to the Beat of Math," 2016), the influence of dance-enriched learning on student attitudes has not been empirically researched. This small-scale, localized study introduces dance as an enhancement in an English as a Second Language (ESL) curriculum that utilizes the benefits of kinesthetic learning to increase student enjoyment, motivation, and confidence in learning.

Literature Review

Intrinsic motivation can help students succeed academically and achieve greater mastery of the English language. Gardner and Yung (2015) define motivation as "a combination of effort, desire and attitude relating to learning the target language" (p. 159). Self-determination theory distinguishes between two forms of

motivation: extrinsic motivation—working towards a goal in order to reach a reward—and intrinsic motivation—working towards a goal for the self-satisfaction and enjoyment of having done so (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Studies have shown that students who are intrinsically motivated are more likely to persevere in the midst of academic challenges than those who are motivated extrinsically (Amabile, 1982; Boyd, 2002; Rockafellow & Saules, 2006). Zhang, Lin, Zhang, and Choi (2017), for example, indicate that student motivation positively correlates with the number of vocabulary words English Language Learners (ELLs) successfully learn. Thus, researchers tend to agree that increased intrinsic motivation leads to increased academic success (Cup Choy, 1977; Lens & Vansteenkiste, 2012; Könings, Brand-Gruwel, & van Merriënboer, 2011; Zimmerman, 2008).

Student motivation has been shown to correlate with learning enjoyment, which can likewise help students succeed in language courses. Research shows that motivation is correlated with positive emotions as opposed to negative ones (MacIntyre & Vincze, 2017), and for this reason, researchers hold that enjoyment is closely tied to motivation (Hong, Hwang, Tai, & Lin, 2017). Enjoyment of learning is explained by flow, a theory proposed by Csikszentmihalyi (1975). According to this theory, flow is the state of pleasant absorption in an activity when a student is focused "on the object of the activity rather than on an achievement outcome" (Brom et al., 2017, p. 239). Pearce, Ainley, and Howard (2005) indicate that students move in and out of flow state during a typical lesson, but flow state often occurs when students are immersed in an activity. This state of enjoyment, or flow, is preferential for students because it has been shown to relate to immediate learning gains as well as long-term knowledge retention (Brom et al., 2017; Mega, Ronconi, & De Beni, 2014; Pekrun et al., 2002). For example, Mega, Ronconi, and De Beni (2014) have shown that of 5,805 undergraduate students in Italy, those who enjoyed their classes passed more exams and had higher final GPAs at the end of their program. Furthermore, studies suggest that student enjoyment combined with intrinsic motivation predicts even greater academic success (Hong, Hwang, Tai, & Lin, 2017). Taylan's (2017) research in EFL classes in Turkey, for instance, reports that enjoyment of class increases student motivation, leading to higher grades and overall accomplishment.

Classroom anxiety can mitigate academic success. Countless language learners struggle with anxiety in the language classroom (E. K. Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope,

1986; Phillips, 1992), which has been shown to inhibit the learning process and slow down learning (Arnold & Brown 1999; Mori & Mori, 2011). However, overcoming this anxiety along with increasing motivation and enjoyment can lead to greater academic success. For example, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) indicate that anxiety during a specific stage of a second language communication task directly inhibits the student's ability to perform that task well. Because positive emotions in a learning situation are thought to positively correlate with a student's capacity to succeed (Lin, Chao, & Huang, 2015), changing the affective state in class by decreasing anxiety and increasing motivation and enjoyment can better enable students to achieve highly (Du, 2009; Mori & Mori 2011). As courses incorporate interesting activities that boost student motivation and enjoyment, student confidence in learning can increase as well (Haciomeroglu, 2017; Sanadgol, 2015).

Teachers can capitalize on student motivation, enjoyment, and confidence by designing engaging activities to aid students in achieving their language goals. Despite an instructor's best intentions, however, student motivation and enjoyment tend to decline over the course of a semester or year (Gottfried, Nylund-Gibson, Gottfried, Morovati, & Gonzalez, 2017; Busse & Walter, 2013; Wigfield, Tonks, & Klauda, 2009). Some teachers have designed curriculum enhancements, or emotional design techniques (Brom et al., 2017; see also Um, Plass, Hayward, & Homer, 2012), to help counteract their students' potential motivational decline. These techniques employ creative methods of manipulating content into more interactive forms such as digital game-based (e.g., Brom, Šisler, Slussareff, Selmbacherová, & Hlávka, 2016) and multimedia learning (e.g., van der Meij, 2013). These alternate teaching platforms, among others, serve to increase students' positive emotional responses, which in turn increase flow, motivation and confidence, which can lead to greater academic accomplishment.

Kinesthetic learning, or learning through movement, is another emotional design method that could be an effective technique to increase enjoyment, motivation, and confidence in language learners. A method that gained brief popularity in the 1970s called Total Physical Response (TPR) was among the first explorations of kinesthetic learning in ESL instruction. This method incorporated simple movements in the language classroom (Asher, 1966). It built on synaptic trace theory of memory, which states that information is more easily recalled when it can be traced back to physical action (Poo et al., 2016). TPR has since fallen out of use

and subsequently maligned because it is limited in scope of application and lacks clear methodology and empirical validation; though, recent research has emerged that supports the benefits of kinesthetic learning (though not TPR specifically).

Moreno's Cognitive-Affective Theory of Learning from Media (CATLM) holds that in order to retain information in long-term memory, a student must process new information through the senses as well as organize that information in visual models through experience (Moreno, 2005; see also Weinstein & Park, 2014). Students organize information differently, depending on which learning style resonates with their experience most. MacKeracher (2004, pp.71) explained that learning styles are "the characteristic of cognitive, affective, social, and physiological behaviors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment." Thus, incorporating many learning styles into a classroom setting enables students to organize information through experience (Brown, 2000; Haley, 2004; Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2011), which in turn leads to increased information retention (Moreno, 2005) and other benefits. Kinesthetic learning combined with typical visual and auditory teaching methods can also boost student motivation and lead to greater student enjoyment (Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2011) by providing personalized kinesthetic learning experiences that benefit a wide range of students, including those who may not have kinesthetic learning preferences (Schumann, 1997).

Despite its benefits, kinesthetic approaches are often overlooked in curriculum design, while visual and auditory styles are incorporated more often (Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Cohen, 1993; Haley, 2004; Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2011). The widely used and accepted teaching approach in ESL, communicative competence teaching, is likewise dominated by visual and auditory methods, while kinesthetic teaching methods are typically limited to role plays (Even, 2008). Thus, it may be possible for ESL teachers to incorporate more elements of kinesthetic learning, including dance, into their classroom in order to help increase student flow, motivation, and confidence.

Although dance has occasionally been used as a teaching method to augment typical academic classes, no systematic studies have investigated its impact on student attitude in the ESL classroom. One course established by an English Foreign Language (EFL) teacher in Japan incorporated dance and rhyming games into an English teaching curriculum for adult students (Bell, 1999). The results showed

rising confidence levels as students grew to enjoy participating in dancing and singing activities. However, the study was based merely on one instructor's observations rather than on systematic quantitative or qualitative data collection. Similarly, a program called Kinnect uses dance to teach science concepts such as photosynthesis and rock formation to elementary school students (Hill, 2015), and a comparable program uses dance to teach math at a junior high school ("Moving and Grooving to the Beat of Math," 2016). Teachers claim these classes help students "learn better" (Hill, 2015) by boosting student motivation, engagement, and enjoyment, but no empirical study has validated these claims.

Although teachers of these courses agree that dance-augmented academic curriculum has myriad benefits, evidence to support the gratification and motivational benefits of dance-based learning is merely anecdotal at this point. Additional research, including empirical investigations that link student self-reports with dance interventions are needed to determine whether dance-based learning can indeed increase student enjoyment, motivation, or confidence in learning English as a second language. As such, we conducted a local and small-scale study to determine student self-reports of a supplemental, 4-week dance-based English curriculum. Our aim in conducting this study was to determine whether students found the dance curriculum beneficial in its own right and whether they reported any change in their enjoyment, motivation, or confidence in English language learning due to their participation in a dance-based curriculum.

Method

Participants

We conducted this course at the English language lab school associated with a large accredited university. This language school has seven levels, ranging from novice learners in Level 1 through low-advanced learners in level 7, and we invited students in level 4 and above to participate in the dance curriculum. This is because proficient English learners would benefit most from this course's academic focus, as much of the curriculum involves higher-level vocabulary and complex sentence formation.

Of all 49 students who attended the class at some point, we received the necessary consent forms and questionnaires from 26 students. The distribution of participants across levels was relatively even, with about 5 participants from levels

4, 5, and 6. There were 8 students from level 7 who attended, and a few students from level 3 (3 students) also participated. These students were ages 19-37, with 57% of them being in their early 20's. 18 participants were from Latin American countries, 5 came from Asian countries, and the remaining 3 came from other countries including Haiti, Algeria, and Poland. The representation of males and females enrolled was close to even, with 58% of participants female and the remaining 42% male. 16 of these students had been in the U.S. for less than 6 months, while the other 9 students had been in the country between one and two years.

Materials

We created a 4-week Dance ESL curriculum to implement with these students. This curriculum incorporated formal pedagogical practices of effective ESL teaching in a beginning contemporary dance class format. The curriculum focused on learning vocabulary words in preparation for the TOEFL.

Classes met for 50 minutes on Mondays and Wednesdays for four weeks, a total of about six and a half hours. Mondays concentrated on learning new words and dance techniques while Wednesdays concentrated on integrating new words with dance elements. The last week was a comprehensive review. Each class consisted of about 15 minutes of instruction, with the remaining 35 minutes dedicated to group work. A concise version of this Dance ESL curriculum is attached as the appendix, and a complete version is available upon request.

Students who chose to participate took a questionnaire before and after the course that assessed each participant's enjoyment, motivation, and confidence levels through validated evaluations Achievement Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ) (Pekrun, Goetz, & Perry, 2005) and Motivation Orientation of Language Teaching (MOLT) (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). These questionnaires focused on students' experience in their regular academic courses that semester. See Figures 1-3 below for examples of questions concerning enjoyment, motivation, and confidence.

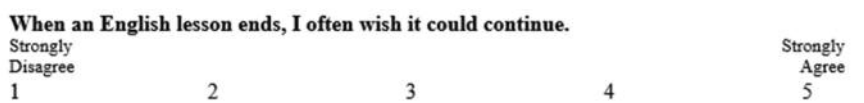

Figure 1. Example of enjoyment question

I am sure that one day, I will be able to speak English.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Figure 2. Example of motivation question

I get scared that I might say something wrong, so I'd rather not say anything in English.

Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Figure 3. Example of confidence/anxiety question

The questionnaire also requested information about demographics including country of origin, countries of habitation, time spent in the U.S., time spent studying English inside and outside the U.S., gender, birthdate, native language, additional languages, and level of English proficiency (as demonstrated by the class enrolled in at the language school).

Procedures

We recruited students by announcing the course in classes, posting fliers, and sending out email blasts. We informed students that the curriculum was meant to study the capacity of dance-based learning to aid in vocabulary retention, but they were not explicitly told about our intent to study their emotional responses to classwork. Students' incentive to participate was the intrinsic desire to dance, the potential to learn vocabulary in preparation for the TOEFL, and the refreshments provided at the end of each class. All students who attended class the first week took a pre-course questionnaire.

We took attendance at each class with the expectation that students would attrite. At the completion of the course, students were divided into three groups: Group A (those who attended 5-8 times), Group B (those who attended 3-4 times), and Group C (those who attended once or twice), which were compared against each other in analysis. 6 students were in Group A, 7 were in Group B, and 13 were in Group C.

Students in all groups took post-course questionnaires consisting of the same questions as the pre-course questionnaire. We also conducted focus groups and interviews (through personal interaction and email correspondence) to analyze the

results of this curriculum qualitatively. A total of 10 participants from Groups A and B contributed qualitative feedback.

Analysis

Upon completion of the curriculum, we used pre- and post-course questionnaires to analyze the effect of the independent factor—number of Dance ESL classes attended—on the dependent factors— enjoyment, motivation, and confidence in their typical academic classes. We calculated averages of these dependent factors before and after the course for each of the attendance groups (A, B, and C) and used t-tests to determine whether the analysis was statistically significant.

To analyze qualitative data from focus groups and interviews, we used content analysis by coding and organizing thought groups then comparing positive responses to the negative ones.

Results and Discussion

Numerical Data

Quantitative data reveals information about the impact of attendance on self-reported scores. T tests indicated that none of the demographic information related had a significant impact on either the benefits students received from the curriculum or the students' likelihood of attending. This includes the student's level of language learning, country of origin, age, and time spent in the U.S. Most notably, these results show that gender did not significantly influence the effects of Dance ESL on student participation, showing that dance participation was not necessarily a gendered activity in this ESL course.

Statistical measures help us visualize the effect of attendance on enjoyment, motivation, and confidence. The average percent change in participants' self-reported scores of these factors are shown in Table 1 below. Positive numbers show an increase in self-reported scores during the course and negative numbers show a decrease in self-reported scores during that same timeframe. Although these percent changes by group are not statistically significant, we can see that self-reported scores in Group A and Group B, with 6 and 7 participants, respectfully, increase during the course, while Group C's scores, with 13 participants, decrease over the same timeframe.

Table 1. Changes in Self-reported Enjoyment, Motivation, and Confidence

	Attendance Group	n	Starting Mean and SD	Ending Mean and SD	Percent Mean Change
Enjoyment	A	6	4.3 (0.49)	4.5 (0.57)	+ 4.5%
	B	7	4.4 (0.52)	4.5 (0.38)	+ 2.0%
	C	13	4.3 (0.39)	4.2 (0.48)	- 0.5%
Motivation	A	6	4.3 (0.42)	4.4 (0.44)	+ 1.6%
	B	7	4.3 (0.42)	4.6 (0.36)	+ 7.1%
	C	13	4.4 (0.49)	4.3 (0.37)	- 1.6%
Confidence	A	6	3.3 (0.64)	3.4 (0.59)	+ 3.0%
	B	7	3.1 (0.97)	3.5 (1.11)	+ 12.9%
	C	12	3.6 (0.53)	3.4 (0.82)	- 5.5%

Attitude averages show a steady increase correlating with the amount of time spent in Dance ESL class. Enjoyment and motivation scores, on the other hand, contain a threshold at which these values do not increase between Group B (participants who came three to four times) and Group A (participants who came 5-8 times). From this data, we can infer that Dance ESL classes may increase positive emotional responses to learning including enjoyment, motivation, and confidence; however, these results do not carry forward in a linear relationship. The quantitative data illustrates that attending Dance ESL class about once a week may be just as effective at increasing positive emotional responses as attending Dance ESL classes about twice a week. However, more research with a larger subject sampling should be done to determine whether these conclusions are statistically significant.

Student Comments

Qualitative results from a focus group, personal interviews, and email exchanges with 10 students from Groups A and B reveal more information about the benefits and limitations of this curriculum. As this course focused on boosting students' positive emotional responses and vocabulary retention, we will first examine remarks dealing with these topics.

Students agreed that Dance ESL classes helped increase their enjoyment, motivation, and confidence. Regarding enjoyment, many agreed that that the class made them excited about learning English. For example, one remarked, "I feel that the Dance and English classes made me more happy and excited about learning

English." Another stated that she was excited about learning English specifically in the Dance ESL course: "I feel more excited because when I was in the class Dance and English, I couldn't wait until class finished to go there." These quotes show that students enjoyed the Dance ESL classes but are inconclusive about whether the course helped boost their enjoyment of English in their typical academic courses as well.

Students also agreed that the responsibility of communicating with their groups throughout the course increased their motivation to learn English because they wanted to communicate more clearly and effectively. This is demonstrated by one student's remark, "Performing these tasks, I had many opportunities to learn English, as well as motivation to learn. Because I wanted to be a part of the team and also help my team, which means that I need to learn more English to express my thoughts freely in English." Another stated, "When we danced with partners, we had to talk in English, so I wanted to learn English more." The quotes demonstrate that group interaction encouraged them to work on their language skills.

Regarding confidence, some students mentioned that group work helped them overcome anxiety about communicating in English. Speaking about the tendency to form new groups each class period, one student said, "I had been worried about talking with new people in English. But through this class, I overcame that." Another student showed that the positive outlook of errors we have in dance class carried over to their perspective of errors in English: "The teacher helped [us be] not ashamed [of] our errors, just be friendly and help each other in learning English, as well as just help to develop." These remarks show that students increased in confidence both within Dance ESL classes and outside of that specific course.

The three elements discussed above—enjoyment, motivation, and confidence—were the elements of focus group and interview questions that received only positive feedback. Looking at the specific quotes discussed, we may infer that these positive responses were due in large part to the nature of the curriculum that required active communication in groups (see Bentley & Warwick, 2013).

Participants also reported that Dance ESL classes helped them learn content more effectively. This information is not reflected in the quantitative data because vocabulary retention was not measured, but it can be clearly seen in the content analysis. This analysis shows that the majority of students felt incorporating movement with English enabled them to learn vocabulary more effectively and that at-

tending regularly helped them retain that information. Some students remarked that although they could not remember all the words that were introduced, the slower pace and incorporation of movement helped them learn more than they normally would have. Segments of students' remarks about vocabulary retention along with the total number of positive and negative remarks are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Student Comments on Vocabulary Retention

	Positive Remarks	**Negative Remarks**
Vocabulary retention (13 positive|2 negative)	+ I think the part of it we need to think… with movement is how to demonstrate or create to show the meaning of the word that we need to perform. That helps me to memorize the word. It's easier that I can remember. It's a little hard to try to make the movement, but that work makes me so I can remember after. + So if I say explosive *motion with hands* we know it, and that helps a lot to recall that word, at least for me. + We learned more than the definition. + I like it so much because we practice and work in the class, so I think it—I remember all the words. + I think it's better because every week [in school] we have to learn 24 new words and you ask us to learn a few words, not too much.	- Well, I can't remember them all. - I don't remember them all.

Participant remarks support the hypothesis that Dance ESL classes can increase positive emotional responses and help students learn and retain vocabulary.

Aside from the primary goals of this course, participants also reported that the Dance ESL classes were beneficial for their emotional and physical wellbeing. They reported that classes were enjoyable, helped them meet new friends, relieved stress, and made them happier. They reported that they liked participating in regular exercise and meeting new people. Participants also found that the nervousness they may have felt about dancing at the start of the course faded once in class. Most

participants remarked that they wished the class could continue. Segments of student remarks regarding wellbeing along with information about the number of positive and negative remarks for each component are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Student Comments on Wellbeing

	Positive Remarks	**Negative Remarks**
Enjoyment of class (3 positive|0 negative)	+ This class helped me, because somewhat I feel more happy in class. + Yesterday I felt not good, and after dancing… 'Wohoo! I can do it!'	
Social aspects of class (5 positive|0 negative)	+ In this class, I made a lot of friends. + We have great company.	
Stress relief in class (6 positive|1 negative)	+ In my opinion, [this class] can help me to more relax. + Every time we have class or so much homework, I think it's better [to go to Dance and English class].	- [If we had a syllabus, there would be] more efficiency to learn, like for each week the day we're going to do something or some activity, and some people… will feel the pressure [without a syllabus].
Exercise in class (1 positive|0 negative)	+ [And we] have the physical exercise, right? So for the week for two hours for exercise it's good.	
Confidence about dancing (10 positive|1 negative)	+ This is the part that I like because… I don't know to dance, and my companion said 'go, go' and I said 'no, no I don't know how to dance' and I have that conflict, but when I came I liked it because "oh wow," I tried to do my best and I try to learn. + I think our class was very respectful, so I think I'm not a very good dancer, but I feel very comfortable.	- I think this is the reason people don't come: they're scared of dance or they feel not comfortable.
Duration of course	+ I don't want to finish.	
(3 positive|0 negative)	+ I wanted… more than a month. You should consider that if someone does it again.	

Many agreed that although this course had benefits, some steps can be taken to improve it further. They would like to focus on more structured communication activities as well as pronunciation practice, as many participants struggle with speaking and pronunciation the most. They recommended further strengthening the link between dance and English by incorporating speaking activities in nearly all facets of the class. They believe that the power of interpersonal connections and friendships should be harnessed to encourage others to move past their fears and try something new. Segments of students' suggestions for improvement are found in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Student Suggestions for Course Improvement

	Suggestions for improvement
Structured practice	• So I don't know how can we practice a little more our speaking. • [I want to practice] vocabulary pronunciation.
More practice	• I think there's some we need to work on, like how to make the link stronger. Yeah so maybe, you can… put on a song and we need to say some word, or just [during] warm-up we can be saying the word or vocabulary or something. I just try to [encourage] the connection.
Involving more people	• My friends. Definitely it's friends [that help me feel comfortable dancing]… that's why I think next time there will be more people because we can speak about and tell friends to go for it.

Conclusion

Both quantitative and qualitative results agree that active participation in Dance ESL classes can lower overall anxiety, which in turn increases student confidence and motivation. However, these benefits may not be compounded as participation increases. Qualitative results additionally show that students may have learned vocabulary words and their uses more effectively by incorporating movement with academic material in accordance with synaptic trace theory of memory. Participants report that this course benefited their general wellbeing through exercising, relieving stress, increasing happiness, and forming friendships. These conclusions demonstrate that kinesthetic learning can have beneficial applications in the academic classroom that help both kinesthetic learners and others to learn and retain information.

Future Research

Further research with a larger sample of participants can be done to determine the statistical significance of findings, and inclusion of a control group will enable researchers to determine whether students' attendance did have a notable effect on their enjoyment, motivation, and confidence. Also, since vocabulary retention was not quantitatively measured despite the curriculum's design to teach vocabulary, future research can include pre- and post- course tests that measure this aspect. Additional research may be done to resolve new questions that arose over the course of this study. For example, with a larger sampling of students, does the percent increase in motivation and confidence between Groups A and B have a linear relationship? Why or why not? Also, the confidence change in this study was much more drastic (3.0-12.9% change) than the changes in motivation and enjoyment (1.6-7.1% and 0.5-4.5% change, respectfully): Does this hold true when compared to a control group? Why or why not? Additionally, many students commented on the social aspects of class that helped increase their enjoyment, motivation, and confidence. Further studies can examine the effect of socialness on learning and the relationship between physical and emotional wellbeing and participation in the Dance ESL course.

Implications

More studies should be done on a larger scale to determine the importance of kinesthetic learning in students' retention of material and emotional responses. However, this curriculum may continue to be offered at the language lab because of widespread student interest in it. Those who participated at least four times reported increases in enjoyment, motivation, and confidence, so continuing to offer the course may benefit students who choose to participate.

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Appendix
Condensed Dance ESL Curriculum

Course Outcomes:

1. Students will learn 20 vocabulary words from the TOEFL academic word list
2. Students will be acquainted with movement devices that can be used to help facilitate word recognition and memory
3. Students will be able to work collaboratively and creatively in groups
4. Students will be able to form complete sentences and choreographed phrases
5. Students will be able to recognize dance energy qualities, motion elements, and shape features

Target Vocabulary:

1. Crucial (adj)
2. Estimate (v/n)
3. Interpretation (n)
4. Maximize (v)
5. Minimize (v)
8. Wane (v)
9. Convert (v)
10. Erode (v)
11. Function (n)
12. Pursue (v)
15. Exclude (v)
16. Flexible (adj)
17. Monitor (v)
18. Reliable (adj)
19. Secure (adj)

6. Period (n)
7. Retain (v)
13. Transform (v)
14. Assist (v)
20. Vary (v)

Week One:

Vocabulary: Words 1-8

Energy qualities: collapse, percussive/explosive, sustained, suspend, swing, sway

Monday: Complete consent forms and questionnaires, play a get to know you game (The class forms a circle. Each person introduces him or herself along with a movement ("I'm ___ and I like to ___"). The class repeats, then starts from the beginning of the circle, adding on the new name and movement. Repeat until everyone has been introduced. Students then walk around the room the try to recall each person's name), and introduce new vocabulary.

Wednesday: Review vocabulary and do energy quality activity (The class forms a circle. Everyone practices energy qualities as we introduce them with pictures. Review all energy qualities quickly before giving directions. Groups of 3-4 are formed. Each group selects four vocabulary words and must choose four energy qualities to match them. Groups create a movement for each word based on energy qualities. Students should be prepared to articulate why energy qualities were chosen to match certain vocabulary terms. Groups show the class their choreography, classmates guess what words they had).

Week Two:

Vocabulary: Words 9-13

Motion types: axial (roll, hop, bending, pulling, pushing, bouncing, kicking, twisting, sinking, slashing, jabbing, stretching) and locomotor (skip, leap, jump, gallop, run, slide, walk)

Monday: Introduce motion elements, introduce new vocabulary, and do sentence activity (Students choose one vocabulary word and write their own example sentence. They turn it in on a separate piece of paper without a name. Announce that their sentences will be used to help with our next activity on Wednesday).

Wednesday: Review vocabulary and do motion activity (The class practices motion qualities in a circle. Groups of 3-4 are formed. Each group selects one sentence made by a classmate last period. Groups use motion elements to create movement for each sentence. Groups show the class their choreography, classmates guess what words they had. Read the full sentence out loud and perform the choreography again).

Week Three:

Vocabulary: Words 14-20

Shape features: positive-negative, straight, symmetrical, asymmetrical, curved, twisted, angular

Monday: Introduce shape features and introduce new vocabulary.

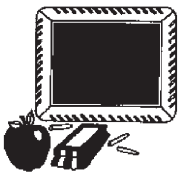
Wednesday: Review vocabulary, review shapes, and do shape activity (Groups of 3-4 are formed. Each group chooses four vocabulary words from the front. Groups create shapes for each vocabulary word. Each group shows the class the shapes they made for each word. If time allows, they explain why the word matches the shape they chose. Groups create 8-16 counts of transition in between shapes and perform for the class).

Week Four:

Vocabulary: Review all words 1-20

Monday: Review vocabulary by matching, do sentence creation activity (Groups of 3-4 are formed. Each group picks 4 vocabulary words from the front. Groups write example sentences for each word chosen. Sentences can be cohesive when read together or they can have distinct subject matters. Check for grammatical accuracy before students proceed), do sentence analysis activity (Groups read through their sentences and circle words that can have distinct energy qualities and underline words that can have distinct shapes), do movement creation activity (Groups form movement and shapes for each word they circled and underlined, respectively. Groups rehearse these movements and shapes while saying the words with which they correspond. They then fill in the unchoreographed space of each sentence with motion elements. They rehearse while repeating the passage, but are told that they can choose to perform it with words, without words, with music, or in silence).

Wednesday: Review and complete group choreography, perform choreography, and complete post-course questionnaires



Tips for Teachers

Turn-Taking Strategies to Motivate Reluctant Speakers

Samuel Newbould, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, Suzhou, People's Republic of China

Introduction

ESL and EFL teachers often struggle to help silent or reluctant students feel comfortable participating in whole-class activities, such as checking homework, relating personal anecdotes, or discussing current events. Teachers can feel frustrated when the same few students volunteer, while other students fear speaking in front of their peers or teacher. Special attempts to call on those students who do not usually raise their hands or to extend wait time for reticent students can backfire, leaving the teacher exhausted, confident students bored, and reluctant learners even more uncomfortable than usual. This teaching tip grew out of such moments and offers inclusive, engaging alternatives to the usual routines of asking for volunteers or calling on individual students directly.

First Things First

If students are to willingly engage with each other and voluntarily participate in full-class activities, they must first perceive the language class as a supportive, stress-free environment. This means they must have positive rapport with their teacher and with each other. Such a relationship cannot be created in a few minutes during a single lesson; it must be carefully cultivated from the beginning of a course. While it may sound like extra work for a busy teacher, building positive group dynamics can make all the difference in how students view classroom activities. One means of building such rapport is for teachers to model the attitudes, behaviors, or words we want them to employ. For example, we can show our students that we respond to our own mistakes—as teachers and as language learn-

ers—lightheartedly. We can also acknowledge our limitations. For example, when students ask questions that we have not heard or researched before, we can honestly say, "I don't know" and then make sure to follow up in the next lesson to show an example of self-directed learning. (For more on the subject of group dynamics in language learning, see Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003). Assuming that a positive classroom atmosphere has been created, the four types of strategies described below can create lively, novel, even fun variation in turn-taking routines.

Removing the Surprise Factor

Even when group dynamics are positive and students are not afraid, they can still feel caught off guard by spontaneous requests to speak in whole-class settings. Providing just a bit of thinking, preparation, or rehearsal time can make all the difference. Here are four strategies for giving students time to think before needing to speak.

1. *Solo thinking time.* Simply giving students time to compose their thoughts and mentally rehearse their words can increase participation. For example, we can tell students today what the discussion topic will be tomorrow. We can also post questions, prompts, or topics on the board before class begins so that students can think about them as class gets underway. Finally, we can extend the wait time between posing questions and calling on volunteers to answer them.
2. *Think-Pair-Share.* This is a common cooperative learning technique that begins with solo thinking time. The teacher asks a question or invites discussion and then gives students time to think about their response. Next, students turn to a neighbor and share their responses. This step provides gentle, but forced output, giving students important practice in putting ideas into target language words. It also boosts confidence and provides an opportunity for meaningful practice and communication. When the teacher invites volunteers to share their responses, more students feel prepared to do so.
3. *Pyramid Up.* This is similar to Think-Pair-Share except that students discuss their responses with progressively larger groups of peers. The teacher sets a task, and students find a classmate who has the same opinion or answer. They share their ideas and practice their words with each other. Then, they form a group of four with another student pair and share their responses, negotiating their words, and agreeing, disagreeing, and, most importantly, revising their words and ideas as they learn from each other.

Asking students to form groups provides a "safety in numbers" sense of security, so if called upon later, they know they have the backing of others and are less likely to suffer from stage fright.

4. *Numbered Heads Together.* This strategy begins with students in groups of three or four. They choose numbers for themselves, 1 to 3 (or 4). The teacher poses a question or prompt and gives a few minutes for students to discuss their ideas or consolidate their thinking as a group. Then, the teacher designates reporters by, for example, calling the Number 3 students to respond.

Role Reversals

Putting students in charge of turn-taking injects an element of novelty and gives students autonomy over one aspect of a lesson. They enjoy both benefits.

1. *You go next.* Once a question or prompt has been stated, the teacher chooses the first student to respond. The next time a student response is elicited, the Number 1 student chooses Number 2. Later in the lesson, when a new speaking opportunity arises, Number 2 chooses Number 3, and so on. This chain then continues throughout the lesson and may stretch over several days. Often students know each other better than teachers do, so they know who to call on for a thoughtful, surprising, humorous, or relevant personal anecdote for a particular question or prompt. Adaptations on this technique might include alternating gender or choosing someone who is wearing a particular color.
2. *Teaching Assistants.* This technique is a way to minimize the demotivating effect that highly fluent or attention-grabbing students can sometimes have on reticent students. When the eager students volunteer, instead of hearing their response, the teacher directs them to nominate a subgroup of the class to respond, for example, students who have part-time jobs, students who have siblings, or students who have relatives living abroad.

L1 Turn-Taking Routines

Sometimes, when students are overwhelmed by challenges or fear of the target language (L2), it can be beneficial to use familiar routines from their first language (L1) culture. All languages have routines, chants, or word play designed to determine who goes first in a game or who is on the "hot seat." Students' affective filters are lowered with these games because they are fun, familiar, local and because the turn-taking is assigned to luck rather than a teacher's decision. The sense of antic-

ipation inherent in such games also increases the engagement of students who are onlookers, not only those who are playing at any given moment.

1. *Rock Paper Scissors.* This is a quick, low tech, engaging activity familiar to learners around the world. It requires few, if any, words, and therefore, works well in multilingual environments as well as those where one language is dominant. The teacher selects two students to begin play. The loser (or winner, depending on the local rules) answers the question, provides an example, or states an opinion on the teacher's question.
2. *Choosing Chants.* This is a classroom application of the children's chant Eeny, meeny, miny, mo that English teachers are likely to be familiar with. There are regional and dialectical variations of such chants, but no matter where one is, there are likely to be locally-appropriate equivalents.

Utilizing Technology

Mobile apps and websites that are digital versions of "pulling a name out of the hat" can quickly and randomly select students to respond to questions or complete tasks. The use of technology adds an element of interest to nearly any class, and the obvious randomness of computer selection reassures students who fear they might be picked on by a teacher. Here are three easy-to-use web tools for randomly selecting students. Teachers can easily find them with an internet search, using their favorite browser.

1. *ClassDojo.* This is a popular teacher and student app that has a random student selector with an engaging visual of the app circling through the student names until one is chosen. Students and teachers must download and sign up for the app although it is free for both. It offers additional teaching and learning features, such as awarding virtual points, setting quizzes, creating an interactive class forum, and recording learning logs. ClassDojo is best suited for those who are comfortable with a greater degree of technology in the classroom and for environments in which everyone has mobile phones.
2. *The Random Student Generator.* This website requires no sign up, no download, and only one person to operate it. The teacher enters students' names in a column and then presses Select. It retains the sense of suspense as when students are being selected in class but with an added visual of the names circling before one is selected. The website can also sort students into groups if desired.

3. *Random Name Picker.* This site does not have animation, but it rather instantly chooses a student's name from a list.

Most sites such as these can also be used for other classroom purposes besides just taking turns. For example, teachers could enter vocabulary items, quiz questions, or discussion topics, and the random generator can choose the phrase, question, or topic for students to work on.

Caveat and Conclusion

All of the techniques described above are engaging ways to vary turn-taking routines in language classes. However, they are not all equally effective in all circumstances. For example, some are suitable for rapid-fire Q&A or homework checks while others are more appropriate for communicative, discussion-oriented lessons. Either way, students often perceive them as more engaging and fair than relying on eager volunteers or calling on reluctant speakers.

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About the Author

Sam Newbould has been working with English language learners preparing for higher education in the UK and China for 5 years. In addition to classroom teaching, he is also vice-president of the International Association of Foreign English Teachers in China.

Teaching Academic Essay Structure: As Easy as 1-2-3

Austin Pack, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, Suzhou, People's Republic of China

Introduction

Learning how to write a well-organized academic essay is a foundational skill that EAP students need to acquire. However, this can be challenging if essay structure differs from the styles of writing students are accustomed to in their own culture and language or if they simply do not have much prior experience with writing for an academic audience. This tip describes a fun, student-centered, collaborative, and constructivist activity in which students discover the basic structure of an academic essay with minimal teacher input. The three phases—building, analyzing, and color coding a paper—make academic essay structure easy to teach and to learn, as easy as 1-2-3.

Preparation

Students should have at least a low-intermediate proficiency level, be familiar with expository paragraph structure, and have prior experience working in groups. The activity will take about 60-90 minutes and is designed for groups of three or four.

Preparing the Model Text

1. Choose, adapt, or create a suitable example essay. A four-paragraph essay with very clear structure—introduction, two body paragraphs, and conclusion—is recommended. The introduction should have background information on the topic and a thesis statement that outlines the structure of the essay. Body paragraphs should have topic sentences, supporting ideas, details or examples, and concluding sentences. The concluding paragraph should restate the thesis statement as well as leave the reader with an interesting final impression. The essay should be at the students' independent reading level so that readability does not interfere with text analysis.
2. Reprint the essay breaking it into these components (see Appendix).
    - Introduction: background info and thesis statement

- Body paragraphs: a topic sentence, supporting idea 1 with details or example, supporting idea 2 with details or example, and a concluding sentence
- Conclusion: a restatement of thesis statement and information that leaves the reader with an interesting final impression.

Use a font size that 3-4 students can examine together. It is important not to photocopy and cut a printed essay into pieces because students will be able to put it together without reading it carefully.

3. Print enough copies for groups of three or four.
4. Cut each copy of the essay into strips, mix up the strips, and put them into an envelope. Ensure that each group will have all the pieces needed to reconstruct the essay.

Procedure

Assemble the Materials

Each student will need a copy of the intact model essay, and each group will need

- An envelope with the model essay cut into its component parts
- A sheet of A1 size paper
- Glue or a glue stick.
- Highlighters (or pens) in six different colors. Each group should have the same colors.

Phase 1: Building the Essay

1. Divide students into groups of three or four and explain that they will discover the structure of an academic English essay by putting together a puzzle.
2. Give each group an envelope containing the cut-up essay.
3. Explain that they should reassemble the essay on their table. When they think they are finished, they should notify you to come check their work.
4. If a group finishes with the correct arrangement, give them a sheet of paper and glue and tell them to rebuild the essay on paper, leaving space between each paragraph. If desired, they can then help other groups.
5. If a group finishes with an error, point out the piece that is out of order, but avoid telling them how to repair it. Typically, groups can correct their errors themselves.

6. If desired, insert an element of competition by saying that the first group to finish correctly will have their work used as the answer key for the others.

Phase 2: Analyzing Essay Structure

Once the essay has been reconstructed, ask the questions in the table below. Typical student discoveries and responses are on the right.

	Questions	Typically, students are able to see that…
1	Were you able to discover the essay structure? If so, how did you do it?	Transition words and phrases in the topic sentences and throughout the essay make it possible to build the essay.
2	Which part of the essay shows what the entire essay is about?	The thesis statement is key. It identifies the topic and previews the structure of the essay.
3	How do the body paragraphs connect to the thesis statement?	They give more information to support the thesis with facts, examples, and stories.
4	How are the introduction and conclusion similar and different?	• The introduction has background information. • The thesis idea is mentioned in both, but usually in different words. • The conclusion includes a short summary of the essay and leaves the reader something to think about.

Phase 3: Color Coding the Essay

Give a set of highlighters to each group and a copy of the intact essay to each student.

1. Facilitate a classroom discussion to review the essay components, emphasizing the terms used to describe them (thesis statement, topic sentences, body paragraph, etc.), and their respective purposes.
2. Ask students to highlight each part of the essay. If you have a computer and projector available, you can work alongside the students using the highlighter tool in Microsoft Word. Alternatively, you can invite one group to tape their paper to the board and do their highlighting where everyone can see. Instructions can be given orally or in writing.

Introduction

- Highlight the background information in purple.
- Highlight the thesis statement in yellow.

- Body Paragraphs
- Highlight topic sentences in blue.
- Highlight supporting ideas in green.
- Highlight details and examples in red.
- Highlight concluding sentences in brown.

Conclusion

- Highlight a restatement of the thesis in yellow.
- Highlight information that leaves the reader with an interesting final impression in brown.

Extensions and Benefits

Once students have completed the "Easy as 1-2-3" routine, there are numerous ways to extend it in future lessons.

- Give students another model essay to highlight as homework. Ask them to use the same coding pattern as practiced in class. During the next class, students can compare their work and discuss any differences. For example, it may be possible to arrange body paragraphs in more than one way.
- Ask students to write their own essay, color-coding it (with the same color scheme) as a check on its organization. Remind them that no sentence should be left uncolored. Examining their own writing in this way pushes students to reflect on the purpose of each sentence, including its function and position in the paper.
- Give students (or groups) a cut-up essay that is not well structured, ask them to build, analyze, and color it so see if they can identify and repair the weaknesses in the organization.
- Use the same process to examine the structure of other text types encountered in academic reading or writing lessons.

The reflective practice of examining each sentence in an essay to see how to color code it has benefits for both students and instructors. First, in order to complete the three steps, they must understand, in an active way, the key components of an essay and how they are interrelated. Second, following this lesson, students are often able to notice and correct organizational weaknesses in their own essays, for example, a missing topic sentence. Third, by examining each sentence of their essay as they attempt to color-code it, students can often find sentences that are off-topic or unnecessary. If they find that a sentence does not fit their color scheme,

they know that it either needs to be deleted or rewritten so that its meaning and purpose are clearer. Last, but certainly not least, this process helps students begin to notice organizational structure in academic texts that they are reading.

Asking students to color code their papers is also beneficial to the instructor. First, the color helps the teacher comprehend the student's organization, thereby making the essay easier to read and quicker to respond to. As any teacher of writing knows, after an extended period of marking, black text on white paper starts to become blurry. Color-coded essays may reduce the physical and mental fatigue experienced by teachers as they mark multiple essays in one sitting. If teachers provide feedback on a colored draft and then require students to revise it based on feedback given, it is easy for teachers to see how students have, or have not, modified their papers.

Conclusion

By working together to construct, examine, and annotate an essay, students notice details about the parts and their interconnectedness in a way that listening to a lecture or reading a textbook does not always ensure. Of course, not all papers that students read or write in their academic courses will be as tightly organized as the models presented in EAP courses. However, this strategy will help students both unpack their academic reading assignments and compose well-organized papers in their higher education courses.

About the Author

Austin Pack, a Ph.D. student of the University of Liverpool, has taught English, Greek, and linguistics courses in China and America. Austin currently manages the Virtual Reality Language Learning Lab at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University. His research interests include the psychology of the language learner, complex dynamic systems, computer assisted language learning, and language pedagogy.

Appendix

Sample Essay Strips and Color Coding

This is an extract of a text used by the author as a model essay. It consists of the introduction, first body paragraph, and the topic sentence of a second body paragraph. The essay describes factors that influence personal identity. It shows how the essay has been formatted for cutting apart as well as how it would be color coded after students have reconstructed it.

Developing an understanding of oneself is an essential part of every individual becoming a mature person. Each person's identity is a unique combination of many aspects, which can be as broad as woman or man, and American or Japanese. However, this can also be as narrow as being a member of one particular family or of a specific political party. (PURPLE)

Three important factors that often help shape a person's identity are nationality, education and family. (ORANGE)

First of all, one of the most significant factors influencing the formation of a person's identity is their nationality and country's culture. (BLUE)

Depending on where a person is born, an individual can have a very different upbringing, which may lead to different values and beliefs. (GREEN)

For instance, two cultures may have significant differences in issues involving social interaction. Americans, as an example, tend to emphasize individualism and informality when interacting with other people. The Japanese, on the other hand, often focus more on the importance of the group, such as the community or society, and interactions between people can be more formal and polite than in American culture. As a consequence of the cultural differences, individuals from these countries may develop very distinct self-identities. (RED)

Although it is hard to define "American-ness" or what it means to be Japanese, it cannot be denied that a person's identity will be influenced by the culture in which they grow up. (BROWN)

Another factor which has a significant impact on a person's individual identity is education. (BLUE)

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The English Language: A Very Short Introduction

Review by Yu Zhonggen, Hohai University, Nanjing, China

The English Language: A Very Short Introduction. Simon Horobin. 2018. 176 pp. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. 176 pp. ISBN: 9780198709251.

Short "introductions" can alter the way readers think about the subjects or issues that attract them, and can effectively introduce fresh ideas readers have previously not known. Highly condensed information on the varieties of English, a concise and accessible history of English, key debates concerning issues of correctness, standards, and dialects, uses of English worldwide, and the future of the English language are discussed by Simon Horobin, a distinguished Professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of Magdalen College.

Nowadays, the most popular language is definitely English and is used to one extent or another by billions of people in every corner of the globe. This book comprises seven chapters, each addressing an impressive dimension of the English language.

Chapter 1 introduces readers to the great variety of English, such as old English, Early Modern English, Scots, Tok Pisin, and Modern English, raising and answering different questions about the status of the English language, its linguistic forebears, and progeny. Exploring further the origins of English, Chapter 2 briefly introduces the history of the English language, and includes information on changes in structure, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling.

Chapter 3 deals mainly with language ecology and the role of "authorities" in the imposition and use of English. Horobin reviews the historic replacement of indigenous languages with English in colonial contexts and discusses the profound damage this brought to the cultural, literary, aesthetic and sociolinguistic dynamics of the indigenous languages.

Chapter 4 looks into the origin, development and status of Standard English, which is a fixed variety, intolerant of variation, and popularly used by a great number of English speakers living in diverse and separated regions. Before the eighteenth century, dialectal Englishes, whether in spoken or written forms, were

recognized as the norm. Their spellings, pronunciations, and grammatical rules included a large number of variants since dialects were of many kinds due to separated regions and various classes of speakers. "Authorities" have attempted since the eighteenth century to prescribe the acceptability of pronunciations, linguistic forms, spellings, collocations, and other aspects through compiling authoritative dictionaries, handbooks, grammar books and so forth. These efforts to establish a standard English, or a "Queen's English", are in constant tension with "local" varieties or dialects of English in various provinces, states and communities in English-speaking areas of the world.

The major concern of Chapter 5 is the variety of dialects in language-mediated communication. A dialect varies in forms and meanings on the basis of regions, communities, societies, and usage. An example of dialectal English is Scots, commonly spoken in Scotland. Scots is significantly different from both general Standard English and Scottish Standard English. They differ much in pronunciation, morphology, phonology, syntax, and discourse, although they share much in common. These local varieties of English take shape and evolve under constant and sometimes irresistible forces such as colonization, migration and globalization.

Chapter 6 is concerned with the spread and development of Global Englishes. The colonization of North America gave rise to a rocketing number of new English speakers. More recently, English has been adopted in post-colonial and independent countries in Africa and South Asia. Together with newly-formed varieties, pidgins, and creoles, the spread of English is unprecedented. Kachru's (1995) attempt to summarize the spread with his three concentric circles model is discussed and critiqued.

Chapter 7 aims to answer the question "Why do we care?" and puts forward suggestions about language change. With the development of mobile and mixed societies, it may be clumsy to establish immutable English grammar, spelling, pronunciation and related linguistic features. The majority of people accept that English is changing unavoidably. English in the twenty-second century may be different from its current form. English speakers in the next century may look on today's English as an ancient language and feel it hard to understand. As a small example, the English future temporal reference system is under slight revision, where "be going to" has been gradually increasing in frequency compared with "will" over the past 500 years (Denis and Tagliamonte, 2017). English is also borrowing words from other languages. With globalization of our economy and inte-

gration of cultures, increasing international communication cannot be avoided and the communicative medium—language--has to develop in order to serve this trend. English, the most commonly used language in the world, will no doubt undergo great changes in the years ahead.

In sum, Professor Horobin provides an interesting and lively introduction to the usage, history, and future of the English language. This book, both concise and scientific, contains rich information which is beneficial for language lovers, learners, teachers and researchers. Perusing this book, readers will be able to distill the fascination of Englishes, rather than the stiffness of English.

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About the Reviewer

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The Plurilingual TESOL Teacher: The Hidden Languaged Lives of TESOL Teachers and Why They Matter

Review by Zhenjie Weng, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, USA

As a plurilingual and transnational TESOL teacher who is from China but currently studying and teaching in the United States, I found myself often telling my international students from China, Japan, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere that "I started learning English just like you. I made progress, sometimes I failed, I continued working hard, … and now I am here teaching you English. If I could do it, you can do it too." Sharing these personal second language learning and using experiences with my students, I encouraged and built a rapport with them. Also, through constant reflection on my second/additional language learning and using experiences, I was empathetic to my students and critical to my own language teaching and positioning as a TESOL teacher. In spite of all these potential benefits from learning an additional language, being a plurilingual teacher is not well recognized or desirable in language teacher education under the monolingual ideology in the field. This made me emotional but also passionate and exhilarated while reading *The Plurilingual TESOL Teacher: The Hidden Languaged Lives of TESOL Teachers and Why They Matter* (De Gruyter Mouton, 2016) written by Elizabeth Ellis, a professor at the University of New England.

This book is more than just a reporting of three studies on the relevance between language background of English language teachers and their teaching of English. It is also a book about social justice and equity, particularly for the large population of "non-native" English teachers around the world who are by definition plurilingual but whose plurilingualism and cross-cultural skills are often devalued in the marketplace and in professional development. Ellis first criticizes the currently "messy and vague" (p. 10) binary of native and non-native speakers in the TESOL field which emphasizes English language proficiency as the predominant qualification to be TESOL teachers. She claims that professionals should move away from this dichotomy as it reinforces the monolingual monolith in the field and "calls for recognition of [plurilingual teachers'] particular knowledge, experience and skills" (p. 265).

Ellis then argues that "[l]anguage learning experience and the experience of L2 use are valuable assets for all TESOL teachers" (p. 52). Reasons, supported by her research findings, include that most TESOL teachers have rich, varied, and diverse experiences of language learning and language use and these experiences can potentially turn into the knowledge base of TESOL teachers through systematic reflection (p. 270). It is found that plurilingual teachers, when compared with monolingual teachers, have more substantial knowledge about language, language awareness, language learning awareness and understand the challenges learners may face, all of which are powerful contributors to teachers' professional identities. More essentially, she warns that it is not just linguistic resources that are wasted if teachers' additional language experiences are ignored or inadmissible in their teaching, but also "the professional knowledge about language learning and language teaching which results from the existence of the linguistic resources" (p. 270).

Conveying these significant but complex messages to readers can be challenging without convincing evidence and well-structured logic. However, Ellis guides her readers through the book with this concern in mind. The book is comprised of eleven chapters. In the first three chapters, Ellis describes current TESOL practice in dominant English speaking countries. Particularly, in Chapter 2, Ellis demonstrates the neglect of teachers' language background in the TESOL profession in Australia, Canada, USA, UK and New Zealand. It is striking to know that only the teacher professional standards in New Zealand explicitly include additional language learning and language using experience of a teacher as a desirable qualification. With this monolingual dominance in the field, Ellis, in Chapter 3, leads her readers to the three research studies that she has designed to answer the two research questions: a) "Does the language learning experience of teachers of TESOL to adults contribute to their professional knowledge and beliefs?" b) "If so, what kinds of language learning experience make a contribution and in what ways?" (p. 42).

Starting from Chapter 4 to Chapter 9, Ellis alternates chapters on theoretical frameworks and data presentation. For example, in Chapter 8, Ellis discusses the fundamental body of literature on language teacher cognition, asserting that teachers' knowledge, belief, and insights of language learning and teaching could be profoundly influenced by "experiential knowledge" which teachers receive through "apprenticeship of observation" as students (p. 197). This is followed by Chapter 9 in which Ellis has drawn upon research data to illustrate the teacher participants'

insights about language learning and teaching from their own learning experience. One of the findings is that "[plurilingual teachers] *apply* insights gained from their experience as learners, by implementing methods which they had found effective, and avoiding approaches they had personally disliked or which poor teachers had used" (p. 250).

Ellis ends her research study findings in Chapter 10 in which she presents data from a quantitative survey to demonstrate the linguistic profiles of TESOL teachers in Australia and their insights on the impact of additional language learning and using experience on their knowledge about language and effectiveness of teaching, which is used to further affirm the conclusions made in previous chapters. At the close of the book, in Chapter 11, Ellis summarizes previous chapters and offers implications for teacher education. She suggests that teacher education should acknowledge linguistic resources of both teachers and students and include second language learning in TESOL teacher training. Although the suggested audience of the book is TESOL teacher trainers or educators, I think this book is suitable for a variety of readers, including TESOL graduate students, TESOL researchers, and TESOL practitioners, who will learn much from this insightful book.

About the Reviewer

Zhenjie Weng is a doctoral student at the Ohio State University in the Department of Teaching and Learning. Her research interests include second language writing, teacher identity, language teacher education, and World English(es).

Notes to Contributors

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