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Technology Mediated Education: Possible Challenges and New Horizons

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Technology Mediated Education:
Possible Challenges and New Horizons

Table of Contents

Małgorzata Krzemińska-Adamek, Maria Curie-Sklodowska University, Poland
Izabela Jarosz, Maria Curie-Sklodowska University, Poland
Anna Kiszczak, Maria Curie-Sklodowska University, Poland

From the Editors

The COVID-19 outbreak has brought several problems and challenges in the educational sector throughout the world. Notwithstanding several obstacles caused by the pandemic, advanced technology has allowed continuing the process of education, yet in a substantially altered version. To be precise, the communication between the teacher and students has been reduced to using online tools and applications without traditional face-to-face contact. The current volume presents the influence of technology-mediated communication on teaching and learning during the pandemic as well as the ways to improve these processes. It is aimed to outline both positive and negative aspects of online communication in teaching and learning, particularly highlighting teachers' and students' reflections, the application of specific teaching techniques, language assessment, teaching language skills and subsystems, and the relevance of non-verbal aspects of communication.

The first two articles discuss emotions experienced during the pandemic by EFL teachers (Katarzyna Papaja) and ways of dealing with the difficulties of lockdown using the storytelling technique (Anna Pełczyńska). The following two articles tackle the issues related to language assessment: the use of an online platform for reduced redundancy testing (Wojciech Malec) and challenges in online assessment leading to revisiting language assessment courses in teacher training programmes (Ferit Kılıçkaya). The remaining texts in the volume concentrate on technology in developing speaking skills in the context of English for Specific Purposes courses (Agnieszka Dzięcioł-Pędich and Agnieszka Dudzik), applica-

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tions of a pronunciation database in various contexts including home schooling (Robert Skoczek and Alexandra Ebel), and focusing on aspects of Intercultural Communicative Competence while working online with young language learners (Izabela Jarosz, Anna Kiszczak and Małgorzata Krzemińska-Adamek).

The editors believe that the current volume will inspire both scholars and practitioners to reflect on the complexity of technology-mediated communication in the times of the pandemic.

Katarzyna Papaja, University of Silesia, Poland

Negative Emotions Experienced by Polish English Teachers During COVID-19. A Qualitative Study Based on Diaries

ABSTRACT

The aim of the article is to discuss the research results of the study conducted on English teachers' negative emotions experienced during COVID-19. In order to collect the data, 30 English teachers from secondary schools were asked to keep a diary for one semester and describe situations that aroused feelings of anxiety, anger, and loneliness. The study was of a qualitative nature, and it showed that most of the emotions that the English teachers experienced were associated with the lack of support from the government and their colleagues, and also with the uncertainty about the future.

Keywords: online education, negative emotions, English teacher, COVID-19

1. Introduction

Emotions have been proved to be very important in the process of reflection as people who experience events learn better when there is emotional involvement (Arnold, 2019; Swan & Bailey, 2004). Nevertheless, "reflection is a complex cognitive and affective process which takes time and practice to develop and integrate into one's mind, heart and life" (Stanley 1999, p. 111). Taylor (2001, p. 219) and Weiss (2000, p. 45) claim that higher-level learning is the result of linking feelings with reason and that the process of reflection involves both rationality and intuition. In other words, emotions can be a catalyst for the process of reflection, as they stimulate further action. The spread of COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020 led to the closure of schools and universities worldwide and forced the transition to compulsory online learning. This process, which turned out to be very challenging for teachers and students, evoked many different emotions.

The article aims at discussing the research results of the study conducted on English teachers' negative emotions experienced during COVID-19. Thirty English teachers from secondary schools were asked to keep a diary for one semester and describe situations that aroused feelings of anxiety, anger, and loneliness. The

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collected data showed that most of the emotions that the English teachers experienced were associated with the lack of support from the government and their colleagues, and also with the uncertainty about the future.

2. Teacher's emotions

Emotions can be classified into positive emotions such as joy, satisfaction, pride, or love and negative ones such as anger, exhaustion, hopelessness, anxiety, shame, or boredom (Chen, Kaczmarek, & Ohyama, 2020; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003; Watson & Clark, 1988). Emotions have been considered an essential part of teachers' professional lives, given that, teachers experience all of them depending on a variety of classroom and school situations.

Research into teachers' emotions has shown that they might be linked to students, their learning, teachers themselves, teaching, as well as educational policies, parents' expectations and relationships with other colleagues from school (Becker, Goetz, Morger, & Ranellucci, 2014; Scott & Sutton, 2019; Traxler & Frenzel, 2015). Becker et al. (2014, p. 21) claim that teachers' positive emotions have a significant impact on students' engagement, motivation and enjoyment. Furthermore, Zembylas, Charalambous, C., & Charalambous, P. (2014) prove that positive emotions "produce a better learning environment, which supports student learning and development" (p. 74). The teachers' negative emotions, on the other hand, are considered to have a negative influence on students' deeper level of cognitive learning approaches (van Uden, Ritzen, & Pieters, 2014, p. 30) and are often referred to as "critical emotional filters" (Hargreaves, 2001, p. 1056; Yoo & Carter, 2017, p. 40; Zembylas et al., 2014, p. 75). In the case of the impact of emotions on the teachers themselves, it was found that positive emotions cause more in-depth pedagogical thoughts, influence self-efficacy, vulnerability, and teacher well-being (Brigido, Borrachero, Bermejo, & Mellado, 2013, p. 214; Mercer & Gregersen, 2020, pp. 138–142; Neville, 2013, p. 20). In contrast, negative emotions discourage teachers' motivation and might lead to anxiety, burnout syndrome, and even depression (MacIntyre, Gregersen & Mercer, 2020, p. 2; Yin, Huang, & Wang, 2017, p. 921). Finally, several empirical studies show that positive emotions have a great impact on the relationship with colleagues and parents. Those teachers who experience positive emotions are more likely to adopt flexible and creative approaches and are more open-minded and friendly (Chen, 2016, p. 72; MacIntyre et al., 2019, p. 32; Sauders, 2013, p. 329). On the other hand, those who experience negative emotions tend to quarrel more with their colleagues and might display a negative attitude to parents (Becker et al., 2014, p. 22; Kitching, 2009, p. 150; Yao et al., 2015, p. 12510).

The findings by many researchers provide an insight into the importance of emotions teachers experience and contribute to the discussion concerning teacher well-being especially in times of a pandemic when teaching has become a greater challenge.

3. Online education during COVID-19

There is no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the process of education at all levels. Suddenly, the teachers had to create a completely new learning environment meeting the students' expectations, which was a great challenge bearing in mind that most educational institutions had not been prepared for it (Flores & Gago, 2020). "The ongoing COVID-19 crisis has been and will continue to be, both a massive challenge and a learning experience for the global education community. Practically no one saw (or wanted to believe) something like this coming" (Tuominen & Leponiemi, 2020, p. 7). This unexpected change led to many opportunities but also constraints. On the one hand, lockdown measures have forced educational institutions to exploit the possibilities of technology (Kaur, 2020, p. 416; Miller, MacLaren, & Xu, 2020 p. 3; Rapanta, Botturi, Goodyear, Guàrdia, & Koole, 2020, p. 4). On the other, this situation has also served to identify problems, weaknesses, and space for reflection, especially regarding digital literacy and innovation in education, assessment, and evaluation processes (Kaur, 2020, p. 416; Manzoor, 2020, p. 2).

It is widely known that online education has enormous potential for increasing access to broader knowledge and education across the world (Traxler, 2018). Furthermore, new technologies provide the students and the teachers with opportunities to learn and teach anywhere and anytime (Brown, 2017). What is more, online education allows them to set their own learning/teaching schedule and become more independent individuals (Dumford & Miller, 2018, p. 453). On the other hand, one of the most often mentioned drawbacks in the literature is the lack of social interaction, which leads to the feeling of isolation both on the part of the teachers and the learners (Brown, 2017; Costley & Lange, 2017; Hutt, 2017; Kruse, 2001). Moreover, the lack of physical interaction in the educational process might lead to many problems connected with communication, academic performance, or even mental and physical health (Kelly, Zakrajsek, & Pacansky-Brock, 2021, p. 14).

Confusion and stress for teachers have been identified by UNESCO (2020) as one of the consequences of school closures. Many teachers were left alone and had to cope with the new situation on their own (McCarthy, 2020). Furthermore, the uncertainty about how long this situation might last and the unpleasant emotions experienced during this period led to the prolonged feeling of stress (MacIntyre et al., 2020, p. 3). There are not many studies conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic among teachers, focusing on the emotions they experience. However, the recent data indicates that the topic is significant and needs a thorough investigation. Al Lily, Ismail, Abunasser, and Alhajhoj (2020, p. 12) reveal that the present pandemic situation caused teachers to suffer problems that are often related to a pandemic situation, such as anxiety, depression, domestic violence, and divorce, all of which restrict their ability to teach properly. Other

data obtained from a study conducted in Spain shows that teachers experienced psychosomatic problems and exhaustion due to the workload connected with on-line teaching (Prado-Gascó, Gómez-Domínguez, Soto-Rubio, Díaz-Rodríguez, & Navarro-Mateu, 2020). Moreover, it was indicated in the previous studies that working from home using modern technologies might create feelings of tension, anxiety, exhaustion, and decreased job satisfaction (Cuervo-Cazurra, Ciravegna, Melgarejo, & Lopez, 2018; Krish, 2008; Nagrale, 2013). At this point, it is also worth mentioning that teaching, in general, is placed as one of the most stressful professions as it is prone to heavy workloads, unbalanced work-life integration, limited autonomy, time constraints, enormous administrative obligations, difficult relationships with colleagues and school leaders, role conflict/ambiguity, emotional labour, dread over losing control of the class, fear of evaluation, and low professional self-esteem, (Mercer & Gregersen, 2020, p. 138). Bearing in mind all these stressful factors mentioned above and the COVID-19 pandemic situation, it is no wonder that the unpleasant work-related emotions associated with online education are becoming the topic of discussion among education professionals, policymakers, and researchers (Kim & Asbury, 2020, p. 1063).

4. The current research

One of the main objectives of the current study was to investigate English teachers' negative emotions experienced during COVID-19. It should be clearly stated from the very outset, however, that the research to be reported in the following stages is of a descriptive-exploratory nature, and its goal is "to analyse the data as they are rather than to compare them to other data to see how similar they are" (van Lier, 1988, p. 2). Based on the literature review, I assumed that there is a need to investigate the negative emotions such as anxiety, anger, and loneliness since these emotions are the ones that teachers are often afraid to talk about. Therefore, the research questions were the following:

1) What are the factors that caused **anxiety** during online teaching in the COVID-19 pandemic?

2) What are the factors that caused **anger** during online teaching in the COVID-19 pandemic?

3) What are the factors that caused **loneliness** during online teaching in the COVID-19 pandemic?

4.1. Research participants

A total of 30 English teachers participated in the study; 28 females and 2 males. The basic demographic data concerning teaching experience and the type of school is presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Participants' basic data

		Frequency	Percentage
Teaching experience	0-1 year	1	3,3
	2-4 years	7	23,3
	5-10 years	12	40,0
	11-20 years	5	16,6
	more than 20 years	5	16,6
Type of school	Primary School	15	50,0
	High School	15	50,0

According to the data presented in Table 1, most teachers (n=12) have between 5 and 10 years of teaching experience, which gives 40%. Seven teachers (23.3%) have between 2 and 4 years of teaching experience, while 5 of them (16.6%), have between 11 and 20 years of teaching experience. The same number, namely five teachers (16.6%) have more than 20 years of teaching experience, and only one teacher (3.3%) has less than a year of teaching experience.

4.2. Research data collection instrument

The qualitative data was collected through diaries that the English teachers were asked to keep. They were instructed to divide the diaries into four sections corresponding to the negative emotions namely, anxiety, anger, and loneliness. The teachers were asked to describe the factors during online teaching, which evoked the negative emotions mentioned above. It is worth mentioning that after having delivered the completed diaries, the participants of the study expressed their gratitude, stating that this experience helped them with understanding and dealing with their negative emotions.

4.3. Research implementation

The research took place between September 2020 and January 2021. All the participants of the study were informed that it was anonymous and that the data collected through the diaries would be used for research purposes only. Furthermore, each teacher signed an agreement and provided the information concerning teaching experience, and the type of school in which he/she was working. Even though the participants of the study were given a choice as far as language was concerned, all the answers were provided in Polish which might be connected with the fact that it is easier to express one's emotions in L1 (Foolen, 2016; Pavlenko, 2008). Only two diaries were written in an electronic version; the others were written by hand and took the form of a notebook. Except for the two diaries delivered via e-mail, the others were sent by traditional post.

5. Research results
Due to the huge amount of data collected, the most common tendencies concerning the negative emotions identified in the responses will be provided in the following part of the article.

The feeling of anxiety
"I feel more and more anxious and stressed, which is due to **the number of classes that I have online. I have to sit in front of the computer all day. Apart from preparing the lessons I have to fill in lots of paperwork… I'm exhausted. For the last few days, I couldn't rest properly – just work and work"[1].**

   "Today, I had a very bad day. I really feel anxious about my future. My contract finishes this year, and I don't know if it's going to be prolonged. I have been trying to talk to the headmaster, but she says that she doesn't know anything as the situation during the pandemic is so unstable".

   "I don't know if I am doing my job properly. I haven't received any **proper teaching training** concerning teaching online. I'm afraid that I won't manage if it's going to last the whole semester".

   "I gave my students the test and the results are terrible. I think that this online teaching doesn't make any sense… I can't see their faces, they don't respond to my questions, and the tests' results are not very good. I'm really worried about their **progress**. I think that some of them might not pass their matura exam".

   "I don't know how to motivate my learners. I have a feeling that they are **demotivated** by online learning. I don't know what to do… Today when I was trying to have a nice conversation class, nearly none of them responded to my questions. I thought that I had prepared a really nice online lesson, but I'm afraid that I failed… I couldn't motivate them to be active".

   "I'm afraid of **failure** as a teacher. I have been teaching for only 2 years, and this online teaching is something that I cannot deal with. I have a feeling that I fail every day. I can see that my students do not follow the lessons… sometimes, I even have a feeling that they are not there… maybe sleeping or doing something else. I think that I'm becoming more and more frustrated".

   "I'm afraid that I am really discouraged by online teaching. I'm permanently tired. I feel stressed that I can't meet my **students' expectations**. When we had

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[1] All emphasis added.

face-to-face classes, I was more motivated and enthusiastic; now it's gone. I think that I'm experiencing teacher's burnout syndrome".

"I'm afraid that **I'm not good enough at online teaching**. Before we were asked to teach online, I hardly ever used any computer or online materials. For me, the most important was the coursebook. Now I feel so frustrated… I'm sure that my students know much more, and they often laugh at me".

"As I teach in a primary school, I often have problems with **discipline**. I'm afraid that it is due to online education. I have a feeling that the learners respect me a little bit less. It always takes me a lot of time to encourage them to listen to what I'm going to say. I'm afraid that I can't cope with the discipline online, and I don't have the proper tools. What can I do? I'm here and they are there".

"I'm afraid that my **attitude** to teaching, other teachers, and learners has changed due to online education. I'm stressed all the time and cannot cope with this type of education. I'm also nervous, and sometimes I shout at my students. I know that my behaviour is not proper, but I can't control it".

When analysing the answers provided by the English teachers, there are a few factors which make them feel anxious, namely: the amount of work which online education requires, uncertainty about the future and fear about being fired, lack of proper teacher training concerning online teaching, students' lack of progress, students' lack of motivation, students' expectations which are not fulfilled, problems with discipline and a negative attitude to teaching, other teachers and learners, which might lead to teachers' burnout.

The feeling of anger

"I feel angry because I can't **organize my time**. Sometimes, I can't force myself to prepare for the classes, as there are so many things to do at home. What is more, I have 2 kids who also learn at home, and I often need to help them. I feel angry and frustrated because I'm constantly disrupted, and I can't concentrate on my work".

"My students made me so angry today. Last week I gave them some **homework,** and none of them did it. They were supposed to prepare a project about their free time activities and they didn't do it. When I was asking them why most of them didn't answer my questions, they stated that their microphones didn't work".

"One **parent** made me really angry yesterday. Her child never does the homework, and whenever I ask him questions, he pretends that his microphone doesn't work. I called his mother yesterday and told her about the situation. She told me

that it was my fault because I couldn`t teach online properly. It was unbelievable. I wanted to say something and she just put down the phone".

"The current **government** makes me really angry. We haven't been offered any help. The lessons last 30 minutes, and we still have to follow the curriculum and cover all the topics. I really don't know how to do it".

"I am really angry because one of my students showed **disrespect**. I asked him to do the exercise, and he didn't do it. I was trying to find out why and he responded that while he was learning online, I couldn't do anything, and it was up to him whether he wanted to learn or not. The other students started laughing, and I totally lost control over the lesson. This situation really made me angry, and I had to get some fresh air".

"I often get angry during online classes because many students **do not follow my instructions**. I tell them what to do, which copy to look at, but they check something online, do not listen to me and then suddenly disappear, claiming that something happened with the Internet connection. This is really frustrating".

"What makes me angry during online education is **students' laziness**. They don't do many tasks, and I simply have a feeling that it's because they are lazy. I usually don't see their faces, so they might even stay in bed during the lesson. A few days ago, one student didn't hear my questions because he was sleeping".

"**Disruptions** during the classes make me so angry. Sometimes the Internet is so weak that they can't hear me or I can't hear them. I can also hear a lot of noise – dogs barking, TV on, people talking etc.… All these disruptions have a negative impact on my students' concentration on the lesson".

"What makes me feel angry is the fact that **I can't see my students**, and there-fore, I don't know if they understand what I'm saying. Non-verbal signs are cru-cial here. Of course, I ask them many questions in order to find out if they under-stand what I'm talking about, but they simply don't answer and there is silence".

"**Huge amounts of work** makes me angry and **hours spent in front of the computer**. I have to prepare lessons online and correct everything online, as well. I'm not used to sitting in front of the computer for the whole day, and I simply feel exhausted".

From the data provided by the teachers, I can see that they quite often feel an-ger. The most common factors that lead to the feeling of anger are problems with time management, students' laziness and disrespect, lack of parents' and govern-

ment's cooperation, inability to see the students who have their cameras turned off, disruptions, huge amounts of work and hours spent in front of the computer.

The feeling of loneliness

"Since the beginning of online education, I have been feeling very lonely because **I don't get any support from my headmaster and from other colleagues**. Whatever I do, I need to do it on my own. This feeling is terrible".

"I don't know **how to motivate my learners**. I feel so lonely and hopeless, as all my efforts are not appreciated. My students are discouraged by online learning, and I can feel that they are also feeling frustrated".

"I try hard not to show my loneliness and negative attitude towards any kind of situation. However, to be honest, I do not like when my students **ignore, cheat and are dishonest**. This is really frustrating".

"When we suddenly faced the COVID-19 pandemic, **I didn't know what to do**. I didn't know who to turn to and when I was trying to talk to my headmaster and ask for some support, I was just **ignored.** I had no idea how to teach 7 and 8 years olds online! They were not listening to me and were constantly disrupted by other things."

"I have been teaching for 16 years now, and I have to say that I have never felt as lonely as I feel now. **I'm closed in my room, in front of the computer, talking to the screen,** not knowing if my students are there or not. I might even say that sometimes I feel stupid because I have a feeling that I'm talking to myself".

"When I was going to school, I was always around people. Since last April I have been staying alone at home, talking to the screen and I have a feeling that I'm completely alone. I know that my **personal life** shouldn't have any impact on my teaching but it does. I wish I could go back to school".

"Yesterday, I just felt so lonely. I had a very problematic pupil who was misbehaving during lessons, so I decided to ask our **school psychologist** for help, and the response was really shocking to me as I was told that most of the students had some psychological problems because of online education, and she couldn't help everybody. She told me that I should educate myself in psychology and deal with problematic students on my own".

"I'm afraid that **lack of support from parents** makes me feel lonely in the whole process of online education. I have asked for help many times and hardly

ever received any support. I know that many parents cannot cope with the situation but we should support each other; it would be much easier".

"**Isolation**, in general, makes me feel so lonely. I can't see my colleagues, my pupils… and what is more, I cannot see the future in bright colours. I have stopped watching the news as the numbers made me even more frustrating and had a negative impact on my teaching".

"Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, **I have been working on my own** preparing all the teaching materials. I have been feeling very lonely because I didn't receive any support from my colleagues. I always thought that we would support each other and do things together but unfortunately, it didn't happen even though I wrote many e-mails to them suggesting some cooperation".

Hawkley, Brown, and Cacioppo (2005, p. 800) claim that the general feeling of loneliness is likely to have various causes, including perceptions of being rejected or isolated, having inadequate emotional and instrumental social support from interpersonal interactions and friendships, and lacking a sense of connectedness within the larger community. The teachers who took part in the current research provide the following factors which had an impact on their loneliness: lack of support from headmasters, colleagues, psychologists and parents, students' lack of motivation, ignorance and dishonesty, isolation, and the feeling of being at home in front of the computer.

6. Discussion

Several studies indicate multiple factors that have an impact on teachers' negative emotions, such as anxiety, anger, fear and loneliness (Gavish & Friedman, 2010; MacIntyre et al., 2019; Mailizar, Almanthari, Maulina, & Bruce, 2020). Without any doubt, COVID-19 and the online education challenges that the teachers had to face increased these negative feelings. As revealed by several studies, teachers' negative emotions might be caused by students, teachers themselves, the process of learning and teaching, educational policies, parents' expectations and relationships with other colleagues from school (Becker et al., 2014; Scott & Sutton, 2009; Traxler & Frenzel, 2015).

When analysing the English teachers' responses concerning negative emotions caused by students and the process of learning, most of them describe the situations in which they feel anxious because they cannot see their students' progress and are afraid that they might not pass their final exams. They also feel stressed because they have a feeling that they failed as teachers who cannot motivate their students to learn. Additionally, they have a feeling that they do not meet their students' expectations and cannot control their behaviour. The current research results go in tandem with the research results obtained by van Uden et al., (2014,

p. 30) who also claim that teachers' feeling of anxiety is mostly caused by students negative learning approaches. As for the situations that evoke anger, the English teachers usually mention lack of homework, disrespect, and students' laziness. Duru and Bakis (2014, p. 118) as well as Mercer and Gregersen (2020), also mention these factors, which have a negative impact on teachers' well-being. As for the feeling of loneliness, the English teachers mention students' ignorance, cheating and dishonesty. They state that this feeling is really frustrating. As mentioned by Yin et al. (2017, p. 909) the feeling of loneliness is often experienced by teachers, as the work seems to be solitary. On the other hand, the feeling of loneliness might be intensified due to the current situation of the teachers.

When analysing the answers concerning the impact of negative emotions on the teachers themselves, it can be noticed that many teachers feel anxious because of the number of classes they have to teach. They stress the fact that they often feel exhausted and worried about their future. Another important factor that causes anxiety is the lack of proper teacher training. Many participants of the study mention that they did not know what to do at the very beginning of online education, as they were not offered any training. Therefore, many fear that they are not good enough at online teaching and feel stressed about it. As Mercer and Gregersen (2020) mention, teachers' constant fear about the future, emotional labour and time constraints might lead to teacher burnout syndrome. Their fear might also be linked to anger. Many participants of the study claim that they feel angry because they cannot organise their time properly. What is more, the amount of work and hours spent in front of the computer also evoke the feeling of anger which might be linked to emotional exhaustion (Keller, Chang, Becker, Goetz, & Frenzel, 2014, pp. 7–8). Research on teachers' and students' emotions shows that physical but also emotional exhaustion might lead to sudden outbursts of anger (Frenzel, 2014; Hagenauer & Volet, 2014; Hargreaves, 2001; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). When referring to the feeling of sadness, many teachers feel sad because they have a feeling that nobody cares about them and they feel at a loss. Their feeling of sadness is also linked to the feeling of loneliness. The teachers state that they feel isolated and excluded from school life. McCarthy (2020) and Kelly et al. (2021), who conducted research among teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic, came to the same conclusion. Teachers feel lonely due to the lack of physical interaction.

Last but not least is teachers' negative emotions connected with educational policies, parents' expectations and the relationships with the headmaster and other colleagues. The participants of the current study feel anxious because they have not been provided with special training concerning online education. In their opinion, it was the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the headmaster. Moreover, the English teachers feel angry with some parents who have high expectations and do not support the teachers. When asking for help, many parents claim that it is the teachers' responsibility to provide their kids with proper edu-

cation and pedagogical rules. Scott and Sutton (2009, p. 167) claim that lack of parent support is one of the most frustrating factors for the teachers. That is why they often feel angry and stressed. When describing the feeling of sadness, many English teachers feel sad because they cannot meet their colleagues from work and therefore, they feel that there is no cooperation. Even when asking for help, many teachers say that they do not feel like cooperating because they are overwhelmed with the current situation. Mailizar et al. (2020, p. 7) state that this is a common behaviour among teachers during COVID-19, who do not get enough support from the government. They feel that their work is not appreciated enough. Finally, when describing the feeling of loneliness, the teachers also mention the lack of support from parents, headmasters, colleagues and even school psychologists. As concluded by Besser, Flett, and Zeigler-Hill, (2020, p. 18), this feeling of loneliness caused by a lack of support has often been accompanied by symptoms of anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbance.

7. Conclusions and future implications

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) has imposed many changes in the current system of education. All schools were suddenly closed and as a result, both teachers and students had to face challenges connected with online education.

Many members of the teaching profession experienced psychological discomfort. The current study reports the negative emotions that the English teachers experienced during online education. The qualitative data shows that the teachers' negative emotions are related to students, teachers themselves, parents, headmasters, colleagues and the government. Furthermore, the findings indicate that special attention should be given to the problem of teachers' negative emotions, as they often report to be totally left on their own. Therefore, it is crucial to take care of the teachers' well-being, which has an enormous impact on the quality of education. It is essential to remember that the education received by young people in this current time of crisis will shape the society of the future.

8. Limitations of the study

The interpretation of the above-presented findings is limited by certain methodological constraints connected with selecting and using the research instrument. The study was mainly based on diaries, which did not contribute to its reliability. A recommendable direction for future studies could be the adoption of a mixed-methods approach enabling a combination of quantitative and qualitative tools that would lead to a cross-verification of the obtained results, thus allowing potential researchers to look at the teachers' emotions from a wider perspective.

Finally, it has to be mentioned that the limitation of the present research is also connected with the number and the profile of the study participants. The sample

might not be representative as there were only 30 English teachers who took part in the research. It would be advisable to investigate more teachers specializing in various fields. Despite these limitations, the results of this study open up a series of possibilities for future research.

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Technology-Mediated Education Caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic Reflected in Students and Teachers' Stories Via the Application of Storytelling Techniques

ABSTRACT

The article focuses on stories, revealing personal experiences related to the technology-mediated education caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and storytelling as a tool in qualitative research. Stories and storytelling may play an important part in qualitative research through presenting a unique, subjective view, which may contribute to the universal perspective. The transition to online teaching has been related to the pandemic, that constitutes a traumatic experience, generating further difficult experiences of an individual nature, which need to be told and shared. That is why, the research through storytelling in the context of the transition to online reality, caused by the pandemic seems to be adequate. Stories as natural phenomena to the human psyche and everyday existence may provide an interesting insight into online teaching, which might have been lost in the limitations of other research tools.

Keywords: technology-mediated education, online education, stories, storytelling, koan

"A story constitutes then, a fifth element"[1]
Olga Tokarczuk

1. Introduction

You are in this place. In this large, spacious room, where you sit behind the massive, mahogany desk. You may feel its surface: it is polished, smooth, warm and cool at the same time. So are the desks that are visible in front of you: elegant and smooth occuping the place.

You may see them, placed in harmonious rows. There are chairs behind them. As empty as they are, for the time being, you may feel their impatience to be filled with these creatures that would listen to you. At last, they come and you may start.

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[1] "Opowieść jest więc piątym żywiołem" (Tokarczuk, 2020, pp. 23–24) [translation mine].

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And you talk and talk and talk until you are tired and close your eyes for a moment. To open them for a new reality. There are no desks anymore nor students listening to you. There is only one chair: yours. And there is only one place: home. Yours. There is no spaciousness in front of you. You feel like there are mirrors everywhere, like in "halls of mirrors where/in every place we look we see our stare" (Jennings, 1986, pp. 24–26).

The mirrors in which you and your words are reflected are no longer the mirror of human eyes, but the smooth surface of a computer screen.

You talk to the computer as if it were a human being able to reach out to other human beings.

At the same time, you are alone with yourself.

And you talk and talk and talk until you are tired and close your eyes for a moment.

Is talking to the computer part of being a human?

When teaching through a computer, do we teach ourselves?

Does teaching through a computer make me more human? Or humane?

The above text represents the attempt of writing a koan of my own in order to start the discussion of the phenomenon of technology-mediated education. Unfortunately, the idea of starting an academic text with a koan is not mine, which is to be explained further in this paper.

The koan is defined as:

> a surprising or paradoxical word or phrase, taken from an anecdote, that is used as an object of meditation in traditions descended from Chinese Chan Buddhism, like Japanese Zen. Contemplating these words is part of the training given by a teacher to help a Buddhist student to awaken (Editors, 2021).

As it was stated before, it had not been my idea to start an academic text with a koan. I was inspired by the book *Cosmological Koans: A Journey to the Heart of Physical Reality* by Anthony Aguirre (2019)[2]. The construction of the book is unique in that every scientific phenomenon is preceded by a koan related to the topic (Aguirre, 2019, 2021).

Koan is also important in the context of this paper, because of its meanings: one of them is a story (Editors, 2021).

A story occupies a meaningful place in the context of technology-mediated education, especially because of the fact that it has been forced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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[2] The Author of the paper became acquainted with the book in Polish version *Kosmologiczne Koany. Podróż do serca rzeczywistości fizycznej,* translated into Polish by Tomasz Lanczewski

It cannot be denied that the COVID-19 pandemic has been a traumatic experience. The experience has been categorized as a "collective trauma" (Bologna, 2021). The phenomenon is defined below:

> Individual trauma is a traumatic event that happens to a person, whereas collective trauma happens to not just a small group of people but society," said Dan Reidenberg, a mental health expert and executive director of Suicide Awareness Voices of Education. "Collective trauma changes history and memory for many. It changes the way we process and see not only the trauma that was experienced but what we do with our memory of it as we move forward (Bologna, 2021).

Trauma needs to be healed and one of the tools to deal with traumatic experiences is storytelling. Telling stories constitutes a part of psychological therapy:

> Telling the trauma story to a supportive therapist is one of the key components of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), which is one of the most effective treatments for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). I recently explored the latest findings on PTSD treatment research with psychologist Dr Mark Powers, Director of Trauma Research at Baylor Scott and White Health. As we discussed, effective CBT typically doesn't require an intensive examination of the survivor's beliefs and evidence for those beliefs, as is often done in CBT for other conditions. Instead, insights about the truth of what happened emerge just through talking about what happened and what it means (Gillihan, 2021).

The above stated psychological benefits of telling stories and also the very immediate association of trauma caused by the pandemic has led to the assumption that the application of storytelling as an idea and a qualitative research tool is a natural solution in academic discussions related to technology-mediated education.

This paper consists of two parts. The first part is devoted to the theoretical foundations related to stories and storytelling. They are necessary to present the empirical part that consists of the collected stories written by students. There is also a koan (rudimentary one) written by me, as the person representing the teacher's point of view.

2. Theoretical part: storytelling

Storytelling is a complex phenomenon that embraces many layers of meaning, reflected in the variety of its definitions. The definitions seem to be very similar yet every one of them presents a different facet of this diamond (story), described by Tokarczuk (2020) as "the fifth element". That is the reason for presenting several of the selected definitional approaches to story and storytelling.

2.1.Storytelling: definition

Storytelling is defined in a variety of ways. That is why the selected definitions of the phenomenon are presented in this section of the paper.

2.1.1. The fundamental aspects of storytelling

The most concise definition of storytelling is given by Serrat (2017): "Storytelling is the vivid description of ideas, beliefs, personal experiences, and life-lessons through stories or narratives that evoke powerful emotions and insights" (p. 839). There are several aspects mentioned:

- vividness;
- a system of ideas and convictions, expectations;
- events in personal life;
- elements of affective domain (experiences);
- elements of sageness, sapience (pp. 839–840).

It is vital to remember that storytelling operates not only within the boundaries of the intellect. It originates and functions within an affective domain, being created and creating through emotions). The most fundamental aspect of creative writing, which is the source of the written stories is mystery (Dąbała, 2004, p. 87)

2.1.1.1 Mystery as a source of storytelling

There are two elements that constitute creative writing, a story-making tool, and these are mystery and suspense (Dąbała, 2004). However, mystery is the essential element. A story may not have suspense, but it has to possess the mystery. What is more, there is more than one kind of mystery:

Creative writing points to the existence of basic varieties of mystery, even though they may not be referred to directly. In the centre of interest here is primarily the mystery of the other person, the mystery of God or the mystery of one's own self (Dąbała, 2012, p. 64).

All of these varieties of mystery may be found also in stories told to each other every day. It may be due to the fact that narration is found at the very core of human existence and human nature: "Narration is naturally rooted in various scholarly disciplines but also in life itself" (Dąbała, 2012, p. 25). The innateness of stories, of narrative formats originated from the term "homo narratus".

2.1.1.2. Homo narratus

The essence of the homo narratus concept may be found in the claim "Humans are the Stories They Tell about Themselves" (Richardson, 2013). Stories are not only the products of creative writing, they are also part of everyday life. They are told all the time, to family, friends, strangers, sometimes to pets and plants. What is interesting, they are also told to ourselves. The stories in our heads would be the most influential in shaping human lives and characters.

There are elements necessary for the story to be told. These are narrative transactional formats, which consists of the following elements: canonical steady state, precipitating event, restoration and coda marking the end (Dautenhahn, 2002,

p. 256). Dautenhahn (2002, pp. 248–249) discusses Narrative Intelligence Hypothesis (NIH), which is based on a set of reasons, given below:

1) Individualized societies are a necessary (but possibly not sufficient) 'substrate' for the evolution of narratives. In such societies, members know each other personally.

2) The specific narrative format of such transactions serves an important communicative function among primates and has possibly evolved independently in other groups of species that live in individualized societies. Narrative capacities co-evolved in order to cope with increasingly complex dynamics.

3) The evolution of communication in terms of narrative language (storytelling) was an important factor in human evolution that has shaped the evolution of human cognition, societies and human culture. The use of language in a narrative format provided an efficient means of 'social grooming' that maintains group coherence.

4) Pre-verbal transactions in narrative format bootstrap a child's development of social competence and social understanding.

5) Human cultures which are fundamentally 'narrative' in nature provide an environment that young human primates are immersed in and facilitate not only the development of a child into a skilled storyteller and communicator but also the development of an autobiographical self.

The set of arguments listed above indicate the vital role of storytelling in contributing to the development of human cognitive capacities, human societies as well as to individual development. This might form a place of narrative intelligence within the theory of MI theory – the theory of Multiple Intelligences (described by Davis, Christodoulou, Seider, & Gardner, 2011, pp. 485–502).

2.1.2. The story, context and performance

A story reaches beyond its characters, plot, atmosphere, which is conceptualized within pragmatics and sociolinguistics as well as branches of linguistics (Stapleton & Wilson 2017). Apart from all of these qualities there exist external factors, which, via their paradoxical nature, may turn out to be internal. The elements are the teller and the telling (Stapleton & Wilson 2017, pp. 61–63). The teller is the person who tells the story, whereas the telling "is the situated act of story-telling or narration, including its interactional and social features" (p. 62). There is also the third element, the tale, which is the story fabric, together with the timeline, the characters, and the chain of events (pp. 61–63). The last factor, the quintessential one, is heavily influenced by the two external ones. The story is modified by the teller, filtered through their subjective selves. Additionally, it is modified, sometimes even recreated by the telling.

Each act of telling contributes to the reshaping of a story. That is why, it is a context-bound, fluid, ever-changing entity, which makes it a perfect tool for

reflecting reality, the phenomenon of the same qualities. The story influences and is influenced by the teller and the telling, which are both the parts of a tale as well as storytelling tools.

2.2. Storytelling: functions

As there are several definitional aspects of stories and storytelling, there also exist several functions of the phenomena, through which they may also be defined.

2.2.1. Communicative function of storytelling

Storytelling is defined in the context of human communication as the essence of being human, which is reflected in the expression *homo narratus* (Richardson, 2013). The functions of stories and narratives are discussed below:

> And stories seem to be the most efficient method to communicate about the world, others and self, as they are loaded with social information. If the social theory of the development of language is valid, the narrative is the mortar of human society and the catalyst of culture. Stories brought us together and made us human, which is why Kerstin Dautenhahn, biologist and professor of computer science, calls us Homo narratus, the storytelling hominid (Richardson, 2013).

Stories are not only fiction-makers but also information-providers. The perception of stories as the fabric and the tools of entertainment has obscured their communicative role of passing information.

Dautenhahn (2002) also uses the term "communicative function":

> With a few exceptions (Read & Miller, 1995), most discussions on the 'narrative mind' have neglected the evolutionary origins of narrative. Research on narrative focuses almost exclusively on language in humans (see, e.g., Turner, 1996). Similarly, the narrative is often conceived of as a (sophisticated) art form, rather than serving a primarily communicative function[….]. Human narrative capacities are not unique and there is an evolutionary continuity that links human narratives to transactional narrative formats in social interactions among animals. Also, from a developmental point of view, we argue that narrative capacities develop from the pre-verbal, narrative, transactional formats that children get engaged in with their parents and peers. Instead of focusing on differences between humans and other animals, we point out similarities and evolutionary, shared histories of primates with specific regard to the origins and the transactional format of narratives (pp. 248–249).

The ability to tell stories is not human-specific. It may also shape animal reality. One may draw the conclusion that stories are not only a fundamental part of civilization but also a part of nature (with animals using narrative formats).

The story is not only art. It is a tool that serves many practical purposes: passing information, forming relationships, strengthening bonds, creating societies. A culture may be defined as a shared inventory of stories, especially myths:

> Myths are stories that are deep and enduring. Myths represent the shared belief of people within a society (or in our case, members within an organization). Myths can address the past, the

present, or the future by telling the listener how things have been (Levy, 1994), why we behave a certain way (Belk & Tumbat, 2005), how to behave (Whelan & O'Gorman, 2007), or even what happens if we fail to act in a certain way (Livingston, 1965). Stories take on mythic qualities when they represent a shared vision, are carefully retold, and passed to the next generation. Over the years, the authors have heard many mythic stories when they visited organizations (Kendall, J. & Kendall, K., 2012, p. 168).

2.2.2. Research function: storytelling as a research tool

Storytelling, through its communicative function, may be used as a tool in the qualitative approach in conducting research, as is illustrated by the study:

> In this paper we explore early IS research using stories and story fragments, reveal what we learn from observing how researchers in other disciplines use storytelling, and adopt the tenets of the social construction of technology (SCOT) theory as a useful lens for understanding organizational members' creation of shared meaning through IS stories. Realizing that organizational storytelling today is much like the telling of myths, we propose that researchers need to appreciate the story as a whole. We also assert that researchers need to identify the purpose, the telling, and the order in which the story is told. Our goal is to inspire IS researchers to realize the depth and richness found in organizational stories and to appreciate and use stories in their own work (Kendall, J. & Kendall, K., 2012, pp. 161–162)

2.2.3. Storytelling as a pedagogical tool

Storytelling may also be applied in language learning:

> Storytelling is one of the oldest forms of human communication, and much has been said in the literature about its effectiveness as a pedagogical tool in the development of language skills in first (L1) language, and also in a foreign or second language (L2), regardless of a learners' age or background (e.g., Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer, & Lowrance, 2004; Cameron, 2001). Furthermore, storytelling is even claimed to be more effective in language teaching than traditional teaching materials, such as textbooks. Indeed, studies generally believe that the effectiveness of storytelling relies on the fact that it is fun, engaging and highly memorable, raising learners' interest in listening to stories (Lucarevschi, 2016, pp. 24–25).

3. Empirical part: the application of storytelling in conducting research into technology-mediated education in the COVID-19 pandemic

In this part of the paper, storytelling is applied within all of its functions mentioned in 1.2. First of all, it has been used as a tool in qualitative methodological approach, then as a pedagogical tool and, finally, in its communicative function. Obviously, there is no linear placement of all the functions; they overlap and permeate each other, forming a specific mechanism.

3.1. The goal of the research: research questions

The goal of this study was to collect stories, revealing personal experiences related to the technology-mediated education caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The following research questions guided the studies:

1) How may the storytelling technique be applied in the context of online education caused by COVID-19 pandemics?
2) What are the stories, related to online education, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, that the students would like to share?
3) How may the storytelling device be enhanced to elicit more personal experiences and insights in the possibly most natural way?

3.2. Methodology

Stories and storytelling require an individual and open approach, which are the characteristic features of qualitative research (Wilczyńska & Michońska-Stadnik, 2010, p. 140). Hence, the research approach is qualitative, the research tool is storytelling and text analysis. In this study, storytelling is also considered as a form of inquiry, a special type of in-depth interview.

3.3. Participants

The participants of the research represented the students of the second and third years of philology. Only 20% decided to take part in the first task of the research project and 11% decided to take part in the second task. The smaller amount of participants in the case of the second task might be justified with the writing of their diplomas, as none of the students of the third year wrote the story for the second part of the research.

3.4. Procedure

In order to conduct this study five procedures were implemented. They are presented in the table below:

Table 1. The procedures implemented in the study

The number of the procedure	The description
1	A discussion of the technology-mediated education in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2	The presentation of the role of stories in trauma.
3	The presentation of the first task (TASK 1): writing stories after the following instruction: The outbreak of the pandemic caused by COVID-19 has brought a transition from face-to-face contact in an educational context to technology-mediated education, mainly online education. In March 2020, the students and academics met online to continue the teaching and learning process. Do you remember your first thought concerning your online classes and lectures? What was it? How has it evolved? How did the transition to technology-mediated education change your life? How did it change your view on education, on life, on yourself?

The number of the procedure	The description
3	What is the most unique/happiest/ saddest/ most outraging, etc. experience concerning technology-mediated education caused by the COVID-19 pandemic? First sentences to inspire: The 50 Best First Sentences in Fiction (gawker.com)
4	Introducing the second task (TASK 2), with the first sentence given by the researcher: 1. Write a story, related to education online, that starts with the sentence: I will never forget this online class (lecture) when ……… 2. Put your story aside for a day or two. 3. Read your story and describe its tone.

3.5 Results

As a result of the conducted research, eight stories for the first task (TASK 1) and five stories for the second one (TASK 2) were delivered.

3.6 The analysis of the results

There is a difference between the first set of stories and the second one. For the sake of this study, they may be labelled as stories-task1 (ST1) and the second "wave", stories related to task 2 (ST2). The difference consists of two aspects: opinion-giving and emotional.

In the case of ST1, the opinion-giving aspect dominates over the emotional. One may have an impression that some students misunderstood the task of writing narrative forms related to online classes and lectures with producing an opinion about them, which may be illustrated by the example: "At first, the teachers seemed quite confused and the material they provided was heavier to learn. The weaker transmission of the material consisted of many things, including a poor internet connection, a poorly prepared platform for voice conferences, low involvement on the part of students and general irritation with the existing conditions. With time, many lecturers adopted their new style and with each lecture, the classes became more and more similar to those of the university. I think that the summer break allowed us all to refine the system in which we work until today because this academic year remote learning looks much better than in the previous one" (S3 ST1)[3].

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[3] Students, research participants, had numbers assigned to them. It was mainly the researcher's decision; the students usually did not mind being mentioning by their names. However, the application of numbers for the students, together with the number of texts seem to contribute to the transparency

It may be due to the fact that students are accustomed to assessing classes, lectures and academic teachers through questionnaires. The second reason is that the instruction for TASK 1 was open and general, without many guidance points.

In ST2, the emotional aspect was more visible, whereas there were less opinions. It may be due to the fact that the instructions were clearer and guided by first sentence.

The first sentence is vital to the story. It is labelled as a narrative hook (Turco, 1991, p. 41). There are many Internet sources, giving advice on how to write a well-constructed first sentence[4]. The first sentence is helpful in writing the rest of the story, as is illustrated by this study.

As for the dichotomy of positive and negative aspects of online education, the negative one predominates. Most of the students were unsatisfied with the necessity of classes and lectures online. Factors like isolation, lockdown, lack of personal contact with peers, the company of household members, and not always being agreeable, have been presented: "After three months it started to get to me that the isolation is not the best for me. Working with children via the internet made me burnt out of my passion for teaching and studying online became torture" (S1 ST1); "Sitting at home with parents whom I do not have a good connection with, only going out on walks with my dog, dealing with my grandfather's death, and now my father battling with covid and taking care of my mother and grandma, took a big toll on me. School was also not a big help in all of this" (S5 ST1).

Qualitative research enables unexpected results. On of them is an unusual insight into the problem with online education: "I have the impression, at least on my example, that after this pandemic I will lose some aspects that make up my identity. Mainly, in this case, I refer to the external image. Because of the fact that I am sitting at home during an online lesson with the camera turned off, I am unable to express myself through my appearance or style of dress. Suddenly I changed all my favourite pants into tracksuits and leggings. It is a bit depressing. As a whole, I believe this is some kind of test. I have the impression that this situation may be more difficult for children attending primary school" (S6 ST1).

The concept of self-expression through clothes usually does not appear in the context of education. Yet, it may be a vital aspect, especially in language education, language being a complex phenomenon that requires body language for communication. Apart from this, language and art (which is connected with self-expression via external image) may have a lot in common.

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of the research project. S1 ST1 translates as: Student number 1 who is a participant of task 1 of this research project. One person is mentioned by name as he specifically asked for it.

   [4] How to Write a Great First Sentence, with 22 Examples (annerallen.com); How to Write a Winning First Sentence (convinceandconvert.com); The 50 Best First Sentences in Fiction (gawker.com).

The ST2 stories were more personal, as was stated before. The most personal story deals with the death of a relative: "I will never forget this online class (lecture) when I got a phone call from my mum […] dad is dead. I couldn't believe it" (S2 ST2). This particular story is written with short, monomorphemic lexical items, active voice and direct speech predominates. All of these elements reflect this dramatic situation, one of the traumas of the COVID-19 pandemic that students faced.

Finally, there are two stories, for TASK 1 and TASK 2, written by the same person, whom these empirical studies revealed to be artistically talented and who also made a self-discovery. The S4 texts are presented, both for TASK 1 and TASK 2: "Imagine a daunted, sad and desireless person, sitting in front of the computer at home, trying to study things. Yes, that's me.

Ever since March 2020, I felt stressed, depressed, frightened of tomorrow. At first, I thought that the pandemic won't last for long and, oh boy, was I wrong. I was very sceptical of the idea that teaching will work in a remote format, in fact, I still am... The technology was not prepared for this amount of people connecting online. Constant connection issues meant an unpleasant experience during lectures. To put it simply, it was terrible, for at least a couple of weeks.

Transitioning to remote learning wasn't a tough thing to manage, at least for me. I know people that still don't know how to operate a computer, but oh well… Since I play a lot of video games in my free time, jumping over to remote education was as simple as apple pie. But that transition took a large toll on my social life. I love meeting people on the school premises and its still possible mind you, but it lacks something that makes these encounters fun, enjoyable.

Since the start of the pandemic, my life hasn`t changed much. I still have contact with my family and friends. One difference would be the way how I think about the future of mine. Now, I feel anxious of what the future will bring, and that's really daunting, because you can't think straight at times. It's barely impossible to have thoughts about hundreds of different things… overthinking just makes things worse, believe me, I know.

The unique thing about the pandemic and the tech-oriented form of education is that you don't have to move from home to get things done. Everything is being done remotely, user to user, without the need to suffocate yourself with these awful masks and that's cheering... especially after the train wreck that 2020 has been.

Anyway, that's the reality of living during a pandemic, my reality. Thank you for reading" (S4 ST1).

"I'll never forget this online class when I was asked to present my hobby to other students. Obviously, I prepared a lengthy, interactive presentation featuring elements of my hobby, photography. I did a bit of research, found engaging facts that are connected to the given subject and chose some good and interesting photographs of my own, as well as some old-school ones.

The presentation was prepared and ready to be shown after a few days.

Day-zero was upon me. The amount of stress, that was overflowing my body throughout the morning, was tough to handle. Heavy sweating, among other things, annoyed me the most. Little did I realize that I've already shown my hobby to the whole class. Honestly, these were the shortest 30 minutes of my life.

To my surprise, the reception of everything that I've presented was simply amazing. Some people were genuinely interested in my hobby and asked various kinds of questions that I was more than pleased to answer!

That was the day to remember. The day when I broke the barrier of anxiety and stress during speech" (S4 ST2).

As is illustrated by the texts above, the stories are interesting, and the discovery is that the writer does not experience anxiety and stress when performing in public anymore. It is one of the rare examples of the benefits of online education. Another one is illustrated by my own story as the representative story of an academic teacher.

4. The koan and the further research perspectives

The story mentioned above is my (attempt at) a koan that begins this paper. One of the functions of koans is to change the perspective in order to change the mode of thinking. Usually, a koan ends with one question, but here several questions are presented:

Is talking to the computer a part of being a human?

When teaching through a computer, do we teach ourselves?

Does teaching through a computer make us more human? Or humane?

The questions have been partly answered in this paper. There is still a lot to discover within the realms of these questions. That is why they constitute a field for further research.

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Using WebClass for Reduced Redundancy Testing

Abstract

This article examines and reviews two types of reduced redundancy tests, namely cloze tests and C-tests, which involve completing a text from which certain units (whole words or their parts) have been removed. Assessment instruments of this kind are typically used to measure overall language proficiency, for example for the purpose of making placement decisions. The paper also discusses the development of these two measures of reduced redundancy with the help of the WebClass testing system.

Keywords: language testing, reduced redundancy, cloze, C-test, WebClass

1. Introduction

Redundancy can be defined as the degree to which language as a whole or a specific linguistic unit contains "more formal clues than are strictly necessary to convey its message" (Delbridge & Bernard, 1966, p. 107). It is possible to express this degree numerically "as the fraction of the letters in a written text, or the fraction of the phonemes in a spoken utterance that could be eliminated if no random disturbances were present" (Fano, 1961, p. 261). In the case of English printed texts, redundancy is estimated to be approximately 50 percent (Claiborne, 1990; Shannon, 1948). This means that in optimum communication conditions, a message written in English should be understandable even if roughly one-half of the letters were obscured.

By way of illustration, redundancy manifests itself in the sentence *I met Susan yesterday*, where past tense is indicated not only by the verb form but also by the adverbial of time. When the same information is signalled by more than one element, redundancy may be perceived as "information overlap" (Horning, 1987, p. 18). In addition to this, redundancy may be regarded as unnecessary repetition. For example, compared to the English phrase *this little cat*, its Polish equivalent *ta mała kotka* redundantly repeats grammatical agreement as each word is marked for feminine gender. Repetition is also a defining feature of pleonasm and tautology, as in *return back* or *each and every* (Lehmann, 2005, p. 121). Nevertheless, redundancy should not be associated with uselessness. On the contrary, when com-

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munication is hampered by noise, "redundancy enables us to reconstruct missing components of messages" (Oakes, 1998, p. 62). Thus, rather than being useless, redundancy is an essential property of language.

Natural language is a redundant system because it allows the speakers to communicate even when a substantial part of the signal is absent or deformed. In other words, knowing a language means being able "to understand a distorted message, to accept a message with *reduced* redundancy" [emphasis added] (Spolsky, 1968, p. 10). More specifically, it means being able to *restore* those parts of a linguistic code which have been omitted. This particular ability has traditionally been assessed using two language testing procedures, namely the cloze test and the C-test.

2. From cloze tests to C-tests

The word *cloze* is a derivative of *closure*, which in Gestalt psychology refers to the human tendency to perceive an incomplete form as a whole (Renkema, 2004, p. 178). The cloze test is a type of gap-filling procedure which consists in completing a text from which some words have been removed. Although methods of this kind were used by psychologists in the late nineteenth century to test intelligence (Harris, cit. in Oller & Jonz, 1994, p. 10), the first official application of the term *cloze* is attributed to Taylor (1953), who used it to name a device for measuring text difficulty (or 'readability').

Cloze tests may be of several different kinds, depending on the deletion strategy as well as the type of expected response. The standard technique, known as *fixed-ratio cloze*, is to delete the words mechanically at regular intervals (e.g. every eighth word). In *variable-ratio* procedures, by contrast, the words to be replaced with blanks are selected either *randomly* or on the basis of *rational* decisions (e.g. all adjectives or prepositions). Instead of individual words, longer strings of text could be deleted, yet this is not common practice. When the test takers are expected to fill in the blanks by producing their own responses, the task may be referred to as *open* cloze. The other possibility is to provide several alternatives for each deleted word and thus obtain a multiple-choice variant of cloze (sometimes called 'maze', e.g. Cash & Schumm, 2006, p. 266). It should be added that the beginning (and perhaps also the ending) of the passage can be left unchanged so as to allow a better understanding of the text.

Whereas the earliest cloze tests were predominantly used to measure readability and comprehension (e.g. Beard, 1967; Bormuth, 1968, 1969; Culhane, 1970; Porter, 1976; Rankin & Culhane, 1969; Schneyer, 1965), subsequent implementations of the method were more frequently employed as measures of global language proficiency (e.g. Oller, 1972; Oller, 1979; Oller & Conrad, 1971; Stubbs & Tucker, 1974). In contrast to discrete-point tests, the cloze procedure was widely acknowledged as an integrative form of assessment (Hale et al., 1989). This view was based on the fact that cloze tests appeared "to be highly correlated with virtu-

ally every other type of language test, and with tests of nearly every language skill and component" (Bachman, 1982, p. 61). Quite understandably, cloze tests were generally recommended as language proficiency tests which were relatively easy to create and administer (Aitken, 1977).

On the other hand, cloze tests did not really prove to be solely measuring language competence. For example, Byrne, Feldhusen, and Kane (1971) found cloze test scores to be related to measures of IQ. Another problem was that many cloze tests lacked consistency from one administration to another in terms of both measurement properties and criterion-related validity. In particular, the reliabilities of cloze tests and their relationships with criterion measures of ESL proficiency often varied significantly (for references, see Brown, 1988, 1993, 2002). Furthermore, a study reported in Alderson (1979) exposed some specific inconsistencies between various modifications of the cloze procedure. First, the deletion frequency had a significant effect on the ability being measured. Second, tests with difficult texts were better correlated with proficiency measures while tests with easy texts were better correlated with dictation. Finally, acceptable-answer scoring resulted in higher validity than did exact-answer scoring. This apparent unpredictability of cloze test scores significantly detracted from the attractiveness of the procedure as a unitary technique previously recommended as a measure of overall language proficiency.

In addition to the above, a fundamental drawback of the cloze method as a measure of L2 proficiency was revealed by Lado (1986), who found that even native speakers may struggle with tests of this kind. This study additionally demonstrated that changing the scoring scheme from exact to acceptable answer failed to improve native speakers' test performance. In view of the fact that it seemed to be absurd to assert that native speakers of English did not know English, Lado (1986) concluded that it was unacceptable for a language test to have "such a heavy non-language factor" (p. 132).

All the problems with cloze tests led many test developers to question the usefulness of this procedure. According to Brown (2002), for example, the standard (fixed-ratio) cloze "is far too inefficient for responsible use in decision-making" (p. 110). Indeed, rational deletion may be a better option (Bachman, 1985) as this variant of the cloze technique gives the test developer more control over the content validity of the test. On the other hand, "the rational deletion cloze is neither a test of reduced redundancy nor a measure of general language competence" (Grotjahn, 2013, p. 121). It seems that those who actually need a language proficiency test can do better by opting for the C-test.

C-tests were introduced in 1981 (Raatz & Klein-Braley, cit. in Klein-Braley, 1985, p. 81) as a solution to the well-documented problems with cloze tests. This more recent method of assessment is not radically different from the cloze test: both involve restoring a mutilated text whose beginning and ending are typically left unchanged. However, there are also some essential differences. First, the

standard form of the C-test is constructed by deleting the second half of every second word (in accordance with the so-called *C-principle*). Another difference is that a complete C-test consists of *several* short passages (but see also Khodadady, 2013, who argues that this should not be viewed as an absolute rule). Moreover, when estimating internal consistency reliability, each passage of text is analysed as a superitem (Raatz, 1985). It is worth adding that in constructing C-tests we normally delete the longer parts of those words that consist of an odd number of letters, and single-letter words are omitted, i.e. left intact.

Compared to the cloze procedure, the C-test offers several important benefits, conveniently summarized by Klein-Braley (1997). First, C-tests require considerably shorter texts than do cloze tests. Second, C-tests can be scored objectively using exact-answer scoring because in the majority of cases only one correct answer is possible. Third, the scoring of C-tests is fast and simple, almost like reading the text. Fourth, native speakers have no problem restoring half-deleted words, whereas people who do not know the language at all typically obtain a score that is close to zero. Fifth, the fact that every second word is mutilated is likely to give rise to a better representation of all the word classes in the text. Sixth, the use of several different texts ensures more adequate sampling of content types. This means that "[e]xaminees who happen to have special knowledge in certain areas no longer have substantial advantages over other examinees" (Klein-Braley, 1997, p. 65).

Admittedly, the C-test is not an absolutely perfect testing technique, and even some of the above benefits have been challenged in the literature. For example, contrary to claims that C-tests are very easy for native speakers, Jafarpur's (1995) study demonstrated that this was true only in the case of one C-test (out of a total of twenty). Huhta (1996), similarly, concluded that certain C-tests "can be very difficult even for native speakers" (p. 215). In another study, the C-principle (i.e. the rule of two) produced tests containing non-functioning items (Jafarpur, 1999b). Moreover, Jafarpur (1999a) used classical item analysis to select the best-performing items and develop an improved version of a C-test, but this did not really have a positive effect on the statistical properties of the test. In addition to these potential problems, some studies have reported rather unfavourable reactions to C-tests on the part of the test takers. For example, in a study by Bradshaw (1990) these reactions were largely negative, and Jafarpur (1995) stated that "C-tests [were] irritating and unacceptable to the subjects" (p. 209). Findings such as these contradict claims by Klein-Braley and Raatz (1984) that C-tests have face validity. In truth, the problem may well be due to the novelty of the format, which is still rarely used in popular textbooks for English language learners. On the plus side, C-tests tend to have satisfactory reliability coefficients (e.g. Coleman, 1996; Klein-Braley & Raatz, 1984; Linnemann & Wilbert, 2010, and many others).

In terms of the construct being measured and the purpose of testing, the C-test bears considerable similarity to the cloze procedure: it was originally intended as

a measure of overall language ability. Indeed, a recent meta-analysis of Pearson's correlation coefficients between C-test and criterion-test scores by McKay et al. (2021) indicates that C-tests are most strongly correlated with general language proficiency. Over the years, C-tests have been found to correlate significantly with various language proficiency measures, such as the Iowa State University English Placement Test (EPT) (Chapelle & Abraham, 1990), the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) (Dörnyei & Katona, 1992), TOEFL (Babaii & Ansary, 2001), and Test of German as a Foreign Language (TestDaF) (Eckes & Grotjahn, 2006). As for the purpose of C-tests, they are considered to be particularly useful in situations where selection or placement decisions need to be made (e.g. Mozgalina & Ryshina-Pankova, 2015; Norris, 2006; Odendahl, 2019).

3. Computer-based C-tests

With the growing popularity of digital technologies, language test developers are more and more frequently using computers and other electronic devices to design tests, create test items, assemble them into test forms, administer these to the examinees, score the responses, deliver reports, provide feedback, as well as analyse the scores. Tests of reduced redundancy are, quite naturally, no exception to this general tendency. Recent examples of computerized C-tests include the *Online Language Placement Test*, also known as *onSET* (www.onset.de), which is a test of language proficiency in German or English; *QSAT*, a web-based mC-test constructed by deleting the first half (instead of the second half) of every second word (Boonsathorn & Kaoropthai, 2016); and a computerized C-test in Spanish (Riggs & Maimone, 2018). The crucial question that arises in the context of computerized testing is whether the mode of delivery has a significant impact on the properties of the measurement instrument. This problem has been addressed by Bisping and Raatz (2002), who tested the equivalence of paper-based and computer-based versions of a C-test and found that there were no significant differences between the two modes of administration in terms of the means, standard deviations and reliabilities. The computerized C-test, however, was more appealing to the test takers.

Computerized C-testing can be largely automated with the aid of dedicated software. One of the earliest tools of this kind, reported by Koller and Zahn (1996), was developed at the Language Centre of the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg to construct, deliver, and score computerized C-tests for placement purposes. This DOS program was also capable of conducting statistical evaluations of the scores. More recently, Odendahl (2019) developed a web-based C-testing platform, which uses a corpus of texts taken from blogs, novels, and newspaper articles as a basis for C-test generation. The system can be used to administer C-tests and then rank the test takers by general language proficiency, thus providing the necessary information for admission and placement decisions. In addition, some mobile apps have been developed for language learners who are interested in practising C-

tests. These include an app that can generate C-tests for individuals preparing for various proficiency or entrance exams (Khokhryakov, 2019) and an app designed to calculate a predicted score for the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) exam (Heidermann & Kebble, 2017; Kebble, 2018). The latter app uses texts from previous IELTS papers to automate C-test generation.

4. WebClass

WebClass (webclass.co) is an online learning management system (LMS) incorporating a fairly extensive testing component that can be utilized for web-based language test development (Malec, 2018). In particular, the system enables the test developer to author, deliver, and conduct statistical analysis of assessments of various types. While the platform is not specifically designed for reduced redundancy testing, it offers a tool that can be helpful in constructing cloze tests and C-tests, either of which, from a technical point of view, is composed of standard gap-filling items arranged into a passage of text.

The tool in question is the text-to-items converter, illustrated in Figure 1 (see also Malec, 2016). The converter is a kind of add-on to the test editor in that it can be used to format a piece of text to be transformed into test items proper. In the case of gap-filling items, the rule is that every word (or a longer string of text) inside square brackets is replaced by a blank and the text inside the brackets is the key. Each gap can contain an unlimited number of correct alternatives, separated by a forward slash.
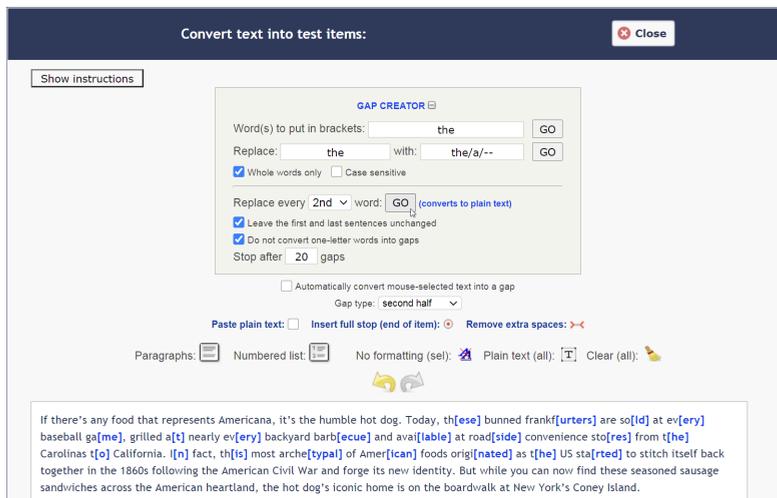
Figure 1. Using the text converter to create a C-test on WebClass
(Text source: www.bbc.com/travel/story/20190702-the-truth-about-the-us-most-iconic-food)

As can be seen in Figure 1, the text converter features a gap creator for automated replacement of every *n*th word with a gap. Three important options relevant to cloze-type formats are integrated into the gap creator, namely leaving the first and last sentences unchanged, skipping one-letter words, and terminating the replacement after a specified number of gaps. The type of gap is selected below the gap creator box[1], and the options available include *selection*, *first half*, *second half*, and *keep first letter*. The first of these options is intended for cloze tests: each whole word (or some other piece of manually selected text) is replaced with a gap. The third option (second half) is meant for the standard variety of C-tests. It is worth adding that numerals (optionally followed by a single letter, as in *1980s*) are always skipped by the gap creator and any other words that need to be left intact (such as proper names) can be marked with an asterisk in front. The text-to-items converter can handle one passage of text at a time. Hence, if more passages are to be included in the entire test, the gap-creating procedure has to be repeated for each of them.

Further settings are available in the main test editor. These include, for example, the time limit, mastery level, acceptable and partially acceptable responses, feedback (general and answer-specific), as well as gap length. Moreover, the test constructor may decide to automatically award partial credit for responses containing no more than a specific number of spelling errors (modifiable for each item). In addition, the scoring algorithm can be set to ignore spaces, punctuation, and capitalization in the responses to any given item. Generally speaking, either exact-answer or acceptable-answer scoring can be implemented on the platform.

C-test
Complete the following text by typing the missing letters in the spaces provided.

If there's any food that represents Americana, it's the humble hot dog. Today, the_____ bunned frankfurters_____ are sold_____ at every_____ baseball ga_____, grilled a_____ nearly ev_____ backyard barb_____ and avai_____ at road_____ convenience sto_____ from t_____ Carolinas t_____ California. I_____ fact, th_____ most arche_____ of Amer_____ foods origi_____ as t_____ US sta_____ to stitch itself back together in the 1860s following the American Civil War and forge its new identity. But while you can now find these seasoned sausage sandwiches across the American heartland, the hot dog's iconic home is on the boardwalk at New York's Coney Island.

Figure 2: Responding to a C-test on WebClass

Figure 2 shows the passage from Figure 1 in its final form (as displayed to the examinees). The test as a whole can optionally be delivered in full screen mode. In addition, the test takers may be instructed not to navigate away from the test, and if they actually do so, the test is automatically suspended for them. When this happens, the teacher or test administrator is informed and has the option of allow-

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[1]   The gap-type options are located below the gap creator box (which is collapsed by default) because they are also applicable to two other methods of creating gaps, i.e. by double-clicking a word and (optionally) by selecting a piece of text with the mouse.

ing individual test takers to continue. This security setting may be a vital option in unproctored testing environments, as in distance education. It may be worth adding that the time limit can be modified while the test is being administered.

Test administration is routinely followed on WebClass by human verification of the automated scoring. In the case of gap-filling items, the score verification tool displays the content of each item followed by the key and all the responses not included in the key. The test takers are grouped by the incorrect responses. The score verification procedure consists in inspecting the incorrect answers and, if need be, adding them to the key or to a pool of acceptable answers (deserving either full or partial credit). Naturally, once an answer has been accepted, the change is applicable to all the test takers who have submitted this particular response, and it is not necessary to repeat the procedure for each individual test taker. The score verification tool additionally allows the tester to provide feedback to the examinees on their responses.

The final components of test development on WebClass include statistical analysis of the scores and item banking. The statistics computed by the system include several reliability estimates and item indices. Some of these statistics are specifically applicable to criterion-referenced assessments, while tests of reduced redundancy are intended for norm-referenced interpretations. The statistics which are relevant to norm-referenced tests include Cronbach's alpha, Spearman-Brown split-half reliability coefficient, SEM (standard error of measurement), item facility, and item discrimination. It is currently not possible to compute reliability estimates with C-test passages as superitems. However, all the scores can be downloaded (in .csv format) to be analyzed elsewhere. Finally, items which function properly can be stored in the item bank, and then imported into a new test. Every cloze and C-test passage is stored in the item bank and retrieved in its entirety.

Conclusion

Redundancy as a linguistic concept has existed in language testing since the early 1960s (Barnwell, 1996). For many years the cloze test was considered to be a promising testing technique. However, over the course of several decades many of its shortcomings became increasingly evident until they were finally addressed by the C-test in the 1980s. This paper has discussed cloze tests and C-tests as measures of general language proficiency and briefly presented the WebClass LMS as a tool that can aid the tester in developing tests of this kind.

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Reconsidering Language Assessment Courses in Teacher Training Programs During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic

ABSTRACT

Assessing learners' performance is crucial as it informs about learners' achievement levels in addition to their strengths and weaknesses, not only in face-to-face but also in online teaching. The study aimed at investigating the challenges faced by language teachers in assessing learners during online teaching and to offer some suggestions regarding language assessment courses in teacher training programs. The study adopted a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis. The participants included 22 language teachers aged between 24 to 48. Of these teachers, 8 were male, while the rest were female. Their teaching experience varied from 2 to 25 years, with an average of 11.8 years. The data was based on the responses of the participants during semi-structured interviews. The participants were asked to attend ZOOM meetings to be held, considering their availability. The interviews lasted 10 to 25 minutes. The results of the study indicated that the challenges faced by the participants included five major themes: Assessment type, assessment item formats, support, previous training (assessment literacy), and academic integrity. Several suggestions were offered considering online testing and assessment literacy and language assessment courses in teacher training programs.

Keywords: Teacher education, ICT, curriculum development, assessment, testing

1. Introduction

Assessment practices in learning and teaching contexts are an indispensable part of any teaching and learning context, and language teaching is no exception since it includes gathering information on what students or learners know and how they perform based on their educational experience. Case and Obenchain (2010) stress the importance of observing and assessing students throughout the semester and informing students of their performance to focus on the weaknesses and strengths, which is also known as formative assessment. Formative assessments are planned within a face-to-face or online course or lesson and aimed at determining learner weaknesses and strengths, leading to acting accordingly through some remedial practice or tutorial. The main function of this type of assessment is that it is ongoing, consistent, and provides critical feedback to learn-

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ers, while summative assessments are conducted at the end of a semester or after several weeks to measure what learners have learned (Absolum, Flockton, Hattie, Hipkins, & Reid, 2009). This type of assessment is mainly used to indicate whether or not overall learning goals have been achieved. Formative and specifically summative assessments are mainly conducted through paper-and-pencil tests through which learners' grammar and vocabulary knowledge are assessed. Traditional assessment instruments benefiting from multiple-choice, and fill-in-the-blank are the main assessment items that focus on discrete-point assessments (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010; Hughes, 2003). In addition to traditional ways of assessment, teachers might also consider alternative assessment methods such as projects, self and peer assessment along with the traditional written assessment (Brumen, Cagran, & Nixon, 2009). As Falsgraf (2009, pp. 495–496) indicates, there are several obstacles to appropriate and healthy assessment.

Most language teachers are enrolled at their department during their education on at least one course on language assessment and evaluation. One obstacle is that teachers generally may not receive the necessary training in assessment practices, leading to a lack of knowledge and practice in choosing the most appropriate instruments. Büyükkarcı (2014), in his investigation of language teachers' assessment beliefs and their practices working at primary schools in Turkey, found that although teachers have positive attitudes and beliefs about formative assessment of students' performances, they do not apply formative assessment practices. The main obstacles found to account for this are crowded/overcrowded classrooms and teachers' workload. Another similar study conducted by Han and Kaya (2014) has investigated Turkish EFL teachers' assessment preferences and practices at primary and secondary educational levels. The results show that the teachers focus more on reading and speaking skills than on listening and writing skills. Moreover, it was found that half of the teachers consider the integration of the language skills important in teaching contexts. Gender and previous training on assessment are not found to be variables that affect assessment preferences. Glover (2014) analysed the effects of examinations on teacher talk through discourse analysis. Findings suggest that teacher talk may be affected by examinations as the teachers in the study tend to move away from the role of guiding to telling in their talks. The findings also indicated that teachers feel the force to match their regular teaching with the format of the examination to better prepare students to score high on examinations. They also reported negative effects on learner motivation due to the burden and stress on the learners. Compared to the core knowledge about language testing such as types of testing, reliability, and validity, the pre-service language teachers who were the participants of the study conducted by Hatipoğlu (2010) expressed the need for more time for practising writing items for the language skills and evaluating a variety of exams conducted in various situations.

Considering the findings of the above studies, it might be stated that teacher training programs prepare teachers, more or less, for assessments in the face-to-face contexts, with no or little specific attention to online assessment practices although there might be several personal attempts to integrate technology-based assessments into the curriculum or courses. The major challenge during the pandemic was that language teachers did not have the chance to meet their students face to face in the physical classroom. Therefore, they could not move the face-to-face assessment practices into online teaching environments and tried to manage by themselves, especially at the very beginning of the pandemic. This study, therefore, aimed at determining the challenges faced by language teachers regarding assessment during the pandemic and to offer some suggestions as to the content of the language assessment courses in teacher training during and after the pandemic.

2. Material and Methods

2.1. Research context and participants

The study included public high schools as the research context in Turkey. The teachers working at high schools were contacted on a Facebook group. This included around fifty thousand language teachers who were working at various schools from primary to university contexts. 22 teachers responded to the message shared on the group explaining the purpose of the study and agreed to participate in the study through semi-structured interviews. The teachers were aged between 24 to 48. Of these teachers, 8 were male, while the rest were female. Their teaching experience varied from 2 to 25 years, with an average of 11.8 years.

2.2. Data collection and procedure

The study adopted a qualitative approach to the data collection process to investigate the possible answers to the research questions of the study. The data was based on the responses of the participants during the semi-structured interviews. The participants were asked to attend ZOOM meetings to be held, considering their availability. The interviews lasted 10 to 25 minutes and were not recorded as the participants did not agree. As the recording was not possible, the researcher tried to focus on the responses by taking notes. All the interviews were conducted in Turkish, and the following questions were directed to the participants: 1) How have you assessed your students during your online teaching? 2) Have you used any software or website to assess your students? 3) What has been the main purpose for assessing your students? 4) Has your school provided you with any technical or training support? In what ways? 5) Do you think that your university education has prepared you for assessing students during online teaching? In what ways? 6) What are the issues and opportunities that you have faced during your online teaching? 7) Do you have any other comments/suggestions?

2.3. Data analysis

The data collected through the semi-structured interviews were subject to inductive content analysis. The notes taken from the interviews were re-read repeatedly by the researcher to determine the common themes and codes. Codes can be defined as the labels to determine recurring topics, issues, or themes in the qualitative data and to characterize particular perceptions. These themes and codes were hierarchically ranked. The emerging themes and sub-categories were checked against consistency by another expert in the field, with ample knowledge of inductive content analysis. Every effort has been made to provide compelling examples to demonstrate the themes and codes and to maintain a rich overall description; however, it can be considered quite natural to lose some depth and complexity when the analysis is to be provided in an article with strict word limitations. This is especially valid since it is difficult to provide a convincing analysis by just providing adequate examples as one or two extracts for a theme or a code.

3. Results

The themes and the codes, together with the exemplar responses, have been provided in Table 1. The table also includes selected quotations as a representative of the responses to the interview questions.

Table 1. Themes and codes obtained from the responses

Themes	Codes	Examples
Assessment type	Formative	"I have tried to assess my learners every two weeks or so to determine the problem areas so that I can focus on those issues during my online teaching in the next classes".
	Summative	"It was almost impossible to assess my students' academic achievement as the regulations did not allow that".
Assessment item formats	Traditional (selected response)	"My assessment was asynchronous. I mean, I just assigned assignments on EBA. My students answered multiple-choice questions and matching activities to review the course content".
	Alternative assessment (constructed response)	"I hardly used alternative assessments as my students did not have the necessary technological devices. Some used only mobile phones, while some others had laptops and tablets".

Themes	Codes	Examples
Support	Technical	"My school did not provide any technical support when we had problems connecting to EBA to have synchronous classes. I asked my friends or other teachers to help me".
	Training	No training has been provided. I just watched the videos shared on the school website or any other videos suggested by my friends and colleagues".
Previous training (assessment literacy)	Assessing skills	"I know how to assess the basic language skills and language components though I need more practice in creating and choosing appropriate assessment items".
	Online assessment	"I think we were not provided with detailed training and practice in conducting online assessments, especially in alternative assessments".
Academic integrity	In-secure assessment	"Summative assessment or high-stakes exams were not possible as cheating or getting others' help is easy".
	Authorship	"Sometimes I cannot be sure whether the work is my student's work".

Assessment type

Regarding assessment types, although the participants did not state "formative" and "summative", the responses (n= 18) indicated that the participants benefited from formative assessment through multiple-choice and matching items. They benefited from several tools and websites such as *Quizziz*, *Worldwall*, and Live-worksheets both to create and to use ready-to-use materials which are created by other teachers and users. Several less frequently used assessment tools were also named, such as *Kahoot* and *Mentimeter*. However, summative assessment seemed to be a genuine concern as scoring and grading practices were determined by the Ministry of Education, and face-to-face exams were required, although it was not possible to have these exams. One of the participants expressed this in this way: "I know very well that my students also need some communicative ability in English. Although I try to integrate some listening and speaking activities in my assessment, it was not possible as attending online classes was not possible due to two main reasons. The first one was that attendance was not mandatory. Some students simply did not have the necessary equipment and access to the Internet. The assessment was often not possible, as a result" (Interviewee 12, Female).

Another participant underscored the importance of frequent testing saying that: "I believe that frequent testing and providing feedback help my students notice their weaknesses. As a result, every two weeks I give my students mini online exams including multiple-choice questions because this is the format of the test.

But for the official examinations, I also use gap-filling exercises, especially for grammar" (Interviewee 29, Male).

Assessment item formats

Based on the responses, it was determined that the participants mainly created and used traditional (selected-response) assessment item formats such as matching, multiple-choice, and fill-in-the-blank activities. These activities were mainly assigned and conducted asynchronously. In other words, live feedback was not possible. Some (n=14) created activities based on gamification using websites such as *Wordwall*. However, the number of these activities, according to the participants, was few. Almost all the participants (n=20) raised serious concerns regarding alternative assessment. Considering the responses, while it is possible to say that most of the participants excelled at supplementing the lessons with authoring or using digital assessment tools, conducting alternative assessments online seemed to be impossible for the participants. Related to this, two of the participants stated that: "Each week I assign some online worksheets using the website Liveworksheets to my students. These worksheets include dialogues together with some vocabulary activities based on these dialogues. Sometimes they do their homework at home, and sometimes we check the answers during online teaching. But I could not use or, honestly speaking, do not know how to conduct an online alternative assessment" (Interviewee 8, Female). "I very well know that multiple-choice questions are just based on recognition and do not test students' productive skills. However, the tools and websites available do not allow me to create exercises requiring them to produce" (Interviewee 13, Female).

Support

A great majority of the participants (n=17) indicated that the technical and training support was not sufficient, especially at the very beginning of the pandemic. They also added that they were not provided with any training regarding teaching and learning online, including assessment, except several videos that either they found themselves or that were provided to them. One participant indicated this lack of support saying that: "I felt alone when I had connection problems or needed support on how to use specific software or hardware. For example, I tried to solve my connection problems to EBA [an online platform for all teachers and students which includes online activities, exams, and tests]. We did not have any specific training on teaching or assessing skills online but attended several seminars on Facebook and YouTube" (Interviewee 7, Female).

Previous training (assessment literacy)

Regarding training on assessment literacy during teacher training programs, most of the participants (n=15) stated that they had several courses during their university education in teacher training programs on language assessment principles such as reliability and validity, writing items, and assessing skills. However, it was indicated that despite their previous training, they still felt the need to practice creating and/or choosing appropriate assessment items and scoring alternative assessment instruments. Almost all the participants (n=21) pointed to the fact that they did not receive any comprehensive training on how to assess language skills and components in online or distance education environments. One participant explained this as follows: "In my opinion, I know more or less how to assess the basic language skills and language components though I need more practice in creating and choosing appropriate assessment items. I believe that we were not provided with detailed training and practice in conducting an online assessment, especially in alternative assessment" (Interviewee 5, Female).

Academic integrity

As for summative assessment and high-stakes exams through which grades are finalized, the majority of the participants raised concerns about the security of assessment and authorship. In addition to technical constraints and limitations, the participants indicated that the assessment policy required by the Ministry of National Education also kept them from utilising alternative assessments. They indicated that they had the knowledge and practice to use various alternative assessments such as assignments, projects, portfolios, and discussions. However, several concerns were voiced, such as the security of assessment, as it would not be possible to ensure that the students created the work on their own or without any unethical help or support from others. One participant indicated that: "Summative assessment or high-stakes exams were not possible as cheating or getting others' help is easy. Online quizzes cannot also be utilized as again technically it would not be possible to secure the exams. Sometimes I cannot be sure whether the work is my student's work" (Interviewee 3, Male).

4. Discussion and conclusion

Based on the responses, it can be stated that during the pandemic, formative assessment received more attention from the participants due to several reasons. One is that the participants were well aware that during online teaching and the pandemic, it was more crucial than ever to determine learners' strengths and weaknesses. In line with what is stressed by Folse, Hubley, and Coombe (2007), Green (2021), and Uzun and Ertok (2020), the participants highly valued formative assessment during online teaching. However, summative assessment seems to have failed during online teaching especially when it serves in the form of high-stakes exams. Therefore,

it can be put forward that although summative assessment plays a significant role, online teaching practices lack the essential benchmark to check learners' progress, schools, and educational programmes. This might also mean that online teaching and assessment did not benefit from beneficial washback on learners (Çakır, 2017; Gastaldi & Grimaldi, 2021; Kılıçkaya, 2016; Öztürk-Karataş & Okan, 2019, 2021).

Regarding assessment items, it was also seen that assessing learners were limited to grammatical forms, vocabulary, and to some extent reading comprehension through selected-response items such as multiple-choice questions and matching, which is in line with findings of several other studies (Büyükkarcı, 2014; Golver, 2014; Han & Kaya, 2014). This seems to be mainly due to the technical resources available and the features of these resources and websites such as providing immediate feedback regarding correct and incorrect answers (Ferdig, Baumgartner, Hartshorne, Kaplan-Rakowski, & Mouza, 2020; Fitriyah & Jannah, 2021; Paudel, 2021). The participants mainly opted for tools and websites which provide easy and free access to online assessment tools such as *Quizlet* and *Wordwall*, and *Edpuzzle*. This assessment practice seems to have resulted in neglecting assessment of communication and the ability to comprehend authentic materials. In addition to this, engaging in person-to-person communication in Zoom meetings and presenting topics or ideas were seldom practised by the learners during these online teaching practices.

The responses indicated that the participants received little, if not any, technical support and training when they had problems using the platform required by the Ministry of Education. The participants sought help and solutions from YouTube videos including some sort of training regarding the challenges they faced such as troubleshooting on technological devices and Internet connections, which appeared as the common challenges faced in online teaching as displayed by Canpolat and Yıldırım (2021), and Fitriyah and Jannah (2021). This indicates that the participants lacked official support from the schools, although there were some seminars and workshops directed towards the general audience.

The participants' previous training in language assessment and evaluations prove that the participants had some experience in assessing language skills and components, such as grammar and vocabulary. However, the real challenge appeared to be related to assessing these skills online using the tools available. Most believed that they needed more practice in creating and choosing appropriate assessment items, which is consistent with findings of several other studies (Brumen et al., 2009; Hatipoğlu, 2010; Ölmezer-Öztürk, Öztürk, & Aydın, 2021). The responses of the participants also indicated the need for training in online assessment and several websites and software to utilise online formative and summative assessment. It was made clear by the participants that individual efforts of the staff at the teacher training programmes, and the number of the courses could not be sufficient and efficient. Therefore, a carefully designed program including more

practice and applications in assessment in both in teaching face to face and online classrooms is recommended. This could also be achieved by integrating assessment into school experience and practice teaching courses as part of the training program (Hidri, 2021).

Academic integrity was another theme that emerged during the analysis of the responses leading to two codes: insecure assessment and authorship. Considering the realities of online assessment, it might be quite natural that maintaining academic integrity would appear challenging and maybe even impossible. Implementing online exams with selected-response items is often more prone to cheating than written or spoken tasks (Harper, Bretag, & Rundle, 2020). Most teachers, like the ones in the current study, are willing to use alternative assignments, such as reflection tasks. Several participants showed interest in take-home exams not only to benefit from the advantages of summative assessment but also to reduce students' anxiety (Bengtsson, 2019); however, they added that since they were worried about the authorship and some other technical issues; they decided not to.

In conclusion, the study tried to investigate language teachers' experience with online language assessment practices and their views regarding the challenges faced. Their responses indicated that they needed more training, practice, and support on utilizing online assessment tools, with specific needs on alternative assessment as, to some extent, they excelled at using traditional assessment items via several websites and tools available. Therefore, the results also indicated the need for reconsidering language assessment courses in teacher training programs during and after the pandemic as even when the pandemic is over and its effects are lessened, online assessment practices would be an integral part of our teaching and learning practices (Russell & Murphy, 2021).

As with any practical research, it is worth noting that there are several limitations of the study in various aspects. It must be acknowledged that the study utilized the participants' responses in data analysis and their reported experiences were considered in data analysis, presentation of findings, and the discussion of these findings. Therefore, readers might like to take into account that what was reported by the participants might well be different from what they do or did in their teaching contexts. Therefore, further research focus on observations of online assessment practices through the example instruments as used by the participants. As a form of data triangulation, the participants could also be asked to keep a journal in which they write down their feelings and experiences on a daily basis. Furthermore, in addition to teachers' perspectives, learners' experience with online assessment and their views on academic integrity should also be investigated.

Acknowledgement

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Technology in Support of Developing Speaking Skills in ESP Courses

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, when face-to-face human interactions are restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students have fewer opportunities to put their oral communicative abilities to the test. Under these circumstances, technology becomes an ally of both teachers and learners. While synchronous tools enable students to communicate with one another in real time, asynchronous tools allow them, among others, to record their utterances for review and self-evaluation. This paper aims to indicate which technological solutions could help teachers increase learners' oral production in the ESP classroom (with particular emphasis on Medical and Business English) and which ones could help students improve their speaking skills independently.

Keywords: technology, speaking, oral communication, speaking skills, ESP

1. Role of speaking in ESP education

Speaking is frequently regarded as the most challenging skill to develop in the foreign language classroom. This also applies to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instruction, which aims to prepare students to master the language used in various professional and workplace settings to accomplish specific purposes (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

ESP courses are primarily designed for learners who have to carry out specific communicative tasks prescribed by their academic or workplace contexts. The tasks may include conference presentations and discussing research results for academic purposes, medical history taking or giving a nursing handover for medical purposes, reporting ideas and designs for engineering purposes, or negotiating with suppliers for business purposes. This complexity of ESP content is observed by Orr (2001, p. 207), who defines specialist language learners as those who require special skills "to carry out highly specialised tasks for which general English may not prove sufficient". They commonly seek to develop their linguistic compe-

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tence in English in order to be able to communicate professional information and to perform job-related tasks.

Significantly, in ESP programmes it is needs analysis that guides curriculum development and determines which language skills are useful for the learners in order to accomplish certain professional tasks. ESP instruction is "an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 19). Thus, conducting a needs analysis is imperative to determine what students need to achieve through the medium of English (Huhta, Vogt, Johnson, Tulkki, & Hall, 2013).

2. Oral communication skills in the ESP classroom

The development of speaking skills has become one of the core elements of ESP training. The need to communicate orally is evident in the light of the cultural challenges of multinational teams working together in increasingly global professional environments. Furthermore, the need for effective communication skills training in English is emphasised by a number of professional bodies, such as the General Medical Council (GMC) or the Association of American Medical Colleges (Kurtz, Silverman, & Draper, 2005). Consequently, speaking skills should be given due importance in the ESP curriculum.

ESP courses ought to be designed to enable participants to practise speaking for a number of activity types, including
- communicating in typical situations in the workplace or educational context,
- discussing research data,
- giving presentations or talks,
- participating in seminars, lectures, discussions, etc.,
- communicating specialized knowledge to non-professionals,
- communicating in culturally diverse contexts.

In order to help learners communicate more effectively in the workplace, considerable emphasis also needs to be put on the practice of accurate pronunciation of specialist terms. This is particularly important in high-reliability domains, such as medicine or aviation, where accurate and effective communication is critical for safe practice and where miscommunication may result in failure to convey relevant information. Ineffective communication may, in effect, increase the potential for minor errors or even malpractice.

3. Synchronous and asynchronous communication tools

In order to help students develop their speaking skills, teachers can use either synchronous or asynchronous communication tools.

Synchronous tools allow teachers and students accessing the same communicator at the same time to engage in real-time communication, irrespective of the distance between them. As a result, participants of a communicative event can im-

mediately respond to the message they have received. Clandfield (2020) observes that synchronous learning tools such as Blackboard Collaborate enable students to engage in whole-class activities, open and guided pair work, or pair and small group speaking tasks in breakout rooms.

Asynchronous communication does not occur in real time, i.e., participants of a communicative event do not immediately receive and/or respond to messages. One of the most frequently used asynchronous tools is e-mail, which is the "foundation for all forms of online learning and teaching" (Kearsley, 2000, p. 28). Other popular tools include discussion boards or forums, which enable students to interact with the course content, the teacher, and their peers. Some teachers use asynchronous tools to record voice or video messages to which students can respond at a time that is most convenient for them.

Real-time communication has a lot of advantages in all educational contexts. It fosters understanding of the academic content and allows students to put their language knowledge into practice. Moreover, it promotes immediate personal engagement between students and teachers, thus decreasing the sense of isolation (Haythornthwaite & Kazmer, 2002) that has become common in many educational contexts due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Significantly, synchronous technologies in the ESP classroom may prevent miscommunication or misunderstanding, as they offer varied ways of interacting and enable participants to collaborate and ask questions or offer clarification in real time.

Both synchronous and asynchronous tools can be used as a vehicle for language interaction. The communication type that teachers adopt should reflect the needs of their students. This is particularly true of ESP instruction, which is guided by learner needs.

4. Developing speaking skills with synchronous tools

To ensure effective online communication, both teachers and students require access to a teaching platform, a stable Internet connection, a camera, a microphone, and headphones. However, the fact that every student seems to be learning online nowadays can affect the data transfer on the Internet (Wilden, 2020). This may result in low-quality audio, which makes messages in a foreign language difficult to understand and the teaching of pronunciation and intonation challenging.

Apart from the flow rate of the data transfer, the quality of the audio is also dependent on the type of microphone and headphones used. Even though many computers and phones have built-in microphones, Wilden (2020) recommends that online learning participants use headsets, because the microphone is closer to the mouth. Moreover, a headset projects the sound at a more limited, yet more targeted, range. This eliminates the risk of the audio being captured by the speaker's microphone. However, some students are unable to afford good-quality headsets or their built-in microphones may be faulty or broken. In such cases, they usually

only log in to a session and passively participate in the lesson, which makes the development of speaking skills in real time almost impossible to achieve.

Not only do messages become easier to understand when the audio quality is satisfactory, but also when each participant has their camera turned on, as body language, gestures and facial expressions reinforce the intended meaning. Nevertheless, both teachers and students might find speaking into a camera intimidating and therefore prefer to only leave their microphones on. Some teachers and students may choose not to switch on their cameras out of fear that others may make judgements concerning their standard of living, accommodation, financial situation, etc. Some learners do not turn on their cameras and/or their microphones because they have competing obligations, e.g., childcare. Moreover, both teachers and students might turn their cameras off due to bandwidth restrictions that can disrupt data transfer and consequently the flow of the lesson. Whatever the reason for switched-off cameras, the fact that both teachers and students do not use them affects the understanding of messages in a foreign language and makes it difficult to reply to what has been said.

Poor Internet access can be a reason why learners are disconnected during an online task in breakout rooms. While monitoring other groups, the teacher might not realize that some students are unable to develop their speaking skills because their partners have unexpectedly left the virtual classroom.

The challenges related to helping learners improve their speaking skills with the help of synchronous communication tools mean that students need to be provided with opportunities to practise those skills with the help of asynchronous communication technologies.

5. Advantages of asynchronous language communication

One of the most important advantages of asynchronous communication is the fact that students can complete speaking assignments at a time and location that is most convenient for them. This minimizes interruptions resulting from other obligations, a scenario common in teaching ESP learners, who are often adults either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. Moreover, the use of asynchronous communication tools improves concentration and the quality of students' utterances (Cullen, 2020). As Hrastinski (2008, p. 52) indicates, "[students] spend more time refining their contributions, which are generally considered more thoughtful compared to synchronous communication".

Kerr (2020) emphasizes that asynchronous speaking tasks are important for shy or reserved students, as they benefit from more independence to complete their activities and often have more opportunities to speak than in synchronous online classes. Learners have more time to think what they want to say and how they want to say it and may also be more motivated than in synchronous settings. They can analyse tasks in detail and listen to recorded material more than once,

which aids understanding and helps them prepare a more appropriate response. It might also contribute to the quality of the response.

Moreover, responses to asynchronous tasks can be edited to remove background noise, unwanted pauses or fragments. Students' videos can be embellished with filters such as stickers, emojis or colourful text with different fonts, which allows online learners to better express themselves or to create characters that might be more assertive and exuberant than they are in real life. This can lead to greater confidence during speaking assignments and minimises the stress resulting from using a camera. The latter, however, no longer seems to be a significant source of stress, as Kerr (2020) indicates that speaking into a camera or a microphone is becoming normalized, probably due to the fact that the whole educational process has been moved to an online environment. In fact, synchronous speaking activities might be more stressful for students, as they carry the potential of causing embarrassment.

Finally, asynchronous speaking activities are a good introduction to learner autonomy. They help students become responsible for planning, organising, monitoring, and evaluating their learning tasks.

6. Asynchronous tools for developing ESP speaking skills

The aim of the following sections is to provide descriptions of three tools that teachers can use to help students develop their oral communication, i.e,. English-Central, Medical English, and Flipgrid. Due to the space limitations, only selected tools available, which are for free and can enhance the development of ESP speaking skills, will be discussed. The authors decided to analyse one tool for developing Business English, one for developing Medical English, and one that could potentially be used for both specialised varieties of English. The analysis was guided by the following questions:

1) Do the tools allow for the asynchronous development of ESP speaking skills?
2) How are they used to develop speaking skills?
3) Do they allow students to improve their speaking skills independently of the teacher?
4) Are they easy to access and easy to use?
5) Do they emphasize the development of accuracy and appropriateness?
6) Are they likely to be appreciated by university students who are digital natives?

6.1. EnglishCentral (https://www.englishcentral.com/browse/videos)

EnglishCentral is a website designed to improve listening and speaking skills as well as vocabulary and pronunciation in an asynchronous context. It offers over 15,000 short, interactive videos divided into nine thematic categories (no videos devoted specifically to Medical English are provided) and classified according to three levels of difficulty. Significantly, the short length of the videos is an advan-

tage, as they maximize students' engagement (Guo, Kim, & Robin, 2014, as cit. in Brame, 2016, p. 4).

Learners who aim to improve their speaking skills using EnglishCentral first select a video related to their professional and linguistic needs. While watching, they can click on unfamiliar words and pause the video to display the definition of a word. This enables students to learn the vocabulary in context.
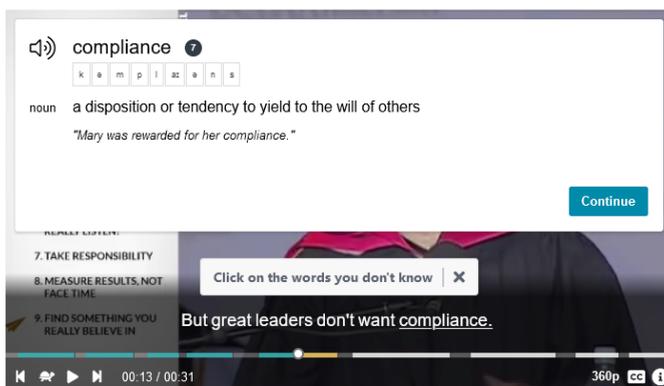
Figure 1: Video from EnglishCentral showing a definition of a word students are not familiar with.

Students can click on the loudspeaker icon to have the options to hear how the word is pronounced, analyse the phonetic transcription, or see how it is used in a sentence. If the pace of the video is too fast, students can click on the turtle icon (see Figure 1 bottom left-hand corner) to slow it down. They can also hear and see selected lines from the video again. The lines contain blanks and the students' task is to fill in the missing letters to recreate the words from the original recording. Automated misspelling detection is provided.
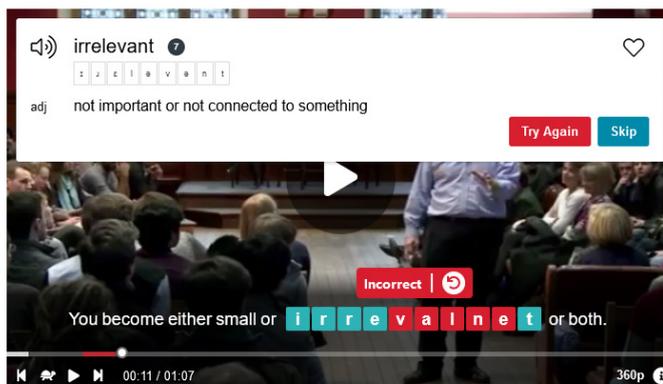
Figure 2: Video from EnglishCentral showing students where they made a spelling mistake.

The students' subsequent task is to listen to selected lines from the video again and repeat them. They record their voices to practise both pronunciation and intonation and submit the recordings to receive online pronunciation feedback.
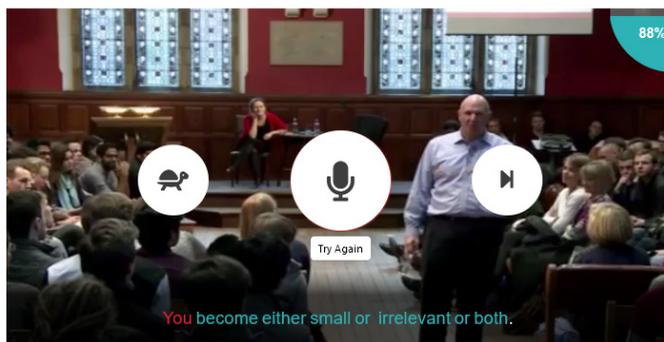
Figure 3: Video from EnglishCentral showing students how to correct their pronunciation and intonation.

Finally, students can chat with a bot called MiMi about the video. The bot displays questions on the screen and students record their voices to answer them (at the time of writing this article this stage was still in the beta version).

EnglishCenteral is relatively intuitive and easy to use. However, it is difficult to find on the Internet and students should therefore be provided with the specific website address.

Following Gajek's (2018, p. 4) suggestion that the selection of tools for developing students' speaking skills should be based on whether they emphasize accuracy and appropriateness since "lack of corrective feedback can produce fluent learners but not accurate enough to be intelligible by most proficient users", EnglishCentral seems adequate as a learning tool. It places emphasis on lexical accuracy, pronunciation and intonation, and is useful for those who need immediate and clear feedback.

Thanks to its interactive videos, EnglishCentral will be appreciated by tertiary students who enjoy online technology. As Lehner (2014, as cit. in Wachtler, Hubmann, Zöhner, & Ebner, 2016) observes, online users are accustomed to interactions and thus tend to prefer interactive features in videos. Furthermore, an opportunity to interact with an instructional video is likely to enhance learner engagement and lead to improved learning effectiveness (Zhang, Zhou, Briggs, & Nunamaker, 2006).

Nevertheless, despite the broad range of business topics, EnglishCentral videos are predominantly aimed at in-service learners rather than university students. The latter will probably find themselves practising phrases and roles they are not

socially familiar with, neither professionally ready for. Consequently, they might not have coping potential when it comes to performing them (Dakowska, 2005).

EnglishCentral is a website for those who appreciate and are able to learn independently of the teacher, as when working with video material students are responsible for their own progress. The question arises whether first-year university students will be able to effectively use the website, as secondary school graduates in the Polish educational context are frequently more familiar with a teacher-driven and teacher-dependent learning process.

6.2 Medical English https://www.medicalenglish.com/

Medical English is one of the very few online tools that students of Medical English could use to improve their speaking skills. It is a web-based language course focused on EMP and is divided into 23 core and 30 tech units. While the former section includes more general medical topics, the latter additionally focuses on different areas of professional knowledge and practice, as many units are built around topics related to different medical specialities, e.g., surgery, obstetrics, radiology, and dermatology. Each core unit is subdivided into seven parts, but only one of them is devoted to developing speaking skills. To complete the speaking task in the unit students first need to listen to five sentences containing medical vocabulary introduced in previous activities.

Figure 4: Speaking activity from Medical English (Unit 1 The Human Body)

Students can listen to either American English or British English versions of the sentences, but the British version seems rather artificial. Next, students are asked to speak, record the sentences they repeat and paste the link to the recording in the space provided on the website. Then students' recordings are graded by the teacher.

Medical English allows for the development of the correct pronunciation of medical terms and intonation in sentences containing them. Thus, similarly to

EnglishCentral, it emphasizes the development of accuracy and appropriateness. However, unlike EnglishCentral, the activities are not interactive, which might discourage tertiary students as interactivity is a factor "attracting and retaining students in online courses and programs" (Moreillon, 2015, p. 41*)*. On the other hand, the lack of interactivity means that it is easy to learn how to work with the activities provided in the course.

Another shortcoming is the fact that no automatic (provided by the tools embedded in the website) and immediate feedback is available, which would instantly enable students to see which areas need improvement. Moreover, to obtain access to all units and activities students should be given a class code, which means that the teacher needs to purchase access to the web resource (which at the moment of writing the article cost more than $20 a month).

6.3 Flipgrid https://flippgrid.com

Flipgrid is a free video-sharing tool that allows teachers to collect video responses from their students. Once the teachers sign up, they can create grids or learner communities and pose problems to which students reply with 90-second video recordings. This is an undisputable advantage, as short videos maximize students' engagement in an online learning environment.

To pose a problem, teachers can type in their questions, add a media resource (e.g., YouTube material) or record their own video. The teacher can create a topic they find appropriate or browse more than 30.000 topics created by the Flipgrid community.
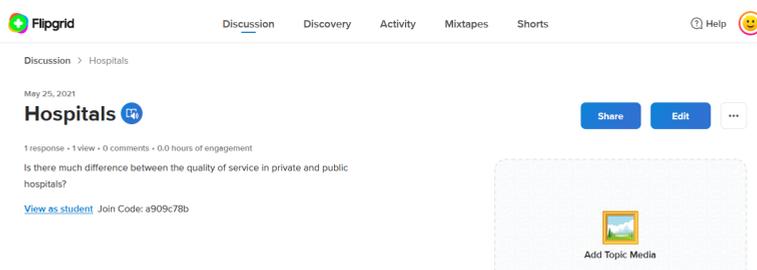
Figure 5: Creating a topic in Flipgrid

Once the teacher has created a topic, they are able to customize it, i.e., select a Video Response Time, allow comments on video response, or enable closed captions in different languages. Moreover, teachers can use the Shorts tool, which allows them to record material and send it to students with a link, which means that students will only be able to watch the video.

To invite students to join the discussion teachers can, among other options, click the 'share topic' button on the topic page or copy the URL and send it to their

students. Once students have access to the topic, they can start recording and edit-
ing their video responses. Students can also record "mic-only" material or cover
their image with digital stickers.
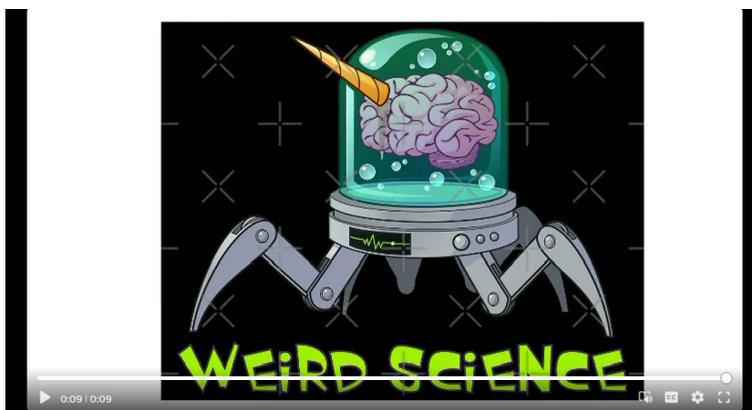
Figure 6: Student response with an avatar.

The teacher can also control the content by setting the Video Moderation mode.
As a result, students' videos will only be posted following the teachers' approval.

At first sight, Flipgrid appears difficult to use due to its complicated number of
features. However, its diverse interactive features have led to the development of
numerous sites and YouTube videos offering dedicated guidance on how to work
with it. At present, one in three American teachers uses Flipgrid (Vander Ark,
2019). In fact, Flipgrid is the most interactive of the three tools discussed here,
hence it is likely to be more appreciated by tertiary students than EnglishCentral
and MedicalEnglish. Moreover, it engages students to reflect on topics that they
might feel intimidated to discuss in front of their peers, as thanks to the editing
tools provided by Flipgrid they can create personas for themselves, i.e., "fictional,
character-driven elements that personify ideal user" (Lowdermilk, 2013, as cit. in
Silva Salomão, Rebelo, & Rodríguez, 2015, p. 6215). According to Davis (2012,
p. 1), "persona means mask" behind which students can hide their personal and
linguistic insecurities.

Contrary to EnglishCentral and MedicalEnglish, Flipgrid is a video platform
that furthers the development of speaking skills at any level and any area of exper-
tise since it is the teacher who creates a grid and decides on how specialised and
linguistically advanced a given topic will be. In this respect Flipgrid seems to be
the most suitable tool for tertiary students with very little professional experience.

Flipgrid is more suited for teachers who want to enhance students' fluency
and creative language use (Vaz Bauler, 2021) rather than linguistic accuracy. It

does, however, promote metacognition when students watch videos posted by their peers, learn from each other, compare their learning process with that of their friends and self-reflect upon their contributions. As Clark (n.d.) observes, "This allows them to 'think about thinking' and naturally throws them into a state of metacognition". contributions promotes an intellectual exchange of ideas rather than "broadcast" outcomes (Moreillon, 2015, p. 43). According to Rafaeli and Sudweeks (1997), interactivity understood as the process of knowledge construction leads to engagement, sociability, the group's potential to stick together, cooperation, and longevity.

Finally, Flipgrid has a range of accessibility features that allow all learners to participate (Nieves, 2020). For instance, students can use Microsoft's Immersive Reader within both the closed captioning and any text within a topic. The Reader reads any text aloud and breaks words up into syllables for easier decoding.

Conclusions

Asynchronous communication tools rely on activities that students can access and interact with when it is convenient for them. They relieve the pressure of an immediate response, give learners more control of how and when they want to reply, thus resulting in fewer interruptions, deeper concentration, and better output. Asynchronous technologies also enable participants to create a living document of their learning progress, which can be subject to self-reflection at any time.

Out of the three asynchronous tools discussed in this article Flipgrid seems to be the most suitable for tertiary students who start learning Business or Medical English and who quite frequently have very little or no experience with these areas of expertise, as it allows teachers to create topics that can be specifically tailored for the groups they teach.

Flipgrid also has a bigger and a more varied number of interactive features than EnglishCentral and MedicalEnglish and can thus accommodate more diversified learning styles and personality types.

Even though Flipgrid does not really promote linguistic accuracy, a feature present in both EnglishCentral and MedicalEnglish, it enhances fluency, creative language use and promotes group cooperation and group cohesion. However, the learning process is at least partially teacher-led and does not allow for wholly individual work.

On the other hand, EnglishCentral and MedicalEnglish provide teachers with highly specialised[1] ready-made topics, which is important when one takes into account the workload of language teachers. Moreover, fluency is important but

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[1]   Flipgrid also contains medical and business topics but they are not as specialized as the ones that are provided by EnglishCentral and MedicalEnglish.

proficient language users should be able to use a foreign language in an accurate way. EnglishCenral as well as MedicalEnglish enable work on accuracy.

The analysis of the three tools seems to suggest that Flipgrid is the best tool for developing ESP speaking skills at tertiary level. However, websites such as EnglishCentral and MedicalEnglish can be implemented as supporting tools, depending on the requirements of the teaching and learning situation.

Taking into account the fact that education has largely moved online and synchronous communication tools do not always allow for effective development of speaking skills, asynchronous communication tools become a necessity. Nevertheless, teachers should bear in mind that the latter tools complement rather than replace the former ones in developing speaking skills.

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German Pronunciation Database and its Possible Applications in the Age of Homeschooling

ABSTRACT

Orthoepy research is a traditional field at the department of Speech Science and Phonetics at Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg. After several pronunciation dictionaries, the department has now published a pronunciation database. With the establishment of the German pronunciation database (DAD), the desire for a publicly accessible reference source is met. It offers norm phonetic information on general vocabulary, as well as forms and rules of phonetical Germanization. The database can be used for various scenarios in German lessons. Continuous expansion means that further possible uses can be introduced in the future.

Keywords: history of pronunciation codification, pronunciation database

1. Orthoepic codifications – from book to database

The results of orthoepy research at the Department of Speech Science and Phonetics at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg have been published in the form of several pronunciation dictionaries, recently the *Deutsches Aussprachewörterbuch* (DAWB) [German Pronunciation Dictionary] (Krech, Stock, Hirschfeld, & Anders, 2009), which wants to be considered as the reference for German standard pronunciation. The recommended pronunciation is especially applicable in fields in which people speak consciously of form, like audio-visual media, stage, education and speech therapy (pp. 6–7). People expect the use of standard pronunciation from persons that work in these fields as Hollmach (2007) showed in a representative survey. Furthermore, the results of orthoepy research address most notably German teachers and learners in German as a foreign, second or mother language.

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1.1 A brief look at history: the beginnings of orthoepy research

One of the first phoneticians, who dealt with standard pronunciation was Wilhelm Viëtor (1850–1918). In some empirical research, he asked people about their pronunciation habits, which can be seen as the first exploration of pronunciation reality. His book *Die Aussprache des Schriftdeutschen* [Pronunciation of written German] (1885) contains a pronunciation theory and a small dictionary with phonetic transcriptions. It can thus be considered as the first systematically applied, scientifically founded set of rules for German standard pronunciation (cf. Krech et al., 2009, p. 9). In 1912 an additional book by the author appeared, which was called *Deutsches Aussprachewörterbuch* [German pronunciation dictionary]. The pronunciation theory was missing in this book, but it contained a dictionary of 35,000 words in IPA transcription.

Another established codification of German standard pronunciation was published at the end of the 19th century by Theodor Siebs (1862–1941). He took the pronunciation of actors in German theatres as a basis for his recommendations. This approach was and is viewed critically to this day (cf. Hollmach, 2007, p. 69; Krech, 1957; Stock, 1996). The author's requirements were so high that even the actors were unable to meet them. But nonetheless, Siebs expanded the scope of his pronunciation norms and transferred them to other areas of communication beyond the theatre stage. Even if this led to a wave of criticism, Siebs' standards were advocated in conservative circles and are in some cases still used today.

1.2 Orthoepy research before German reunification

Unfortunately, in the 1950s, efforts to fundamentally revise Siebs' norms and create an all-German pronunciation dictionary failed, because this initiative was rejected by the descendants and editors of Siebs' pronunciation dictionary (cf. Hollmach, 2007, p. 79). Scientists from Halle then began with systematic research in the field of orthoepie to elaborate a conceptually new pronunciation dictionary beyond the tradition of Theodor Siebs. One of their guiding principles was that the recommendations had to be realizable. They analysed the pronunciation on the radio and examined key pronunciation features such as aspiration of plosives, the pronunciation of R, reduction of [ə] in weak syllables and vowel quality and quantity (Krech, 1961). In 1964 the *Wörterbuch der Deutschen Aussprache* (WDA) [Dictionary of German pronunciation] finally appeared[1].

In the years that followed, research continued in Halle and entailed some new editions of the WDA as well as an extended edition named *Großes Wörterbuch der deutschen Aussprache* (GWDA) [Large Dictionary of German pronunciation] in 1982. One of the novelties was the phonostylistic differentiation of standard pronunciation. It mainly referred to the research results of Gottfried Meinhold

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[1] Cf. Krech, Kurka, Stelzig, Stock, Stötzer and Teske (1964).

(1973). He distinguished between three levels of standard pronunciation in a formal lecture, in reading manuscripts on the radio and in factual conversations (Krech et al., 1982, p. 73).

1.3 New codification of German standard pronunciation since the 1990s

The *Deutsches Aussprachewörterbuch* (DAWB) [German Pronunciation Dictionary], published in 2009, is considered to be a further development of the GWDA (cf. Hirschfeld & Stock, 2016, p. 51). Particularly noteworthy are the sociophonetic studies, the results of which were incorporated into the development of this new dictionary. Therefore, a language that is accepted and desired throughout Germany should be evaluated. 1,700 people from different regions and social classes took part and assessed the appropriateness of various audio samples. The survey confirmed that German people have an internalized idea of standard pronunciation, even if they cannot speak it themselves (Hollmach, 2007). Further innovations and updates included the following areas (cf. Hirschfeld & Stock, 2016, p. 51):

1. description of the three national German standard varieties in Germany, Austria and Switzerland,
2. update of the phonostylistic differentiation,
3. expansion and update of the vocabulary,
4. new codification of phonetic Germanization of foreign words and names.

A decade after the DAWB had been published it seemed a logical step to use the possibilities offered by the internet.

2. German Pronunciation Database

The *Deutsche Aussprachedatenbank* (DAD) [German Pronunciation Database] can be seen as a further development of the DAWB. It was developed by researchers at the Department for Speech Science and Phonetics at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg in cooperation with the Professorship for business informatics at the Technical University of Applied Sciences Wildau (cf. Ebel, Förster & Walther, 2021).

2.1 From idea to implementation

A dictionary in book format limits the utilization for users as well as researchers. This is mainly due to the limited space in books. In addition, clarity is limited when you give too much extra information for every entry. As a result, in a book, many additional details cannot be given. For example, the phonetic transcription of standard pronunciation is done using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Another phonetic spelling like XSAMPA wouldn't find a place in a dictionary and would also reduce clarity. The provision of further information is also restricted. In the *DAWB* the lexical meaning is only given if an identically written entry has

more than one meaning, like the German for August (month) [aɔɡˈʊst] vs. August (name) [ˈaɔɡʊst]. Further restrictions concern the naming of the indications of origin and the representation of pronunciation variants.

While the book format is associated with many restrictions, a database allows a wide range of uses and expansion options for the existing amount of data. In contrast to a linear dictionary, a web application can be used hypertextually. This makes links between individual entries possible and also to other websites that provide for example etymological information. Pronunciation databases provide several search functions, which significantly simplifies use. If you are looking for words with a certain combination of letters or even phones in certain positions or syllables, you can find them using the search box syntax. Of course, it is possible to search for IPA characters as well as XSAMPA characters and their combinations. There are also filter options to sort entries by initial letters, the indication of origin or the number of syllables. Furthermore, you can give multimedia additions like audio files that make the transcribed pronunciation audible.

2.2 Current work status

Since 2011, the data pool has 130,000 entries, generated out of the DAWB dictionary. This data pool was subjected to a quality assurance control with regard to correctness and completeness of the entries as well as usability and systematics (Förster, 2014). After that, some systems were tested, and the first version of the Pronunciation Database was set as a DokuWiki system. The first entries in this database can be dated to 2017. It was determined that audio files should be generated using a TTS system. For this purpose, the available data first had to be prepared and supplemented with additional metadata (Drechsel, 2020). Since the middle of 2020, the DAD is being re-engineered to overcome weaknesses that arose from the old DokuWiki system.

At the moment you can use the DAD only after registration. You can search for single entries, either in their graphemic form or in the IPA transcription. The phonetic search is a central component of DAD and is supported by a virtual IPA keyboard that maps all vowels, consonants, diacritics and suprasegmentals according to the International Phonetic Alphabet.

An entry in the DAD consists of five or six lines. A sixth line comes into play when entries have a foreign language origin. The first line is the word in graphemic form. Below is the transcribed pronunciation with IPA characters. In lines three and four you can find information on the number of syllables and the accent pattern (cf. chapter 2.3). At the bottom, the transcription in XSAMPA characters is given. Moreover, you can display alphabetically sorted word lists. In these lists information is given about transcription, foreign origin and the number of syllables. Every word entry can be clicked on the lists so that you arrive at the webpage for that entry with its informational lines.

2.3 Further developments of the German Pronunciation Database

The beta version of the DAD currently in use is the web-based Open Source wiki software DokuWiki. The application enables user administration and rights assignment, editing and research as well as versioning of changes. A new concept envisages using the web framework Django which gives the flexibility to implement complex features that cannot be realised with DokuWiki as Django is a very versatile framework for web applications.

In addition to the changes in the database structure, corrections are currently being made to individual words as well as groups of words with similar uncertainties. One important field concerns the indication of origin. This additional information is not used to identify the geographical but the linguistic origin of a word or name. For every entry with a foreign pronunciation, the origin is already indicated in the DAWB. In the course of corrections, these indications in the DAD will be written out. For example, the abbreviated spelling of the origin *engl.* is now given as *englisch*. If a word is a combination of two words with different origins, both indications shall be written out, like *Stretchlimousine* (*straight limo*) which is a combination of English and French origin, so that it is represented as *englisch + französisch* [English + French] in the database. Another case is words that have entered German through a third language, e.g., Georgian, that entered German via Russian as an intermediary language or Catalan and its intermediary language Spanish. In those cases, both languages are given in the DAD as *georgisch-russisch* (*Georgian-Russian*) and *katalanisch-spanisch* (*Catalan-Spanish*) respectively. In connection with these adjustments, the indications of origin were also checked, and incorrect indications were changed.

A related problem concerns homography. This term means that two words are written the same but pronounced differently. Different cases can be distinguished:

- One word from one language can be pronounced in different ways, but that doesn't affect the meaning (homosemy), like Strategie (strategy), that can be pronounced [ʃtʁ̥ategˈiː] or [stʁ̥ategˈiː].
- Two (or more) words with different meanings (polysemy), that come from the same language are pronounced differently, e.g., Hochzeit which means wedding if you pronounce it [hˈɔxtsaɪ̯t] but means heyday if you pronounce it [hˈoːxtsaɪ̯t].
- Two (or more) homoseme words that are differently pronounced in various languages, for example, the name Adam which has five entries in the dictionary: [ˈaːdam] (without an indication of origin, because it's the German pronunciation), [ˈɛdəm] (English), [adˈã] (French), [adˈaːm] (Russian), [ˈadam] (Czech). It seems worth mentioning that the pronunciations of foreign origin do not represent the original pronunciation in the respective language of origin but the phonetically Germanized pronunciation. For

more information about phonetically Germanization in orthoepy see e.g. Ebel, Lange and Skoczek (2014).

- Two (or more) polyseme words that are differently pronounced in various languages, for example, Komplet means the Christian Night Prayer if you pronounce it [kɔmplˈeːt] (Latin origin) or it means two coordinated garments if you pronounce it [kɔmplˈeː] (French origin).

Those four groups require different representations in the database. For every case, it was discussed if they should appear in one entry with two (or more) transcriptions and the respective indication of meaning or in several singular entries – one for every meaning.

The last discussion that is in progress affects the accent patterns. In the DAD for every entry, such a pattern is given. Using those patterns, you can distinguish not only between stressed syllables and those without stress, but you can better differentiate unstressed as well as secondarily stressed syllables.

The accent pattern displays the accent level assignment which was carried out automatically based on complex rules (cf. Drechsel, 2020, pp. 57–63). This approach was particularly important with regard to speech synthesis. In German standard pronunciation, we find a typical rhythm, that is created by a change from stressed and non-stressed syllables. To depict this rhythmic structure all entries were provided with a four-level pattern:

- Level 4 represents the primary stressed syllable. Every word has only one primary stress.
- Level 3 marks all syllables that are secondarily stressed. Not every word contains a secondary stress, but there are also words with more than one, like multi-part compounds.
- Level 2 indicates all syllables that could potentially be stressed in German standard pronunciation but aren't stressed in the concrete word.
- Level 1 marks syllables that cannot be stressed in neutral realization (not emotional, not contrasting) of German standard pronunciation. That concerns syllables which include German reduction vowels [ə] or [ɐ] or elided vowels.

For example, the word *Geburtsurkunde* [birth certificate] [gəbˈuːˌɐtsʔuːˌɐkˌʊndə] has the accent pattern 14231. It is possible, especially in words with few syllables, that not every accent level is represented. The word *Juniorprofessor* [junior professor] [jˈuːni̯oːˌɐpʁofˌɛsoːˌɐ] contains no level 1 syllable: 42232. It is currently being discussed to establish a fifth level to be able to distinguish the secondary stresses in words with more than one secondary stress. The previous level 4 would become level 5 and the previous level 3 would be modified into level 4 for secondary stress and level 3 for reduced secondary stress. In the word *Betreuungssituation* (*care situation*) [bətɐˈɔœʊŋʂ͡zituatsi̯ˌoːn] the accent pattern with differentiated secondary stresses would be 1523224.

2.4 Future potential of the database

The most urgent point for future work on the DAD is the completion of all entries with audio files. The addition of audio files is certainly one of the greatest advantages that pronunciation databases have over dictionaries, because many users are not used to reading the phonetic transcription and have difficulties realizing the pronunciation information correctly. But for optimal usability, some criteria for audio files should be considered. Various TTS systems are currently being tested to see which one best meets the requirements.

Another idea that is more related to the content is to group the vocabulary. So, users could selectively display words from certain categories. Different classifications are conceivable. It would be possible to sort all words of the basic vocabulary according to the learning level corresponding to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Terms that are often used in certain situations could also be grouped together (e.g. in a restaurant, at the doctor's, terms from the field of politics, chemical elements, toponyms, athlete names etc.). Another important target is to add inflected forms to the DAD. Especially for learners of German as a foreign language, not only the pronunciation of an infinitive is of interest, but also inflexion forms. To give an example: the German verb *sprechen* shows the following stem forms: *spricht – sprach – hat gesprochen*. These inflexion forms go with a vowel change. This, in turn, is associated with a change in the subsequent fricative, because in German the standard pronunciation <ch> is realized as [ç] only after front tongue vowels, while it is realized as [x] after central and back vowels: [ʃpʁˈɛçn̩] – [ʃpʁɪçt] – [ʃpʁaːx] – [hat ɡəʃpʁˈɔxn̩]. Of course, these extensions should be supplemented by audio files, too.

3. Explanations on the DAD Database in online teaching

The last two years, linked to the current epidemiological situation, have brought many changes in the organisation of teaching. Teachers and learners not only had to get used to the new forms and methods but also new programmes and tools useful for homeschooling. The German Pronunciation Database (DAD) developed in Halle is becoming more relevant in this situation. As outlined above, the DAD offers several useful functions. On the one hand, it can be used as an online dictionary, and on the other hand, it can be used as a database by its filter functions in the online teaching of German as a mother tongue (DaM) and of German as a second language (DaZ) and as a foreign language (DaF). The following are some ways to use the German pronunciation database.

3.1 The DAD potential in the field of DaM

The aim of German teaching in primary schools is to provide pupils with a language education so that they are able to act appropriately in current and future life situations.

The subject of German as a mother tongue is speaking and writing as specific oral and written forms of German. Basic language skills are acquired in the first years of school. The pupils should learn to spell correctly, among other things. The following language skills are trained according to educational standards through appropriate support measures (cf. internet source 1):

- the recognition of the correlations between spelling and pronunciation,
- the use of basic legal orthographic strategies,
- the principle of synthesis when reading and reproducing the content,
- the differentiation of language sound phenomena,
- the corresponding spelling and taking into account of orthographic and morphological rules,
- the syllabification of words,
- the use of punctuation marks,
- the distinction between regional and standard languages,
- the recognition of design features in audio texts, such as voice guidance, speech pauses, and speech tempo.

With the above-mentioned requirements for the students of German as a mother tongue, the phonetic competence is gradually deepened in addition to the awareness of spelling rules. At the same time, these guidelines on educational attainment presuppose the language knowledge of primary school teachers.

On the one hand, the DAD offers comprehensive descriptions of the German sound system and can serve as the basis for further training for the teachers. On the other hand, the use of the DAD can also be used in online lessons.

For example, the following tasks could be prepared with the DAD:

- How many syllables do the following animal names consist of? Clap and say the words out loud! Please check the solution in the DAD?

Siamkatze, Giraffe, Krokodil, Hund, Zwergpinscher, Papagei, Wellensittich

- The letters *s, ss* and *ß* are missing in the following words. Make the plural forms of them and compare the spelling with data in the DAD! What letter is missing? Fill in the correct letters:

    Fa__, Fu___, Nu___, Hau__, Gru__, Spa__, Lo___

- Fill in the gaps in the text. What letters are missing? Check the pronunciation in the DAD and compare it with the spelling rules.

__wei Ka___en wollten mal einen Tiger im ___oo besuchen. Sie gingen __ uerst in ein Geschäft rech___ daneben. „Vielleicht kaufen wir ihm schwar___e Schuhe für seine Ta__en? - schlug die eine Ka___e vor. „Das ist doch ein Wi___!“ – entgegnete die andere Ka__e. Im ___oo wird im Winter gehei__t und er si__t eh nur im Käfig.“ Sie fanden leider nich__, was dem Tiger gefallen könnte. Sie hatten die Schnau__e voll und waren schon etwas gerei__t. „Ohne Geschenk ist doch doof! Wir kaufen ihm diese Kra___bürste.“ Der stol__ Tiger tan__te vor

Freude, nicht weil er sich mit der Bürste nun kra__en konnte, sondern weil ihn seine Freunde nicht vergessen haben.

The teachers can use the DAD in many ways in online lessons. In higher-level classes, foreign words, technical terms, and homonyms can be accessed by a phonetic script and other metadata for individual keywords.

3.2 The DAD potential in the field of DaZ/DaF

German as a Second Language (DaZ) refers to the teaching and use of the German language in a German-speaking environment. In preparatory classes, pupils with little or no knowledge of German acquire the basics of the German language in order to prepare themselves for life and school attendance in Germany.

The subject of German as a Foreign Language (DaF) aims to develop language skills only in school or in language courses. In contrast to DaZ learners, DaF learners operate outside the school in a non-German-speaking environment. Nevertheless, common objectives can be set for both groups of education, which derive from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (internet source 2) and the Education Standards for Primary Schools (internet source 3).

Pronunciation training is integrated into foreign language learning as a part of receptive and productive skills. Listening, speaking, reading and writing take place in parallel in the DaZ/DaF classes. In doing so, the learners refer to their first language, link new sounds with their own learning speech patterns and do not notice the differences. Therefore, both elementary hearing to identify and discriminate new prosodic patterns and sounds and their combinations, and new articulation habits must be developed. In this respect, transforming what was heard into writing and of written texts into the intelligible acoustic form in the area of DaZ/DaF differ significantly from that of the subject of DaM (cf. Hirschfeld & Reinke, 2016, p. 83).

The DAD is thus able to support the teachers, particularly in their teaching design in a variety of ways. In the DAD, German teachers and students will find the basic information on the following topics:
- the phonetics system of the German standard speech,
- accent rules,
- intonation patterns,
- grapheme-phoneme-correspondence,
- the pronunciation of foreign words and names,
- the pronunciations of homosemes, homographs,
- the standard varieties of German.

In contrast to common pronunciation dictionaries, the DAD will in the future offer the possibility of sorting words according to level by the filter functions. The teachers can thus create word lists with the transcriptions they need for German lessons and prepare learners specifically for Goethe-Institute certificate

examinations[2]. In addition to simple words, the transcriptions of common composites can be found in the DAD. Their construction can bring about changes at both the suprasegmental and the segmental levels. For example, progressive devoicing: *Erdbeere* [ˈeːɐ̯tb̥eːʁə] or accent shifts caused by a stress clash, e.g. **Schul**_aus_**flug** [ʃˈuːlaɔ̯sflˌuːk].

The knowledge of IPA transcription should not be the goal itself in the context of foreign language didactics. The aim is to make learners aware of the phonetic differences in German which affect individual sound segments as well as sound sequences. From the entire inventory of sound signs, only those symbols should be used which can be used to illustrate the typical features of standard German speech. German learners should gradually become familiar with the sound signs in the language acquisition process. This is about passive, receptive skills.

The phonetic description of Standard German and pronunciation training are also among the canonical contents of German studies abroad. As a result, the DAD can be addressed to many target groups.

For practice-oriented language teaching, the following tasks could be offered at an early stage:

- Check and mark the accent positions in country names and in derived languages in the DAD, e.g. *China – chinesisch, Italien – italienisch* etc. The task is undoubtedly suitable as a form of exercise, which can also be used as basic teaching material in German courses. German students and German learners are made aware that the accent-syllables in the derivatives change.
- Check the length and shortness of the accent vowels in the DAD and compare them with the spelling. Transcribe the accent vowels and add a table with simple rules, e.g. *der Vater, die Mutter, der Sohn, die Tochter, die Oma, der Opa, der Schwager, die Schwägerin, die Nichte, der Neffe.*
- The final devoicing principle awareness, e.g. *das Aas vs. er aß* [aːs]*, das Werg vs. das Werk* [vɛɐ̯k]*, das Rad vs. der Rat* [ʁaːt].

Conclusion

Acquiring phonetic competence in the DaM / DaF/ DaZ teaching is essential for the promotion of learner autonomy in dealing with pronunciation codes and thus for the successful application of new vocabulary in speech-language communication. Since there is currently a lack of a scientifically sound pronunciation code with public access on the Internet, the DAD fills this gap, especially since it can be installed efficiently on a variety of devices. Such a tool is always at hand and is used as a teaching aid. As a database, however, the DAD is not a teaching tool, but it can complement and make online teaching more attractive.

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[2] With kind permission of the Goethe-Institut, Germany, we also use words from the word lists for the Goethe-Zertifikat A1, Goethe-Zertifikat A2 and Goethe-Zertifikat exams B1, see www.goethe.de/pruefungen.

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Developing Selected Aspects of Intercultural Communicative Competence in the EFL Lower Primary Classroom: Learners' Perceptions of Online Culture-Based Lessons

ABSTRACT

The present paper aims to outline a study devoted to the implementation of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) into primary online classroom practice. The selected aspects of Anglophone cultural content were chosen to complement students' own culture issues covered by the core curriculum. The cultural elements were incorporated into the background of EFL materials focusing on teaching vocabulary by means of a range of activities suitable for primary school learners (42 second graders). The conclusions to be presented will provide the researchers' reflections on the implementation of and the students' response to the lessons.

Keywords: Intercultural Communicative Competence, lower primary EFL classroom, culture in ELT, online lessons

1. Introduction

Recently, there has been a strong tendency towards promoting Intercultural Communicative Competence among EFL learners. This is believed to enhance not only their language learning but also understanding of today's world. Still, developing intercultural competence in the EFL primary classroom can be a fairly challenging task, both on the side of the teacher and the students. Kramsch (1993) notices that language learners are frequently not in a position to interpret many behaviours and norms present in their native environment, not to mention the culture referring to a language that they have just started learning. Hence, in order to be able to con-

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vey a foreign culture, the teacher must be sure they understand their own culture with regard to a certain issue. Siek-Piskozub (2014) suggests that with primary school learners at low levels, intercultural competence can focus on their native language, with foreign language teachers occasionally engaging in the process of developing students' ICC. Still, taking into account Brewster's (2002) view that children learn holistically and cross-curricular teaching works best with them, there is no need to separate a foreign language from its culture in order to build some aspects of ICC. In our mind, intercultural competence could be built from the very beginning in an L2, basing on the knowledge about the native culture young learners get in their L1 during subject integrated classes. Therefore, an EFL culture-based course for young learners would be advisable in order to search for some kind of integration with the students' native elements of culture and respond to their needs of holistic learning. In order to discuss the development of some aspects of ICC in the primary classroom through an EFL culture-based lesson design, it is now useful to define the term in more details.

2. Language and culture interrelations

As it is outlined by a number of scholars, language and culture are inseparable and one cannot be acquired without the other. Among others, it is Malinowski (1923, p. 306) who indicates that it is necessary to include cultural aspects in linguistic analysis. For the anthropologist, both the context of situation and the context of culture are core for the proper understanding of an utterance, or a text. This is how Malinowski (1923) defines the issue:

> [T]he meaning of a single word is to a very high degree dependent on its context […]. [T]he conception of context must burst the bonds of mere linguistics and be carried over into the analysis of the general conditions under which a language is spoken [...]. [T]he study of any language spoken by a people who live under conditions different from our own and possess a different culture, must be carried out in conjunction with the study of their culture and their environment (p. 306).

In other words, the semantics of a lexical unit cannot be studied independently of context that is understood as culture and general conditions a given speech community lives in.

Wierzbicka (1997, pp. 1–2) particularly emphasizes a close connection between the life of a given society and the lexicon of the language used by this society, taking into account both the outer and inner aspects of life. Strictly speaking, "words can tell us something about the […] habits of the people". Such a wide existence of language-specific words denoting special kinds of "things", various customs and social institutions cannot be a matter of accident. For instance, as Fillmore (1982, p. 120) explains, the word *vegetarian* denoting "a person who avoids meat deliberately" exists due to the fact that in our culture, most of the

community regularly eats meat. Hence, "someone who eats only vegetables" seems "a relevant and interesting category against the background of [meat eating] society". Broadly speaking, as Wierzbicka (1997, p. 2) puts it, "what applies to material culture and to social rituals and institutions applies also to people's values, ideals, and attitudes and to their ways of thinking about the world and our life in it". Wierzbicka (1997) points out that

> the meanings of words from different languages don't match […] [due to the fact] that they reflect and pass on ways of living and ways of thinking characteristic of a given society […] and that they provide priceless clues to the understanding of culture (p. 4).

In other words, it is impossible to establish fixed boundaries of words' meanings because they mirror human cultural practices and ways of thinking that are changeable and fluid.

For the aforementioned reasons, learning a foreign language without understanding its culture seems to be hardly possible. As Gill and Cankova (2002) notice, it is understanding culture that can guarantee successful communication in foreign language learning. It is extremely important to understand the customs, lifestyles and views as well as history, economy or achievements of the community whose language one is learning. All of them form the background to understand "what, how, and why people communicate in the way they do" (p. 1). The natural part of learning a language is also the curiosity about the people whose culture is foreign to us.

Kramsch (1993) claims that learning another language cannot exclude learning about the culture with which it is associated. As the author puts it, "if language is seen as a social practice, culture becomes the very core of language teaching" (p. 8). Hence, if an FL learner is to be a truly competent foreign language speaker, it seems that language and culture cannot be separated and thus taught independently.

2.1 The place of culture in foreign language education

Siek-Piskozub (2014) points out that in language education, developing communicative competence has proved to be not efficient enough for successful communication for a number of reasons. First of all, it has become evident that native-like communicative competence in a foreign language does not guarantee successful communication between members belonging to different cultural backgrounds. The possible reason is in the differences in the mental structure of the speakers and the inability to build and maintain own and foreign identity. Besides, the classroom activities used to develop communicative competence usually refer to "a socio-culturally neutral native speaker" (p. 22).

Along similar lines, Corbett (2003, p. 2) explains that in the communicative approach there was an emphasis on native-like proficiency and the four skills. Com-

municative competence was the goal of each lesson. In the intercultural approach, learners need "to be 'diplomats', able to view different cultures from a perspective of informed understanding". Therefore, it is not only language development and improvement, but also intercultural understanding and mediation that should be emphasised.

Hence, culture is not attached here as yet another element enhancing successful communication for EFL learners. Kramsch (1993, p. 1) underscores that culture is not a fifth element added to the four skills of communicative competence, but rather it is always present in the background of a language lesson. Kramsch (1993, p. 205) assumes that teaching culture does not mean teaching facts but developing understanding which can be achieved when a learner begins to feel like a foreigner in a communicative situation, always taking into account his/her native culture.

Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) add that the tasks in a foreign language classroom should focus on developing the following: the awareness of learners' own cultural behaviour, the awareness of the cultural behaviour of others, and the ability to explain learners' own cultural standpoint. Apart from teaching "achievement culture", the subject of the lesson should focus on expanding the so-called "behaviour culture" (p. 5), so that it could include culturally-influenced beliefs and perceptions expressed both through language and cultural behaviours that guarantee acceptability in the host community.

Byram (1997, p. 33) distinguishes four key components of Intercultural Communicative Competence: knowledge, attitude, skills of interpretation and comparison, and skills of discovery and interaction. Naturally, these are learned through real-life experience. It goes without saying that familiarizing oneself with another culture and developing real intercultural skills requires becoming an active member of a given culture, or what Byram (1997, p. 1) calls a 'sojourner', not a tourist. Sill, according to Byram (1997, p. 33), it is advisable to promote the components of ICC in the EFL classroom environment, stressing the importance of treating them like "attributes that people bring to the situation rather than abilities which can be produced there in a short time".

Much in a similar vein Kramsch (2001) notices that

> the ultimate goal of cultural learning is not to convey information about a culture nor to promote the acquisition of culturally influenced ways of behaving, but rather to help learners see their culture in relation to others so as to promote cross-cultural understanding (p. 229).

In other words, it is not cultural knowledge and memorization of certain behaviour patterns and social norms that guarantees intercultural communicative competence, but rather the ability to notice own and foreign culture in a perspective that guarantees understanding.

As Byram and Morgan (1994, pp. 55–60) notice, people belonging to different cultures have different perspectives according to which they perceive the surrounding reality. Entering a foreign culture means then contradicting one's own culture. It is, therefore, the role of the teacher to indicate various perspectives by outlining similarities and differences between a native and foreign culture. What is important is the cultural experience not the cultural conscience. Thus, as Sercu (2005) notices, "language teaching has two sides: a language side and a culture side, and that one of the greatest pedagogical challenges consists in integrating these two sides so that students get a sense of their interconnectedness" (p. vii). To put it in other words, it is the role of the teacher to show students both sides and teach them how to relate the two perspectives in order to become intercultural speakers.

Byram (1997) underscores that a teacher successful in promoting ICC does not rely on any special approach or method, but on "the integrity as a person and the relationships that [he/she is] able to develop in the classroom". Therefore, it is not the new method or approach, but rather the ability to "build and maintain human relationships" (p. 32) that guarantees the success in developing ICC among EFL learners.

2.2 Intercultural competence in foreign language primary classroom

According to Sercu (2005, pp. 10–11), ICC development does not seem to be very popular among EFL teachers. Having investigated the issue in seven countries, including Poland, he concluded that, with respect to integration of ICC into foreign language education, teachers can be divided into two basic groups: those in favour of the ICC development in FL education and those, including Polish teachers, believing language and culture integration in a FL classroom is not possible. Still, even the so-called "favourably disposed foreign language teachers" do not reflect their beliefs about ICC in the classroom. In general, it seems that they do not pay more attention to extensive culture teaching than "the unfavourably disposed foreign language teachers".

Considering ELT materials, Siek-Piskozub (2014) outlines that many of them do not focus on building ICC, but rather treat culture as a supplementary element. As a result of this, many teachers do not feel the necessity to develop intercultural competence among their learners and tend to focus solely on communicative competence. The scarce emphasis on the development of ICC is merely present in materials for advanced and mature students. Having investigated the issue of secondary school EFL learners' response to culture-related texts, Chodkiewicz and Kwiatek (2015, pp. 34–35) found out that for the majority of the students such texts are not interesting or thought-provoking, and do not generate high cognitive engagement in text processing. When it comes to primary school learners, Siek-Piskozub (2014) notices that the problem receives no attention, leaving behind the needs of young FL learners.

Still, it is the role of early educators to engage with ongoing learning and reflective practice in order to make the learners culturally competent. In other words, it is necessary to build intercultural competence from the very beginning of primary education, especially in the age of globalisation. In the words of Sercu (2005),

> all foreign language educators [including primary school teachers] are now expected to exploit [the potential of foreign language education being intercultural][…] and promote the acquisition of intercultural competence in their learners (pp. 1–2).

Indeed, cultural awareness is advocated by such authors as Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010) who see the importance of language, culture and cognitive processing when establishing connections in Content and Language Integrated Learning. As they point out, culture determines the way people perceive the world, and language is to express that. Therefore, CLIL provides learners with intercultural experience they would not have a chance to practise in a monolingual classroom. Without "intercultural experiences, [a thorough understanding of] global citizenship" (p. 39) is not possible. Hence, the idea behind building cross-curricular links between foreign language and other subjects seems to facilitate learning in the primary classroom.

3. The study

Responding to the need of the development of ICC in the primary classroom, a small-scale study with the primary second graders was conducted in the context of online education. The study involved a series of EFL lessons whose content was related to the topics in the Polish primary curriculum, and integrated with the cultural material currently taught in the online classroom by the early school education teacher. It needs to be mentioned that in Poland, EFL teaching programme is not a part of the integrated primary curriculum. English as a foreign language is taught as a separate subject from the 1st grade onwards. Therefore, the present study constitutes an avenue for a connection of language and the curriculum content.

3.1. Purpose of the study

The study had two objectives. First, it served to provide the researchers with some reflections on the issue of possible integration of EFL lessons with the content of the lower primary curriculum in the Polish school. Second, it was aimed to find out how young learners perceived such lessons and how useful the activities were for developing intercultural awareness among the pupils. We examined the learners' questionnaires concerning their perception of the lessons as well as their knowledge related to certain aspects of intercultural competence.

3.2. Method

During a period of a month and a half, six lessons were conducted in each of the two groups of primary school second graders who received online education during the lockdown period of the COVID-19 pandemic. The lessons were 45 minutes long and covered the following topics: Teeth and Tooth Fairy, Easter, Entertainment, Drama, Theme Park, Environment. All of them were strictly integrated with other Polish lessons the students attended during a particular week. The cultural aspects were taught in the background of language practice. Contrary to the learners' traditional EFL lessons, our classes were organised in accordance with the principles of ICC presented below:

Table 1. Principles of ICC and their implementation in the lessons (based on Byram, 1994, p. 15)

	Goals of ICC	Meeting the ICC goals in the study
1.	Appreciate the similarities and differences between ss' own culture and cultures of the countries where the target language is spoken	Cross-curricular links between English and Polish lessons instead of culture as a separate unit in EFL coursebooks
2.	Identify with the experience and perspective of people in the countries and communities where the target language is spoken	Language tasks enabling experiencing culture from the native speaker perspective (cultural shock) instead of language activities and cultural facts separately
3.	Use this knowledge to develop a more objective view of ss' own customs and ways of thinking	The elements of foreign culture in the background of EFL lessons related to corresponding elements of ss' native culture included in the Polish primary programme

3.2.1 Participants

The learners comprised two groups between 7 and 8 years of age[1]. There were 20 and 22 members in each group, all in the second grade of the primary school in Poland. Their level of English was A1 according to CEFR. They had two EFL 45-minute lessons per week. The content of the lessons was taught online with a special emphasis placed on teaching vocabulary. Cultural aspects were taught as separate lessons at the end of each unit and were not directly related to the content of the unit. Their knowledge of culture was rather factual and limited to some songs, rhymes or specific vocabulary they had to learn by heart and use while completing exercises in the activity book.

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[1]   Due to the young age of the students, the researchers obtained written consents for research participation from their parents.

3.2.2 Materials

The first research tool for our study were lesson plans built on the subject-integrated education main coursebook for second graders of the state primary school (Lorek & Zatorska, 2015). The topics of the lessons were selected in such a way as to follow the material currently taught during the lessons in Polish with regard to certain elements of culture. In order to design the classroom tasks, a reference to various EFL materials corresponding to the themes chosen was necessary. The designed materials for our lessons were mainly based on the resources provided by British Council: Teaching Kids available online and Tiger 2 coursebook for state school second graders.

The second instrument used in the current study was the same questionnaire given to the students after each lesson with a view to collecting information concerning their perception of the designed lessons and investigating some aspects of their cultural awareness. Due to the participants' age and limited English proficiency, the questionnaire was conducted in their native language. In the questionnaire, the students were asked both closed and open questions. The former concerned their perception of the lesson while the latter were to investigate whether their level of ICC related to a particular issue raised after the lesson. The open questions were related to practical experience (practising real life situations), linguistic elements (vocabulary and grammar), and passive experience (facts about culture).

3.2.3 Design and procedure

The lesson plans were based on classroom strategies designed by Coyle and Verdu (2000) in accordance with the five instructional phases:

Motivation aimed at building new knowledge on the previous one. The teacher introduced students into the topic by organising the learning environment and activating learners' knowledge with regard to certain aspects of their native culture[2] that had been practised during their classes in Polish;

Input aimed at developing learners' comprehension and retention of the new material. The teacher presented and modelled new foreign language content by means of visuals, video sequences, gestures, etc.;

Controlled Practice aimed at practising new material. At this stage the students were engaged in identifying gestures showed by the teacher, answering teacher's questions, and matching pictures with the words, or completing missing letters in

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[2] Obviously, in the age of globalisation, native culture cannot be called homogenous and isolated. In many cases, some aspects can be much similar. Hence, in line with Siek-Piskozub (2014), it is not our aim to search for differences, neither similarities, but rather to build the elements of foreign culture on the native one.

the words. The role of the teacher also included guidance and necessary correction of their language use;

Semi-Controlled Practice aimed at promoting social and cooperative interaction by means of whole-class work where the teacher only monitored and helped students when it was necessary[3];

Transfer Phase aimed at promoting students' independence so that they could use language autonomously and the teacher's support was greatly diminished.

Each lesson designed for the purpose of the current study followed the above-mentioned phases. Clearly, the selected topics, materials and activities differed, yet, it was of paramount importance for us to keep the same scheme of all the lessons in order to maintain the same criteria in the questionnaires completed by the participants.

3.3 Results and discussion

Question number one of the questionnaire the students filled in during each lesson concerned students' evaluation of the lesson. The aim was to get students' general impression about the lesson. The students were to choose from three answers: yes, a little, no that were identified as positive, neutral, and negative response, respectively. Depending on the topic of the lesson, the answers to choose from varied, but each time they corresponded to the three categories: hands-on experience of cultural aspects, linguistic elements, and passive experience of cultural aspects. By hands-on experience, we understand any cultural aspect experienced by the learners in a practical way, e.g. searching for the eggs hidden in the online classroom, by linguistic element, we understand elements of language, such as grammar or vocabulary, by passive experience we mean experience such as watching a video or listening to a song.

1. Did you like the lesson?

Table 2. The students' general evaluation of the lessons

lesson	positive	neutral	negative
1	85%	12.5%	2.5%
2	78%	22%	0
3	77.5%	20%	2.5%
4	77.5%	20%	2.5%
5	74%	21%	5%
6	78%	22%	0

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[3] Coyle and Verdu (2000) suggest doing pair-work or group-work in this phase, however, taking into consideration the age of the learners and the context of online teaching, it has been changed into whole-class work in the present study.

As shown in Table 2, the results clearly indicate that the vast majority of the learners evaluated the lessons in a positive way, and only a small percentage declared some negative impression as regards the four lessons. This means that most learners perceived the culture-based online lessons as attractive and engaging for them.

In order to evaluate the scope of cultural aspects acquired by the participants, it is not only the general impression that matters, but also the comprehension of the lesson. For this reason, the aim of the second question was to get some insight into the perceived understanding of the content and language.

2. Was the lesson easy?

Table 3. The students' perceptions of the difficulty of each lesson

lesson	positive	neutral	negative
1	85%	10%	5%
2	65%	35%	0
3	65%	33%	2%
4	70%	30%	0
5	71%	29%	0
6	54%	38%	8%

It is noticeable from Table 3 that the majority of the learners found each lesson relatively easy. Hence, it might be concluded that the material chosen for our lessons seemed to be in accordance with their level. As expected, lesson 6 appeared to be the most difficult, which might have been caused by the subject connected with environmental issues where the vocabulary was slightly above the level of second graders. The fact that the lessons were conducted in an online setting does not seem to have hampered the students' understanding of the contents covered.

3. What was the most interesting?

Table 4. Interesting elements of the lessons as perceived by the students

lesson	element of culture (practical experience)	linguistic element	element of culture (passive experience)
1	32%	12%	56%
2	92%	3%	5%
3	60%	32.5%	7.5%
4	70%	27%	3%
5	50%	18%	32%
6	54%	22%	24%

Evidently, the learners found elements of culture in the form of practical experience the most interesting. While it appears that the linguistic side of the lesson was also important for them, the least enjoyable were the elements of culture presented in the form of pure facts. These seem to be in accordance with the researchers' post-lesson reflections that showed not only the importance of practical experience, but also language comprehension.

4. What was the most difficult?

Table 5. The students' perceptions of the difficulty of the selected elements of the lessons

lesson	element of culture (practical experience)	linguistic element	element of culture (passive experience)
1	0	93%	7%
2	5.5%	89%	5.5%
3	27%	54%	19%
4	30%	51%	19%
5	29%	33%	38%
6	56%	35%	9%

Although the learners paid attention to the linguistic elements during the lesson and found them relatively interesting, it turns out that this was the most difficult part of the lesson. They may have not enjoyed the facts about cultural issues much due to the fact that these matters were not challenging for them. The elements of culture in the form of practical experience were the most interesting for the participants of our study, but apparently they were not the most difficult for them.

5. What new did you learn?

Table 6. The students' self-assessment of new language- and culture-related knowledge and skills

lesson	element of culture (practical experience)	linguistic element	element of culture (passive experience)
1	6%	76%	18%
2	27%	54%	19%
3	54%	20%	26%
4	57%	20%	23%
5	37%	29%	34%
6	42%	36%	22%

Considering the learners' feelings about new issues that they learned during the classes, we might say that the elements of culture presented as pure facts were

not novel for the participants. What they considered new was the vocabulary and aspects of culture in the form of practical experience. Hence, it might be concluded that it is not the factual information, but rather practical experience related to selected aspects of culture together with the linguistic elements that seem to be the most effective and needed when teaching English as a foreign language and developing ICC among young learners.

6. Enumerate 3 things you remember best:

Table 7. The students' self-assessment of best remembered elements of the lessons

lesson	element of culture (hands-on experience)	linguistic element	element of culture (passive experience)
1	9%	18%	73%
2	51%	22%	27%
3	49%	20%	31%
4	57%	23%	20%
5	37%	34%	29%
6	36%	22%	42%

Although in Lesson 1 and 6 the learners' remembered the elements of passive experience best, the results from the four remaining classes show that it is culture in the form of practical experience that seems to be stored in young learners' memory better. Taking into account the overall response to introducing elements of culture as practical experience, it might be stated that such a form of learning seems to be more efficient than presenting the learners with pure facts relating to some aspects of culture.

Conclusions

The study showed that culture is neither to be viewed as the additional fifth element attached to the four skills, nor as the knowledge of facts about foreign countries and their people. It should be perceived as the background integrated into the linguistic content dealt with at each educational level (Byram & Morgan, 1994; Corbet, 2003; Kramsch, 1993). Nonetheless, it seems that the issue has not received sufficient attention with regard to the primary classroom (Sercu, 2005; Siek-Piskozub, 2014).

In general, it might be concluded that culture integrated lessons as such as well as their content were evaluated in a positive way by young learners. It seems that not only practical experience of cultural aspects but also language practice should be highlighted when developing some aspects of intercultural competence among primary school students. As expected at the beginning, culture presented

in the form of pure facts apparently does not guarantee effective learning. The use of native culture elements blended thematically with subject-integrated education provides better comprehension of culture-based EFL lessons by young learners. Therefore, the idea of integrating culture and foreign language teaching with cross-curricular education in state schools appears to be an effective tool when attempting to promote basic elements of intercultural competence among young learners also in the context of online education. Yet, taking into account the limitations of the current study, namely a relatively small sample as well as the length of the treatment phase, the authors believe the issues addressed in this article will be an interesting avenue for further longitudinal research.

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The Effects of Instructions in L1 and L2 in EFL Listening Classes on A2 Level Learners

ABSTRACT

The current study aimed to investigate the effects of providing instructions in L2 listening activities on the participants' performance in the classroom as well as the participants' views regarding the use of L1. The study included 48 students from the preparatory classes in the School of Foreign Languages, at a state university in Turkey. Through the post-test, only quasi-experimental research design, the participants' performance was compared in classes with L1 and L2 instructions in the listening activities. The results indicated that the participants in the experimental group scored higher than those in the control group who were exposed to L2 instructions.

Keywords: first language use, L1, giving instructions, listening, A2 level, EFL

1. Introduction

Learners' L1 was possibly considered as 'elephant in the room' of English Language teaching (Levine, 2011) and it was generally believed that L1 itself should be avoided by learners as indicated by several scholars. For example, Gabrielatos (2001) stated that "L1 use in ELT: [is] not a skeleton, but a bone of contention" (p. 33). Lee (2018) indicated that the debate on the L1 use could be related to the common belief that when the students are in the process of learning more than one language, there might be interference and linguistic codes might become disorganised totally, resulting in perpetual communication difficulties. Accordingly, the time allocated for L1 use might be considered as wasted time as it could have been used for exposing learners to input in L2. L1 use by teachers during the classroom activities, such as giving instructions and interaction in other skills, is not advised since it might prevent the students from benefiting from contextual cues or inferences that might aid comprehension (Oflaz, 2009).

It might be inevitable to use L1 in foreign language classes in some situations (Lightbown & Spada, 2020). As several authors emphasised in their research (e.g.,

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Greggio & Gil, 2007; Jingxia, 2008; Lewicka-Mroczek & Wajda, 2017; Oflaz, 2009) instructors might utilise the L1 if it is necessary in various cases. Swan (2007) believed that L1 is a reflection of cultural identity and it might be considered as a point that needs to be underlined. Moreover, the contextualisation of listening activities with the assistance of L1 cultural items is highly important and therefore requires further exploration. Therefore, it could be important to study the effectiveness level of L2 instruction when it is integrated with L1. To further probe into the use of L1, the study aimed at examining and comparing the performances of A2 level adult learners in listening activities when the activity instructions are given in L1 and L2 separately in two homogeneous classes.

2. Literature review

The use of L1 has been in the process of attracting attention from teachers and researchers recently and its methodological value is widely discussed (Atkinson, 1987; Hall, 2018; Lee, 2018; Nation, 2003). For example, Nation (2003) put forward a balance between two distinct sides of the idea of using or not using the L1. It can also be proposed that if using the learners' L1 contributes to classroom learning and teaching practices, L1 should not be avoided (Zulfikar, 2018). Similarly, Nation (2003) asserted that L1 use should not be prohibited by stating that teachers should be respectful of the learners' L1 and need to avoid classroom practices that make the L1 seem unnecessary. What Nation (2003) stated regarding the use of L1 may not be deniable since when the teacher leads students to perceive that L2 is viewed better than their L1, they might prefer not to use their L1 and resist learning languages. However, the teacher cannot permit students to overuse L1 in the classroom as "it is the English teacher's job to help learners develop their proficiency in English" (Nation, 2003, p. 6). Another research study focusing on the amount of L1 and L2 used in English classes at lower secondary schools was conducted by Najvarová (2011). The aim of the study was, among other things, to identify the proportion between the target language and L1 used by both teachers and learners. Employing video recordings, the study revealed that, in an average lesson, L1 was used for 40% of the time. Again, significant differences were discovered between individual teachers. While one of them was observed to use the L2 for 68% of the lesson time, another teacher spent the same amount of time using L1. These findings might lead us to go into details about teachers' attitudes and students' success based on L1 use. As a response to this, Macaro's (2001) optimal position proposed that "some aspects of learning might be enhanced by the use of L1; therefore, there should be a constant exploration of pedagogical principles regarding whether and in what ways L1 use is justified" (p. 535).

Macaro's (2001) study in 14 French language lessons revealed that the use of L1 was found out to be low level among the teachers. On the other hand, it was observed that the communicative content of an expression in the L1 can be trans-

ferred more swiftly than the equivalent content in L2 communication. Additionally, Nation (2003) suggested that a balanced approach was necessary because there appeared to be a significant role of L1, and the case of the increasing amount of L2 use in the teaching environment needs to be recognised. This can both prevent students' negative feelings and help them learn L2. On the other hand, Cook (2001) states that an L2 user has the feature of holding L1 and L2 in his/her mind in an intermingled way. There is no clear separation between the knowledge, meanings of L2, and L1 in the learners' minds. In the light of these, understanding the role of the L1 can be significant for adult learners who are within L2 learning programs in different environments, specifically where most of the learners are from similar academic qualifications with similar L1 proficiency. It might be worth questioning for those to internalize certain grammatical structures and instructions provided in English concerning comparable skills in their L1. Hall (2018) stated that there was a clear need for balancing L1 and L2 use by describing the acceptable amount and time in the teaching environment.

The studies conducted by Debreli and Oyman (2006), and Kocaman and Aslan (2018) focused on the learners' views on L1 use in the language classroom. Debreli and Oyman (2006) conducted their study with 303 Turkish learners of English at a preparatory school of a private university. The responses to the questionnaire indicated that the students had positive perceptions regarding the inclusion of L1 in their classes and that especially students with lower-level proficiency in English had more positive perceptions. In line with these findings, Kocaman and Aslan's study (2018) found that students at private high schools were willing to use L1 as its use helped them better understand the explanations. For example, the study conducted by Brevik and Rindal (2020) observed lower secondary English lessons with 179 students and their experiences of being exposed to the target language and the use of other languages to support learning this. The analysis of the videos of the observed classrooms as well as the participants' perceived experiences indicates that the official language or the schooling language was the main shared/common language used to support the teaching process and that there were only a few references to the use of other languages in some languages with limited and/or infrequent references to students' other linguistic repertoires. The results also indicated that the participants found the use of schooling language useful in learning the target language.

3. Methodology
In line with the aim of the study, the following research questions were proposed: 1) Is there a statistically significant difference between the scores obtained in the post-tests by the control and the experimental groups when the test instructions were provided in L1 and L2? 2) What are the students' views on the instructions provided in L1 and L2 in listening activities?

Research Design, Context, and Participants

The present study adopted a quasi-experimental research approach using a post-test-only design since it did not include the use of random assignment. Also, it is a mixed research method that involved two methods of gathering data, both quantitative and qualitative. In this study, the quantitative results were collected first, and then qualitative data were collected to enrich the findings. The study was carried out in the preparatory monolingual classes in the School of Foreign Languages of a state university in Turkey in the spring term of the 2016-2017 academic year. The total duration was 8 weeks with two hours of instruction per week for both groups. The participants of the study were the students who were placed in A2 level classes concerning the examination of the previous module that stood for the placement exam and all shared Turkish as their L1 (Table 1).

Table 1. Control and experimental groups

Control group (A2 level)	Experimental group (A2 level)
24 participants (9 male, 15 female)	24 participants (10 male, 14 female)
L1: Turkish	L1: Turkish
No English prep class before	No English prep class before
Instructions in L2 (English)	Instructions in L1 (Turkish)
Post-test	Post-test

Procedure

Starting with the first lesson, the researcher as both the implementer of the study and instructor initiated separate Turkish and English principled instruction giving in both groups. The control group was exposed to listening activities and the instructions in English as they were provided in the coursebook. In addition, they were asked instruction check questions all the time in English. On the other hand, the experimental group was exposed to the same listening activities, but the instructions were provided in Turkish. The classes were not observed, and the study was conducted throughout 8 weeks in the same way. In the eighth week, after the final class, the post-test was given to both groups to obtain students' final scores. Both groups were given the same post-test, but in the experimental group, the instructions were provided in Turkish, while those were in English in the control group. The scores obtained from post-tests were analysed statistically. The following day the interviews were held with the participants from the experimental group. 5 female and 4 male students volunteered to be interviewed one by one.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted as semi-structured interviews in the participants' L1 (Turkish) in the researcher's office. The interview questions were prepared in

Turkish before conducting the interviews. However, to encourage participants to express themselves, share their experiences, and raise issues that were not covered in the interview questions, they were allowed to ask impromptu questions. The participants were coded using the letters of the alphabet to protect their identities. The interviews with participants were taped and the researcher took notes where necessary. The duration of individual interviews varied from 20 to 35 minutes. The participants were expected to answer the following interview questions: 1) Do you think that receiving the instructions in Turkish is helpful for you while doing listening exercises or activities? Why, why not? 2) When the instruction is given in Turkish, how often do you need to re-ask about it to the teacher? If yes, what could be the possible reasons for? 3) Do you prefer to ask the teacher or classmates when you have difficulty in comprehending the instructions provided in Turkish during the lesson? Why? 4) How does it affect the pace of the lesson to receive the instruction in Turkish? Why? 5) How does it affect your level of concentration on the lesson when you receive the instruction in Turkish, positively or negatively? What are the reasons?

Data Analysis

The quantitative data gathered from the post-test scores were analysed on IBM SPSS 24.0 through independent samples t-test and descriptive statistics. For the qualitative aspect of the study, the audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed and were coded within distinctive words, phrases, and sentences. The responses of the participants were coded into segments that represented the main ideas during the first cycle of the coding process, and during the second cycle, these codes were re-categorised into more generalised codes. Furthermore, the transcripts and the coding reports were shared with two experts in the field to further ensure the validation of the codes.

4. Results

The results revealed that when the experimental group participants were provided with L1 instructions before listening activities, their performance in the post-test increased significantly compared to the control group participants who were exposed to L2 instructions. Moreover, L1 instructions were positively received by the participants due to several reasons such as clear instructions on what was expected of participants. However, it was also indicated that L1 use must be carefully planned as it might lead to other issues such as lack of exposure to L2. These results have been discussed in detail in the following section.

To answer the first research question, the participants' scores obtained in the post-tests were statically analysed using IBM SPSS (Version 24.0) software. Table 2 presents independent samples t-test results based on the placement exam scores. As seen in Table 2, there is no statistically significant difference between

the means of placement scores of the control group and the experimental group ($t_{(46)}$=.120, p=.905, p>.05). This means that based on placement scores these two groups are statistically equal to each other. Table 3 presents independent t-test results on post-test Scores.

Table 2. Independent Samples t-test results based on Placement Scores

		Mean	**St.D.**	*t*	*sd*	*p*
Placement	Control	68.67	13.84	0.12	.46	.905
	Expr.	68.17	14.896			

As it can be seen in Table 3, a statistically meaningful difference was obtained between the means of the scores obtained from students' post-tests ($t_{(46)}$=-2.112, p=.04, p<.05). This means that the mean of the experimental group's post-test scores (X=73.54) is higher than the mean of the control group's post-test scores (X=65.21). The results indicate that the participants in the experimental group, who were exposed to instructions in L1, performed better in the test compared to the control group participants' post-test scores. In the study, the effect size was obtained as 0.609 for both groups' means and standard deviation values of post-tests.

Table 3. Independent t-test results on Post-test Scores

		Mean	**St.D.**	*t*	*sd*	*p*
Post-Test	Control	65.21	14.998	-2.112	46	.04
	Expr.	73.54	12.201			

Participants' views on L1 and L2 instructions in listening activities
The second aim of the study was to determine the participants' views as regards the instructions. On the whole, participants (n=6) said that they found the use of L1 helpful. They claimed that it contributed to following the steps of the activity easily. Also, they stated that it gave the feeling of dealing with something familiar to them. One of them mentioned that he felt like it helped him not getting lost in the process of listening to the audio file. They also stated that they were able to make educated guesses about the possible answers to the audio exercises thanks to the instructions in Turkish. Two participants (n=2) said that they felt neutral and found no difference in comparison to getting instructions in English based on their past classroom experiences.

Additionally, participants' preferences regarding whom to ask a question were discussed. Four of the participants (n=4) stated that they wanted to ask the teacher as he was the only authority in the class, and he seemed to volunteer to answer.

Two of them added that classmates might not listen to the instructions carefully although they were in Turkish and they were afraid of not being able to complete the activities appropriately. Four participants (n=4) preferred to ask their classmates about what was expected to do in the activities as the teacher would not respond in their L1 (Turkish). They thought that their classmates seemed more available and it was a type of solidarity.

The frequency of asking the teacher more about the instruction given in Turkish was also questioned. One participant (n=1) said that she felt free to ask in Turkish to make the instruction clearer. She also revealed that she wanted to benefit from the unique time span to communicate in Turkish. Two participants (n=2) answered the question with the frequency adverb hardly ever and shared that it was easy to deal with a minor failure in comprehending the instruction since it was provided in Turkish. One of them said that she needed to re-ask when she could not fully concentrate on the lesson due to personal issues. The other one needed to ask when the teacher spoke fast while giving the instruction. Six of the participants (n=6) responded that they did not have to re-ask as the instructions were clear and easy to comprehend and they followed the instruction check questions of the teacher.

Moreover, the effect of receiving instructions on the pace of the lesson was commented on by the participants. Seven participants (n=7) answered positively. They believed that it decreased the number of students' questions about what to do before the listening activity started. Moreover, they mentioned that they became more focused on the activities and followed the steps easily. They observed that the teacher could switch to another listening activity fast without the necessity to paraphrase the instruction with simpler vocabulary items in English. One participant (n=1) stated that the same amount of time would be used with the instruction in English. She also stated that more time could be allowed while listening rather than during giving instructions. Finally, the participants were asked about their level of concentration in terms of receiving instruction in Turkish. Six participants (n=6) responded positively. One of them found the use of L1 necessary and added that he could understand what he was going to do during the activity. Most of the participants stated that receiving the instruction in Turkish was for the sake of doing listening activity exercises successfully.

5. Discussion

The main findings revealed that the experimental group participants exposed to instructions in L1 obtained higher scores compared to the control group exposed to the instructions in L2. The study also found that instructions provided in L1 were viewed positively due to several factors such as clear instructions of what to do before listening activities. In this study, the post-test scores presented the experimental group's moderately more successful performance. These findings and interpreta-

tion are in alignment with Oflaz (2009) since his study revealed that understanding the instructions given in the exams was very important as it helped learners to know what to do while answering the questions. The post-test scores revealed the experimental group's moderately more successful performance than the control group. This result might reflect that L1 (Turkish in the study context) might have a role especially in providing instructions. These findings are partially in alignment with the statistical results of the study conducted by Paker and Karaağaç (2015), who found that L1 was an integrated part of teaching a language. Moreover, the use of L1 provided various functions such as enabling the topic/meaning clear by providing examples, presenting extra explanations before certain tasks, and describing complex concepts or ideas in the instructions before exercises or exam procedures.

As for an overall inference, in this study learners might have become sure of the tasks and felt more confident before the activities started. Respectively, they might have revealed better performance in the post-test. In light of this inference, it can be said that the facilitative role of L1 might assist learners in coping with instruction related hindrances. It can be said that these findings are partially parallel with the statistical results of Mayo and Hidelgo's (2017) study, which indicated their findings certified the facilitative role of the L1 that fundamentally served to assist learners as they handled unknown vocabulary items in the instructions. Based on the findings of Mayo and Hidelgo (2017), it was revealed that the participants resorted to L1 more repetitively the second time they dealt with the task. The results indicated the facilitating function of the L1 for the fulfilment of the tasks by the students in a foreign language context.

It might be stated that the findings of this study echoes Bhooth, Azman, and Ismail's (2014) results since the experimental group's more successful performance on a medium scale could be a minor indicator of an increased level of students' engagement in the listening activities. Based on these findings, it was proposed that L1, in the case of the Arabic language, might be used by students as a kind of learning strategy such as translating new words, describing concepts, and assisting each other in their group activities. Moreover, Bhooth et al. (2014) stated L1 would be utilised by the teachers as an instructional method to empower learners' comprehension and raise the level of their participation in the teaching environment. Yet, teachers need to be sure that students do not excessively depend on L1. Although this study revealed a medium effect of L1 use on learners on a limited scale, there still might be indications of the constructive effect of controlled L1 use. Namely, it can be said that a limited and controlled way of using L1 might result in moderately better performances among lower-level L2 learners such as A2 level students in this study. It can be said that Taşkın's (2011) study is not in alignment with this study in terms of complete exposure to L2 by the learners. Within the discussion of her findings, Taşkın (2011) supported that teachers should know what to do in every single stage of the lesson regardless of which skill it was.

In this study, interviewees claimed that receiving instruction in L1 contributed to following the steps of the activity easily. In addition, they stated that it supported the feeling of dealing with something familiar to them. They implied that they were able to determine what they would do during the tasks and felt more focused before the activities started. These findings show parallelism with Gündüz's (2012) findings, which indicated that the common reason for using L1 was to comprehend complex concepts and to ask for detailed explanations.

About the responses of the students, it might be said that students preferred to comply with the feature of the activity without feeling the need for interaction with the teacher in L1. This finding partly corroborates that of Ghorbani's (2011) study. Ghorbani (2011) pointed out that the use of L1 in the L2 classroom could be interpreted with respect to features of the classroom activity and student/teacher's interaction. Based on the responses to the third interview question, four participants said that they would prefer to ask the teacher if they had difficulty in comprehending the instructions provided in Turkish as he was the only authority in the class and he seemed to volunteer to answer. At this point, as most of the students tended to interact due to their reasons, instruction in L1 might cause interference or confusion. Moreover, it might also weaken students' preferences to interact with each other.

Depending on the findings of the study and the discussion, it might be suggested that A2 level adult learners in EFL classes might perform moderately better in listening activities or exercises such as multiple-choice, true/false statements, and multiple matching and matching exchanges when instructions are provided in L1 by the teacher. It can also be stated that receiving instruction in L1 may lead students to obtain better results in examinations in accordance with their performances during class hours. In addition, students might focus on the content of the listening material and the following tasks without experiencing comprehension problems related to the instructions of the listening task. With respect to common responses in the interview, it can be stated that receiving the instruction in L1 may help students to focus on what they will do during listening, which might help decrease the level of debilitating form of anxiety caused by high-stakes language tests. However, judicious and intentional use of L1 must be considered (Shin, Dixon, & Choi, 2020), and whenever possible, L2 Language use should be encouraged.

Conclusion

The current study aimed to investigate the effects of proving instructions in L2 listening activities on the participants' performance in the classroom and the participants' views regarding the use of L1. The study included 48 students in the preparatory classes in the School of Foreign Languages, at a state university in Turkey. Through the post-test only quasi-experimental research design, the participants' performance was compared in classes with L1 and L2 instructions in

the listening activities. The results indicated that the participants in the experimental group scored higher than those in the control group who were exposed to L2 instructions. The study also revealed that the participants viewed L1 instructions positively. However, one caveat witch was pointed out by them was that this also increased the frequency of resorting to L1 in the classroom interaction. The study also had some limitations. The current study was a small-scale study with a limited number of participants. In addition, the participants were selected using convenience sampling and it was not possible to conduct a true experimental study and only reflected practice in the prep class at a state university. Therefore, the sample size of the study and the number of participants might not allow broad decisions to be made. However, it is also due to note that results could be transferable to other similar contexts where learners have the same L1 and learn English as a foreign language.

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Indonesian EFL Learners' Attitudes and Perceptions on Task-based Language Teaching

ABSTRACT

Task-based Language Teaching in Asia, especially Indonesia, was more prevalent in English as a Foreign Language teaching. It is one of the practical approaches in language teaching for improving learners' communication skills. This is consistent with Indonesia's educational policy, which intends to enhance learners' communication skills. This approach is slowly gaining popularity among English teachers in Indonesia. However, there has been very little research on TBLT in the Indonesian context. In Indonesia, MTsN 3 Demak is one of the schools that implement this approach in teaching English. As such, this descriptive qualitative study was conducted to explore the learners' attitudes and perspectives on TBLT. The data for the study were collected through a questionnaire from a total of 96 learners at the school. The questionnaire was analysed quantitatively using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage. The study results demonstrate that most EFL Indonesian learners generally have good attitudes and perceptions concerning TBLT, so they like to join TBLT English classes. In this study, some major issues highlighted by the results will be examined, and some significant suggestions are discussed.

Keywords: EFL learner, Task-based Language Teaching, attitude, perception, Indonesia

1. Introduction

Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) became widely used in the early 1980s as a second language learning concept to develop a process-based syllabus and design communication tasks that promote the practical use of language by learners with communication skills development. Recent studies show three recurring features among the many interpretations of TBLT concerning classroom practice:

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1) TBLT is aligned with the pedagogical philosophy of learners, 2) it incorporates specific elements such as the objective, process and particular results (Murphy, 2003; Skehan, 1998), and 3) it promotes meaningful content-based activities instead of the linguistic forms (Carless, 2002; Littlewood, 2004).

TBLT is considered an alternative teaching approach as it favours a method that uses functional communicative language (Ellis, 2003; Willis, 1996). According to Ellis (2003) and Willis (1996), TBLT is an efficient approach that creates a learning environment and allows learners to use target language forms that they think are most likely to allow them to reach their communicative targets. Moreover, Richards and Rodgers (2014) reported that Task-based Language Teaching had received considerable interest in applied linguistics. However, it has had few practical implementations and scant documentation on its impact or efficacy as a basis for designing the curriculum, material development and teaching of classrooms.

Task-based Language Teaching develops a strong understanding of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). It seeks to create a second language linguistic repertoire by enabling learners to participate in classroom activities (Ellis, 2003; Richards, 2006). As a result, language learning results form building appropriate communicative work in the classroom (Richards, 2006), which promotes learner focus, with learners being more involved in the learning process. Furthermore, TBLT concentrates on applying authentic material, language skills, cognitive processes (Ellis, 2003) and promotes meaningful communication in language teaching. During the tasks, learners can become more exposed to the target language via reading or listening; this exhibition can help them see how meaning is expressed (Willis, 1996).

TBLT studies have grown in varying ways from understanding, opinions and reasons for using TBLT or avoiding its implementation (Bernard & Viet, 2010; Le, 2014). However, in EFL countries, learners have minimal access to English as a target language in daily life. Therefore, "real opportunities must be provided for language use in the classroom" (Jeon & Hahn, 2006, p. 124). In particular, TBLT is still not sufficiently investigated or empirically proved in Indonesia (Hutagalung & Purwati, 2014). In other words, they studied TBLT in EFL contexts, but not the attitudes and perceptions of the EFL learners. The attitude and perception of the student's language teaching process have an enormous impact on what they do.

In the Indonesian EFL context, there have been few empirical studies to study the attitudes and perceptions of language learners. It is, therefore, necessary to investigate the perceptions of learners about TBLT in the Indonesian EFL context, taking into consideration the essential roles and attitudes and perceptions of TBLT. TBLT as an alternative approach can be mainly seen in the positive views of the learners. Rifkin (2000, p. 401) argued that the learner's attitude in the learning process is essential to determine the failure or success of the learner. Teachers need to know learners' points of view to gain better learning results since this approach has

helped or hampered learners in acquiring the target language. Teachers should also be aware of learners' perceptions, but they should also regard them as a decision to choose the right approach to education (Cray & Currie, 1996, p. 124).

To address this need, the current study examined the attitudes of learners and their perception of TBLT as implemented in the foreign language teaching environment in English. This study presents the general attitudes of learners and their perceptions of TBLT with a questionnaire as resulted from a questionnaire-based investigation. The findings will help teachers plan and carry out any genuine communicative tasks and provide insight into what teachers do base on the Indonesian EFL context where English is a foreign language.

2. Review of the Literature

2.1 Research on Task-based Language Teaching in EFL Contexts

Most of TBLT research was carried out in the English as a Second Language (ESL) context. However, English for Foreign Language (EFL) countries have become increasingly interested in TBLT in recent years, particularly after efforts have met with different degrees of resistance and success (Ellis, 1996). However, the application for Task-based Language Teaching was not problematic in the context of EFL. As McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) discovered in their study of a task-based EFL course in Thailand, students accustomed to participating in teacher-led classes may require some adjustment time to the interactive approach of TBLT. During their task-based course, the students expressed a desire for more grammar instruction and target language forms. They also wanted more guidance and assistance from their teachers. There may also be different perceptions of the objective for task-focused language teaching. İlïn, İnözü, and Yumru (2007) revealed that their class tasks concentrated on language rather than on form and language practice activities in an EFL three primary classes research study in Turkey. The teachers in their study knew about the TBLT's objectives yet utilized them towards the end of the language lessons since it was expected.

Ho and Wong (2004) reported that western approaches like TBLT might be inconsistent with public demand and conflict with non-western contexts about educational values and traditions. Although there are some problems with TBLT implementation in the EFL context, the research also recognises the advantages of the strategy and observes the overall positive responsiveness of learners. They realized the need for TBLT to promote learners' independence and transferable abilities and offer learners the chance to do English practice (Ho & Wong, 2004, p. 105). It is also possible for the tasks to be adjusted to examine the teaching of language elements (İlïn, İnözü, & Yumru, 2007, p. 67). The positive results of this research appear to be encouraging; however, further TBLT research is required to produce more definitive results within the EFL context.

2.2 Learners' Attitude towards TBLT

Attitude is the tendency to favor or disfavor a particular object or behavior (Albarracin, Zanna, Johnson, & Kumkale, 2005, p. 3). According to Vogel, Bohner, and Wanke (2014, p. 5), the objects of the attitude could be anyone, groups, things, or ideas. Furthermore, Nathial (2018, p. 113.) believes that attitude is the willingness to react positively or negatively to a specific idea, object, person, or situation. Crystal (1997, p. 18), on the other hand, defines attitude as the way individuals feel about their own language or other languages. As a result, attitude towards language is a concept for explaining linguistic behavior.

Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi, and Alzwari (2012, p. 126) claim that there are two kinds of language attitudes in language learning: positive and negative attitudes. Moreover, Primadi, Setiyadi, & Kadaryanto (2014, p. 2) thus indicated the three aspects of the attitude concept: English attitudes, English-language attitudes and attitude towards English native speakers. The three theoretical assumptions that attitudes towards learning a target language may affect linguistic motivation and can mediate the link between linguistic attitudes and language accomplishment are based on these three attitudes.

Many studies in EFL learning have focused on learners' attitudes towards language learning. The majority of research suggests that a positive attitude towards learning leads to positive results, and the reverse is true as well (Wang, 2010). As part of his review of a large number of studies, Brown (2000) examined attitudes as they relate to language acquisition. As a result of their positive attitude towards language learning, he found that positive results were obtained. Failure in language learning, on the other hand, is the result of a negative attitude towards learning (Holmes, 1992; Karahan, 2008). If this is the case, teachers should also focus on improving their learners' attitudes towards learning in order to increase their chances of learning successfully (Mantle-Bromley, 1995).

Learners play a crucial role in class and can determine the success of TBLT (Chung & Huang, 2009, p. 76). Understanding their attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, choices and needs is unavoidable if EFL teaching gives language and cultural empowerment to learners (Savignon, 2007, p. 214). To help learners achieve these goals, a clear understanding of TBLT's attitudes and perceptions as a broad framework for shaping existing definitions of EFL teaching targets is vital (Savignon & Wang, 2003, p. 228). Exploring student attitudes can therefore lead to better results in language learning. The learner's attitude towards TBLT has an impact on the practice of TBLT, which makes it essential for the learner to implement the approach in the classroom. The attitudes of the learner are therefore necessary. The discrepancy between TBLT theory and practice may be learners' attitudes; accordingly, as mentioned in Karavas-Doukas (1995, p. 54), the study of their attitudes serves as the basis for identifying possible contradictions between the beliefs of learners and the principles of TBLT.

2.3 Studies Exploring Learners' Perception About TBLT

A number of studies focus on the learners' perception of TBLT, but several commonalities exist in these studies. In their study, Meng and Cheng (2010) found that most Chinese learners were enthusiastic and thought the approach to the task was functional. Learners were excited about the various tasks and believed that this was good because the greater the participation in the task, the better the performance was assessed. However, over a quarter of the participants felt disappointed by their work. Teachers were advised to introduce the task as soon as possible and give learners time to prepare for the job performance. Furthermore, teachers still had to guide learners in their work phases when they were experiencing difficulties. During the activity and after the activity, the teacher plays a crucial role.

The learners' views on TBLT have also been studied by Hadi (2012). In open-answer questionnaires, he studied 88 Iranian female learners. The results show that the learners were positive and welcomed the new TBLT experience. The learners considered that TBLT offered them the opportunity to cooperate, interact spontaneously, and emphasise their motivating potential using the target language (p. 108). Huang (2015, p. 118) showed positive reactions to TBLT among ELT learners. This study showed that TBLT engaged learners and expanded their interests, and made them more self-reliant. The learners said TBLT enhanced their interest in learning the target language and increased their autonomy by actively preparing the task and improving their searching capacity for information on information gap activities. Learners are never limited to welcoming a new learning experience in their real-life. Teachers ought to be sensitive to this. It is not easy to create a stage where learners are concerned and committed to learning. Teachers may combine TBLT and traditional teaching.

In Indonesian contexts, like in several other Asian countries, learners have internet access, and that's how they get excited to explore their curiosity. Teachers should understand what learners love in their real-lives and relate these to reading activities. For example, Tahririan and Basiri (2005) conducted a study on enhancing learners' understanding of reading within TBLT. They used internet reading as their primary task. The research findings indicated that reading skills such as skimming and scanning are essential for reading on the Internet. Learners did not read every single word or line on the page. Instead, in search of relevant information, they turned their eyes from one item to another (p. 140).

2.4 Context: Issues with TBLT in Indonesia

In the Indonesian context, specific recommendations must be considered while implementing TBLT in the English as a foreign language classroom. They concern current curricula and textbooks, demand for a system of evaluation, teachers' beliefs, and objective language use (Fachrurrazy, 2000, p. 74).

First, the current syllabus of the available textbooks was not designed using an approach based on the task. However, because the task-orientated approach concerns teaching and learning activities, teachers can modify their lesson readiness to adopt the task-oriented approach with little creativity.

Secondly, the implementation of task-based language teaching will have the problem with the demand for an evaluation system. Because it focuses on what the learners are doing rather than what they say, the assessment focuses not on the need for the current language accuracy evaluation system. Teachers are currently encouraged to apply the approach gradually and combine it with teaching and learning activities based on the requests of an evaluation system. However, the approach can be fully implemented at the primary school level because English is a subject for local content, so the student assessment is determined not by the external examination but by EFL teachers.

Thirdly, the EFL teachers in Indonesia may have their own beliefs about how they should teach English. They may believe that they are "not teaching" unless they teach graphics in their traditional ways (e.g. grammar explanation and mechanical drills). Such a belief has to be revised over the long term. Teachers need to develop and update teaching and learning approaches, methods, and techniques.

Fourthly, two things have to be considered for the use of the target language. On the one hand, teachers face a challenge to improve their English skills so that they can respond to the need to use their target language. However, beginner EFL learners can be challenged if the teacher only uses English in the classroom (the target language). Prabhu (1987) suggests that other communication resources (such as guessing, gestures, native language or actions) may be used to resolve learners' problems because of the limited mastery of languages. Using the native language in a particular situation in a foreign language class is an option.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Questions

The study aimed to explore Indonesian English learners' attitudes and perceptions of TBLT. The following questions were formulated for this purpose: 1) What are the Indonesian EFL learners' attitudes towards TBLT? 2) What are the Indonesian English learners' perceptions on the implementation of TBLT? 3) Why do English learners in Indonesia like, or dislike the implementation of TBLT?

3.2 Research Context

This case study was done at MTsN 3 Demak, which requires learners to attend four integrated EFL classes. These learners are subject to the four skills that the EFL curriculum covers and it is called the 2013 curriculum. All of Indonesia's schools have this kind of curriculum. This is why all EFL teachers must participate

in EFL curriculum implementation. TBLT and CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) are the most essential issues for junior and secondary schools across Indonesia after decades of different methods or approaches to English teaching. The present study was carried out with learners at the Islamic Junior High School in EFL teaching.

3.3 Research Design

This study aimed to examine the attitudes and perceptions of Indonesian EFL learners towards TBLT. Based on the objective of this study, the researcher selected and used a descriptive survey design. According to Pinsonneault and Kraemer (1993, p. 77), descriptive surveys are appropriate and helpful in gathering data about features, behaviours, or attitudes of a big number of people. This research design was chosen due to its practicality and efficiency and its ability to obtain authentic and actual information from participants.

3.4 Participants

The participants was administered to 96 English language learners studying in MTSN 3 Demak school (Central Java, Indonesia). These learners were selected from the teacher's three English classes, and each of the learners had a different level of proficiency in English, including lower, intermediate, upper-intermediate and advanced levels. The learners were between 12 and 15 years old.

3.5 Instruments

The researcher used a questionnaire to investigate the learners' attitudes and perceptions on TBLT at MTsN 3 Demak school. The questionnaire was adapted from a study conducted by Jeon (2005, pp. 108–109) and Zhu-Xiu (2016, pp. 32–33). It was translated from English into Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia) to guarantee that the learners understood it.

The questionnaire consisted of four parts. The first part comprised of questions regarding age and sex. The second part offered learners questions to acquire insight into their preferred English language tasks. The third part attempted to find opinions on TBLT practise in the classroom. The second and third parts required learners to rate each question on a 5-point scale ranging from „strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". Finally, the last part identifies why learners like or dislike the implementation of TBLT. The learners rated their choices from the given items in this section.

3.6 Data Collection

The questionnaires were distributed by an online survey platform (google formats, in Indonesia) to 96 participants from the eighth grade of MTsN 3 Demak to prevent and curb the spread of COVID-19. The participants were asked to complete

the questionnaire and were assured of confidentiality in the information provided. The attitude and perceptions of the learners were gathered by evaluating their answers to the questionnaires.

3.7 Data Analysis

The analytical data process was carried out in two steps. In the first step, the numerical scores were provided for the elements of Likert-specific questionnaires (strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, neutral=3, agree=4, and strongly agree=5). In the second step, it was required participants to justify their reasons for supporting or opposing TBLT. Therefore, the items that were chosen received a score of 1, while the ones that were not chosen received a score of 0.

In order to find out the attitudes and perceptions they hold about TBLT in language schools and its implementation, a percentage analysis was carried out of the student replies for each questionnaire item and for what reason learners like or don't like TBLT implementation.

4. Findings

4.1 Indonesian EFL learners' attitudes towards TBLT

The quantitative results of the research show that learners at MTsN 3 Demak school have a positive attitude to TBLT.

Table 1. The results of the learners' answers to Section 2 (N=96)

Questionnaire Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	*%*	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*
1	10	9.60	50	48.00	16	15.36	3	2.88	0	0
2	25	24.00	52	49.92	15	14.40	2	1.92	0	0
3	15	14.40	43	41.28	20	19.20	7	6.72	1	0.96
4	10	9.60	35	33.60	22	21.12	9	8.64	2	1.92
5	16	15.36	47	45.12	18	17.28	6	5.76	1	0.96
6	20	19.20	48	46.08	16	15.36	4	3.84	0	0

Table 1 reveals that most learners agree with the items in general and do not disagree significantly. For the first item, "I enjoy the opportunity of communication through various types of tasks", 9.60% (10 learners) agreed strongly, and 48% (50 learners) agreed, 15.36% (16 learners) were neutral, 2.88% (3 learners) disagreed, and no learners disagreed. The results for item two, "An English class task performances are fun for me", were strongly agreed 24%(25 learners), 49.92% (52 learners) agreed, 14.4% (15 learners) were neutral, 1.92% (2 learn-

ers) were disagreeable, and 0% (0 learners) were strongly unanimous. Concerning item three, "Tasks that help me to engage in spontaneous interactions with English", 14.5%(15 learners) agreed strongly, 41.28% (43 learners) agreed, 19.2% (20 learners) were neutral, 6.72% (7 learners) disagreed, and 0.96% (1 learner) strongly disagreed. For item 4, "Task performances in a classroom prepare me for real-world communications challenges", 9.6% (10 learners) strongly agreed, 33.69% (35 learners) agreed, 21.12% (22 learners) showed neutral, 8.64% (9 learners) disagreed; (35 learners) strongly disagreed. As for item 5, "Task is a powerful means of facilitating my communication skills in English",15.36% (16 learners) strongly agreed, 45.12% (47 learners) agreed, 17.28% (18 learners) were neutral, 5.76% (6 learners) disagreed, and 0.96% (1 learner) strongly disagreed" (1 learner). In light of the final point, Item 6, "Tasks that help me use expressions and grammar patterns that I've learned", 19.2% (20 learners) strongly agreed, 46.08% (48 learners) agreed, 15.36% (16 learners) were neutral, 3.84% (4 learners) disagreed, and 0% (none learners) did not strongly disagree.

4.2 Indonesian EFL learners' perceptions on the implementation of TBLT

Section 3 of the questionnaire contained eight items. The results of the learners' responses to the questionnaire items are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The Results of the Learners' Responses in Section Three (total 96)

Questionnaire Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
7	30	28.80	49	47.04	10	9.60	3	2.88	0	0
8	22	21.12	55	52.80	12	11.52	2	1.92	0	0
9	27	25.92	50	48.00	13	12.48	4	3.84	12	0.96
10	5	4.80	18	17.28	22	21.12	38	36.48	8	11.52
11	8	7.68	15	14.40	24	23.04	40	38.40	10	7.68
12	10	9.60	18	17.28	18	17.28	36	34.56	0	9.60
13	20	19.20	59	55.68	10	9.60	5	4.80	0	0
14	20	19.20	50	48.00	16	15.36	8	7.68	0	0
15	18	17.28	54	51.84	18	17.28	5	4.80	0	0

In response to item 7, 28.8% (30 learners) and 47.04% (49 learners) thought TBLT is a relaxing learning environment suitable for TBLT promoters in Indonesia. For item 8, 21.12% (22 learners) strongly agreed. They agreed that a collaborative learning environment was created when their teacher implemented TBLT, whereas 0% (no learners) disagreed strongly with this issue. As regards item 9, 25.92% (27 learners) strongly agreed with the development of integrated skills

in a classroom, and 48% or 50 learners agreed. 12.48% or 13 learners felt neutral about this issue, and 4 of them (3.84%) disagreed, and no learners felt strongly disagree with this statement. In response to items 10, 36.48% (38 learners) reported that TBLT did not deal with their grammar, and as a result, 38.40% (40 learners) for item 11 did not believe TBLT is TBLT was not suited for learners preparing examinations. The answers to item 12 indicated that, even if the student's English was not fluent and accurate, 34.56% or 36 learners thought they could do their job well. This showed their trust and interest and also in performing class tasks. According to the responses to item 13, 55.68% of learners reported that TBLT was suitable for the management of classrooms. In response to item 14, 48% or 50 learners agreed that TBLT were ineffective in large classes. From the responses to item 15, 51.84% of the learners agreed that TBLT materials were meaningful and purposeful for their English learning.

4.3 The reasons why learners of English in Indonesia like, or dislike the implementation of TBLT

This section responds to the third question from the research: Why do learners of English in Indonesia like or dislike the implementation of TBLT? In this section, the learners could only choose "yes" or "no". They had to choose one or all of the five reasons to answer "yes" by putting a (√) for any reason that they thought best matched their position. However, if the learners answered "no", they were not required to choose any provided reasons. Table 3 shows how many reasons learners chose that benefit TBLT and Table 4 shows the numbers of reasons learners have chosen to dislike TBLT.

Table 3. Reasons why English learners like the implementation of TBLT (N=96)

Reason No.	Learner number	Percentage (learner number/N)
1	34	32.64
2	70	67.20
3	56	53.76
4	78	74.88
5	85	81.60

According to Table 3, only 32.64% of the "yes" votes received for reason 1 TBLT were supported by learners' academic advancement, a relatively small percentage. Most learners may consider "scholastically progress" in a restricted sense as an accomplishment in examinations, or they cannot rely heavily on TBLT to promote their language skills other than developing communication skills. Reason 2 TBLT improvement attracted 67.2% of learners' interaction skills, whilst reason 3 TBLT stimulated 53.76% of learners' "yes" votes. Reason 4 TBLT develops

a collaborative learning environment that attracted 74.88% of learners, showing that their study setting in which communication may take place was given considerable attention. Lastly, 81.6% of learners have attracted the reason 5 "TBLT is best used in a small group setting". Table 4 shows the number of reasons for learners who have chosen the "no" option.

Table 4. Reasons why English learners dislike the implementation of TBLT (N=96)

Reason No.	Learner number	Percentage (learner number/N) (%)
1	62	59.52
2	50	48.00
3	75	72.00
4	60	57.60
5	30	28.80

According to Table 4, 59.52% of learners decided to choose the reason 1, „Learners are not used to TBLT approach", 48% chose reason 2, "The textbook materials are insufficient for applying TBLT", 72% chose reason 3, "TBLT is difficult to be implemented in large classes", 57.6% chose reason 4, "I find it difficult to assess my own performance", and 28.8% chose reason 5, "Teachers are not very familiar with TBLT".

5. Discussion

In response to the first research question, the analysis of items 1–6 revealed that learners had a favourable attitude about learning English utilizing the Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach. They were able to communicate information through several types of teaching and learning tasks. They realized that the TBLT technique enabled them to improve their English communicative abilities. This is shown in Jeon's (2005) study, which shows that it can be the outcome of the change from the Asian EFL environment towards using task- and activities-based language learning to improve the teaching skills of learners.

With respect to the second research question, which examined learners' perceptions about the implementation of TBLT, the analysis of items 7 to 15 revealed that Indonesian EFL learners had a good perception regarding the performance of language classrooms. They were ready to adjust to the new language learning approach. TBLT presents a new language strategy that is very distinct from the typical PPP paradigm. The changing approach to education creates major issues in the management of the classroom. The CLT and TBLT concerns with the classroom management system are noted by Littlewood (2007). The familiar PPP sequence offers a technique that 'delivers' the language required in the curriculum and a means of controlling class interaction. Many teachers express concern that this control is no longer working when learners participate in independent tasks.

The research findings also indicate that although learners are generally in favour of TBLT, they are still not confident of TBLT's role in grammar and exams. What is implied in these findings are consistent with the fact that most of these learners hold the traditional teaching belief that grammar and learning for exams are crucial elements in language learning. The findings are consistent with Deng and Carless (2010) and Littlewood (2007). They argue that exams in schools such as communicative or task-based approaches are typically viewed as a barrier to their implementation. Although tasks allow learners to choose the language needed to achieve the task's result, learners can choose the grammar elements to use. The research findings also show that, while learners generally support the TBLT, they remain unconfident of the function of TBLT in grammar and exams. This conclusion also implies that most of these learners believe that grammar and learning for tests are key to language acquisition.

In answer to the third research question, which aims to explain why learners like or dislike the use of TBLT, the results show that learners' motivations for their desire to apply TBLT vary. The majority of learners favoured a task-based approach because they first favoured their cooperation, interaction, and motivation potential. Many learners appreciated TBLT due to its adequacy for small groups in the teaching and learning process. They could share knowledge and experience of learning English.

Very few learners expressed a dislike of TBLT. The main reason why they don't like it is that huge class sizes are a barrier to TBLT. In large courses, management can be an issue, according to their reports. If we consider that the size of the English class is generally very large in Indonesia, it is worth talking about this in the future. In Indonesia, an English class typically has 30–36 learners. The second major issue is that they are not used to teaching in a learner-centred classroom in which they find it hard to accomplish chores alone. This outcome is not surprising because in Indonesia, the foreign-language class has long been a teacher-centred language one. Learners have also claimed that evaluating task performance is challenging, which shows that Indonesian learners are used to conventional assessments. The way to assess task performance is, of course, also an issue for teachers.

Conclusions

Studies of the attitude and perception of learners towards task-based language teaching are still limited in the Indonesian context. This research is, therefore, necessary since it takes learners to the forefront. From the learners' perspective, this research addresses numerous significant TBLT difficulties. Results demonstrate that most Indonesian EFL learners usually have favourable views and perceptions of TBLT; hence most learners enjoy TBLT. Language challenges in TBLT can be of great assistance for creating an exciting environment in which learners

enhance their communication skills. This task provides varied language teaching approaches and makes the classroom considerably more enjoyable and engaging; it may also establish a dynamic and creative atmosphere in the classroom that offers language education. Although most learners in Indonesia welcome TBLT, there are still many problems revealed by the research. Of significant concern to Indonesian learners is the size of the classes, class management, the development of the language grammar of learners, the preparation for examinations and their belief in language learning. Attitudes and perceptions of learners are essential to the success of language teaching. Thus, language learners in Indonesia should consider their attitudes and perceptions carefully.

Regarding the study results, teachers, learners and decision-makers are offered some recommendations. Firstly, since the learners' opinions significantly impact their learning process, they must maintain a positive attitude towards TBLT in order to obtain the intended result. Secondly, because the lack of confidence is one reason for learners to avoid TBLT, overcoming obstacles in the classroom should be considered, such as the size of the classes, learners' exam and others. Moreover, given that Indonesian EFL learners' attitudes towards TBLT were relatively good in this study, EFL teachers should implement this approach in their English classrooms. In this respect, educational system decision-makers should change their attitudes and do everything they can to support TBLT.

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Appendix

Learner Questionnaire
(Kuesioner Peserta didik)

This questionnaire is designed to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of Indonesian EFL learners towards Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach in the context of classroom practice. I would greatly appreciate it if you could take the time to read and respond to each statement. The information you provide will be private. Your assistance has been greatly appreciated.

(Kuesioner ini dirancang untuk menguji sikap dan persepsi peserta didik yang belajar bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa kedua di Indonesia terhadap pembelajaran bahasa berbasis tugas (PBBT) dengan mengacu pada praktik di kelas. Saya akan sangat berterima kasih jika Anda meluangkan waktu untuk membaca memberikan respon terhadap masing-masing pernyataan. Informasi yang Anda berikan akan dijaga kerahasiaannya. Saya sangat berterima kasih atas bantuan Anda).

Section I. General and Demographic Information
(Bagian I. Informasi Umum dan Demografi)
Gender   male   female

(Jenis Kelamin)   *laki-laki perempuan*
Age 11-13 14-16
(Umur)   *11-13 14-16*

Section II. Learners' Attitude towards TBLT
(Bagian II. Sikap Peserta didik terhadap PBBT)

Please put a (√) in the appropriate box to respond to each of the following statements.
(Berilah tanda (√) pada kotak yang tersedia dalam merespon masing-masing pernyataan berikut ini).

SA (strongly agree), A (agree), N (neutral), D (disagree), SD (strongly disagree).
(SS (sangat setuju), S (setuju), N (netral), TS (tidak setuju), STS (sangat tidak setuju)).

Questionnaire Items (Item Kuesioner)	SA (SS)	A (S)	N (N)	D (TS)	SD (STS)
1. I enjoy the opportunity of communication through various types of tasks. (Saya menikmati kesempatan berkomunikasi melalui beberapa bentuk tugas).					
2. An English class task performance is fun for me. (Pengerjaan tugas di kelas bahasa Inggris menyenangkan bagi saya).					
3. Tasks that help me to engage in spontaneous interactions with English. (Tugas membantu saya terlibat dalam interaksi spontan dalam bahasa Inggris).					
4. A task performance in a classroom prepares me for real-world communications challenges. (Kinerja tugas di kelas akan mempersiapkan saya untuk mengatasi tantangan berkomunikasi di dunia nyata).					
5. Task is a powerful means of facilitating my communication skills in English. (Tugas adalah sarana yang efektif untuk memfasilitasi kemampuan komunikasi saya dalam bahasa Inggris).					
6. Tasks that help me use expressions and grammar patterns that I've learned. (Tugas membantu saya memanfaatkan ekspresi dan pola tata bahasa yang telah saya pelajari).					

Section III. Learners' Perceptions of TBLT Implementation
(Bagian III. Persepsi Peserta Didik tentang Implementasi PBBT)

The statements that follow address learners' perspectives on TBLT implementation in the classroom. Please mark the area that best represents your position on the scale below with a (√).

(Pernyataan-pernyataan berikut membahas persepsi peserta didik tentang penerapan TBLT di kelas. Berikan sebuah tanda pada kotak yang paling sesuai dengan posisi Anda sesuai dengan skala berikut berikut dengan menggunakan (√).

SA (strongly agree), A (agree), N (neutral), D (disagree), SD (strongly disagree).
(SS (sangat setuju), S (setuju), N (netral), TS (tidak setuju), STS (sangat tidak setuju)).

Questionnaire Items *(Item Kuesioner)*	SA (SS)	A (S)	N (N)	D (TS)	SD (STS)
TBLT creates a comfortable environment to encourage the use of the target language. *(PBBT menciptakan lingkungan yang nyaman untuk mendorong penggunaan bahasa target).*					
TBLT stimulates the needs and interests of learners. *(PBBT merangsang kebutuhan dan minat peserta didik).*					
In the classroom, TBLT focuses on developing integrated skills. *(Dalam kelas, PBBT berfokus pada pengembangan keterampilan terintegrasi).*					
TBLT perceives the significance of grammar. *(PBBT mementingkan tata bahasa).*					
TBLT is appropriate for learners to prepare exams. *(PBBT cocok bagi peserta didik untuk mempersiapkan ujian).*					
Learners cannot complete the task without fluency and accuracy in English. *(Peserta didik tidak dapat menyelesaikan tugas tanpa kelancaran dan akurasi dalam bahasa Inggris).*					
TBLT is an effective method to control the classroom management. *(PBBT merupakan metode yang efektif untuk manajemen).*					
In large classes, TBLT is ineffective. *(Di kelas besar, TBLT tidak efektif).*					
The learning materials used in TBLT should be relevant and useful in the real world. (Materi pembelajaran yang digunakan dalam TBLT harus relevan dan berguna di dunia nyata).					

Section 4. Reasons learners like or dislike TBLT
(Bagian 4. Alasan pelajar menyukai atau tidak menyukai PBBT)

Do you like the implementation of TBLT in your English classroom? (Only choose one option that best suits you)

(Apakah Anda menyukai penerapan PBBT di kelas bahasa Inggris Anda? (Hanya pilih satu opsi yang paling cocok untuk Anda))

Yes
 (Ya)
No
 (Tidak)
If yes, please put a √ for any reasons that you think best matches your position.

(Jika ya, beri tanda untuk alasan apa pun yang menurut Anda paling sesuai dengan posisi Anda).

	TBLT promotes learners' academic progress. *(PBBT mempromosikan kemajuan akademik pelajar).*
	TBLT improve learners' interaction skills. *(PBBT meningkatkan keterampilan interaksi peserta didik).*
	TBLT encourages learners' intrinsic motivation. *(PBBT mendorong motivasi intrinsik peserta didik).*
	TBLT develops a collaborative learning environment. *(PBBT menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang kolaboratif).*
	TBLT is best used in a small group setting. *(PBBT cocok untuk kerja kelompok kecil).*

If you have other reasons, please write them down.
(Jika Anda memiliki alasan lain, silakan tuliskan).

(_____)

If no, please put a √ for any reasons that you think best matches your position.
(Jika tidak, beri tanda untuk alasan apa pun yang menurut Anda paling sesuai dengan posisi Anda).

	Learners are not used to TBLT approach. *(Siswa tidak terbiasa dengan PBBT).*
	The textbook materials are unsufficient for applying TBLT. *(Materi dalam buku teks tidak cocok dalam pelaksanaan PBBT).*
	TBLT is difficult to be implemented in large classes. *(PBBT sulit diimplementasikan di kelas besar).*
	I find it difficult to assess my own performance. *(Saya mengalami kesulitan dalam menilai kinerja saya sendiri).*
	Teachers are not very familiar with TBLT. *(Guru tidak begitu mengetahui PBBT).*

If you have other reasons, please write them down.
(Jika Anda memiliki alasan lain, silakan tuliskan).

(_____)