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Editorial

Dr. Carlo Granados-Beltrán
Academic Vice Chancellor ÚNICA

In this 29th issue of the *GiST Education and Learning Research Journal,* we explore how critical reflections on identity, power, and diversity reshape English Language Teaching (ELT) and the transformative potential of innovative methodologies and technological tools. The contributions featured here weave together narratives of teacher empowerment, intercultural engagement, learner autonomy, and pedagogical innovation, offering readers a holistic perspective on the evolving ELT landscape.

A key theme in this issue is the reimagining of teachers' roles. This discussion is initiated through a feminist lens that examines how gendered expectations continue to shape the career paths of female language educators. Through the narratives of women navigating patriarchal educational landscapes, "Reconstructing Language Teacher's Roles from a Feminist Perspective" illustrates how oppression, stereotypes, and acts of resistance influence teaching philosophies and professional identities. By emphasizing teacher agency and autonomy, it highlights that transforming English Language Teaching (ELT) starts with empowering educators and challenging outdated hierarchical structures that often go unquestioned.

This focus on empowerment naturally encompasses the emotional and social dimensions of learning environments. As discussed in "Teachers Prepare to Infuse Social-Emotional Learning in English as a Foreign Language Classes in Uruguay," educators in Uruguay are incorporating Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) into their English instruction, aligning with culturally responsive teaching practices that emphasize empathy, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal relationships. Their experiences illustrate how SEL boosts student engagement and creates supportive classrooms where both teachers and students can succeed. This focus on well-being resonates with broader conversations on sustainable teaching methods, underscoring the importance of education in developing the whole individual, not just linguistic skills.

Culture plays a pivotal role in acquiring a language. Effective language mastery requires an appreciation of the cultural contexts that shape its use. The research titled "Bolstering Intercultural Communication among EFL Learners in Online Conversation Clubs" demonstrates how these online spaces foster intercultural dialogue, enabling learners to encounter various viewpoints, challenge stereotypes, and enhance their intercultural communicative skills. These clubs highlight the potential of virtual environments to promote learner independence and inter-cultural awareness, offering meaningful connections with the global community.

The research titled "Using Global Englishes to Enhance Listening Comprehension in Pre-Intermediate English Learners" underscores the significance of linguistic diversity. As English remains a global lingua franca, experiencing its different variations is crucial. In Costa Rica, students indicate that specific accents are easier for them to comprehend, highlighting how familiarity and exposure to various language forms influence understanding. This study advocates for curricula that mirror the realities of global communication, equipping students for a world where English is utilized in many diverse contexts forms.

Shifting our focus from linguistic diversity, we explore the cognitive aspects of language acquisition. The research titled "EFL Students' Writing Strategies, Self-Efficacy, and Performance in Ethiopia: Exploring Interrelationships" investigates how self-efficacy, writing strategies, and performance are connected, revealing that confidence and strategic learning are intertwined. Importantly, the results caution against analyzing strategies in isolation—self-belief and motivation also play essential roles. This indicates that promoting learner autonomy requires more than teaching techniques; it necessitates fostering an environment where students believe in their abilities to succeed.

In concluding this issue, we examine how technology continuously reshapes English Language Teaching (ELT). The article "Using Data-Driven Learning Approach to Enhance EFL Learners' Academic Speaking Skills" demonstrates how learners can utilize authentic language data through corpus tools to improve their academic speaking abilities. After implementing Data-Driven Learning (DDL) methods, students reported increased confidence and enhanced skills, highlighting the empowering effect of thoughtfully integrated technology on learners and classroom interactions. In an era where digital literacy is as critical as language skills, these strategies create opportunities for meaningful, independent learning experiences.

Additionally, this issue features a book review of "Building a Culture of Research in TESOL: Collaborations and Communities" by Jessie Hutchison Curtis and Özgehan Uştuk. The review emphasizes how nurturing research-oriented mindsets and collaborative practices within TESOL communities can enhance professional development and advance the field.

As we reflect on the insights offered in this issue, it becomes clear that the future of ELT lies in embracing complexity—recognizing that language education is never just about language. It is about power and agency, culture and connection, emotion and well-being, strategy and technology. The articles in this collection remind us that effective teaching and learning happen when we acknowledge and respond to these intersections.

We express our gratitude to the authors and reviewers whose contributions make this issue possible. Their dedication and expertise continue to enrich our understanding of English language teaching and learning, providing new perspectives on how education can be transformative for everyone involved.

We invite scholars from around the globe to keep contributing to the GiST Journal, whether by submitting articles, serving as reviewers, or providing book reviews. Your support is invaluable, and we hope you find this issue as thought-provoking and inspiring as we did while curating it.

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Reconstructing Female Language Teacher's Roles from a Sociocultural Perspective

Reconfigurando los roles del profesorado de lenguas desde el una perspectiva feminista

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Abstract

The idea of teacher education has emerged to bridge the gap in questioning intellectual equality for both male and female teachers. Pursuing higher education in language professional careers which are understood as auxiliary jobs by male counterparts poses a big challenge for female teachers who were born and raised in a patriarchal community. This current study explored and interrogated socio-cultural contexts of learning and teaching by gender roles experienced by female language student teachers. It was designed as a narrative case study inviting three student teachers who currently pursued master's or doctoral degree in the US to share their visual narrative experiences. The findings revealed any experience and aspiration of their language learning and teaching by oppression, stereotypes, and agency associated with female language teachers. Conclusions from this study will be helpful for student teachers to reconstruct their teaching philosophy and autonomy in family, school, and community settings.

Keywords: Female language teachers, EFL learning and teaching, sociocultural theory, feminism

Resumen

La idea de la formación docente ha surgido para cerrar la brecha en la cuestión de la igualdad intelectual entre maestros y maestras. Continuar con los estudios superiores en carreras profesionales relacionadas con los idiomas, que suelen ser entendidas como trabajos auxiliares por sus colegas masculinos, representa un gran desafío para las mujeres docentes que han nacido y crecido en una comunidad patriarcal. Este estudio explora e investiga los contextos socioculturales del aprendizaje y la enseñanza a través de los roles de género experimentados por mujeres que estudian sobre la de enseñanza de idiomas. Se diseñó como un estudio de caso narrativo, en el que participaron tres estudiantes de magíster o doctorado en los EE.UU., quienes compartieron sus experiencias a través de narrativas visuales. Los hallazgos revelaron que sus experiencias y aspiraciones en el aprendizaje y la enseñanza de idiomas están marcadas por la opresión, los estereotipos y la agencia asociada con las mujeres docentes de idiomas. Las conclusiones de este estudio serán útiles para que las futuras docentes reconstruyan su filosofía de enseñanza y su autonomía en los ámbitos familiar, escolar y comunitario.

Palabras clave: Mujeres docentes de idiomas, aprendizaje y enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL), sociocultural.

Resumo:

A ideia da formação de professores surgiu para reduzir a lacuna na questão da igualdade intelectual entre professores e professoras. Continuar os estudos superiores em carreiras profissionais relacionadas aos idiomas, que geralmente são entendidas como trabalhos auxiliares por seus colegas masculinos, representa um grande desafio para as mulheres docentes que nasceram e cresceram em uma comunidade patriarcal. Este estudo explora e investiga os contextos

socioculturais da aprendizagem e do ensino por meio dos papéis de gênero experimentados por mulheres que estudam ensino de idiomas. Foi concebido como um estudo de caso narrativo, no qual participaram três estudantes de mestrado ou doutorado nos EUA, que compartilharam suas experiências por meio de narrativas visuais. Os resultados revelaram que suas experiências e aspirações na aprendizagem e no ensino de idiomas são marcadas por opressão, estereótipos e agência associada às mulheres docentes de idiomas. As conclusões deste estudo serão úteis para que futuras professoras reconstruam sua filosofia de ensino e sua autonomia nos âmbitos familiar, escolar e comunitário.

Palavras-chave: Mulheres docentes de idiomas, aprendizagem e ensino de inglês como língua estrangeira (EFL), sociocultural.

Gender representation in educational settings is a topic to address. Woman underrepresentation in such settings overlies on two factors: societal culture and organizational culture (ElAti et al., 2024). The dominance of man's power in the society and gendered divisions in an organization have institutionalized the gender positions in the community and school. As a woman who was born and raised in a patriarchal culture, I observe the gaps in the legitimacy between men's and women's aspirations for career choice. Male supremacy, disempowerment, and stereotyping towards working women impede their career progress and promotion. Gender stereotypes and roles in Eastern culture warrant further investigation to reach equal opportunities for male and female educators, staff, and students at any educational level. Patriarchal environments restrict them to perform with good academic outputs and prosper intellectual and emotional well-being (Dlamini & Adams, 2014). Language teachers may be impacted by the patriarchal culture that places both women and men in a certain social degree. Patriarchal culture is a situation where "men hold power and are the central figures in the family, community, government, and larger society" (Saraswati et al., 2018, p. 3). The socially constructed norms in a patriarchal community are assumed to also influence the behaviors, expectations, and career goals of female teachers. Some studies (e.g., Basu & Kundu, 2022; Han, et al., 2020) have discovered female domination in a teaching position because men are more legitimated to have better income or remuneration from other career positions. Hence, female language teachers might experience microaggressions or subtle discrimination and stereotypes of their jobs culturally at the community and institutional level.

Gender stereotypes of female teachers and students have not been totally solved in schools that are surrounded by a patriarchal community. Hentschel et al. (2019) define gender stereotyping as generally characterizing someone with socially constructed attributes or features including agency and communality. For example, women's roles in the textbooks are stereotyped using some representations such as having family or domestic roles and low-risk, less diverse, and less prestigious occupations (Islam & Asadullah, 2018; Rohmawati & Putra, 2022; Yonata, 2021). The woman representation in the textbook might affect the students' perception towards their female teachers and female students of their social and career insights.

Stereotypes about women's role in educational hierarchies form patterns that are inherited and tacitly embodied (Maher & Rathbone, 1986). For instance, many educational institutions like universities exert power and authority that are often gendered in practice (Arquisola & Rentschler, 2023). Social and historical contexts that evolve around female teachers and learners are key dimensions to assist them in identifying opportunities and events to challenge women's stereotypes. A film study scrutinizing the implication of patriarchal culture towards gender discrimination in Anne, character in Anne with an E, further notices that women who are aware of

gender discrimination may come out with a strong self-actualization such as forming women-led ideology and empowerment, evaluating and innovating education, as well as being participative in the public agenda (Rahma, 2023). Therefore, analyzing these contexts calls for women of a gender-stereotypical interest from critical perspectives.

Nowadays, a lot of professional development opportunities are concerned about women's roles in education. Scholarships available to Indonesian female English teachers can be alternative educational and leadership programs that open chances for them to improve their visibility in public domains. Teacher education can challenge the existing social structure that demeans women (Maher & Rathbone, 1986). Such programs may become efforts to criticize gender discrimination in curriculum design and school leadership roles. With the vast development of government- and foreign-based scholarship, few studies focus on exploring in-depth how Indonesian English teachers who pursue higher degrees use their academic degree merits to critically view the possibilities and obstacles of giving impacts on language education. It pushes female teachers to develop their personal self-esteem and occupational status as factors to change the traditional social structure (Basu & Kundu, 2022), especially regarding male-female proper work concerning language learning and teaching practices. Identifying teachers' sociocultural learning and teaching context also provides an analysis of how teachers use these sociocultural affordances to conceptualize their beliefs about future learning and teaching goals.

Some studies have interrogated the role of student teachers' narratives to identify their agency, identity, and beliefs (Kalaja et al., 2016; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013; Sexton, 2008). This current study adds a novel discussion to locate the student teachers' personal experiences in the milieu of family, community, and school from interpretive and feminist points of view. Therefore, this current study aims to understand the narratives of Indonesian female EFL student teachers' sociocultural contexts and interrogate the ups and downs of language learning and teaching. To achieve the research purpose, this study intends to answer two research questions:

1. How do Indonesian female language student teachers describe their sociocultural contexts of language learning and teaching?

2. In what ways do Indonesian female student teachers' sociocultural narratives inform their language teaching practices in the future?

Literature Review

Sociocultural Contexts of Learning and Teaching, Patriarchal Gender Role, and Feminism

This current study uses three big conceptual frameworks to address female EFL teachers' experience in learning and teaching. The article's conceptual frameworks include sociocultural theory by Vygotsky extended by (John-Steiner & Mahn, 2003) and gender role in patriachal culture (Greenwood & George, 2016).

Sociocultural contexts of language learners

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasizes learning based on four vital factors: social source of development, various forms of participation, semiotic mediation, and genetic analysis dealing with historical contexts (John-Steiner & Mahn, 2003). Social sources of development put forth interdependence between the support given and language proficiency attainment. Another variable is child participation with parents, peers, and community members who have more experience using the language. Interaction and collaboration of more knowledgeable people will support a child with better understanding and skill of being independent learners (Neupane, 2022) and co-construction of their knowledge (Vuopala et al., 2019). The participatory factor facilitates the transmission and construction of knowledge more easily, reduces tendencies to exclude members with less authority and power, and fosters linguistic transaction and transformation in knowledge. Besides, various physical and non-physical semiotic mediation are associated with resources used to elucidate the internalization of language and conceptual thought construction. For the last sociocultural learning factor, Vygotsky uses genetic analysis to inspect sociocultural and historical conditions in a context affecting gender and social power, including interactions with peers and adults and access to resources.

Sociocultural theory values the connections between individual and social processes to be successful in learning and development. However, there is a gap in the sociocultural theory as it does not consider socio-cultural factors such as gender, age, beliefs, and values to synthesize experiences in language development. Analysis of female language teachers' lived experience is a basis for understanding the sociocultural factors that shape opportunities for learning and teaching.

Gender role in patriarchal culture

As culture contributes to individuals' upbringing, women born and raised in Eastern culture mostly experience silence and less chances to take control of their

life because of their gender roles. Low gender equalitarianism is found among female children, parents, and husbands in South Asia where a patriarchal structure dominates (Gupta et al. cited in Greenwood & George, 2016). Women bear high social expectations to listen and take the orders of their fathers, husbands, in-law relatives, and adult children for their entire life. On the other hand, individual upbringing also depends on the family structure imposed by a patriarchal structure. Both male and female children have traditionally been placed at the bottom of the social hierarchy (Devine et al., 2021). Therefore, younger children might have less voice compared to the adults around them.

In the same way, the community in Indonesia normally engenders socio-psychological attributes through gender roles. For example, men are associated with assertiveness, toughness, and competitiveness. Meanwhile, women are expected to be tender, soft, caring (Hofstede cited in Greenwood & George, 2016), and dismissive of male commands. From the lens of sociocultural learning, the sexist view may create big inequalities in giving opportunities for interaction and communication between women and men. It is evident in patriarchal schools, the valorization of men's social power remains because of the system of social relations and masculinity (Haase, 2010). Haase's research (2010) found that students fear and admire male teachers at the same time. Students in the research thought that male teachers' voice scares them more than the experience of being hit by female teachers. The cultural context imposes a mental effect by gender disposition that is unequally true in a learning environment. The patriarchal schools portray that male teachers are considered to have stronger disciplinary culture through the language they use to show power, dignity, and social distance (Read, 2008).

Comparing the expectations to bring to schools, families, and communities, feminine traits are imposed greatly to women; while they are also forced to follow "the regimented, authoritarian, and focused conformity over individual needs" (Maher & Rathbone, 1986, p. 274). The stereotyping of women's traits has formed 'differentness' in cognitive abilities, structural limitations, accessibility to curriculum that inclusively consider personal goals, personal and professional power, and pedagogical styles not only in the family but also community and school.

Method

Research design

A qualitative research inquiry was conducted using a narrative case study method to gather an in-depth understanding of female student teachers' social and historical contexts of learning and teaching from the feminist perspective. This case study would open up the discourse of female teachers' roles that are underrepresented in various

settings of their life, such as family, community, and school. A case study helps readers understand the information from the sources (Bhattacharya, 2017), and thus this current study is expected to gather rich data interpretation that illustrates a learner's and teacher's social and academic experience related to language learning. Since this study invited Indonesian female student teachers who are currently in a master's or doctoral program, their narratives were key stories that can inform learning and teaching from feminist and constructivist perspectives. Narratives of this study were depicted in two forms: visual narratives and interviews that confirmed the teachers' narratives. Narrative can discursively reveal how one makes meaning of being and becoming historically and contextually situated (Prior, 2012). Additionally, visually constructed narratives provide alternative ways to recall stories and make meaning more easily, aside from verbally sharing one's experiences (Kalaja et al., 2016).

Positionality

With my inquisitive aim, I assume that other female language learners might face similar challenges and privileges that I experience as a woman growing up in a patriarchal culture. Moreover, as I have built rapport with my female participants, it is easier for me to bring gender issues around language education. The idea of intersecting gender and education is inspired by Bhattacharya's book (2017), which highlights the issues of the experience of people with their identities in societal structures. Bhattacharya also mentions that qualitative research can be aimed at interrogating the inequalities and marginalization of certain groups; hence, my research proposition challenges the status quo of being a female language teacher, which is frequently considered inferior to their male counterparts in a patriarchal society. Moreover, I have discussed future goals with some of the research participants related to their contributions to the society. The reason for women's involvement in my research is that it takes the gender lens with a similar expectation from McKittrick's (2021) critical race concern to fix and repair a sense of place for black people from subhuman to human positions. This study, therefore, is expected to reformulate public discourse about women as domestic servants to mistresses in their families, work, and community.

Participants

Three Indonesian female student teachers who are currently studying English language teaching and learning were invited to participate in this narrative case study. The participants were selected using purposive sampling to meet the inclusion criteria (i.e., master or doctoral student at an American university, having work experience of at least 1 year, speaking English as a foreign language, and receiving a scholarship for their degree abroad). Each of their narratives was a rare documentation of a

teacher's journey in the public domain. Therefore, the purpose of asking the teachers to draw their socio-cultural learning and teaching contexts could yield inspiring insights from the perspective of a learner and educator. All of the teachers were in the second year of their study program at three different American universities located in Ohio (midwestern US), Arizona (southwestern US), and Iowa (midwestern US). The representation of graduate students from these different locations may devise different narratives influenced by the university's academic, social-historical, and spatial atmosphere of the university or town. One woman was in her 20s, and the other two were in their 30s. All teachers graduated with English-equivalent bachelor's degrees at Indonesian Universities. One Ph.D. student teacher obtained her master's double degree from an Indonesian university and an American University, and the other Ph.D. student teacher held a master's degree from an Indonesian university. Only the doctoral student-teacher studying in Iowa was married. Because of the ethical considerations, all of the student teachers' names were closed and labeled with different names. All of the student teachers specialized in different fields. Bintar was a master's student in Teaching English as a Second Language; Ulil studied in a doctoral program of English as a Second Language; and Wardah studied in a doctoral program of Applied Linguistics and Technology. To participate in this current study, the researcher sent a consent letter to all participants. They were required to read a consent letter and sign it after they agreed.

Materials

Data collection

The primary data of this current study were collected through the elicitation of visual narratives by Kalaja et al. (2016), using drawings to explain the stories, feelings, and contexts from one's experience. In addition, further interpretation beyond the primary data was gained through interviews. Data from visual narrative frames were used to chronologically address the learning and teaching socio-cultural contexts of the female student teachers. After the narrative frames were collected, the researcher conducted a further step, an interview to delve into their experience. The whole research process including the data collection and analysis took place from February to May 2023. This study received an ethical approval from the University of Massachusetts Amherst Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (Number of ethic code: #4241).

Task

In accomplishing the data collection, the student teachers were first asked to visualize their socio-cultural learning and teaching experience in the past, when

becoming a student and a teacher in the Indonesian context. The prompt question given in the first take to help them start visualizing was "Draw your life as a female language learner and teacher in your family, school, and community in the past (childhood to career life). (You can use speech bubbles in your stories if necessary)." The teachers were then given a day to finish the first story. After they finished the first story, they were given another day to visualize the second story. In the second take, they were prompted using this instruction, "Draw the life you imagine as a language learner and a future language teacher after graduating from an American university. (You can use speech bubbles in your stories if necessary)." The narrative sheet provided for the teachers also contained another instruction, "you can visualize your stories in combination with writings" to provide greater flexibility in modes for teachers to express their ideas. The teachers were then asked to submit their narrative sheets to the researcher's email. Following Kalaja's et al. (2016) method, these drawings were called visual narratives that can inform the extensive experience within oneself as a language learner and teacher.

The next step was conducting an hour and a half of elicitation and informal semi structured interview with the three participants. Interview questions/probes were designed deductively from Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (i.e., source of development, participation, semiotic mediation, and genetic analysis) concerning a feminist perspective and teacher education by Maher and Rathbone (1986). In the elicitation, the teachers were invited to interpret the visual narratives they created. The elicitation stage lasted for approximately 40 minutes with interruptions from the researchers when further clarifications on some stories were needed. The follow-up questions were given to confirm vague events in their narratives. In a one-hour semi-structured interview, the teachers were then asked further to meet the research purposes. Data both from the elicitation and the interview were recorded and analyzed in the latter step.

Procedures

Data analysis

The visual narratives were documented and analyzed from Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and gender role theory. The key aspects of the visual narratives included the socio-cultural learning and teaching contexts of being a female learner and teacher, as well as their vision of their future learning and teaching practice. For the sociocultural learning and teaching context, the pictures were categorized into four aspects of sociocultural contexts: a social source of development, socially and culturally shaped contexts, participation with peers and adults, and access to resources (John-Steiner & Mahn, 2003). The data analysis also took place by considering the feminist theory in

education by Maher and Rathbone (1986), which states connections between feminism and teacher education. Meanwhile, to ease the elicitation and interview data process, all interview data were transcribed using a machine transcriber, and transcription results were cross-checked with the audio to clarify the data accuracy. Once the cross-check was done, the data were deductively analyzed using NVivo codes. The data were first coded according to three settings i.e., family, school, and community that entail the socio-cultural variables discussed earlier. The feminist perspective was examined through the student teachers' current experience and future teaching and learning aspirations. Each case of the teachers was presented consecutively one by one, and the later discussion involved disconnections and connections between the teachers' experiences. This process is a natural process of a case study which also aligns with what Maher and Rathbone (1986) argue about the perceived variety of women's experiences.

Results

Social source of development and socially and culturally shaped learning

From the story visualization, this study revealed some socio-cultural contexts the participants had faced. Bintar told her that she grew up in a village where she could not find ways to connect with the community where she lived. Although 'village' is often connotated with a strong community, as a female child, she did not find herself engaging with her peers and adults in the surrounding community. She informed me that she was not an outgoing person and thus preferred not to interact much with her neighbors. Additionally, in this community, people embraced the "silence is gold" philosophy where women were discouraged from voicing their opinions about the issues in their community in ways that men were not. Men possessed more social power than women, leading to less sociocultural and educational participation. Because of this, her interactions with the community were limited to a teacher's student program in which she had to teach reading to her peers in the neighborhood (Figure 1 Box 4). Later when she grew up, she identified herself more exploring the world outside of her home.

> *So, my teacher seemed to know that Bintar likes reading. That made her ask me to help my friend read stories, learning how to read. So, I met my friend every afternoon. She is fortunately my neighbor, across my house. Like 50 or 100 meters from my house.* (Bintar's Image Elicitation)

Figure 1. Bintar's Visual Narrative of Sociocultural Contexts of Learning and Teaching

Wardah interacted with the surrounding community because she was involved in community gatherings and schoolwork. Wardah's neighbor helped her complete language homework when she was in elementary school. She met a lot of community members because her father was the head of the neighborhood. As she worked at a university, she participated in religious gatherings in her community despite having less time to spend outside due to long work hours.

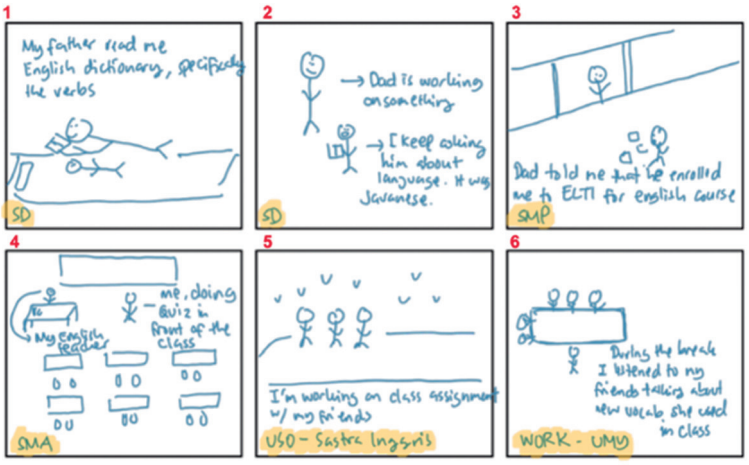
Figure 2. Wardah's Visual Narrative of Sociocultural Contexts of Learning and Teaching

> *In Indonesia, neighbor. Mm. Not quite often, but I always join the religious activity, just that one, because most of the time I was tired after going back from work. Sometimes I had to work extra hours, going back at six or six already dark, everybody already inside of the home. So it's really hard for me to talk unless, like, we have this specific event.* (Wardah's Interview)

Ulil had a continuum of interactions with her neighbors in her village. She interacted with her peers when she was young and connected with them in high school by joining mosque clubs. However, she began to spend less time with them as she went to college and worked. With limited interactions, she realized that she blindly followed any decisions made in her community. Growing up in a mostly dominated Javanese community, Ulil, who was still single, was aware of marriage-related expectations as her peers criticized her decision to pursue higher education in the US. However, she continued her decision as her family and colleagues supported her.

Since junior high and senior high, I rarely interacted with the nearby neighbors, but with neighbors from different neighborhood, because my neighbors across my house were not on my age. However, I met with my peers from other neighborhood in youth mosque club when I was in high school which is near my house. As I worked far away, I rarely met them. (Ulil's Interview)

Figure 3. Ulil's Visual Narrative of Sociocultural Contexts of Learning and Teaching



Dichotomized parentship: shaping child's agency and familial connections

Bintar's language-learning journey was highly influenced by her family. Her parents encouraged her to learn a foreign language because they understood its significance. They, therefore, sent her to an English private course when she was in elementary school (Figure 1 Box 2). Bintar's father, who was a former teacher, helped cover her learning costs, allowed her to read from his history book collection, and invited her to book exhibitions. Reading opened her eyes to a wider perspective on different cultures worldwide. Despite this, Bintar felt more connected to her mother than her father because of the cultural structure such as the gap in age and values between baby boomers and millennials. Bintar admitted that her decision to choose English education, later, was influenced by her perception of teaching as a feminine job. As she graduated from college, she developed her own ideologies and sense of learning autonomy despite the family culture in which a child must follow her family's decisions. She decided to pursue her master's degree in the US, although her family disagreed with her decision. This situation made her withhold information from her family.

> *My father support is different from my mother. My mom or sister took me to the course. My father paid for my course fees. My father gave money to purchase books, and that's his support in this stage (Figure 1 Box 2), funding my learning. However, when I was enrolled to junior high school, I took an English private course, and my father took me there because my mother worked at night. However, when I was in elementary school, my mom and sister took me to a private course. However, my parents support is equal just different in portion. My father then really supported me to go to a book exhibition (Figure 1 Box 3). He was a teacher, so he had a lot of books. My father allowed me to choose anything I want. From that moment, I started to become interested English.* (Bintar's Image Elicitation)

Wardah's family encouraged her to study English, and thus learning resources were more accessible to her. Her parents sent her to the most esteemed school in town and later to a private subject course at the end of senior high school. The resources helped her improve her English skill and social skills with her peers. Although her parents could not speak English, Wardah learned English differently. Her father bought music cassettes, CDs, and books, while her mom supported her with motivational stories. Working as a teacher, her mother encouraged her to get international experience and good compensation for teaching (Figure 2 Box 6), and her father let her participate in various community events and facilitated her public exposure to performing as a female communicator.

> *My mom is a schoolteacher. Since she was teaching Indonesian back then, she's already retired now. But yeah, she wants me. She wanted me to have like this kind of international feeling, studying abroad, having much, much better opportunity in the future. This kind of like thinking that my mom had back then, I decided to say yes, even though I will struggle with the language because I didn't really like English, I was about to choose. I really want*

to be like in math subject because math was my favorite, but in my junior and senior high school. (Wardah's Image Elicitation)

Her relationship with her parents was influenced by a religious vantage point. Wardah believed her duty to follow her mother was a part of the observance of her religion. Therefore, she chose the major that her mother had chosen for her. Unlike her relationship with her mother, Wardah faced tension when interacting with her father. Her mother was like a friend, who she shared everything with, but because her father was an introverted person, she engaged with him less. Because of these differentiated gender identities, she often stepped back from building intimate interactions with her father.

With an educated family background, Ulil, the first child in her family, had easier access to material resources and chances to learn with her parents. Her parents implicitly set family expectations because of their roles. She claimed her father, who was an engineer, was a source of knowledge because he gave her various reading sources and reading activities (Figure 3 Box 1 and 2), while her mother became her emotional support. Her parents sent her to a renowned school in town, and her father registered her for an English private course (Figure 3 Box 3). Her decision to pursue higher education in the US was also supported by her family who acknowledged that this was necessary for being a higher-ed educator.

When I was junior high, my father picked me from playing with my elder nephew and he said I was registered to ELT, an English private course. He did not say anything before , so I don't know. I think maybe he considered the importance of English. (Ulil's Image Elicitation)

Ulil had built close relationships with her father since she was young. Her father was quite engaging in dialogues and discussions with her, especially when he accompanied her to school. Because she lived in a Javanese family in which a parent-child hierarchical structure exists, she still did not flexibly navigate her own voice to her parents. As a result, she tended not to express her opinion until she was asked to do so. Besides, she believed that her parents' blessings are the prayer for her life; thus, she kept her will to herself to be not considered rebellious.

Punitive educational experience, peer help, and unspoken mind at school

Although Bintar studied in a village elementary school, she could find literacy resources from her class teacher. Despite this, she had a traumatic experience in English learning in elementary school because of a reprimanding EFL female teacher (Figure 1 Box 1). As she moved to a more renowned middle and senior high school in town, she felt her agency and chances to connect with her peers were lower. Her

peers were born and raised in more urban areas and thus had access to intellectual and economic affordances compared to her. As Bintar did not fit within the larger dominant elite (high-income and intellectual) student group, she only grouped with female peers who are from the same social status. To improve her English, Bintar had a student teaching position in an English club known as a dominated English club (Figure 1 Box 6).

Most of the time, Bintar faced the great challenge of representing herself as a village female English language learner (Figure 1 Box 5). She also felt this way when she studied at an American university. Although she considered teachers as a source of knowledge, it was not easy for her to voice out her aspiration to them because of the hierarchical relationship. She also had a similar experience as a freelance teacher at her university. She experienced pressure because of hierarchical work cultures such as a staff-leader relationship and job status. Otherwise, she was afraid of being fired if she voiced her criticism towards her leaders out loud.

> *First box is about a coercive teacher in elementary school. It tells us about the first time I learned English. I forgot how old I was at that time, maybe around 3 or 4 grade in elementary school. The English female teacher was irritable to us. When the bell rang, all of us was in rush to class. We know that she's bad-tempered. Look, she walked to the class. We were in hurry to class. Because of this experience, I did not like English. Because of having a coercive English female teacher, I was afraid of learning English and making mistakes which makes me rebuked. If we did a mistake, she would be angry at us and criticized us. (Bintar's Image Elicitation)*

Wardah claimed herself as an average language learner. She did not participate in many English learning events outside of her class because those were available only for good English-speaking students. In addition, she experienced academic burnout in middle school because her female teacher traumatized her by giving high-demanded testing items that went beyond her knowledge (Figure 2 Box 2 and 3). Later in college, she met peers and professors that allowed her to improve her skills. She then decided to study in the US and found a discussion group that improved her language acquisition and assessment. As she worked as a lecturer, her ability to sharpen her skills was still limited because her female head department restricted her. Additionally, her chance to participate in professional development workshops was constrained because her husband, who worked at the same faculty, was prioritized over her.

Wardah's learning participation with peers and adults at school was quite varied. Her teachers, as a source of knowledge, designed competitive teachings. Individual participation was promoted more than collaboration. However, she could still find ways to reach out to peers to practice her English in college. Her prior student experience left her anxious about her learning. She tended to not argue or keep her thoughts to herself. However, when she began working with a female peer, she found greater autonomy to criticize her language teachers who put too many demanding

expectations on her and her peers. She also had a similar action when she experienced unfair treatment from the head of the study program at the university she worked. Her determination to raise her voice did not always make everything smooth, but she was aware to stand up for her rights as a language learner and teacher.

> *Somehow it was, like, traumatic for me because that kind of like negative thinking that I had about English from that teacher remains forever. I hate English, to be honest, since I was like a student at junior high school as well as in high school. I keep kind of like trembling. I keep kind of like shaking. I just hated, like, sweating all the time and kept counting of the time. Like how many minutes left, just like, one minute. Oh, my God. Having that kind of experience wasn't really nice, right? As a student, I really, really hated (English). (Wardah's Image Elicitation)*

Ulil received better learning resources at an English private course and extracurricular programs than at formal schools. Her English teacher in high school noticed her interest in language and then asked her to participate in language debate competitions. She developed her English a lot in college as she could interact with peers who were proficient in the language.

When Ulil was at middle school, her female English teacher was demanding and punitive. Later in senior high school, she had motherly and compassionate English female teachers, but they still barely focused on group work to encourage peer collaboration. However, in college, she met active mixed-gender peers through group work and collegial support where her male peers were generous in sharing their language knowledge and practice with her (Figure 3 Box 5 and 6).

Ulil believed she learned in a culture legitimizing a teacher's power over students. At the university she worked, she faced many cultural and professional communication issues. Hence, she felt inferior and never expressed her opinions to her teachers. She developed other ways of voicing her thoughts, such as talking to colleagues at her level or those in lower positions. Working in a place influenced by Javanese culture, her colleagues still perceived that Ulil as a single teacher could have worked harder than the married teachers. She experienced a stereotypical assumption about marital status and work performance in that situation.

> *My English female teacher in junior high was coercive although she was physically good-looking. She gave a lot of homework and punished us for not doing it. At that time, I thought I would not mess up with her because she was punitive. (Ulil's Interview)*

> *At some points, I sometimes got some aspirations to say to my colleagues. I thought the problem should be solved this way, but it was not able to be solved right away or I could not talk about it right away to the person. So, I shared my thoughts to my close colleagues or someone in the lower position. For example, I would not say my aspirations to the rector since I could reach out to the study program secretary. (Ulil's Interview)*

Safe, equitable, and aspirational teaching for contextual and participatory learning

Bintar hopes to be a good teacher who can create a safe and nonjudgmental learning space to encourage students' active participation in expressing opinions and respectfully evaluating themselves and others. She expects to build a good rapport and collaborate with her students by solving language problems without being concerned with the power hierarchy (Figure 4 Box 1). Creating a supportive learning culture becomes her future goal to eliminate the inequalities between male and female students, in addition to providing good facilities such as the Internet, computers, books, and educational tools. She hopes to establish multilingual teacher collaboration at her institution and build connections between authentic community issues and English education to stand for social justice.

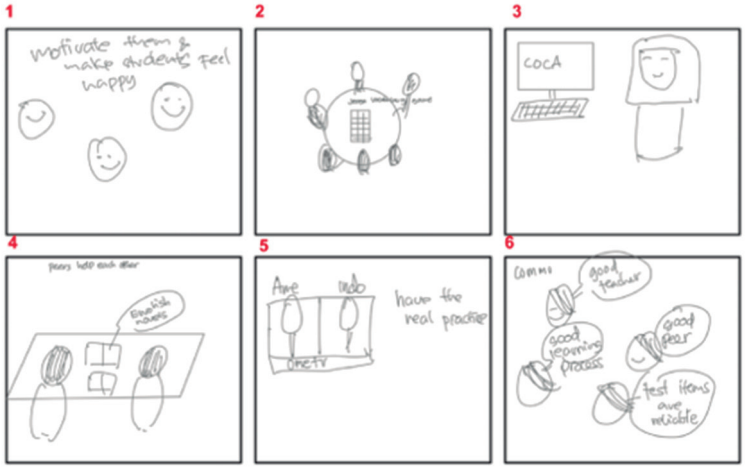
Figure 4. Bintar's Visual Narratives of Future Teaching and Learning Aspirations

> *I want my class to allow students to be active and comfortable. I do not want to be a coercive teacher like my former English teacher. I do not want judgment on my students, so they are safe to express their opinions and make mistakes. They also need to be supported by good facilities. It's important for language teaching. For example, technology, speaker and internet, and what's that? Computer. They must be in class. It is useful for teachers. I want to build a close relationship with my students like supporting each other. For example, if I do not know the answer, my students should understand me. We can find the answer together. That's what I imagine myself as a language teacher. (Bintar's Image Elicitation)*

Wardah illustrated her future learning and teaching as a call to action against her unpleasant learning and teaching experience. She wants a fun creative learning class

to support students with any learning needs, thus not leaving others behind. She wants to use her expertise in corpus instructions to help students have logical reasons to identify language structures. She intends to apply collaborative learning to offer vibrant learning spaces. She wants to grow the autonomy and communication skills of her students by applying universal groupings, hands-on learning, and the use of technology such as OmeTv. Based on her experience, she theorizes that good teachers and good peers will result in a good learning process. She envisions her students actively engaging regardless of their gender. She also hopes her department will have an equal-gender student placement mechanism for teaching practicum.

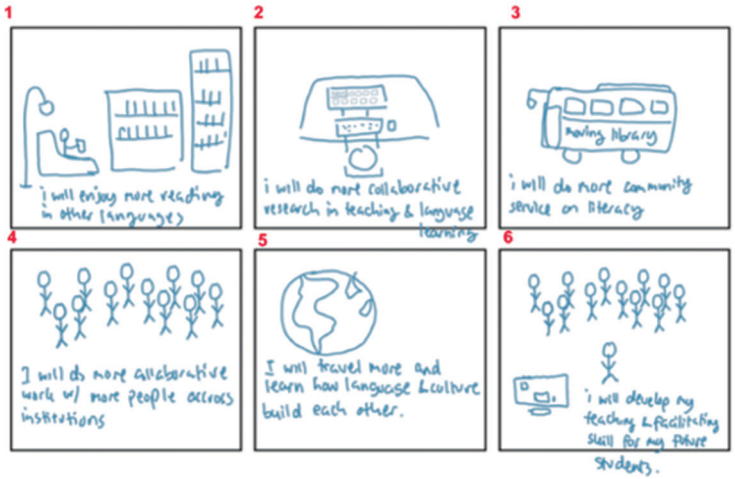
Figure 5. Wardah's Visual Narratives of Future Teaching and Learning Aspirations



Reflecting again back to the experience that I had, I definitely want my student be happy. English definitely like motivate them and make my student feel happy all the time. I want to involve game like I as like on the second picture on the second box I have like Jenga vocabulary for whatever the game discussion and things like that. I just want to make my student feel happy and kind of like being supportive, supporting each other. Do not make one of the student left behind because I didn't really like the feeling at all. And I want. I want to cry because, like my experience with English was not that good. (Wardah's Image Elicitation)

Ulil brought aspirations about how important collaboration is in teaching and research. She wants to mingle with a community and bring her authentic experience to class while teaching English (Figure 6 Box 4 and 5). She also hopes to reach out to her students' families and invite them to see their children's learning. To give equal learning opportunities, she wants to assign students to mixed-gender student groups and give them the same scoring system and differentiated instruction if necessary.

Figure 6. Ulil's Visual Narratives of Future Teaching and Learning Aspirations



Although literacy practices are not necessarily related to the English subject I taught, I can still learn and bring the experience from the travelling or the community. They would contribute to how I teach English to the student, specifically on the social practices, despite indirectly teaching the English language. For my language teaching, what I could bring from here (US) is how to develop myself and my teaching competence. That will indirectly relate to the quality of language teaching in my future class. (Ulil's Image Elicitation)

Discussion

For the first point, this study demonstrates Indonesian female EFL teachers' experience influenced by different sociocultural contexts of various settings. The participants' interaction with peers and adults in the community is influenced by academic and religious factors, patriarchal support, and the child's introverted personality. Muslim women participate in mosques for several reasons, including learning about Islam, praying, socializing, engaging in community activities, and obtaining emotional support and connection (Nyhagen, 2019). In addition, limited interaction with the community due to work reasons might have something to do with the participants' individualistic ideals as a result of Western interference in the form of neoliberal capitalism, which can be detrimental to traditional communal life (Hirmer et al., 2022). Results on father's social support align with research that mentions that the political stage in the patriarchal culture is the world of men (Wayan & Nyoman, 2020), leading to subtle silence culture stereotyping women as passive (Sakallı Uğurlu et al., 2021).

Moreover, all participants received their parents' encouragement of English learning in many ways despite the dichotomy of the father and mother roles. This is related to the fatherly patriarchy, which manifests man dominance in most aspects of family life (Pierik, 2022), and man's responsibility for more economic or material power than mothers (Krumhuber et al., 2022). This suggests that fatherly patriarchy embeds gender-stereotypic beliefs and idealized roles for fathers and mothers (Koenig et al., 2011). However, man dominance found in all cases demonstrates power-sharing to widen female family members' knowledge. Overall, success trajectories also depend on different forms of parental support a child receives (Al-deen, 2019).

Self-stereotyping on teaching as a feminine job may influence how the self is construed with specific gender descriptions (Krumhuber et al., 2022) such as female children proper for expressive attributes (warm, caring, and nurturing) (Hentschel et al., 2019). The participants' parents thought promising international exposure, a stable job, and academic promotion in teaching career, but these depend on intrinsic, extrinsic, and altruistic motives that contribute to positive or negative people's perceptions of teaching (Başöz, 2021).

Regarding freedom to speak, all participants tend to withhold from expressing their opinions to their parents because of religious factors, familial hierarchy, and ethnic culture. In relation to this, patriarchy is connotated with power, family relations, social hierarchy (Pierik, 2022), and religiosity in different religious groups such as families (Perales & Bouma, 2019). Gaps in the conversational topic, perceived gender role of parents, age, and generational values influence the outcome of power relations (Pierik, 2022) in family. Legitimizing men's power in families may continue creating social distance between fathers and daughters (Haase, 2010).

Pursuing a higher degree in a Western university is an example of autonomy against gender stereotypes that men have more self-oriented traits (e.g., ambitious, independent, dominant, and success-oriented) (Sakallı Uğurlu et al., 2021). Autonomy and ideology development in college may result from peer interaction and access to learning resources that shape the key personalities of female language learners. As most participants access Western learning resources, they may intersect with Western ideologies about women's emancipatory rights for social inclusion (Koburtay et al., 2023).

From the lens of learners' experience, all participants had a discouraging learning experience with intrusive EFL female teachers despite considering them a source of knowledge. This situation may suggest how coercive female teachers challenge the authoritarian regime of the schooling system, in which male teachers receive more referral to power and control (Bayever, 2021; Robinson, 1992). Thus, the current finding might lead to questioning the boundary of femininity between the attitudes of EFL male and female teachers in disciplining students.

The participants' prior teachers might pose teaching beliefs, experience, and intercultural competencies which may interrupt the ability to adjust and localize EFL materials to be more participatory (Munandar & Newton, 2021). Since the introduction to critical cultural awareness commonly begins at the college level, EFL teaching in college may touch on cultural realities rather than focusing on grammar only in middle-senior high school (Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018). Besides, students' basic knowledge and experience may be a challenge for high school EFL teachers to exhibit communicative learning strategies and thus mostly use teacher-centered teaching (Muliyah & Aminatun, 2020).

Isolation and marginalization of voice that the participants faced at school is caused by different social statuses, academic competitiveness, and gendered working culture. Low socio-economic status and low academic self-efficacy could lead to students' disconnection from school (Ahmadi et al., 2020). Female leadership in Indonesian higher education is hindered by a stifling bureaucracy, insufficient resource allocation (Arquisola & Rentschler, 2023), and lower job status (Markey et al., 2002). It aligns with Harlo's study in which women's voice is more sounding than men's but quieter only when addressing their voice to the supervisor or more powerful offender (Harlos, 2010). At this point, multidimensional individual, group, and institutional factors concern the participants about their actions, voice, and access to resources and interactions.

Marriage in patriarchal culture is viewed as an ideal household expectation (Pierik, 2022), but it may create anxiety for independent women (da Silva Perez, 2022). Concerning marital stereotype among the participants, a study in Turkey discovered that single-working women are associated with being hardworking and ambitious, while married working women are entitled to be hardworking for caring for domestic activities and work (Özkan, 2011). This situation offers a broader perspective on stereotypical differences on married and single Indonesian EFL teachers.

In response to the second question, the participants aim to benefit themselves and their community. Good teachers regardless of their gender should have personality competence, pedagogical competence, social competence, and professional competence (Sakkir et al., 2021). The participants also want their teaching to adopt social justice, authentic learning, and critical literacy by considering accessibility to facilities (e.g., books, the internet, and other educational tools). Similar proper facilities and authenticity in learning are resources envisioned by foreign language teachers in Finland (Kalaja et al., 2016). Most participants consider mix-gender grouping inside and outside class to create a collaborative and friendly learning environment. This study concludes that mix-gender grouping seems to impact female and male students' success, reduce gender disparities, and curtail the negative influence of gender stereotypes on a particular group of sexes (Almasri, 2022).

Conclusion

Capturing different experiences of female teachers uncovers the gap and inequalities in language education at different levels (family, community, and school). The presence of women in community setting deals with the purpose that want to achieve in the community. Religious attainment may bridge the gap in social inclusion between men and women in a Muslim dominated patriarchal community. Parents' support, in addition, is prominent in the learning and teaching of Indonesian female EFL teachers. Parents' support is differentiated by gender roles in the family, such as emotional support from the mothers and material and instrumental support from the fathers. The stereotypical thought of teaching as a feminine job still exists, although it is also viewed as valuable in terms of a promising career. The teachers tend not to raise their voices to parents because of complex interplaying factors i.e., religious factors, familial hierarchy, and ethnic culture. This also relates to their stage of developing their own ideologies and autonomy of learning and teaching, which mostly occurs after college, possibly due to peer interaction and access to wider resources. This study also reveals an anomaly in how the participants' female EFL teachers perform attitudes crossing the boundary of femininity. Besides, school as a learning and teaching place poses a subtle stereotypical perception of marital status and privilege of single female EFL teachers. Not wanting to repeat the same oppressive and stereotypical experience, the EFL teachers envision their future teaching as safe and non-judgmental.

The current findings shed light on female EFL teachers' learning and teaching experience that may pose transformative language education practices in the future. Since this study accounts for female teachers' experience from being a child, a community member, learner, and teacher, it portrays the present, past, and future of their growth in each setting. However, since this study is a case study, it only includes three teachers' visual narratives of socio-cultural contexts. To see the extensive findings of sociocultural contexts on female EFL teachers' learning and teaching, further studies need to include a larger number of participants from different regions of Indonesia. Besides, future research can examine the influence of colonialism and neoliberalism on the sociocultural context of learning and teaching to see the changes in women's scholarship from different points of view. Conducting comparative studies on both male and female teachers' sociocultural contexts will also add to future research's novelty. Moreover, although visual narratives provide alternative ways of presenting experiences using visuals, future research may come with different research methods to address the concerns and strengths of participants, researchers, the community, and beyond.

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Teachers Prepare to Infuse Social-Emotional Learning in English as a Foreign Language Classes in Uruguay

Docentes se preparan para integrar el aprendizaje socioemocional en clases de inglés como lengua extranjera en Uruguay

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Abstract

This qualitative case study examined teachers' views on integrating Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and its role in supporting Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP). A total of 32 K-5th grade English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Uruguayan teachers completed a three-week online asynchronous professional development. Participants' training focused on SEL principles, practices, and strategies for the English as a foreign language classroom. During the training, a three-scale rubric (0 - 3 points) served to formatively assess and provide feedback to the participants on completing weekly tasks. The evaluation examined the content of the teachers' reflection and applications to practice. Feedback focused on how well teachers grasped the theoretical content and its integration. Once the training was completed, participants answered four open-ended questions in an online repository questionnaire. Findings document that after the intervention, the teachers perceived that students benefitted from learning about SEL and its implementation, and they came to believe that SEL principles need to become an integral part of instructional planning in Uruguay's EFL classrooms.

Keywords: Social Emotional Learning (SEL), English as a Foreign Language, Uruguay, Teacher Professional Development, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Resumen

Este estudio cualitativo examinó la comprensión del Aprendizaje Socio Emocional (ASE) adquirida por 32 docentes de inglés como idioma extranjero de K-5° grado después de un desarrollo profesional asincrónico en línea de tres semanas. El entrenamiento se enfocó en los principios, prácticas y estrategias del ASE y su incorporación en clases de inglés. Durante la formación, se utilizó una rúbrica de tres escalas (0-3 puntos) para evaluar formativamente y proporcionar retroalimentación a los participantes sobre la realización de las tareas semanales. La evaluación examinó el contenido de las reflexiones de los docentes y la aplicación de los conceptos a la práctica. La retroalimentación se centró en qué tan bien los docentes comprendieron el contenido teórico y su integración. Una vez finalizada la capacitación, los participantes respondieron a cuatro preguntas abiertas a través de un cuestionario. Los hallazgos documentan que, después de la intervención, los docentes percibieron que los estudiantes se benefician al aprender sobre ASE y su implementación, y llegaron a creer que los principios de SEL deben convertirse en una parte integral de la planificación instruccional en las aulas de de inglés como lengua extranjera en Uruguay.

Palabras Claves: Aprendizaje Socio Emocional, Inglés como Idioma Extranjero, Uruguay, Desarrollo Professional para Docentes, Pedagogía Relevante

Resumo

Este estudo qualitativo examinou a compreensão da Aprendizagem Socioemocional (ASE) adquirida por 32 professores de inglês como língua estrangeira do ensino fundamental (K-5º ano) após um desenvolvimento profissional assíncrono online de três semanas. O treinamento focou nos princípios, práticas e estratégias da ASE e sua incorporação nas aulas de inglês. Durante a formação, utilizou-se uma rubrica de três escalas (0-3 pontos) para avaliar formativamente e fornecer feedback aos participantes sobre a realização das tarefas semanais. A avaliação analisou o conteúdo das reflexões dos professores e a aplicação dos conceitos à prática. O feedback concentrou-se no nível de compreensão dos professores sobre o conteúdo teórico e sua integração. Ao final da capacitação, os participantes responderam a quatro perguntas abertas por meio de um questionário. Os resultados documentam que, após a intervenção, os professores perceberam que os alunos se beneficiam ao aprender sobre ASE e sua implementação, e passaram a acreditar que os princípios da ASE devem se tornar uma parte essencial do planejamento instrucional nas salas de aula de inglês como língua estrangeira no Uruguai.

Palavras-chave: Aprendizagem Socioemocional, Inglês como Língua Estrangeira, Uruguai, Desenvolvimento Profissional de Professores, Pedagogia Relevante

Increases in worldwide migration have resulted in school populations that are more diverse in language and culture than ever before (International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2024). Migration of families forced into exile due to political events has created émigrés who have no choice but to leave their homeland with little more than a suitcase, to confront numerous economic and personal hurdles. In 2020, North America welcomed 59 million immigrants, composing 21% of the world's migration. Europe and Asia opened their doors to 61% of the world's immigrants, reflecting figures of 87 and 86 million respectively (IOM, 2021). Attending to the emotional needs of diverse learners must become a priority of schooling (Bennett, 2019; Greene, 2018) because unexpected influxes of plurilingual and pluricultural learners require educators to modify the school curriculum to address all learners' academic and socio-cultural needs. Culturally responsive educators can address the educational challenges of immigrant learners by investigating students' funds of knowledge (Moll, 2019). Inquiry into learners schooled and non-schooled knowledge ensures the curriculum considers students' socioemotional competencies (SECs) and reflects their languages and cultures.

Uruguay's Emerging Plurilingualism

This research focuses on the growing plurilingualism and pluriculturalism of Uruguay, the second smallest South American nation, nestled between Argentina, Brazil, and the Atlantic Ocean. Uruguay's demographic reflects what is occurring across the world's continents. In the recent past, the population of Uruguay was largely homogeneous but recently the number of immigrants from the Latin American region (Argentina, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Venezuela), and from Syria has led to a notable increase of culturally and linguistically diverse students in the nation's (Caumont, 2020). Many immigrants speak Spanish, a Romance language, and may be literate in it. Immigrants to Uruguay from Syria face different hurdles because Arabic, their first language, has a distinct alphabet system. This inquiry applies to other countries, as valuable insights can be gained by examining the steps Uruguay has taken to address the needs of culturally diverse learners enrolling in its schools.

For the purposes of this study, we use the terms "plurilingual" and "pluricultural" to describe an individual able to interact with others in two or more languages in a manner that serves the goal of the communication. A person does not need a high level of language proficiency to engage in bartering at a roadside stand, but the individual who can successfully barter and buy a product, may consider the ability to interact successfully in such situations defines them as a plurilingual and pluricultural person. Therefore, we believe that immigrant students to Uruguay, while in the process of gaining proficiency in Spanish and English, are pluricultural and plurilingual. Their efforts reflect Uruguay's emerging plurilingualism and evidence the changing demographic in the nation's schools.

Many researchers consider that nurturing educators' culturally responsive ideologies will ensure that diverse student populations see themselves reflected in the school curriculum (Hawkins & Norton, 2009; Ricento, 2019). This research aimed to position EFL teachers as transformative leaders equipped to implement Uruguay's EFL curriculum through a social justice lens. Considering the Uruguayan sociocultural context and events across the world's stage, we proposed that integration of social and emotional learning (SEL) in the Uruguayan EFL classroom requires training teachers to implement SEL and address CRP practices. Supervisors from Uruguay's Department of Foreign Languages (DFL) secured participants for this study, evidencing Uruguay's educational leaders' interest in meeting the guidelines of the Ley General de Educación [General Law of Education] (2020). The law views teachers' work from an integral perspective, considering different aspects of the person's development, addresses the social and emotional components of learning, and focuses beyond the goal of teaching only discipline-specific content.

The anticipated promise of this intervention is that providing EFL teachers opportunities to enhance their pedagogical practices with knowledge of SEL practices, and promoting students' SECs, might offer Uruguayan educators an informed path to achieving educational reform (Jagers et al., 2018). Few studies have focused on the influence of SEL on academic performance in EFL classrooms (Bai & Wang, 2021). This research proposes providing Uruguayan teachers with support to build learners' SECs and create equitable learning opportunities for native-born and immigrant students.

Literature Review

Educational leaders in Uruguay agree that learners need more than discipline-specific instruction, especially those who have experienced political and personal trauma, and face adjusting to a new sociocultural context while acquiring one or two additional languages (Gay, 2018; Pentón Herrera, 2020). Immigrants to Uruguay, whose first language is not Spanish, are required to learn Spanish, which becomes their second language, and English, a third language, at school. Spanish is the official language of the country of Uruguay, and English is taught to all students enrolled in schools. Uruguay's educational policies regarding mandatory English instruction legitimizes the language's economic value for the nation (*Ley General de Educación* [General Law of Education], 2008). English empowers the region's reach beyond the southern hemisphere and positions Uruguayan citizens to compete in the world marketplace.

Uruguay's teachers help ensure equitable resources are available to teachers across rural and urban areas of the nation's schools (Díaz Maggioli & Kuhlman, 2010). The

EFL curriculum being implemented is based on the TESOL standards' domains of knowledge and applications to practice that teachers must know and be able to demonstrate (Kahmi-Stein et al., 2017). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, distance learning in Uruguay aimed to meet the demands of teaching EFL across the country, but a focus on SEL was absent. The complete move to e-learning during the pandemic demonstrated to the DFL that EFL educators were unprepared to infuse SEL in EFL instruction (Jagers et al., 2018; Trinidad, 2020). Preparing EFL teachers had overlooked the need to add a hearty focus on culturally responsive instruction (CRP) (Allbright & Hough, 2020) and SEL, nor stressed that learners' emotions are the cornerstone of the curriculum (Rogers, 2019).

Socio-Emotional Learning in the Southern Hemisphere

The Andean Development Corporation and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (Huerta, 2019; *Revista de Educación* [Journal of Education], 2017), declared the importance of SEL by encouraging the development of SEL constructs (e.g., self-awareness and self-management) (CASEL, 2024). Three Latin American countries (Uruguay, Colombia, and Ecuador) refer to SEL in their curriculum (*Instituto Nacional de Educación Evaluativa* [National Institute of Educational Evaluation], 2020). Still, the effectiveness of implementing SEL in South America has not been determined. Uruguay's national curriculum (ANEP- CEP, 2022) states that elementary instruction must stimulate SEL components, empathy, and conflict resolution skills, urging teachers to embed SEC development intentionally and systematically within instruction; however, to date there is no official framework to guide or help coordinate SEL integration.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP)

In EFL classes, educators teach both English and the cultural norms that English speakers engage with daily. Understanding the cultural practices and histories of English-speaking populations globally is essential in EFL. Social-emotional learning (SEL) enhances RFL by encouraging intercultural comprehension and appreciation for diversity (Gay, 2018). The principles of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) are integrated with SEL as its implementation encourages self-reflection, promoting equity and social justice (Martínez Agudo, 2018; Rogers, 2019). Teaching SEL concepts ensures learners develop their SECs and master ways to engage in respectful communication in formal and informal situations (Aspen Institute, 2018; Jagers et al., 2018). When EFL teachers explore the sociocultural context of schooling (Freire, 1985), they are ready to plan a curriculum that addresses and validates students' backgrounds (Jiménez, 2021; Ladson-Billings, 2021). Three key tenets inform CRP: teachers' cultural competence,

their instructional expertise, and their level of pluricultural understanding (Pentón Herrera, 2020).

Ladson-Billings (2021) explains that CRP focuses on empowering students to achieve academically, reach high levels of cultural competence, and socio-political consciousness. Similarly focused, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) (2024) divides SEL skills into five categories that teachers must support: regulating one's emotions, thoughts, and actions; demonstrating social awareness, empathy, and acceptance of others' social and ethical norms; establishing and maintaining healthy rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups; and making constructive and respectful choices in personal and social interactions based on consideration of the person's identity and well-being. When Ladson-Billings discusses the *so what* of CRP, she focuses on how teachers transform theory into action and explain to learners that the curriculum will prepare them to stand up for their rights and privileges (2021). Teachers meet the equity goals of CRP with a rigorous curriculum that affirms diverse identities and supports students in examining the world through a critical lens.

Socio-Emotional Learning in EFL

Reforms in education require culturally responsive educators (Rogers, 2019). We believe that online self-paced training can engage EFL educators in reflection (Melani et al., 2020). This assumption was important for this intervention, as the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health needs of students and teachers (Trinidad, 2020) continues. Understanding the components of acquiring additional languages requires awareness of the factors of motivation and anxiety and how these are affected by learners' SECs (Dörnyei, 1994; Ellis, 1994). Cultural responsiveness in EFL is present when teachers' SEL and CRP awareness leads students to engage in mindful and respectful behaviors (Oxford, 2015). In such classrooms learners become enthusiastic participants who wish to learn the languages of study and the ways of being of the people who speak the language. Research suggests that developing learners' SECs changes the classroom ambiance and therefore helps close academic gaps (Malloy, 2019). Skills such as self-regulation, perseverance, resilience, and the ability to establish positive peer relationships have been suggested to correlate to higher levels of student engagement, attendance rates, and achievement (Durlak et al., 2011). The respectful relationships that SEL study fosters mitigate the effects of social discontinuity (Dörnyei, 1994), and in addition, students' anxiety decreases as they practice SEL skills (Ellis, 1994). Once students develop their SECs, they will more easily to appreciate their classmates' funds of knowledge (Moll, 2019).

Pentón Herrera (2020) emphasizes the need to remedy learner stress using methods that support SEC development and self-management beyond the classroom.

He suggests using practices that allow learners to think about their attitudes and behaviors. Methods such as bibliotherapy, peace education, yoga, restorative practices, journaling, listening circles, mindfulness and instruction on emotional intelligence help students learn about each other (Pentón Herrera, 2020). SEL helps students recognize their classmates' respectful behaviors and acknowledge positive traits using words such as generous, funny, or open-minded. Teachers and students might select two to three positive words to use each week and reflect on how this type of feedback supports camaraderie.

Theoretical Framework

Insufficient research has explored the ideologies of EFL teachers and how these influence their pedagogy (Adams & Richie, 2017; Bai & Wang, 2021; Martínez Agudo, 2018). The theoretical framework that guided this study was sociocultural learning theory (Freire, 1985; Vygotsky, 1986). In addition, this research was informed by the CASEL (2024) standards for guiding EFL teachers' PD (CASEL, 2024). While the CASEL standards are not considered part of the theoretical framework of this study, their use contributed to the planning of this study and delivery of the teachers' online training. We know that educators cognizant that attention to CRP methods improves the quality of interactions in EFL classrooms, will utilize CASEL to help learners acquire the SECs that lead them to contribute to each other's well-being (Franquíz et al., 2019; Hawkins & Norton, 2009; Oxford, 2015). This work investigates English as a foreign language (EFL) educators' ability to infuse socio-emotional learning (SEL) in culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP).

Two research questions guided this study: What are teachers' perceptions of infusing SEL in EFL? And, what benefits do EFL teachers recognize in using SEL to infuse CRP into classroom instruction?

Methodology

This qualitative case study (Yin, 2009) examined teachers' views on integrating SEL in EFL and its role in supporting CRP. After obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the researchers' institution and the Uruguayan Board of Primary Education, support was obtained from Uruguay's DFL to coordinate recruitment. Two national supervisors from the DFL emailed an invitation to 550 Uruguayan elementary teachers to enroll in a three-week training through an online platform provided by the Uruguayan government. Of 550 emails sent, 32 teachers agreed to participate. Each participant was assigned a unique number used in the results section to ensure compliance with IRB protocols. The invitation presented information about the course content and the study inclusion criteria: employment as an EFL elementary

teacher; intermediate English language proficiency (CEFR B1); internet access; and ten-hour weekly availability to complete readings and assignments. Participants were sent a digital certificate accrediting 20 hours of professional development (PD) issued by the researchers and the DFL supervisors upon compliance with three requirements: submission of a signed consent form; compliance with all course tasks; and completion of all stages of data collection.

Data Gathering

Participants answered four open-ended questions using an online repository website after completing an online asynchronous three-week SEL workshop delivered on the Moodle platform. They could respond online at their convenience and have time to reflect on their instructional planning. Responses were analyzed utilizing six-phase thematic analysis (TA): data familiarization, generation of initial codes, search for themes, review of identified themes, definition of the themes, and reporting (Clarke & Braun, 2017). TA was chosen because it is a systematic approach for examining perspectives about a topic (Clarke & Braun, 2017; Nowell et al. 2017). After the researchers reviewed the collected data, each developed initial codes that later were collaboratively discussed and refined. The next step was to generate the final themes. The inductive process for generating the codes allowed the researchers to understand the responses based on the situated context of the project. The participants responded to the following questions after completion of the PD:

Post-Workshop Questions

1. What did you learn about implementing SEL and CRP that you will use?
2. How can CRP and SEL improve the level of respect in students' communications?
3. What specific strategies or concepts have you implemented after this training?
4. If additional training is provided in the future, what topics would you like to further explore?

Teachers' Training

The three-week online training provided foundational knowledge and strategies for modeling SEC development. Directions and suggestions allowed the teachers to incorporate new pedagogy into lesson plans. The training included readings and tasks requiring active participation and reflection on the integration of SEL. The work with the teachers during Phase I of this research consisted of online training focused on SEL implementation and a focus on CRP in lesson plans. The training was delivered

asynchronously, and no face-to-face meetings were required. Participants agreed to view training videos, complete readings, and reflective assignments. Phase II of the research involved online collaborative lesson planning between the teachers and researchers before online classroom field visits. *Phase III* has not been completed at this point and is therefore not part of the data reported.

Feedback Provided to Participants

During the training, a three-scale rubric (0 - 3 points) was used to formatively assess and give feedback to the participants on completion of weekly tasks: the evaluation examined the content of the teachers' reflection and applications to practice. Feedback focused on how well teachers grasped the theoretical content and its integration.

Week 1.

During the first week of training, the teachers defined SEL, explained, and provided examples showing how SEL skills help EFL students in school and life. Feedback emphasized that SEL is more than recognizing and managing emotions and that the CASEL (2024) core competencies center on helping students succeed academically and personally. Feedback reminded participants that effective SEL implementation requires constant, intentional, and thoughtful setting of short and long-term goals; promoting active student roles; creating classroom routines; and negotiating explicit goals with students.

The teachers were asked to reflect on their understanding of SEL, its effective integration, and CRP strategies. They responded to four open-ended questions addressing what they had learned and hoped to do in the future. The questions required the teachers to share why they believe SEL contributes to EFL classrooms, how its integration impacts students' inter-personal communication, what methods they anticipate using to teach students about SEL, and how they wish to proceed in the future to gain more knowledge related to what SEL training will add to their teaching methods. The teachers responded to the following questions:

- Considering students' academic and affective needs, what short and long-term SEL goals will be part of your lessons?
- How can your students practice decision-making, self-management, and social awareness skills while working on subject matter content?
- How will you sustain the development of SECs in the long term?
- How will you ensure students' engagement?

- What opening and/or closing activities will you implement to promote and sustain learners' self-management skills?

Week 2.

This week participants explored practical ideas, tools, and strategies to embed SEL and CRP into EFL instruction. They identified a specific group of students and wrote a two-page reflection describing the group's characteristics and demographics. In addition, they explained the instructional modifications they chose to effectively integrate SEL (e.g., teacher language, student actions, classroom rules, and classroom environment). Feedback emphasized the need to set feasible goals that align with students' needs; the creation of safe and positive environments where students feel comfortable sharing and learning together; and the need for routines that support and empower students. Questions shared with the teachers had the goal of helping them reflect and apply what they were learning to practice:

- How will you assess students' social and emotional interaction?
- What steps have you taken, and how will you continue to integrate SEL in CRP in the future?
- How will you help students monitor their progress?

Week 3.

This week, the teachers addressed the use of the Good Behavior Game (GBG) to promote SEL and address CRP in lessons (Kellan et al., 2018). The GBG, a classroom-based behavior management strategy that when incorporated into a lesson plan rewards students who stay on-task (AIR, 2021; Rubow et al., 2018) is built on four core elements that model ways to support SEL skill development: behavioral expectations through a set of clearly articulated rules, opportunities for teamwork, adherence to established expectations and, positive reinforcement. The teachers integrated and negotiated the GBG's four elements into a game lasting up to 45 minutes, including rules, behaviors, and positive reinforcements. The GBG was the first step for the teachers to implement what they were learning. The lesson template shared with the teachers helped them plan lessons around academic concepts, SEL, and CRP. Feedback was provided on the lesson plans designed for the GBG game. The teacher's task was to identify the lesson's SEL goals, to make the learning objectives explicit to students, and to create opportunities for students to relate the targeted SEL skills to their lives, thus ensuring students' reflection on their SECs.

Results

At the end of the three-week workshop, participants (n=32) responded to four open-ended questions that explored their confidence in their ability to use CRP to promote SEL skills and their thoughts on how this learning would affect their students. The teachers were asked how they will assess students' social and emotional interactions, what steps they will take to continue integrating SEL in CRP, and how they will help students monitor their progress. Data analysis generated three recurrent themes: SEL skills and CRP to address behavioral issues, student-teacher collaborative work toward mindfulness and respectful conversations, and routines to teach SEL skills utilizing students' cultural background. Overall, responses reflected the teachers' interest in better understanding methods to infuse SEL and CRP in their EFL lessons.

SEL Skills and CRP to Address Behavioral Issues

The teachers grasped that instruction is positively influenced by consultation of CASEL's standards (2024) and the use of CRP to model SEL skills (Allbright & Hough, 2020; Kahmi-Stein et al., 2017). All the participants indicated that the strategies presented in the training (e.g., calming strategies, feedback, identifying emotions, mindfulness, group work, and game-based activities) helped them understand the benefits of addressing students' emotions as a behavior-management strategy, and will help students succeed in school and life as they develop self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, ability to build relationships, and responsible decision-making. Several teachers made comments such as "SEL includes a series of strategies and tools whose function is to help students adapt to the environment" (Participants # 3, 21, 26, 32) "SEL skills are a decisive factor in the formation of citizens capable of harmoniously integrating into society and managing their life projects" (# 7), "CRP is a student-centered approach" (Participants # 8, 10), and "It is our job to lead students to understand their emotions"(Participants # 9, 24). Another participant shared "I identify SEL goals including behavior expectations, planning cycles and assessments" (# 10). Seven other teachers also indicated that they had begun to use some GBG adaptation. Several respondents commented about the GBG: "I think GBG is an effective approach to support SEC development and emotionally sustaining activities" (Participants # 1, 2, 6, 10, 13, 23, 32). Three participants mentioned "the importance of SEL to help students have a better future" (Participants # 8, 17, 29). Three comments presented the teachers belief that CRP and SEL are important to manage behavioral issues, through the integration of activities that help students learn to control their emotions (Participants # 6, 13, 17). Seventeen participants connected the SEL skills to classroom behavior (Participants # 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 18, 20, 23, 24, 26, 29). Eight comments provided similar reflections on how setting a routine, identifying expected behaviors, and rewarding respectful actions builds a positive environment

(Participants # 11, 18). Four teachers discussed the benefits of helping students to "self-monitor and building a nurturing classroom" (Participants # 5, 15, 18, 20). Six teachers demonstrated a high level of interest in learning more about SEL when they asked questions related to how CRP leads students to recognize and respect each other's cultures (Participants # 4, 14, 23, 26, 29, 32).

Collaborative Work toward Mindfulness and Respectful Conversations

The second theme, collaborations toward mindfulness and respectful conversations, was assessed by examining how caring teachers create environments where students' actions and words show they value, respect, and support each other (CASEL, 2024; Durlak et al., 2011). Eight participants (#s 5, 6, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20, 32) connected the benefits of collaborative work focused on developing students' SECs and mentioned the benefits of teaching SEL concepts.

Thirteen participants agreed on the message in the following comments, indicating that SEL skills should be afforded through "all classroom instruction," thus providing students time to practice the skills (Participants #s 1, 18). Five teachers mentioned the GBG game and that it helps students understand how to behave and control their impulses (listening to others, respecting turn-taking, etc.). Another five teachers shared that "In SEL development students realize how their decisions affect the group" (Participants # 4, 13, 19, 24, 31) "I calm them [students] down, and then explain that we will play the GBG game for 10 minutes, to do teamwork." Lastly, six participants indicated that their learning strategies helped them "implement the SEL concepts" (#s 2, 6, 9, 11, 27, 31).

In addition, the teachers mentioned SEL "Signature Practices" that address emotions and equity such as jigsaws, journaling, writing small thoughts on the board, four corners, gallery work, brain breaks, and ice breakers (#s 3, 7, 10). One teacher shared her plan to "create a chart for monitoring how they [the students] are feeling" (# 22). Other teachers (#s 5, 8, 12, 14). acknowledged that as students understand classroom expectations "they [the students] will treat each other respectfully, and their behavior will prepare them for the future as citizens of Uruguay". Several teachers' comments (#s 8, 17, 25) supported the statement "[if students were] doing activities that involve using SEL skills, the classroom atmosphere would be less stressful" and "Reflection on emotions will help students do better next time." Ten participants (# 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 17, 22, 25) shared that involving students in identifying behavioral issues helps them regulate their emotions. A teacher (# 22) suggested "When developing a GBG activity, I spend time with the students selecting the activity, giving them points and rewards to help them reach the expected results." Another teacher (# 4) echoed colleagues' perspectives when they said "If I give learners the tools they need to problem-solve, I will be freer to help the children who have learning difficulties."

Routines to Teach SEL Skills Utilizing Students' Cultural Background

The third theme, routines to teach SEL skills utilizing students' cultural background, was mentioned by 9 participants (# 1, 2, 6, 10, 11, 13, 18, 23, 32). The teachers were focused on the effectiveness of using routines to implement SEL, but few (Participants # 5, 8, 12, 14) stated a pressing need to become informed about the cultural norms of recent immigrants for SEL implementation to be effective. They did, however, demonstrate their concern with giving students time to engage in reflection and conversations about their concerns when they discussed their role modeling respect through routines and development of students' SECs. The same nine teachers who alluded to the role of cultural background, specifically expressed that the modeling that is a key part of routines assists students to develop their SECs (Participants # 1, 2, 6, 10, 11, 13, 18, 23, 32). Four teachers referred to the GBG and how it "helps in seeing the role of routines. They (#s 1, 6, 9, 18) concurred that "habits at the beginning and the end of lessons, and activities with short clear instructions" is the way to support SEC development. Others stated comments reflecting the thought, "I will establish routines to create a safe environment, where students of all backgrounds feel comfortable" (Participants # 2, 3, 11, 27). Other teachers commented that "routines will help me manage SEL skill integration" (# 8); "Setting clear routines is a way to identify expected behaviors, reward the positive ones and build a respectful atmosphere" (# 17), and "the important thing [to teach SEL] is to incorporate clear rules" (# 25). Two teachers saw the benefits of classroom routines for modeling "how to relate and listen to others" (4) and to "practice relationship skills" (#31). Several teachers brought up routines for restorative disciplining and helping students use their leadership and competitive skills. One teacher (#21) shared her plan to resolve conflicts by asking students, "What happened? What can we do to make this right? Will you act differently in the future?" Others (#s 12, 30) shared the benefits of CRP routines is "the collaborative atmosphere that engages students and facilitates conversations about respect, injustice, hate, and inequity" (Gay, 2018; Giroux & Silva, 2010). The teachers seemed to connect their evolving knowledge of SEL to Uruguay's EFL curriculum.

Discussion

The themes that emerged in this study document participants' positive perceptions of the online training workshops. The teachers were asked four questions related to what they learned about the implementation of SEL and CRP in the asynchronous work, how they perceive SEL can raise the level of respect in classroom communications, what strategies and concepts they had used to implement SEL strategies during the training, and what they need to explore further in the future.

The first theme, SEL skills and CRP to address behavioral issues became visible when the participants shared comments that showed they were sold on the idea that SEL reinforces good behaviors and leads students to engage in mindful and respectful behaviors (Oxford, 2015). Implementing the CASEL guidelines offers formative paths to discipline and is a factor in forming responsible and caring citizens. The findings highlight teachers' interest in building students' SECs and suggest that long-term PD will help teachers implement SEL and focus on developing students' SECs.

The second theme, student-teacher collaborative work toward mindfulness and respectful conversations, was evident in the teachers' demonstrated understanding that EFL instruction improves when learners' emotions and funds of knowledge are considered (Adams & Richie, 2017; Rogers, 2019). After the training, the teachers were aware of the value of restorative practices and the need to act when negative behaviors harm students. Many of the teachers mentioned they plan to work to build culturally responsive and equitable learning environments (Allbright & Hough, 2020).

The third theme, routines to teach SEL skills utilizing students' cultural background, was summarized by teachers who shared the perspective that SEL skills contribute to self-reflective processes. The teachers understood that routines that incorporated teaching SEL skills would open doors to conversations about inter-cultural respect, injustice, hate and inequity (Aspen Institute, 2018; Gay, 2018; Giroux & Silva, 2010; Jimenez, 2021; Pentón Herrera, 2020; Martínez Agudo, 2018).

Conclusions, Limitations, and Pedagogical Implications

This study took place in Uruguay, a nation in the southern hemisphere of the Americas. While the country's dominant language is Spanish, educators are now confronting the needs of non-native Spanish speakers in their schools. Some students speak a language from a different linguistic family, and few Uruguayan teachers speak it fluently. The change in the immigrant demographic is challenging a nation of educators now required to offer EFL instruction at all grade levels. This qualitative study aimed to examine the understanding of social and emotional learning (SEL) developed by 32 EFL teachers employed at levels K-5th grade in Uruguay, after a three-week online asynchronous PD.

The reactions of the participants to integrating SEL in their work were positive. They stressed that SEL helps students learn to be respectful and to collaborate with each other (Caumont, 2020). Given the interest in SEL integration from the DFL, we advocate for PD, which gives teachers the tools they need to place a greater emphasis on students' SEC development. As SEL implementation continues, teachers' and students'

reflexivity on their identities will likely increase (Jimenez, 2021). Once Uruguay's DFL supervisors participate in training focused on SEL and CRP, we envision Uruguayan educators becoming South America's educational leaders.

This study's data shows the need for ongoing PD to build teachers' confidence in integrating SEL and CRP. A limitation of this study is its focus on the Uruguayan context, which is characterized by governmental efforts specific to Uruguay, and in this intervention, it centers on elementary grade levels. However, while some immigrants to Uruguay are from South America, many of the country's immigrants reflect the state of world migration. Immigrants to Uruguay from Syria pose greater educational needs than incoming students whose prior schooling was in Spanish. Future research should aim to expand the sample size, include a broader range of grade levels, and diversify the settings of data collection.

This study's findings offer several pedagogical implications. Results can be utilized by researchers, teachers, and administrators across the world to set guidelines that ensure students develop their SECs. This implies the need for PD and support to implement SEL using CRP strategies for teachers. For students, this means enhanced overall well-being and academic achievement. This study's findings will guide educators developing PD programs that prepare teachers with the skills to support SEL in their classrooms, thus bridging the gap between theory and practice. While findings are derived from the experiences of the 32 Uruguayan teachers who participated in the PD, this intervention can guide educators in countries experiencing increased migration and demographic changes in their populations. Study results indicate that SEL training transforms disciplinary approaches from punitive to restorative. This is a valuable insight for educational systems worldwide looking to reduce conflicts and improve school climate. Teachers need time to consult the CASEL guidelines before planning lessons. PD must assist teachers to examine learners' funds of knowledge because classroom interactions are more honest and respectful when the sociocultural context and its influence on learning is addressed in the curriculum (Dörnyei, 1994; Moll, 2019; Oxford, 2015).

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Bolstering Intercultural Communication among EFL Learners in Online Conversation Clubs

Fortalecimiento de la comunicación intercultural entre estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera en clubes de conversación en línea.

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Abstract

Conversation clubs are excellent resources for practicing a new language. They bring together individuals with diverse perspectives and backgrounds to engage in enriching language activities and discussions that promote intercultural consciousness and intercultural skills. While previous studies have emphasized the importance of conversation clubs, our study shows explicitly how conversation clubs promote intercultural communicative competence by practicing the target language through an autonomy-based design. The study revolves around the question: How can intercultural competence be fostered among learners of English as a foreign language in online conversation clubs using an autonomy-based design?

We draw on a qualitative and descriptive case design following Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza (2008). Our descriptive case study involved conducting conversation club sessions with four students by adapting materials and plans and complying with the Program of Education in Foreign Language regulations. Recordings of the sessions, transcripts, and journal entries served as primary data. The findings indicated that conversation clubs fostered students' intercultural communication by 1) diving into cultural differences through multimodal materials, 2) recognizing and questioning cultural stereotypes, and 3) immersing in students' cultural worlds by referring to standard popular references. This study challenges the idea that foreign languages can be learned independently of culture. Interculturality emphasizes the relevance of a community in which ideas can be exchanged and opinions expressed. Conversation clubs are ideal spaces to foster interculturality and autonomy.

Keywords: Autonomy, intercultural communicative competence, conversation clubs, practice, responsibility, reflection, culture.

Resumen

Los clubes de conversación son excelentes recursos para practicar un nuevo idioma ya que permiten integrar variedad de personas con múltiples perspectivas y contextos con el fin de promover la conciencia y habilidades interculturales por medio de actividades y discusiones enriquecedoras. Si bien previamente ya se ha explorado la importancia de los clubes de conversación, nuestro estudio demuestra explícitamente cómo los clubes de conversación promueven la competencia comunicativa intercultural mediante la práctica de la lengua meta siguiendo un enfoque de diseño de clubes basado en la autonomía. El estudio gira en torno a la pregunta ¿cómo se puede fomentar la competencia intercultural entre los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera en los clubes de conversación en línea utilizando un diseño de clubes basado en la autonomía?

Este estudio se basa en un diseño de caso cualitativo y descriptivo de acuerdo con Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza (2008). Nuestro estudio de caso descriptivo consistió en llevar a cabo sesiones de clubes de conversación con cuatro estudiantes en las que se adaptaron materiales y planes que siguen los lineamientos del Programa de Educación en Lengua Extranjera. Como datos primarios se usaron las grabaciones de las sesiones, las transcripciones y las anotaciones en el diario de campo. Los resultados indicaron que los clubes de conversación fomentaron la comunicación intercultural de los estudiantes mediante 1) la inmersión en las diferencias

culturales a través de materiales multimodales, 2) el reconocimiento y el cuestionamiento de los estereotipos culturales, y 3) la inmersión en los mundos culturales de los estudiantes mediante referencias populares estándar.

Este estudio cuestiona la idea de que las lenguas extranjeras puedan aprenderse independientemente de la cultura. La interculturalidad hace hincapié en la importancia de una comunidad en la que se puedan intercambiar ideas y expresar opiniones. Los clubes de conversación son espacios ideales para fomentar la interculturalidad y la autonomía.

Palabras clave: Autonomía, competencia comunicativa intercultural, clubes de conversación, práctica, responsabilidad, reflexión, cultura.

Resumo

Os clubes de conversação são excelentes recursos para praticar um novo idioma, pois permitem integrar uma variedade de pessoas com múltiplas perspectivas e contextos, promovendo a conscientização e as habilidades interculturais por meio de atividades e discussões enriquecedoras. Embora a importância dos clubes de conversação já tenha sido previamente explorada, nosso estudo demonstra explicitamente como esses clubes promovem a competência comunicativa intercultural através da prática da língua-alvo, seguindo um enfoque de design baseado na autonomia. O estudo se concentra na seguinte pergunta: Como se pode fomentar a competência intercultural entre estudantes de inglês como língua estrangeira em clubes de conversação online utilizando um design de clubes baseado na autonomia?

Este estudo se fundamenta em um desenho de caso qualitativo e descritivo, de acordo com Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza (2008). Nosso estudo de caso descritivo consistiu em conduzir sessões de clubes de conversação com quatro estudantes, nas quais materiais e planos foram adaptados de acordo com as diretrizes do Programa de Educação em Língua Estrangeira. Como dados primários, utilizamos gravações das sessões, transcrições e anotações de um diário de campo. Os resultados indicaram que os clubes de conversação fomentaram a comunicação intercultural dos estudantes por meio de: 1) imersão nas diferenças culturais através de materiais multimodais; 2) reconhecimento e questionamento de estereótipos culturais; e 3) imersão nos mundos culturais dos estudantes mediante referências populares padrão.

Este estudo questiona a ideia de que línguas estrangeiras podem ser aprendidas independentemente da cultura. A interculturalidade enfatiza a importância de uma comunidade onde seja possível trocar ideias e expressar opiniões. Os clubes de conversação são espaços ideais para promover a interculturalidade e a autonomia.

Palavras-chave: Autonomia, competência comunicativa intercultural, clubes de conversação, prática, responsabilidade, reflexão, cultura.

In current globalized times, integrating intercultural Communication (IC) into language teaching is of paramount importance. As Lázár (2003) states, foreign language teaching should focus on intercultural awareness and intercultural skills of discovering the other for language learners to become interculturally competent in an increasingly globalized world. Intercultural communication in foreign language teaching is a growing movement that emphasizes the need for language educators to recognize and critically address the complexity of dealing with cultural contexts. In foreign language teaching, conversation clubs have provided opportunities and spaces for EFL learners who want to communicate better and practice the language. These clubs have been encouraged in academic environments such as universities, language institutes, and international settings.

The present article is based on an undergraduate research project that systematized four months of academic and professional experience of a tutor who led conversation clubs remotely (Ávila-Ávila, 2023) with upper intermediate EFL college students. The conversation clubs revolved around international and local topics. As part of the Strengthening Foreign Language as an Institutional Commitment to Curricular Internationalization project, the National University of Colombia opened different voluntary practice spaces for students of different curricular programs. This article shows that conversation clubs can be implemented so that student participants can develop their intercultural communication competence and autonomy. The study followed a qualitative case study design.

Since the 2000's foreign language teaching scholars such as Byram (2008), Hoff (2020), and Fantini (2020) have supported the integration of cultural aspects in language teaching. In Colombia, intercultural communication has been studied from critical, decolonial pedagogies that integrate diverse worldviews (Gutiérrez, 2022; Fernández-Benavides & Castillo-Palacios, 2023; Holmes & Pena-Dix, 2022; Álvarez-Valencia & Miranda, 2022). Most studies on IC come from face-to-face and formal learning environments. There is a need for studies that use intercultural communication in informal online learning spaces. Therefore, with this research, we seek to explore the potential of integrating IC into an online conversation club at the college level. This article revolves around the question: How can intercultural competence be fostered among learners of English as a foreign language in online conversation clubs using an autonomy-based design?

This article is organized as follows: the first section explains the background of studies on interculturality in national and international contexts. The second section presents the primary constructs and theories on autonomy in foreign language learning and the basis of conversation clubs. The third section describes the research design and data collection instruments. Finally, the fourth section illustrates the qualitative analysis, which corresponds to the findings according to Holliday (2007).

Theoretical Framework

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC)

In the field of foreign language education, Byram (2009) proposed that "teachers should plan their teaching to include objectives, materials, and methods that develop the specific elements of intercultural competence (...). Teachers of language need to become teachers of language and culture" (p. 331). In this vein, students develop the abilities to discover the world around them, discover themselves in a globalized world, establish connections between that global diversity and their local reality, adopt attitudes, gain skills to be citizens of the world through versatility, empathy, curiosity, and respect for diversity. Huber and Reynolds (2014) defined ICC as "a combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding, and skills applied through action" (p. 16) that allows learners to acknowledge other cultural affiliations, interact appropriately, and build relationships with people from those affiliations. Huber and Reynolds (2014) stated four key components in ICC: attitudes, knowledge, skills, and actions. Attitudes should embrace openness to various cultures and a willingness to question norms shaped by one's cultural background. Knowledge involves grasping a variety of beliefs and customs, identifying cultural biases and assumptions, and understanding the role language plays in societal communication. Skills include the capacity to discover, interpret, comprehend, and analyze both personal and others' cultural settings and experiences. Lastly, actions aim to break down stereotypes, oppose discrimination, mediate conflicts, promote positive attitudes, and work with culturally diverse groups. Therefore, language learning becomes a primary tool for communicating with individuals from diverse social and cultural contexts since language cannot exist in isolation as it reflects worldviews, belief systems, and cultural nuances. Thus, learners not only develop their linguistic proficiency, engage in cultural understanding, proficiency but engage in a process of cultural understanding and develop other values such as empathy, respect, and cooperation, among others. Additionally, ICC learners recognize different communication styles, cultural references, social norms, and the relativity of their cultural perspectives.

When teaching, foreign language teachers and students experience the predominance of surface or visible culture in textbooks. This approach includes addressing culture from general aspects such as tourist sites, vacations, historical events, and food. In contrast, deep culture, or invisible culture, "can be understood as those complex meanings related to the norms, worldviews, beliefs, values, and ideologies that, in general terms, are shared by a group or community" (Hinkel, 2001, as cited in Gómez-Rodríguez, 2018, p. 188). This means that, according to a more critical take of ICC framework, a broad range of resources and texts that integrate information at a global level must transcend surface approaches to instruct students in concepts such as "democratic values, human rights, and respecting "difference' in a world that is still intolerant and prejudiced" (Gómez-Rodríguez, 2018, p. 190).

Recent perspectives emphasize the need for updating ICC models to reflect current educational needs, such as questioning students' motivations and biases towards diverse cultures (Hoff, 2020). This involves novel approaches to identity and language-culture connections and adapting educational practices to enhance learning (Hoff, 2020). Furthermore, integrating ICC is crucial for the internationalization of higher education (Maíz-Arévalo & Orduna-Nocito, 2021). Fantini (2020) also underscores the importance of developing ICC for diversity and internationalization. Thus, preparing students for a globalized world requires incorporating international curricula, opportunities for cultural exchange, and intercultural skill development. At the national level, recent studies on intercultural approaches in ELT are flourishing, taking up critical stances. Fernández-Benavides & Castillo-Palacios (2023) highlight the role of culture in shaping identities and behaviors. Gutiérrez (2022) advocates for a critical, intercultural pedagogy to understand diverse identities and mindsets in the classroom. Similarly, Holmes & Pena-Dix (2022) and Álvarez-Valencia & Miranda (2022) emphasize a decolonial approach to intercultural communicative competence, integrating indigenous worldviews and multilingual practices in higher education settings. Jaramillo-Jaramillo (2024) discusses the importance of articulating interculturality in policies such as Colombia's National Bilingual Program, suggesting that ICC enhances second/foreign language teaching by helping students navigate bi-multilingual interactions.

Based on the discussion above, in this study, ICC is understood as a multifaceted set of skills that can be acquired and developed to mediate and interact effectively in diverse cultural contexts.This competence requires not only a specific linguistic proficiency but also the adoption of attitudes and actions, as well as the acquisition of knowledge and skills to understand and value cultural diversity. Furthermore, it is an essential element in educational practices and language acquisition for students to deal with the complexities of an interconnected world.

Conversation clubs in foreign language learning and teaching

Scholars have described communication as "a way of transferring messages from the addresser (the speaker/writer) to the addressee (the listener/reader)" (Soyunov et al., 2014, p.41) and, therefore, "dealing with the reality above, learning how to be a better communicator is important for all of us. Better communication means better understanding of us and others" (Ibid.). Conversation clubs provide opportunities and spaces for EFL learners who want to communicate better and practice the language. They are also tools that have been used over time in different contexts. Artists and activists, for example, organize sessions to widen social circles and discuss politics, cultural norms, and meaningful community issues. This kind of club has been common

in academic environments such as universities, language institutes, and international settings. (Malu & Smedley, 2016, p.11).

In the Colombian context, conversation clubs such as those conducted by Acevedo-Fuenmayor and Oviedo-Jaramillo (2023), through semi-structured interviews and recorded observations, showed that conversation roles are pivotal for student engagement, motivation, confidence, and oral fluency when learning and speaking English. Regardless of the context, an English club is a "group of people who meet, join, or act together to participate in an activity for a common purpose that has been structural, especially to learn the English language" (Hamadameen & Najim, 2020, p. 286).

According to Malu and Smedley (2016), in community-based English clubs, there are different roles: the club leader or facilitator and the club participants. The latter can have diverse backgrounds, educational levels, professions, and other beliefs, cultures, and perspectives. This creates a diverse group that enriches the conversations as much as possible. Furthermore, the conversation club leader must provide a safe, supportive, and respectful learning environment in which collaborative work is encouraged and activities are organized based on the interests of the participants.

Lastly, conversation clubs are seen as a valuable learning resource, as they allow for real connections to be made between participants' knowledge of the foreign language since "activities that provide opportunities for learners to communicate meaningfully with each other are more interesting, enjoyable, and memorable. In the long run, such activities have more of an impact on enhancing speech intelligibility" (Nunan, 2003b, p. 116). Moreover, considering that it has been found that some learners feel that it was difficult to speak English because "they did not have ideas to express because they did not think deeply or critically" (Rahmawati, 2021, p. 212), conversation clubs are a tool to encourage critical thinking, inspiring participants to arrange their ideas in a coherent and logical order to convey values in a fluent way.

Setting

This study was conducted during the weekly online conversation clubs in the second semester of 2023 in the framework of a virtual internship. The internship responded to the strengthening strategy of the *Programa de Formación en Lengua Extranjera* [Foreign Language Training Program] PFLE as proposed by Castaño (2023) at Universidad Nacional de Colombia. In the 2nd semester of 2023, 10 seniors from the Philology and Languages - English undergraduate program interned as language tutors. This was the pilot to support the English courses offered remotely in the regional branches of La Paz, Palmira, and Medellín. Tutors taught remotely from Bogota, and their students who participated were enrolled in the National University. Tutors provided students with a safe academic environment to implement strategies, materials, methodologies,

and pedagogical practices to guide and facilitate the learning process. To this end, the tutor proposed an action plan consisting of four weekly practice sessions and six tutoring sessions. In the researcher's case, the practice sessions were distributed in two conversation clubs and two workshops. The conversation clubs conveyed the tutor's professional and academic background and their students' interests.

Sampling and participants

Patton (2002) explains that purposeful sampling is a technique commonly used in qualitative research to identify and select relevant cases for the most efficient use of limited resources. This study used purposeful sampling as four National University of Colombia students from the Medellín branch voluntarily participated in the online conversation clubs. The tutor reached out to students who participated and attended all sessions. They filled in a consent form and agreed to participate in the study. They also provided a pseudonym to use in the transcripts. The students' ages ranged from 19 to 24. Three of them lived in the metropolitan area of Medellín, and one lived in the municipality of Rionegro. Regarding their academic background, the students were in the School of Engineering. In terms of their foreign language training process, only one student had an advanced English level (C1) and made constant use of the language because he worked remotely for a company based in the United States. In relation to motivational factors, the other three students were enrolled in the language program offered by the University as they wanted to find better job opportunities.

The tutor was also a researcher. She was not only in charge of planning, running, and directing conversation clubs within the framework of an online internship but also subsequently conducted an analysis of intercultural components and reflected upon her own perspectives and experience. These functions represent a significant advantage as they allow us to connect the planning and execution phases of the online sessions.

Tutor's positionality: At the time of the study, the tutor was a student majoring in Languages. She has experience teaching abroad in Germany, as a tutor in EFL programs and currently teaches English to children, adolescents, and adults. Her interest in interculturality stems from her own international experiences, where she witnessed firsthand the importance of this aspect when learning a language and discussing her roots and background in multicultural contexts.

Tutor's thesis advisor: The advisor was a Colombian University-based scholar with international experience. Before becoming the advisor of the tutor researcher, she lived in North America for eight years. She helped frame the theoretical and methodological tenets of the research study with data organization, analysis and writing of the research study.

Pedagogical design

The tutor planned the conversation clubs drawing on the pedagogical philosophy of the Program: autonomy. She also used multimodality (Halliday, 1978; Tardy, 2005; Van Leeuwen, 2005; Kress, 2010) and intercultural communication in her pedagogical design. The tutor and her thesis advisor also gathered planning and instructional material. For the pedagogical design, the tutor developed lesson plans using Canva, first brainstorming topics of interest and integrating a learning strategy to meet the communicative objectives of the session. Furthermore, the tutor curated authentic materials. The materials were not adapted but were used as an input or introduction to the topic we talked about. Among the materials, we had informative material (news), and material from the internet (videos, shorts, websites). Finally, the pedagogical planning followed the internship guidelines and principles for autonomy as established by the Language Program PFLE pedagogical vision.

First, we addressed how students can become dependent on their teachers for the development of academic activities. This dependence may arise due to the lack of attention to fundamental pillars of autonomy, such as the heterogeneous approach to learning objectives. Within its different definitions, autonomy can be understood as the "capacity to think on one's own, to organize, decide, and propose" (Lagos-Bejarano & Ruíz-Granados, 2007, p. 11).

Learner autonomy is defined as "the ability to take care of one's learning" (Holec, 1981, p.3) and it appeals to the student's responsibility and critical reflection on their learning process. A responsible learner embraces "the idea that their efforts are crucial to progress in learning and behave accordingly" (Scharle & Szabó, 2000, p.3). David Nunan (2003a) lists nine steps to gain autonomy in language learning: encouraging the use of the second language outside the classroom, setting specific learning objectives, promoting decision-making, and allowing students to participate actively when planning and leading classes. Meanwhile, teachers tailor content, topics, and activities to the student's needs and context.

The following is an example of how an autonomy-based design was put into practice by planning and negotiation of learning objectives.

Figure 1. Slide to introduce the objectives of the session

The component of setting and negotiating learning objectives has been reflected in the conversation clubs' planning and development. Regarding the learning objectives, Nunan points out that, as a first step towards autonomy, one way to "give students a voice is to make the objectives of the teaching clear to them; in this way, making the objectives of each session explicitly known and involving students actively in the process, rather than simply informing them" (2003a, p. 196). In the case of the practice spaces, titles and images related to the session's theme were used so that students could draw their own conclusions about each club's theme and its purposes.

Research Design

Given the nature of this study, we followed a qualitative approach. Drawing on qualitative descriptive case study designs according to Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza (2008) and Yin (1984), this study explored how learners of English can foster intercultural competence through practicing a foreign language in virtual conversation club spaces using an autonomy-based design. Cohen et al. (2017) note that this type of research provides clear, practical examples and focuses on understanding individual or group perceptions of events. Likewise, the tutor was a participant observant as she assumed the role of conversation club leader and researcher. This study also follows the interpretivist tradition, in which the research aims to comprehend participants' experiences within their contexts rather than achieve generalizable results.

Data Collection

The tutor-researcher collected qualitative data through the following instruments: the tutor's journal, session transcriptions, lesson plans, and instructional materials. After running the conversational clubs, the tutor reflected upon each session and organized her notes and quotes from participants' comments into categories. These categories were based on the linguistic, communicative, and attitudinal components of the participants of these spaces. All sessions were video-recorded and transcribed. Students signed a consent to record the session and were informed about the academic purposes of the recording under Act 1266 of 2008. Once each session was over, the tutor used Whisper AI, an automatic speech recognition (ASR) system, to transcribe the audio. Finally, post-editing was carried out. Students' words were taken as provided. Data collection instruments are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Data collection instruments

Data collected	- Transcriptions of conversation clubs supported by AI (240 mins) - Instructional materials - Lesson plans (four) - Tutor- researcher journal - Data Analysis

For the data analysis, we followed Holliday's (2007) perspectives on qualitative analysis and Stranger- Johannessen & Norton's (2017) proposal on retroductive coding. This type of coding involves combining priori codes based on theory and literature and inductive codes derived from reading the data collected. Raw data were gathered from the data collection instruments, prioritizing those referencing intercultural communication and providing various details of the practice session. We then proceeded with the data by color coding according to the emerging codes from theoretical framing and inductive reading. Once we, the researcher and the supervisor, coded the data, we interpreted, triangulated, and developed the theoretical coding for each category. Finally, the researcher and her supervisor collaboratively wrote the argument for each category (Holliday, 2007).

Findings

In this section, we present the findings and discussion emerging from the conversation club spaces in response to the research question: how can intercultural competence be fostered among learners of English as a foreign language in an online conversation club space using an autonomy-based design?

Table 2. Ways to foster Intercultural Competence in conversation clubs

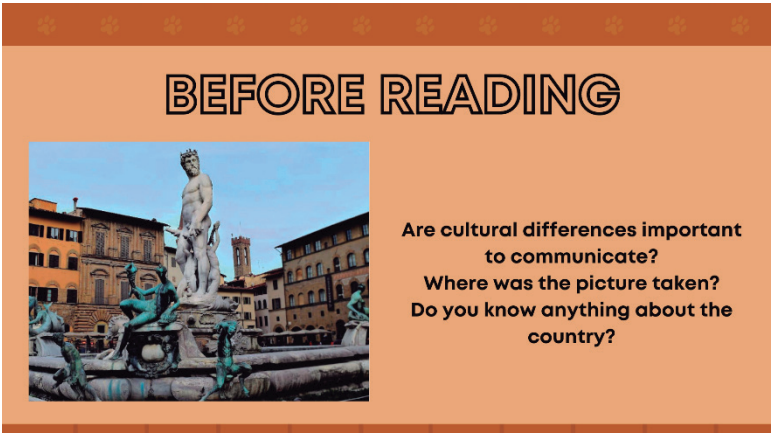
Research question	Categories
How can intercultural competence be fostered among learners of English as a foreign language in an online conversation club space using an autonomy-based design?	- Diving into cultural differences through multimodal materials - Recognizing and questioning local stereotypes - Immersing in students' cultural worlds

Diving into cultural differences through multimodal materials

During the practice session, students addressed their intercultural communicative competence by exploring other cultures and dealing with aspects related to both visible and invisible cultures.

In the excerpt, the tutor prompts students to recognize cultural assets from a European country. The tutor gives initial context on a news report and inquiries into the participant's prior knowledge of certain countries. In the following excerpt from conversation club number 4 this is illustrated.

Figure 2. Slide introducing cultural differences



Tutor: So, first of all, where do you think the picture was taken?

Mariano: Maybe Greece or Italy. (...)

Tutor: Ok. And about Italy, what do you know about Italy?

Mariano: That they eat a lot of pasta. The language is very, very beautiful. They are so tall. Italian music is good also.

Tutor: Do you know any band from Italy?

Mariano: No, but I just, I have a song (sings the song)

Tutor: Yeah! I know that song! Ok. Do you know anything about their traditions, their behaviors?

Mariano: Well, in general, people say that European, they smell bad because they don't take showers. But that's something that I don't know. It's just general.

(...)

Tutor: Ok. Any other ideas about their behaviors, traditions, or ways of thinking?

Mariano: Yeah, well, it's all that I know. I'm not sure. I would say Germany.

Tutor: Why?

Mariano: The architecture looks like Germany.

Tutor: What do you know about these countries? For example, about Germany.

Mariano: About Germany, I know that people there are a little bit brava.

Tutor: Angry (...) Maybe some other things about politics. Like what?

Mariano: Yeah, maybe like they were very dependent from Russia two years ago. They had a little bit sympathy I would say to Russia, especially the east part of Germany. They discriminate each other like we discriminate here in Colombia.

Tutor: Ok, Like nowadays? Currently?

Mariano: Yeah, currently. They discriminate against each other based on the place that they were born.

(Transcription Conversation Club 4, October 2023)

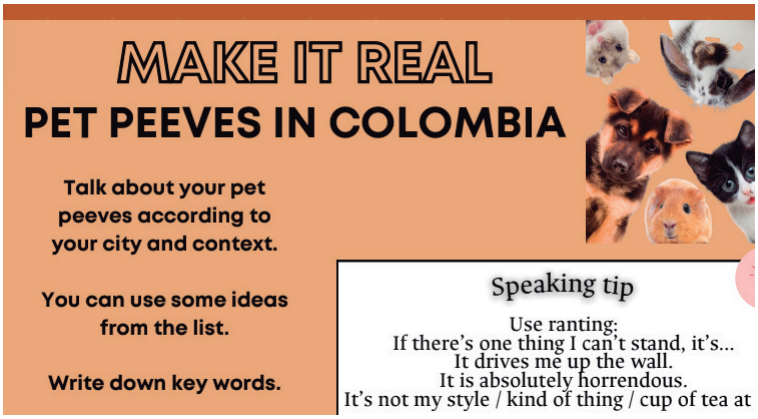
The tutor used multimodal materials in two moments: during the initial activity to provide enough authentic input and in the main communicative activity. Understanding material authenticity considering Roberts & Cooke's (2009) stance "unlike invented materials, authentic materials draw on language data collected in real-life context (p. 625). As of conversation clubs, authentic material includes different

formats to demonstrate English use outside formal learning contexts. In this case, those formats (e.g., short videos, opinions, and news shared through social networks, etc.) were shown. The previous example uses a DW Instagram post on news about tourist misbehavior in Italy. The tutor designed an activity taking the report as it was produced for a general audience, not designed specifically for language learners.

Prompting conversations about other cultures also requires the use of multimodal materials. Rather than only relying on linguistic forms, multimodality theory focuses on semiotics. These are "the actions, materials, and artifacts we use for communicative purposes" (Van Leeuwen, 2005, p. 285). Gestures, voice, spatial orientation, and our use of digital technological devices are examples. Expanding this definition, Kress (2010) highlights that semiotic resources are "socially made and therefore carry the discernible regularities of social occasions, events and hence a certain stability; they are never fixed, let alone rigidly fixed" (p. 9). In the example, the tutor decided to ask questions about the conversation topic and presented additional tools such as images, keywords, and timelines.

In the excerpt, the student provided only minimal information about other countries. Some recalled food or common prejudices from their perspective, such as Europeans smelling bad or "I know that people [in Germany] there are a little bit brava." Multimodality promises to be practical tools for prompting these conversations about other cultures: in the conversation club, for example, the participant carried out exploration by using real-life media resources. This prevents from solely relying on personal assumptions and encourages a deeper, nuanced understanding of cultural differences through materials that showcase varied cultural contexts, behaviors, and values.

Figure 3. Slide introducing communicative activities with multimodal materials



Recognizing and questioning local stereotypes

The tutor fostered intercultural communication with their students by getting to know them and asking about their hometown. In the excerpt below, a student explained where they lived. This was important as the tutor was in a different location. The following excerpt from Conversation Club number 1 provides additional context.

> Gabriel: I live in Medellín. Well, not in Medellín. It is the city where their airport is located and its town, out of the metropolitan area, but just to make things easier, I would say, I will say that it's Medellín. It's the city where everything blooms.
>
> (...)
>
> Tutor: Ok. Question. So, you don't live in the city, I mean, in Medellín but like in the countryside? Or like out of the metropolitan area but it is urban, it has big edifications, or…
>
> Gabriel: Ok, yeah, I do not – Okay, yeah, so I don't know if you've ever traveled in Medellín.
>
> Tutor: Never, no, never.
>
> Gabriel: You gotta get here. Well, it has a metropolitan area. We called it Área Metropolitana del Valle de Aburrá. It's vast variety of cities, but that are connected by the metro actually, but the airport, like the international airport is not located in the city nor metropolitan area, is out of those places and it is in a, I would say it's a mid-developed city that is called Rionegro. And we have and we have a huge tunnel that is a like a masterpiece of the engineering work here in Colombia that connects the airport, my city to Medellín and it's like 20 minutes.

(Transcription Conversation Club 1, September 2023)

This interaction prepared the student to engage in a target language conversation with people who may share their background.

The excerpts below illustrate another example of how going local supports intercultural communication. In this session, the tutor provided background about pet peeves and their relationship with cultural norms. For example, in some cultures, lateness is perceived as ruder than in others. After introducing the notion of pet peeves, the tutor asked participants to address pet peeves in Colombia.

Figure 4. Slide about pet-peeves

Figure 5. Questions about participants' local context

In response to the prompts above, the student elaborated a personal example of how he would apply the concept of pet peeves from his perspective as a Colombian from Antioquia, colloquially known as a paisa. The tutor laughed about this example in the beginning, but also asked the student to use the target language to develop his idea on pet peeves. To further clarify, the term rolos was originally used to describe people living in Bogotá who moved from other parts of the country. Now, it is now used to refer to people from Bogotá.

> Dante: Usually here, people say that rolos are boring and the way that rolos talks could be annoying because rolos talk like they were asking something.

The tutor engaged in further dialogue to share the perspective of *rolos* as she herself identifies as *rola*.

> Tutor: Yeah, it's true, yeah, for rolos most of the things, may -could be effective and in the other way it's the same I would say. Regarding the rolo-and-paisa rivalry I agree, I think we're constantly competing but that's why I asked you for more examples with specific actions that we find annoying.

In this exchange, we can see how the student freely expressed his preconceived ideas about how people from Bogota speak. In further elaboration, the tutor does not tackle this preconception explicitly but presents her perspective and negotiates a middle ground to make the student understand the tutor's perspective. By engaging in dialogue, the student and teacher transcend the shallow belief about "*rolos*' way of speaking being annoying". For the tutor, this might have stemmed from the historic competition between the two largest and wealthiest regions in Colombia.

In the following conversation club session, Dante even showed a deeper reflection on how people, not only in Colombia but in other parts of the world, find annoying certain ways of speaking. In the session, Dante was comparing his example of aversion to the Spanish variety of Bogotá with examples from other parts of the world.

> Dante: Okay, so maybe I'm not sure, maybe in United States to speak Spanish in some places in United States is not okay that that could be I think that's more racism -that is more racism but what else France yeah, they do not like it if you do not speak French. Yeah, I think that is more racism, but what else? in our country, yeah, I will say.

Dante's further look into international comparisons made him find the link between rejecting ways of speaking and racism. For him, this was clear in the case of rejecting the use of Spanish in the US, which he openly labeled as racism. After recalling the situation of some people being rejected or not supported if they traveled to France and did not speak French. He finally realized that linguistic discrimination as a form of covered racism also happens in Colombia. Participating in the conversation clubs and dialogue to understand different perspectives helped Dante dig deeper into his initial aversion to the way people different than him speak. His understanding of the relationship between rejecting ways of speaking and discrimination became clearer after these discussions.

In Dante's experience, as described above, regional differences and rivalry are elaborated and negotiated through dialogue. In this sense, we can assert that opening dialogical spaces to address intercultural communication in foreign languages can be nurtured by looking deeper into students' and teachers' normalized cultural and linguistic preconceptions. Instead of directly attacking these preconceived ideas

or imposing the tutor's or politically correct ones, the tutor and student engaged in dialogue to actively listen to multiple perspectives. The excerpts above shed some light on how dialogue can promote reflection and further analysis of the roots of cultural beliefs. Even at a small scale, remote online conversation clubs allow for the exchange of cultural perspectives. A next step to take, from a critical intercultural stance, is going deeper by tackling and debunking these assumptions more explicitly.

Immersing in students' cultural worlds

Popular cultural references constituted an essential component of the conversation clubs. Some of them were introduced by students themselves, as in the following example, where Dante described the types of music he listens to: "I can come from Megadeth, and then I could be listening to 'Lover' by Taylor Swift".

The tutor's materials conveyed another example of popular culture in the conversation clubs. In the example below, the tutor initiates the conversation club by referencing Tinder, the mobile app. The students start discussing the use of these applications and what they think about them. Then, students create their own Tinder-like profiles using the target language.

Figure 6. Slide on students' cultural worlds

In this case, intercultural communication transcends cultures that are far away and touches on the ways of self-representation; as Cerón (2009) contends, intercultural communication is "the capacity developed by the second language learner to analyze and understand personalities and thinking of people from a place other than their country of origin, comparing them with the realities of their own culture" (p. 310).

With the advent of modern technologies and ways of connecting, the tutor mentioned a media platform that students were familiar with as a topic for the conversation club. Rather than encouraging students to participate in this type of social practice, the tutor resorted to their previous knowledge on the topic as a source for speaking in the conversation clubs. Before the activity, students were surveyed and indicated that they had used the app. Both international culture and media and pop cultures were addressed to further connect with students' lives beyond academia. In these current times, intercultural communicative competence interacts with media and pop culture at one's fingertips through a mobile phone.

Conclusions

Conversation clubs boosted intercultural communication by exposing participants to diverse cultures, addressing local and international stereotypes, and integrating participants' cultural worlds and language practices meaningfully. In each session, perceptions of interculturality, culture, and even autonomy converged to facilitate foreign language learning. The tutor promoted questioning visible and invisible stereotypes, and participants were invited to develop their ideas and expand their knowledge of other societies by incorporating diverse multimodal materials in the sessions.

Participation in the conversation clubs led to discussions about the inherent socio-cultural nature of language. In this way, students recognized how intercultural communicative competence serves them in a globalized world and their local context. In addition, participants reflected on their intercultural interactions and recognized cultural biases inherent in their standpoints through ongoing conversations about participants' beliefs, prejudices, backgrounds, and daily lives.

We challenge the idea that foreign languages can be learned independently from culture. Foreign language learners need to become more familiar with intercultural communicative skills from the first stages of language learning, applying them to their own geographical and political context. Conversation clubs allowed participants to transcend their comfort zone by getting exposed to different social norms and points of view and questioning stereotypes.

Intercultural communication and conversation clubs emphasize the relevance of a community in which ideas can be exchanged and opinions expressed. We call for pedagogical practices that build communities that appreciate cultural diversity, empathy, respect for difference and foster long-term intercultural skills to fulfill the demands of a globalized world.

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Using Global Englishes to Improve Listening Comprehension in Pre-intermediate English Learners

Utilizando los ingleses globales para mejorar la comprensión auditiva en estudiantes de inglés de nivel preintermedio

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Abstract

This qualitative case study examined the impact of listening to Global Englishes on the development of listening comprehension in pre-intermediate English students at Universidad Nacional, Costa Rica. Using questionnaires, focus groups, and observations, the research explored students' perceptions of various English speakers from different nationalities and their overall experience with exposure to diverse global varieties. The findings indicated that students found English spoken by people from the United States, Mexico, and Venezuela easier to understand due to clarity and familiarity, while British, Australian, and Scottish variants presented the greatest challenges, particularly due to pronunciation. Students stated that the listening activities expanded their vocabulary and improved their comprehension skills by providing real-world exposure to English spoken in different regions. The results indicated the need for a shift in language teaching approaches in Costa Rica, emphasizing the inclusion of Global Englishes in curricula to better prepare students for international communication. Further research is recommended to investigate the long-term impact of this approach and its potential benefits in improving aural and oral skills.

Keywords: Listening comprehension, Global Englishes, case study, lingua franca

Resumen

Este estudio de caso cualitativo examinó el impacto de escuchar variedades de inglés global en el desarrollo de la comprensión auditiva en estudiantes de inglés de nivel preintermedio en la Universidad Nacional, Costa Rica. Utilizando cuestionarios, grupos focales y observaciones, la investigación exploró las percepciones de los estudiantes sobre diversos hablantes de inglés de diferentes nacionalidades y su experiencia general con la exposición a variedades globales del idioma inglés. Los resultados indicaron que los estudiantes encontraron más fácil entender el inglés hablado por personas de Estados Unidos, México y Venezuela debido a la claridad y familiaridad, mientras que las variantes británica, australiana y escocesa presentaron mayores desafíos, particularmente por la pronunciación. Los estudiantes señalaron que las actividades de escucha ampliaron su vocabulario y mejoraron sus habilidades de comprensión al proporcionarles una exposición real al inglés hablado en diferentes regiones. Los hallazgos destacaron la necesidad de un cambio en los enfoques de enseñanza del idioma en Costa Rica, enfatizando la inclusión de variedades globales del inglés en los planes de estudio para preparar mejor a los estudiantes para la comunicación internacional. Se recomienda realizar más investigaciones para analizar el impacto a largo plazo de este enfoque y sus posibles beneficios en la mejora de las habilidades auditivas y orales.

Palabras clave: Comprensión auditiva, inglés global, estudio de caso, lengua franca

Resumo

Este estudo de caso qualitativo examinou o impacto da escuta de variedades do inglês global no desenvolvimento da compreensão auditiva em estudantes de inglês de nível pré-intermediário na Universidade Nacional, Costa Rica. Utilizando questionários, grupos focais e observações, a pesquisa explorou as percepções dos estudantes sobre diversos falantes de inglês de diferentes nacionalidades e sua experiência geral com a exposição a variedades globais da língua inglesa.

Os resultados indicaram que os estudantes acharam mais fácil entender o inglês falado por pessoas dos Estados Unidos, México e Venezuela devido à clareza e familiaridade, enquanto as variantes britânica, australiana e escocesa apresentaram maiores desafios, particularmente em relação à pronúncia. Os estudantes destacaram que as atividades de escuta ampliaram seu vocabulário e melhoraram suas habilidades de compreensão ao proporcionar-lhes uma exposição autêntica ao inglês falado em diferentes regiões.

Os achados ressaltaram a necessidade de uma mudança nos enfoques de ensino da língua na Costa Rica, enfatizando a inclusão de variedades globais do inglês nos currículos para preparar melhor os estudantes para a comunicação internacional. Recomenda-se a realização de mais pesquisas para analisar o impacto a longo prazo dessa abordagem e seus possíveis benefícios na melhoria das habilidades auditivas e orais.

Palavras-chave: Compreensão auditiva, inglês global, estudo de caso, língua franca

In today's globalized world, effective and efficient interactions can bridge cultural gaps, enhance understanding, and boost collaboration in various fields from trade and diplomacy to humanitarian endeavors. Likewise, aspects like economic growth and cultural interchange are also ensured when seamless communication is accomplished. As a result, fostering clear communication may ease agreement, collaboration, and mutual respect while benefiting an interconnected global society. However, in many contexts, language remains a challenge to achieving the goal of effective communication. Hence, sharing a common language and fully using and understanding it becomes essential.

Nowadays, English is a global language and plays a major role when it comes to communication around the world. As Kurtuldu and Ozkan (2022) suggested, "English has become the primary source of […] interactions over time by possessing the status of lingua franca" (p. 50). English use goes beyond geographical boundaries, which makes it essential for comprehension and collaboration among speakers from different language backgrounds. Its prevalence in various fields such as science, technology, and business highlightsits indispensable role in shaping our modern society. Therefore, embracing English as a universal language is vital for fostering collaboration, innovation, and mutual understanding in our increasingly connected world.

Traditionally, English spoken by native speakers has been a model to follow, leaving behind Englishes spoken in other contexts, which leads to less exposure and acceptance of non-native varieties of English. However, it is fundamental to stress that English should be taught as a means of communication, and "as English communication situations are becoming diverse, English speakers should be able to understand English spoken not only by L1 speakers but also by other L2 speakers in order to communicate" (Lee, 2022, p. 3). Consequently, non-native English varieties, put on view when learning this language, may become a critical factor in the process and also can promote comprehension among English speakers of other languages.

Becoming a proficient English user takes time and effort, especially when it comes to developing listening skills and, as it is widely known, "foreign language listening comprehension is a complex process and crucial in the development of foreign language competence" (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011, p. 784). Therefore, it is important to emphasize listening skills and expose students to different English varieties to improve their listening comprehension abilities. In this article, we observed how learners reacted when listening to Global Englishes and analyzed it as a possible tool to promote listening comprehension in pre-intermediate English students.

Literature Review

This section presents relevant literature concerning Global Englishes and their implications in the teaching and learning the language in the 21st century.

Beyond an EFL language

English as a foreign language (EFL) is a term used to refer to English taught and learned in contexts where English is not the predominant language (Nunan, 2015, p.1). However, the English language has evolved, as have its learners and their reasons for learning. According to Selvi et al. (2023), "built upon the forces of mercantilism, colonialism, cultural and economic globalization, transnational movement, and technological innovations, the global spread of English has resulted in diverse forms, roles, functions, uses, users, and contexts around the world" (p. 01); such expansion of language use has blurred a somewhat clear division and categories given to learners of English (e.g., ESL, EFL). As humans continue to interact more easily without geographical obstacles through technology and social media, a global use of English demands new ways to understand this phenomenon. In fact, diverse ways to conceptualize English and its uses have emerged, "these include World Englishes (WE), English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), and English as an International Language (EIL), which were later grouped under the umbrella term of Global Englishes (GE)" (Selvi et al., 2023, p.02). The following section presents a more detailed account of these conceptualizations.

Important Concepts

Due to the changes in how English has been used and taught, various concepts and views have appeared in different fields. According to Selvi et al. (2023), this is not new and started in the 1980s with the rise of variations of English. First, World Englishes (WE) can be defined as "the study of the linguistic features of different varieties of English, their history, function, background, and sociolinguistic implications" (p. 25), as per English as an International Language (EIL), they defined it as "the study of the implications of the spread of English as a global language, particularly pedagogy" (p. 25). In terms of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), they conceived it as "the study of the sociolinguistic use, forms, functions and contexts of English as a lingua franca amongst speakers of different first languages, and the sociolinguistic implications of such usage" (p. 26). Another concept that is of importance for this study is that of Global Englishes, which Rose and Galloway (2019) defined as:

> an umbrella term to unite the shared endeavours of these interrelated fields of study in sociolinguistics and applied linguistics. We use it to consolidate research in World Englishes, English as a lingua franca and English as an international language while

> drawing on scholarship from translanguaging and multilingualism in second language acquisition. Thus, we define Global Englishes as an inclusive paradigm that embraces a broad spectrum of interrelated research that has come before it and emerged alongside it. (p. 6)

Therefore, for this project, we understand Global Englishes (GE from here on) as our main concept. It is a broad perception of English as it is used and taught and involves different fields of study such as Applied Linguistics and Sociolinguistics.

Teaching and Learning Implications

Given that the uses of English around the world have changed, the way this language is taught and learned should also change. The many contexts in the way English is used as a global language may call for changes in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). In fact, "ELF users communicate with people from diverse lingua-cultural backgrounds in transient encounters, utilise their multilingual repertoires, and use the English language in creative ways, going beyond the 'native'" (Galloway & Numajiri, 2020, p. 118). This reconceptualization may be based upon the premise that learners are now users; errors can be seen as variants, monolingualism is becoming multilingualism (De Costa & Crowther, 2018); without forgetting Larsen-Freeman's (2015) reconceptualization of language acquisition as language development (as in Crowther, 2021, p. 32). After considering the previous views, "an ideal pedagogical approach to L2 teaching then, would place a focus on intercultural awareness as much as it does linguistic proficiency" (De Costa & Crowther, 2018, p. 29).

In terms of research, there has been a movement where English goes "beyond idealized 'native speaker' models to equipping language users with communication/accommodation skills and strategies to successfully negotiate the fluidity and diversity of language use, users, and interactions (Selvi et al., 2023; Guilherme, 2007; Taguchi, 2014; Pandarangga, 2015; Jindapitak & Teo, 2013; Puri, 2021). In this sense, the teaching and learning of English should be conceived under a broader scope, leaving behind imperialistic views of focusing mostly on English as a global means of communication.

Possible Benefits of Teaching English as a Global Language

Due to the shifts in the use of the English language, teaching English has also changed, giving English as a Global language a more prominent stage. In this sense, "English can no longer be linked exclusively to native English-speaking cultures.

Hence, there is no need, in the teaching of EIL, there is no need to base the content of teaching materials, the choice of teaching methodology, or the ideal teacher on native-speaker models" (McKay, 2003, p. 145). Teaching EIL offers several benefits. It allows for the inclusion of local cultural content and promotes student motivation and cultural awareness (McKay, 2003). Additionally, EIL can foster cosmopolitan citizenship, enabling students to engage responsibly in global contexts without losing their cultural roots (Guilherme, 2007). Thus, teaching EIL responds to the growing demand for English proficiency in an increasingly globalized world (Taguchi, 2014). Therefore, teaching English should consider a wider exposure to the language and its varieties, the materials, the cultural knowledge, and several other aspects, including those of native and non-native speakers, preserving equal importance.

Furthermore, English as a global language may offer several benefits as seen in current global "communication, empowerment, and unification in the global community" (Pandarangga, 2015, p. 90). Exposure to English and its many varieties and the development of proficiency can be a key factor in creating "many opportunities for people in both their personal and professional lives. For example, people proficient in English can travel more easily, work for international companies, and access information and resources from all over the world" (Ngoc Thu, 2023, p. 90). In this sense, the focus of teaching and learning English may be based upon the development of communicative skills to enhance personal and professional growth.

In addition, Puri (2021) argued that "global Englishes perspectives need to be adopted in English language teaching elsewhere because it is supposed to enhance learners' interpersonal communication, mutual support and respect, multidialectal competence, and analytical skills" (p. 124). Puri (2021) also noted that global Englishes perspectives have positive effects, specifically in the context of Nepal. For instance,

> in the context of Nepal are the acceptance of Nepalese variation of English, the focus on teaching English as a means of communication, shifts from native-like pronunciation to comprehensible pronunciation, and the incorporation of English texts written by local authors (p. 125).

Likewise, Sifakis and Sougari (2003) highlighted the benefits of teaching English through a global lens. They emphasized "the need for reinforcing all speakers' (native and non-native alike) sense as communicators at a global level by adding an extra dimension (i.e. cultural awareness) to our 'communicative competence'" (p. 66). Also, "exposure to varieties of English is believed to help facilitate learners' communication abilities when being confronted with diverse types of English uses and users" (Jindapitak & Teo, 2013, p. 195). These arguments not only support moving beyond traditional English standards but also highlight the importance of prioritizing communication

Principles, Practices, and Proposals

Changing the way English teaching is done around the world takes some reconceptualization of principles and practices. In this sense, Selvi et al. (2023) presented a table of principles and practices for teachers to increase linguistic plurality norms. As a summary, they address the need for:

> Increasing exposure to (a) diverse forms of English, (b) situation- and usage-based uses of English that demonstrate flexible use of norms. Modelling pluralisation of linguistic norms through instructional choices, practices as well as interactions with students. Equipping language users with communication and accommodation strategies necessary in/for ELF interactions. Redefining norms and aligning instruction in the light of broader constructs of intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability from EIL. Strategic designing that promotes the utilisation of all resources in one's multilingual repertoire. (pp. 51-52)

This first proposal can be seen as a pivotal one because it all starts when teachers "expose students to the diversity of English used around the world and in different contexts to ensure that they are better prepared to use English in international contexts" (Selvi et al., 2023, p. 29). The exposure to Global Englishes requires teachers to take action and explore new ways to teach and assess students in preparation for a globalized world outside.

Moreover, Puri (2021) explained that many researchers encourage the integration of GE-informed pedagogy into language teaching, emphasizing its potential to enrich classroom materials and practices. As Fang and Ren (2018), and Rose and Galloway (2017) contend, "GE-informed pedagogy contains a complete package of knowledge, skills, and attitudes," making it a comprehensive approach to English language education. Puri (2021) continued to elaborate that such pedagogy "seems to impart the knowledge of English expansion, its varieties, nature of diversification, and changes" (p. 123). Likewise, Jindapitak and Teo (2013) highlighted the need for a shift in teaching practices, asserting that "in order to make educational practices more realistic, up-to-date, and supportive of globalization, there is an urgent need to engage learners in a pedagogy that goes beyond the idea of nativeness" (p. 195). However, they also noted a significant challenge, observing that "the implementation of World Englishes into language pedagogy seems to be the difficulty in searching for and developing materials for the teaching of world Englishes" (p. 196). These perspectives support a shift in teaching practices and propose changes in the way English teaching has been done.

In this sense, Selvi et al. (2023) also proposed increasing WE and ELF exposure in language curricula, emphasizing respect for multilingualism in ELT, raising awareness of GE in ELT and of ELF strategies in language curricula, among other changes. The emphasis that Selvi et al. (2023) give to awareness is a fundamental factor when talking about learning and teaching a language that focuses on communication, knowledge

of new cultures, and the respect that must be had towards them while leaving behind native speakerism idealizations.

Methodology

Research Design

This research project made use of a qualitative case study methodology where "the investigator explores a real-life contemporary bounded system (the case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 153). Yin (2018) also explained that "a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the 'case') within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 15). Thus, we chose a qualitative case study approach to closely examine the two student groups in their everyday settings. This method allowed us to gather detailed information from various sources, such as observations, focus groups, and questionnaires, to gain a full understanding of their experiences while being exposed to Global Englishes. By focusing on their natural contexts, we were able to document and interpret the data in a way that reflected the unique characteristics the groups in their unique environment. This approach helped us explore their behaviors and interactions in a meaningful and practical way.

Research Participants

The participants in this study involved two groups of pre-intermediate English students enrolled in the English Associate program at a regional branch of the Universidad Nacional in Costa Rica. The sample included a total of 46 first-year students from two distinct integrated English courses. The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 45, with the majority having attended public high schools in various regions of Southern Costa Rica. Notably, most of these students were recipients of scholarships due to their socio-economic statuses. These participants were selected due to their linguistic level, diverse backgrounds, and opportunity to benefit from the activity application.

To guarantee ethical practices, participants were fully informed about the purpose of the study and the steps involved. They gave their consent before taking part in the research. Confidentiality was carefully protected by keeping participants' identities anonymous and presenting the results in a way that ensured their privacy.

Activity Application Process

We employed the website www.elllo.org to select audio tracks tailored to the students' proficiency levels and aligned with the topics covered in the course. These audio tracks and accompanying exercises were assigned as homework following the completion of each unit throughout a 17-week semester. The objective was to encourage independent learning and utilization of various website features, including scripts, quizzes, and vocabulary reviews while exposing them to audio tracks with native and non-native speakers of English of many different nationalities. Afterward, we facilitated a class discussion to provide students with an opportunity to share their experiences with the website and its audio tracks.

We selected specific tracks for three main reasons. First, the tracks were chosen to match the students' current proficiency level. Second, the audio tracks included a mix of English varieties, both native and non-native, to support the main objective of exposing students to Global Englishes. Finally, the tracks were aligned with the course content, ensuring that their topics directly complemented the themes covered in the syllabus.

Data Collection Process

Our data collection involved the implementation of three different instruments, each chosen to address specific aspects of the research questions and ensure a comprehensive understanding of the students' experiences. First, learners completed a questionnaire to gather insights into their perceptions of improvements in their comprehension of spoken English, their strengths and weaknesses, and their overall views on the effectiveness of exposure to Global Englishes. Questionnaires are widely regarded as efficient tools for collecting large amounts of self-reported data, particularly in educational research, as they allow for the identification of trends and patterns (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). We selected this tool for its efficiency in collecting large amounts of data, allowing for the identification of trends and patterns in student responses. Also, we documented class discussions and recorded students' opinions regarding the usefulness of audio tracks and any challenges encountered during the activities. Observation and documentation during class discussions are valuable methods for collecting authentic feedback in natural settings (Cohen et al., 2017). Observational data provided contextualized insights into student engagement and interactions, which complemented the findings from the questionnaires and helped answer the research questions. Finally, we conducted two focus groups, each comprising students from different classes. Focus groups are recognized as an effective way to explore participants' experiences and clarify ambiguous questionnaire responses through group discussions (Krueger & Casey, 2015). These sessions aimed to gather qualitative data that emphasized key experiences and addressed aspects of the

questionnaire requiring further exploration. Focus groups were particularly effective for highlighting collective experiences and drawing attention to shared challenges or successes. By combining these instruments, we intended to ensure a general understanding of the learners' experiences while triangulating the data collected. In this sense, triangulation was achieved by cross-referencing the results, such as using questionnaire trends to guide the focus group discussions and validating observational insights through analysis of the students' responses. For instance, feedback from focus groups helped clarify trends identified in the questionnaires, ensuring the reliability and depth of the findings.

Results

The following section aims to summarize the findings we gathered after applying three different instruments to collect information about the impact of listening to Global Englishes and how it may promote listening comprehension in pre-intermediate English students.

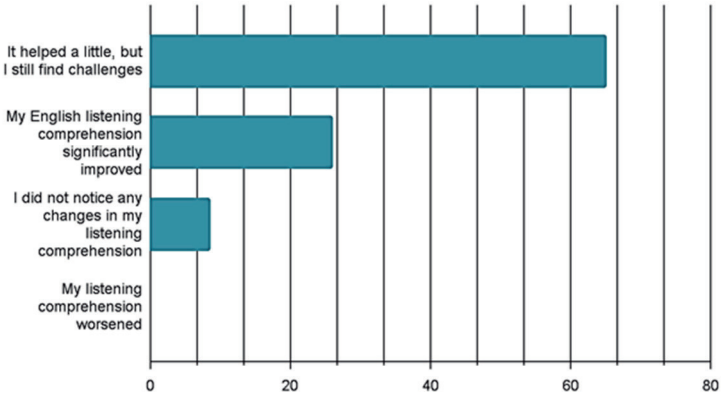
Based on the answers we obtained from the questionnaire, the groups expressed that when listening to different variations of English they highlight the ease of understanding vocabulary due to the clarity of the speakers' voice and the speed of the tracks. Regarding the main difficulties encountered, students stated that pronunciation was the biggest challenge to overcome. We also requested them to point out which variations of English were easier for them to understand. Among these variants, the groups considered that English spoken by people from the United States, Venezuela, Japan, and Mexico was easier to understand. On the other hand, the answers revealed that Australian, British, and Scottish variations were the most challenging ones when listening to the conversations. We also focused the questions on the usefulness of the exercises for students and they suggested that the tracks helped them improve their listening skills since they learned new vocabulary and could experience English spoken in different parts of the world.

In terms of the findings derived from the focus groups, a majority of the students agreed that when listening to global Englishes, they encountered difficulty with understanding pronunciation, since it varies from country to country. In terms of their perceptions, British English was the most demanding English variant while American English seemed to be the less difficult one for them. Interestingly, students also mentioned that those Englishes in which speakers have Spanish as their native language were also less challenging for them. Based on students' opinions, listening to speakers from around the world helped them become aware of how important understanding English is, since this skill may help them achieve goals like traveling or working abroad. Similarly, students mentioned that listening to the conversations

benefited them because it worked as extra practice for the listening evaluations in the course they were taking at the time.

Taking account of the entries obtained in the third instrument, the overall students' views on their improvement in their listening skill seem positive. Most of the interviewees expressed that their progress was optimal, and none believed that their listening skill worsened (Figure 1). On the other hand, almost 9% of them considered that no changes in their listening comprehension were observed after having completed the activities.

Figure 1. Overall Experience Listening to Different Varieties of English



Note. Data gathered from Instrument 3: Questionnaire

Regarding the easiest aspects that students found when hearing different varieties of English, the slower speech rate and the use of simple familiar vocabulary stand out among the options provided. Likewise, the results showed that English speakers from Mexico, Japan, the United States, and Venezuela were easier to understand than those from the other regions. On the contrary, the most difficult aspects to understand for the groups were pronunciation and the use of unfamiliar or regional vocabulary. Likewise, the English spoken in London, Australia, and Wales resulted to be the most difficult ones to comprehend for the groups.

Discussion

This study intended to elucidate the impact that the exposure to English containing language samples from many varieties can have on students' development of listening skills. The findings uncovered aspects such as strengths and weaknesses in terms of

comprehension of different language varieties and provided insights into what was helpful and not during the implementation of the activities.

As stated in the previous analysis, students reported that certain varieties of English are easier to understand due to their "clarity," particularly highlighting the English pronunciation of other Spanish speakers and people from the United States . This may be attributed to the high level of exposure to English varieties that are geographically close to Costa Rica and economically significant. Traditionally, English education in Costa Rica has focused on communication with native speakers (Nunan, 2015) from the United States, largely due to economic reasons. This approach has often overlooked the importance of increasing exposure to global varieties of English and incorporating this element into language curricula (Selvi et al., 2023).

Besides, students reported that pronunciation, particularly that of British, Welsh, and Australian English, significantly affected their comprehension. This issue may derive from a lack of exposure to diverse English varieties, limiting their ability to engage with a more global context of English use (Guilherme, 2007; Jindapitak & Teo, 2013), limiting a unification of English users within a global community (Pandarangga, 2015).

To address this, there should be a paradigm shift in teaching materials and methodologies to make them more available and to move away from native speaker models (McKay, 2003; Selvi et al., 2023; Sifakis & Sougari, 2003). By pluralizing linguistic norms and making instructional choices (Selvi et al., 2023; Puri, 2021) that incorporate a wide range of English varieties, educators may enhance students' comprehension of less common English varieties.

Students also shared information about what was beneficial for them following the implementation of the activities. They perceived that the audio tracks enhanced their listening skills, as they were introduced to new vocabulary while being exposed to English spoken in various parts of the world. This finding aligns with Selvi et al. (2023), who supported a redefinition of instructional norms to improve intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability through increased exposure to Global English.

Conclusions

After analyzing the results and discussion sections, we have drawn some conclusions. First, there is a need for exposure to GE to enhance comprehension. If exposure to American English varieties has proven to be beneficial in promoting comprehension, thus an exposure to global English varieties may enhance general comprehension by providing familiarity with different pronunciation, pace, and vocabulary. We want to highlight the importance of including a wider range of GE varieties in the curriculum to help increase overall listening comprehension skills.

Moreover, English pronunciations that stray away from that of American English, specifically those of British, Australian, Welsh, and Scottish English, were considered as a challenge for the students. This issue also calls for an increment in the exposure to various English varieties in favor of an improvement in comprehension.

In the discussion section, we emphasized a need to move away from native-speaker models of English and promote exposure to GE, especially when it comes to listening. By integrating diverse native and non-native speakers and English varieties into language teaching, students can be better prepared for real-world communication, where English is spoken by individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Such an approach could enhance not only their listening comprehension but also in generating an appreciation for the linguistic diversity of English as a global language.

The most relevant conclusion drawn from the results revealed that there was a positive impact on listening skills. The students' feedback showed that the listening tracks and activities from ELLLO helped them to expand their vocabulary and to further develop their listening skills. They expressed positive remarks about the progress they made in listening comprehension, which may suggest that exposing them to global Englishes could be an asset to improving their learning process.

Recommendations

We suggest that Costa Rica's English curricula incorporate audio and video materials containing speakers from many countries and cultures. Including native and non-native speaker samples can help students broaden their comprehension of English as a global language. Also, we recommend that English be given a global status, away from the idea of native-speakers that may limit students' progress: that is, teachers should promote the development of linguistic skills that allow for global communication and not emphasize native-speaker varieties as the goal.

Furthermore, we advise an increase in listening strategies focused on GE. Besides the exposure to different English varieties, there needs to be a focus on teaching strategies to overcome comprehension difficulties. Students should be exposed to different methods such as top-down and bottom-up listening to include both listening for details and for meaning, which can come in handy when dealing with unfamiliar pronunciations.

Finally, this case study has provided some insights into the benefits that Global Englishes can bring to aid listening comprehension in English students from this specific context. Nonetheless, we consider that further investigation is essential for a better understanding of the topic. We consider that more research on the long-term effects of the exposure to GE can yield valuable information not only about the students' listening comprehension but also about the students' ability to communicate.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Activity Application Protocol

Topics: Academic Life, Weather and Nature, Food and Diets, In the Community, Home, Cultures, Health, Entertainment and Media, Social Life, and Sports.

Goal: Students will be able to improve their listening comprehension skills by being exposed to speakers of English from different parts of the world.

Target Nationalities: Mongolia, The USA, Portugal, South Africa, Japan, The USA (Hawaii), England, The USA, Australia, Scotland, Venezuela, The UK, Japan, Mexico, Wales

Directions:

Pre-Listening:

The students review the key vocabulary from each track by listening to extracts of the track.

While-Listening

Students are asked to listen attentively to the conversation while taking notes of main ideas and details. The students are asked to pay attention to pronunciation features they find different among speakers.

Post-Listening

In class, the students share their thoughts on the content of the conversation and their understanding of it. The class discusses any challenges encountered in understanding the English varieties and the strategies they used to overcome them.

Appendix 2: Summary of Activities and Contents

Topic	Track	Nationality	Chapter
College life / Education	https://www.elllo.org/english/1001/1009-MongoliaSchool.htm	Mongolia The USA	1
Weather and Food	ELLLO Views #1303 Life in Portugal	Portugal South Africa	2-3
Food and diet	ELLLO Views #939 Mari's Favorite Foods ELLLO Views #940 Ron's Favorite Foods	Japan The USA (Hawaii)	3
Community	ELLLO Views #1501 At the Mall	England The USA	4
Community	ELLLO Views #1345 Weekend Work, Wildlife, and Art	Australia The USA	4
Home	ELLLO Views #1459 Meg has to move	The USA	5
Cultures	ELLLO Views #1457 How International are you?	England The USA	6
Cultures	ELLLO Views #1437 Missing Home	Scotland Venezuela	6
Health	https://elllo.org/english/0701/T740-Keren-Healthy.htm	The UK The USA	7
Entertainment and media	ELLLO Views #918 Mari's Media Choices	Japan The USA (Hawaii	8
Social life	https://elllo.org/english/0851/T900-Paul-Money.htm	Mexico England	9
Sports	ELLLO Views #927 Net Ball	Wales	10

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EFL Students' Writing Strategies, Self-Efficacy, and Performance in Ethiopia: Exploring Interrelationships

Estrategias de escritura, autoeficacia y desempeño de estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera en Etiopía: Explorando sus interrelaciones

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Abstract

Effective writing is essential for academic and professional success, especially for students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This study aimed to investigate the correlation between different writing strategies, EFL students' self-efficacy in writing, and their actual writing performance. A descriptive-correlational research design was employed, involving 150 EFL students. Data were collected through questionnaires, IELTS writing tests, and interviews. The results showed a fragile but positive relationship between students' self-efficacy and their use of writing strategies (r=0.119). Students who used various strategies, such as planning, revising, and self-monitoring, reported higher confidence in their writing abilities. Additionally, there was a significant but low correlation between the use of writing strategies and writing performance (r=0.114). However, writing strategies alone did not significantly predict improvements in writing abilities. These findings suggest that while enhancing students' self-efficacy and encouraging effective writing strategies can potentially improve writing performance, writing strategies alone may not be sufficient. Therefore, English teachers should focus on both training and motivating students to use effective writing strategies to address writing challenges effectively.

Keywords: EFL students, self-efficacy, writing performance, writing strategies

Resumen

La escritura efectiva es fundamental para el éxito académico y profesional, especialmente para los estudiantes que aprenden inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL, por sus siglas en inglés). Este estudio tuvo como objetivo investigar la correlación entre diferentes estrategias de escritura, la autoeficacia de los estudiantes de EFL en la escritura y su desempeño real en esta habilidad. Se empleó un diseño de investigación descriptivo-correlacional con la participación de 150 estudiantes de EFL. Los datos fueron recopilados mediante cuestionarios, pruebas de escritura del IELTS y entrevistas. Los resultados mostraron una relación débil pero positiva entre la autoeficacia de los estudiantes y su uso de estrategias de escritura (r=0.119). Los estudiantes que emplearon diversas estrategias, como la planificación, la revisión y la autoevaluación, reportaron una mayor confianza en sus habilidades de escritura. Además, se encontró una correlación significativa pero baja entre el uso de estrategias de escritura y el desempeño en esta habilidad (r=0.114). Sin embargo, el uso de estrategias de escritura por sí solo no predijo mejoras significativas en las habilidades de escritura. Estos hallazgos sugieren que, si bien mejorar la autoeficacia de los estudiantes y fomentar el uso de estrategias efectivas de escritura pueden contribuir al rendimiento en esta habilidad, las estrategias de escritura por sí solas pueden no ser suficientes. Por lo tanto, se recomienda que los docentes de inglés se enfoquen tanto en la capacitación como en la motivación de los estudiantes para que utilicen estrategias de escritura efectivas y enfrenten con éxito los desafíos asociados a la escritura.

Palabras clave: estudiantes de EFL, autoeficacia, desempeño en escritura, estrategias de escritura

Resumo

A escrita eficaz é fundamental para o sucesso acadêmico e profissional, especialmente para estudantes que aprendem inglês como língua estrangeira (EFL, na sigla em inglês). Este estudo teve como objetivo investigar a correlação entre diferentes estratégias de escrita, a autoeficácia dos estudantes de EFL na escrita e seu desempenho real nessa habilidade. Foi utilizado um desenho de pesquisa descritivo-correlacional, com a participação de 150 estudantes de EFL. Os dados foram coletados por meio de questionários, testes de escrita do IELTS e entrevistas. Os resultados mostraram uma relação fraca, mas positiva, entre a autoeficácia dos estudantes e o uso de estratégias de escrita (r=0.119). Os estudantes que empregaram diversas estratégias, como planejamento, revisão e autoavaliação, relataram maior confiança em suas habilidades de escrita. Além disso, foi encontrada uma correlação significativa, porém baixa, entre o uso de estratégias de escrita e o desempenho nessa habilidade (r=0.114). No entanto, o uso de estratégias de escrita, por si só, não previu melhorias significativas nas habilidades de escrita. Esses achados sugerem que, embora melhorar a autoeficácia dos estudantes e incentivar o uso de estratégias eficazes de escrita possam contribuir para o desempenho nessa habilidade, as estratégias de escrita, isoladamente, podem não ser suficientes. Portanto, recomenda-se que os professores de inglês foquem tanto no treinamento quanto na motivação dos estudantes para que utilizem estratégias eficazes de escrita e enfrentem com sucesso os desafios associados à produção textual.

Palavras-chave: estudantes de EFL, autoeficácia, desempenho na escrita, estratégias de escrita

Introduction

For students from non-native English-speaking countries, the ability to write effectively in English is a vital asset. English is the medium of instruction and a prerequisite for achieving higher academic and professional success (Aidinlou & Far, 2014; Chen, 2022; Junianti et al., 2020; Hu, 2022; Raoofi et al., 2017; Sumarsono & Mbato, 2021; Zhou et al., 2022). In Ethiopia, where English is taught as a foreign language (EFL), students' proficiency in writing significantly impacts their academic success and future career opportunities. However, a comprehensive understanding of how EFL students' writing strategies, self-efficacy, and writing performance interrelate in the Ethiopian context remains underexplored.

Writing strategies are deliberate actions and techniques that learners use to manage the writing process effectively (Çetinkaya & Bilgan, 2018; Li et al., 2022; Oussou et al., 2024; Raoofi et al., 2014; Sumarsono & Mbato, 2021; Zhou et al., 2022). These strategies include planning (e.g., brainstorming and outlining), drafting, revising, and editing. Effective writing strategies are crucial for producing coherent and well-structured texts (Fajrina et al., 2021; Li, 2022). Studies have shown that the use of effective writing strategies can significantly impact students' writing performance and overall language proficiency (Blasco, 2016; Golparvar & Khafi, 2021; Graham & Perin, 2022; Zhou et al., 2022). Therefore, writing strategies are essential in EFL settings where students often struggle with language proficiency and writing conventions (Demir, 2018; Hu, 2022; Zhang & Zhang, 2024).

Several researchers emphasize the need for tailored writing strategies that address specific challenges faced by EFL learners, such as limited vocabulary and grammar difficulties (Gorpawar & Khafi, 2021; Goy, 2017; Hu, 2022; Raoofi & Maroofi, 2017; Sun & Wang, 2020; Syahriani & Madya, 2019; Teng & Huang, 2019). Despite this, there is a scarcity of research concentrating on the effectiveness of various writing strategies used by Ethiopian EFL students (Gupta & Woldemariam, 2011; Legesse et al., 2021 2020; Mitiku, 2023; Wondim et al., 2024). Understanding which strategies are most effective in this context can provide valuable insights for teachers seeking to enhance students' writing abilities.

Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their ability to perform specific tasks successfully. Teng and Wang (2023) claimed that self-efficacy influences motivation, effort, and persistence. In the context of writing, self-efficacy affects students' confidence in their writing abilities and their approach to writing tasks (Aidinlou & Far, 2014). Higher self-efficacy is associated with more significant effort, more effective use of writing strategies, and better writing performance (Junianti et al., 2020; Sun & Wang, 2020; Teng & Wang, 2023).

Writing performance is typically evaluated through the quality of written texts, standardized assessments, and teacher feedback. It is influenced by the strategies students use and their level of self-efficacy. Hu (2022) found that students who used effective writing strategies had higher self-efficacy and produced better writing outcomes. In Ethiopia, factors such as large class sizes, limited resources, and diverse linguistic backgrounds pose additional challenges to writing performance (Kifle, 2022). A study by Fikru (2023) highlights these challenges but does not extensively explore how specific writing strategies and self-efficacy impact performance. A focused investigation into these interrelationships can provide a clearer understanding of how to improve writing instruction and support for EFL students (Chen, 2022; Wang, 2023).

Ethiopian students face unique challenges that impact their writing skills, including diverse linguistic backgrounds, varying levels of English proficiency, and inadequate writing instruction resources. Kifle (2022) and Fikru (2023) highlight these challenges, emphasizing the need for research specific to higher education in Ethiopia. Understanding how writing strategies and self-efficacy interact within this context can inform more effective instructional practices and support mechanisms.

Despite the crucial role that writing plays in academic and career success, there remains a clear gap in understanding how writing strategies, self-efficacy, and performance interact among EFL students. Existing research provides insights into these factors individually, but there is a limited comprehensive study on their combined effects within the Ethiopian educational context. The studies conducted by Shen et al. (2024) and Sun and Wang (2020) did not consider the specific barriers faced by EFL students in Ethiopia, such as large class sizes and insufficient resources. Additionally, Balaman (2021) highlighted the importance of the interaction among writing strategies, self-efficacy, and writing performance; however, his findings were not used to investigate their combined effects.

Writing remains a challenging skill for EFL students (Demir, 2018) because it involves effectively transforming ideas into written language (Fajrina et al., 2021; Nurhayati, 2022). Prastikawati et al. (2020) argue that writing integrates physical and cognitive abilities. Further studies highlight the importance of emotion regulation, creativity, and information integration during the writing process (Ghoorchaei & Khosravi, 2019; Hu, 2022; Liu, 2015; Teng & Huang, 2022). Hu's findings reveal that many students struggle with grammar, vocabulary, coherence, and structure in their writing. These difficulties often arise from a lack of motivation, misguided beliefs, insufficient practice, and inadequate feedback from teachers (Tridinanti et al., 2020; Wang, 2023). Besides, students may be hesitant to express their ideas and emotions due to limited language resources (Chen, 2022; Raoofi et al., 2014; Shen et al., 2024; Teng & Wang, 2023) and unrealistic expectations about their writing abilities (Zhou et al., 2022). Karafil and Oguz (2022) emphasize that EFL students are less likely to engage in writing activities because it requires extensive knowledge and organizational skills in English.

As mentioned, students' writing abilities are often limited for various reasons. For example, students may be unable to use writing strategies to address their writing difficulties effectively (Chen, 2022; Fajrina et al., 2023 ; Inayah & Nanda, 2016). Besides, writing difficulties can stem from teachers' monotonous and unchanging instructional strategies (Boonyarattanasoontorn, 2017; Yulianti, 2018). Teachers often fail to train students effectively in using strategies to enhance their writing performance (Hu, 2022; Junianti et al., 2020; Khosravi et al., 2017; Teng & Huang, 2020). Wang (2023) also notes that many EFL students have a limited understanding of vocabulary, grammatical structure, content, and thought organization.

The present study investigates the relationship between writing strategies, writing performance, and self-efficacy. However, it remains unclear how specific writing strategies (e.g., planning, editing, and peer feedback) affect self-efficacy and performance (Chen, 2022; Zhang & Zhang, 2024). This highlights the need for more nuanced studies to understand how individual writing strategies influence various aspects of self-efficacy and performance (Fajrina et al., 2021; Hu, 2022; Yulianti, 2018).

Research must address Ethiopian EFL students' specific requirements, strategies, and self-efficacy to develop targeted interventions and teaching strategies. Most of the previous studies (Gupta & Woldemariam, 2011; Legesse et al., 2021; Mitiku, 2023; Nigussie et al., 2023; Wondim et al., 2024) have generalized findings without considering the specific barriers faced by EFL students in Ethiopia.

Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the interrelationships among writing strategies, self-efficacy, and performance among Ethiopian EFL students. By examining these factors, this study aims to understand their interactions and mutual influences comprehensively. To achieve this goal, the study will address the following fundamental research questions:

What is the relationship between writing self-efficacy and the use of writing strategies among English major students?

What kind of relationship is there between the writing strategies utilized by English major students and their writing performance?

Methodology

Research Design

A descriptive-correlational research design was employed to explore and understand the relationships among writing strategies, self-efficacy, and writing performance among Ethiopian EFL students. The study measured three variables:

writing strategies, writing self-efficacy, and writing performance. Data were collected through questionnaires, the IELTS writing test, and interviews.

Participants and Sampling Techniques

The subjects were third and fourth-year EFL students. The study included 150 EFL students: 72 from Wolkite University (33 third-year students, and 39 fourth-year students) and 78 from Wachamo University (42 third-year students and 36 fourth-year students). A comprehensive sampling technique was used to select participants from English majors enrolled in Basic Writing Skills, Advanced Writing Skills I and II, and the Sophomore English course. Since the number of English majors was sufficient, all of them were included in the study.-

Instruments

Questionnaire

This study's primary data collection tool was a questionnaire with two sections. The first section aimed to assess the frequency and types of writing strategies used by EFL students. The items in the questionnaire were adapted from Petric and Czarl (2003). The questionnaire included a self-report component detailing students' learning strategies to overcome writing challenges. Minor adjustments were made to the vocabulary, phrases, and sentence structure to make the language more approachable and accessible for EFL students.

Data on students' use of writing strategies were gathered using this questionnaire, which consisted of 53 closed-ended questions categorized as follows: social (1–7), affective (8–15), metacognitive (16–25), compensatory (26–30), cognitive (31–48), and memory (49–53). Items were assessed on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("never or almost never applies to me") to 5 ("always or almost always applies to me"). The adjusted reporting scale was used to describe the average score of writing strategies.

The second tool was a writing self-efficacy questionnaire designed to measure students' beliefs in their writing abilities and their confidence in performing writing tasks. The Self-Efficacy Questionnaire was adapted from Erkan and Saban (2011). It included thirty-three closed-ended items, with four Likert-scale responses: 1 ("I do it very well"), 2 ("I do it well"), 3 ("I do not do it well"), and 4 ("I do not do it at all"). The responses ranged from "almost never" to "almost always."

The items were designed to measure four constructs: planning, self-examination, effort, and self-efficacy beliefs. The questionnaire was presented to the students in the target language.

Writing Performance Test

The IELTS writing test was used to assess students' writing abilities and overall performance. This standardized test provided a reliable measure of writing proficiency through consistent criteria. It included tasks that required students to respond to prompts in both descriptive and argumentative formats, evaluating their ability to organize ideas, use appropriate language, and develop coherent arguments. The test was scored based on criteria such as task achievement, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource, and grammatical range and accuracy derived from Read (2022). Each criterion was rated using the IELTS 0-9 scale to assess the learners' writing abilities. All 150 students who completed the questionnaire also took the exam.

Task 1 required students to write at least 150 words in 20 minutes, using information from a table to create a complete report. Task 2 required students to write at least 250 words in 40 minutes, focusing on crafting a persuasive essay. For Task 2, the topic was "Chewing Chat Should End," allowing students to utilize vocabulary and write a compelling argument.

All third-year EFL students took this test to evaluate the effectiveness of their overall writing strategies. Two raters (the researchers) independently assessed the students' assignments to ensure impartial grading. Finally, each student's writing performance on the IELTS exam was evaluated using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) for learning, teaching, and assessment (Athiworakun et al., 2018).

Interview

The third tool used to collect data was a semi-structured interview. Out of 150 respondents, 12 interviewees were selected using simple random sampling techniques. This approach was chosen because it allows for in-depth exploration and flexibility. The aim was to gain deeper insights into students' personal experiences with writing strategies, self-efficacy, and performance. Qualitative data can provide additional clarity and expand on the quantitative findings from the surveys.

The interviews were recorded using a smartphone, with each session lasting between 12 and 18 minutes. Interview guides were also utilized to ensure comprehensive data collection. Finally, the researchers transcribed, analyzed, and interpreted the recorded interviews.

Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Two Ph.D. experts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) validated the instruments from Wolkite University; they each had 16 and 18 years of teaching experience at public universities in Ethiopia. These experts provided feedback on the content and face validity of the questionnaire items, the IELTS writing test, and interview questions. They also commented on the format requirements, item relevance for EFL learners, and how well the instruments measured what the researchers intended to evaluate. Based on their feedback, two irrelevant items were removed from the questionnaire ("Receiving feedback on my writing often makes me feel" and "I always use a dictionary to check spelling"). These items were replaced with more relevant ones, such as "Students must understand the standard format of good writing to become good writers" and "I get information via videocassettes." The researchers incorporated these modifications and corrections to improve the validity of the instruments.

A pilot study was conducted to ensure the reliability of the tools and administration procedures. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were employed to evaluate the reliability and internal consistency of the questionnaires. The Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaire was 0.910, indicating a high level of reliability. This result demonstrates that the items were dependable and suitable for assessing students' writing strategies and self-efficacy levels.

Inter-rater reliability ensured the reliability of the IELTS writing test. Cohen's Kappa was used to assess the consistency of the raters' scores, revealing a significant agreement ($\kappa = = 0.769$) between them. This result demonstrates the test's high consistency and dependability in evaluating students' writing performance.

To maintain the trustworthiness of the interview data, the researchers conducted face-to-face interviews with the interviewees. This approach maximized the credibility of the data.

Procedures

First, the researchers conducted a pilot study to evaluate the instruments. Second, they briefed the English teachers on the study's objectives and worked with them to establish a data collection schedule. Third, the researchers instructed the learners to complete and submit the questionnaires with the assistance of their teachers. Fourth, after the questionnaires were completed: The researchers first introduced the students to the general objectives of the IELTS test. The students then received six hours of training on the general objectives of the IELTS test and the specific objectives of the IELTS writing test. Once the training was over, the students took the exam. Finally, the students took a 60-minute test in which they were required to write at least 400 words across two tasks.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0. Descriptive statistics, such as the mean and standard deviation, were used to determine students' writing strategies and self-efficacy. The frequency with which students utilized writing strategies was assessed based on mean score benchmarks: 1.0-2.4 indicated low strategy use, 2.5-3.4 indicated moderate strategy use, and 3.5-5 indicated high strategy use (Oxford, 1990). In contrast, the relationship between variables was analyzed using inferential statistics, specifically Pearson's correlation coefficient.

Results

Students' responses to the first research question: *What is the relationship between writing self-efficacy and the use of writing strategies among English major students?*

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for the frequency use of writing strategy

Strategies	Mean (M)	SD	Level of strategy use	Frequency of use	Rank
Memory	2.57	0.833	Medium	Sometimes used	1st
Compensation	2.51	0.828	Medium	Sometimes used	2nd
Social	2.33	0.744	Low	Not usually used	3rd
Affective	2.21	0.678	Low	Not usually used	4th
Cognitive	2.18	0.653	Low	Not usually used	5th
Metacognitive	2.11	0.624	Low	Not usually used	6th
Grand total	2.32	0.727	Low	Not usually used	

Table 1 illustrates that students generally used writing strategies at a low frequency. Among these strategies, memory (M = 2.57) and compensation (M = 2.51) strategies were used more frequently compared to social (M = 2.33), affective (M = 2.21), cognitive (M = 2.18), and metacognitive (M = 2.11) strategies. The overall trend indicated a moderate to low level of engagement with writing strategies in their learning process.

Table 2. The Mean Score of Students' Writing Self-efficacy

	Mean	Level
EFL students	2.24	Low

Table 2 indicates that EFL students' mean writing self-efficacy score was 2.24, which falls within the low range. This suggests that, on average, students reported low confidence in their writing abilities.

Table 3. Pearson's correlation results for students' writing strategy utilization and writing self-efficacy

		Writing strategies	Self-efficacy
Writing strategies	Pearson Correlation	1	.119**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.199**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows a statistically significant but weakly positive correlation between students' writing strategy utilization and their writing self-efficacy (r=0.119). This indicated that while there was a slight tendency for higher writing strategy use to be associated with higher self-efficacy, the strength of this relationship was minimal.

Second research question: *What kind of a relationship exists between English major students' writing strategies and their writing performance?*

Table 3. The mean scores of students' IELTS writing test

		No	Mean	SD
Writing performance	Wolkite University	72	1.62	.649
	Wachamo University	78	1.60	.624
Total		150	1.61	.636

As demonstrated in Table 3, students across both Wolkite and Wachamo universities demonstrated similar performance levels in the IELTS writing test, with mean scores of 1.61. The scores indicate a generally consistent but modest level of writing proficiency among the students.

Table 4: Pearson's correlation between students' writing strategies and writing performance

		Writing strategies	Writing performance
Writing strategies	Pearson Correlation	1	.114**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Writing performance	Pearson Correlation	.114**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 4 revealed a statistically significant, yet very weak positive correlation between writing strategies and writing performance (r = 0.114). This suggested that although there was a slight association indicating that better use of writing strategies related to marginally improved writing performance, the effect size was minimal.

Interview Results

Interviewees described a structured approach to essay writing, including brainstorming ideas, creating an outline, drafting the essay, revising, and editing. However, some students skipped the outlining phase and began drafting directly, especially if they were confident about their ideas. For instance, S2 said, "I start with brainstorming to get all my ideas down. Then I create an outline to organize them before writing the first draft." In contrast, S11 noted, "Sometimes I just start writing without an outline and revise later."

Students frequently found outlining, peer reviewing, and using writing templates to be helpful strategies. These methods were praised for assisting with organizing thoughts, improving structure, and providing constructive feedback. For example, S5 said, "Outlining helps me stay focused and ensures my essay has a clear structure." At the same time, S8 noted, "Peer review is valuable because it offers different perspectives and helps me catch mistakes I might otherwise miss."

Students consider factors such as the complexity of the task, their familiarity with the subject matter, and the type of writing required (e.g., argumentative versus descriptive). More experienced students demonstrated greater flexibility in using their strategies for different tasks. As S1 explained, "I adjust my strategies based on how familiar I am with the topic and the requirements of the assignment."

Students with high self-efficacy reported feeling confident in their writing abilities and often cited examples of successfully handling challenging assignments. In contrast,

those with lower self-efficacy expressed doubts about their writing skills and struggled with more complex tasks. For instance, S3 said, "I'm confident in my writing because I've received good grades and positive feedback on my essays," while S6 remarked, "I sometimes doubt my abilities, especially when I'm given a topic I'm not familiar with."

Previous success, positive feedback, and thorough preparation were factors that boosted confidence. Conversely, past failures, lack of preparation, and the perceived difficulty of tasks were cited as factors that undermined confidence. As S10 explained, "I feel more confident if I've done well in similar tasks before and if I've prepared thoroughly."

Common strategies for handling writing challenges included seeking help from peers or instructors, revising drafts, and breaking tasks into smaller parts. Students who proactively sought assistance and revised their work reported better outcomes than those who avoided challenges. As S12 described, "When I encounter difficulties, I frequently seek assistance from my classmates or consult with my teacher. I also divide the writing assignment into smaller chunks and address each one independently."

However, the results indicated a mismatch between students' self-assessments and the evaluations provided by teachers. For example, S1 noted, "I evaluate my writing based on how clearly I've expressed my points and how effectively I've fulfilled the assignment requirements." In contrast, S9 remarked, "Sometimes I believe my writing is better than the comments I receive. I need to work on better understanding my teacher's expectations."

Goals for improving writing commonly included enhancing grammar, expanding vocabulary, and refining essay structure. To achieve these goals, students planned to engage in practice, read extensively, and seek feedback from peers and instructors. For instance, S7 stated, "I want to improve my grammar and vocabulary, so I'm reading more academic texts and writing more frequently. In addition, I intend to attend writing workshops and seek more feedback from my teachers." This approach reflects a commitment to both self-directed and guided improvement in writing skills.

Reactions to feedback varied widely, ranging from appreciation and constructive use to frustration and defensiveness. Students who viewed feedback positively typically incorporated it effectively into their revisions, while those who were defensive often struggled to implement useful changes. Additionally, two interviewees mentioned:

> I appreciate feedback because it helps me understand my weaknesses and improve my writing. (S2)
>
> Sometimes, I find it hard to accept criticism, but I try to use the feedback to make my writing better. (S9)

Generally, the interview data revealed that effective writing strategies, such as outlining and peer review, were strongly linked to higher confidence and improved performance among EFL students. Higher self-efficacy contributed to more effective use of writing strategies and better management of writing challenges. Additionally, students who actively sought and incorporated feedback typically performed better, although there was variability in how feedback was received and utilized. These findings indicate that targeted interventions should prioritize enhancing self-efficacy, refining writing strategies, and improving students' overall writing proficiency.

Discussion

The relationship between Students' Writing Strategies and Writing Self-efficacy

The findings indicated a positive but weak correlation between EFL students' use of effective writing strategies and their writing self-efficacy ($r = 0.119$). Students who reported employing strategies such as planning, drafting, revising, and seeking feedback demonstrated greater confidence in their writing abilities. However, writing self-efficacy was not a strong predictor of using these strategies. The interview results also confirmed that learners had low writing self-efficacy in using effective writing strategies. This suggests that students with lower writing self-efficacy may use less effective writing practices, and those with higher self-efficacy may not necessarily use more effective strategies.

This finding is consistent with Demir's (2018) theory of self-efficacy, which posits that effective strategies can enhance an individual's confidence and perceived competence. Structured writing strategies can help EFL students develop their writing skills and boost their self-confidence. This reciprocal relationship indicates that teachers should incorporate strategy training into writing instruction to foster both skill development and self-efficacy.

This result aligns with previous research on the relationship between students' writing self-efficacy and their use of writing strategies (Aidinlou & Far, 2014; Balaman, 2021; Blasco, 2016; Chen, 2022; Khosravi et al., 2017; Li et al., 2022; Nurhayati, 2022; Sumarsono & Mbato, 2021; Teng & Wang, 2023; Wang, 2023; Zhang & Zhang, 2024). Jin (2023) noted that self-efficacy beliefs influence learners' writing strategies. According to Karafil and Oguz (2022), writing self-efficacy enhances students' awareness of effectively applying various writing strategies. Additionally, Aidinlou and Far (2014) demonstrated a strong correlation between writing self-efficacy and the use of writing strategies. Raoofi and Maroofi (2017) indicated that students who monitor their progress, regulate the effectiveness of their learning strategies, explore new methods, and show enthusiasm for completing tasks efficiently tend to achieve better results.

Interestingly, this finding aligns with prior studies on the relationship between students' writing self-efficacy and their use of writing strategies. However, the weak correlation between EFL students' use of effective writing strategies and their writing self-efficacy can be attributed to several factors. First, EFL students might use a variety of writing strategies, and their self-efficacy could be influenced by factors beyond these strategies, leading to a weak overall correlation. Additionally, individual differences in students' perceptions of their writing ability and their strategies' effectiveness may dilute this association's strength. Measurement limitations also contribute; the tools used to assess writing strategies and self-efficacy might not fully capture the complexity of their interaction, thus weakening the observed relationship. Finally, contextual factors such as varying levels of support, resources, or personal challenges could affect writing self-efficacy independently of the strategies employed.

The relationship between Students' Writing Strategies and Writing Performance

The results indicated that the correlation between students' use of writing strategies and their writing performance was weak, though positive ($r = 0.114$). Additionally, interview data revealed that strategies such as comprehensive pre-writing planning and iterative revisions were only marginally associated with improved writing outcomes. This implied that using writing strategies was not a reliable predictor of academic writing performance. In other words, the findings suggested that students did not effectively apply these strategies to address their writing difficulties.

Previous research on English writing skills supports this finding (Bai et al., 2014; Çetinkaya & Bilgan, 2018; Chen, 2022; He, 2019; Hu, 2022; Junianti et al., 2020; Khosravi et al., 2017; Mutar, 2019; Sumarsono & Mbato, 2021; Shen & Bai, 2024; Teng et al., 2022). For example, Raoofi et al. (2017) demonstrated a direct relationship between writing strategies and writing performance. Similarly, Oussou et al. (2024) identified a positive link between students' writing strategies and their performance. These studies suggest that employing effective writing strategies can significantly enhance learners' writing proficiency. Furthermore, research by Ghoorchaei and Khosravi (2019) indicates that high achievers and low achievers differ in their use of learning strategies and approaches to writing challenges. Consequently, students, irrespective of their writing ability, often seek assistance from various teachers when writing in English, as it is a complex skill requiring both language and content knowledge (Balaman, 2021).

While there was a positive association between students' use of writing strategies and writing performance, the link between these factors was weak for several reasons. First, students use a variety of writing strategies, and not all are equally effective, which can dilute the overall correlation. Second, other factors, such as individual skills, motivation, and external support, influence writing performance, which may weaken

the relationship with writing strategies. Measurement issues might also play a role, as the tools used may not fully capture the complexity of the interaction between strategies and performance. Lastly, contextual factors like classroom environment, feedback quality, and resource availability could affect writing performance independently of the writing strategies employed, further diminishing the strength of the observed correlation.

Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

Conclusions

The study revealed a statistically significant but weak positive correlation between students' use of writing strategies and their writing self-efficacy ($r = 0.119$). This indicates a slight tendency for students who use writing strategies more frequently to report higher self-efficacy. However, the minimal strength of this relationship suggests that other factors may have a more substantial impact on writing self-efficacy.

Additionally, the findings demonstrated a statistically significant but very weak positive correlation between writing strategies and writing performance ($r = 0.114$). This result implies that while a slight association indicates that better use of writing strategies is somewhat linked to improved writing performance, the effect size is minimal. The very weak correlation suggests that the influence of writing strategies on performance is limited, and other variables might play a more significant role in determining writing outcomes.

Implications

Educators should consider incorporating more comprehensive training on writing strategies. It may be beneficial to teach specific strategies and address how these strategies can contribute to building students' self-efficacy. Strategies should be integrated into a broader framework that includes self-regulation and reflection to help students understand their impact on writing confidence.

The minimal strength of the correlation between writing strategies and writing self-efficacy suggests that other factors, such as individual differences, prior experiences, and external support, may play a more significant role. Therefore, teachers should focus on creating a supportive learning environment that includes personalized feedback, encouragement, and opportunities for students to set and achieve personal writing goals, potentially enhancing self-efficacy more effectively.

The very weak correlation between writing strategies and writing performance indicates that simply increasing the use of writing strategies may have a limited impact on improving performance. Teachers might need to explore additional factors that contribute to writing success, such as content knowledge, critical thinking skills, and the quality of feedback provided. A more holistic approach that combines strategy instruction with these other elements could yield better results in improving writing performance.

Recommendations

It is recommended that English teachers should provide more comprehensive training on writing strategies, focusing not only on specific techniques but also on how these strategies can enhance students' self-efficacy. To maximize the effectiveness of this training, it should be incorporated into a broader educational framework that includes self-regulation, reflective practices, and personalized support. Additionally, teachers should create a supportive learning environment that offers tailored feedback, encouragement, and opportunities for students to set and achieve personal writing goals, which can help strengthen their writing confidence.

Teachers should consider adopting a more holistic approach that integrates writing strategies with other factors that influence writing outcomes, such as content knowledge, critical thinking skills, and the quality of feedback. This comprehensive approach could more effectively improve students' overall writing performance.

Teachers should engage in continuous professional development to address the complex factors influencing writing self-efficacy and performance. Training programs should focus on the latest research and effective practices in writing instruction, including how to integrate strategy training with broader pedagogical techniques and support mechanisms.

The study found a weak positive correlation between writing strategy use and writing self-efficacy, as well as a very weak correlation between writing strategies and performance. As a result, future research should investigate other factors that may significantly impact students' writing self-efficacy and performance, such as individual differences (e.g., motivation, prior knowledge, cognitive abilities) and external influences (e.g., feedback, classroom environment). This broader approach could provide a more comprehensive understanding of what drives writing success.

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Using data-driven learning approach to enhance EFL learners' academic speaking skills

Uso del enfoque de aprendizaje basado en datos para mejorar las habilidades de expresión académica en inglés de los estudiantes de EFL

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Abstract

The application of corpus to language instruction encouraged the use of data-driven learning (DDL). It is assisted by computer technology, and uses authentic language data as the basis for language instruction. Previously conducted studies have paid little attention to the use of corpus tools in speaking instruction. Thus, this study aimed to examine the effects of data-driven learning approach on EFL learners' speaking skills development. A quasi-experimental research design that employed an interrupted time series design with single group participants was used. The participants were fourth-year EFL major undergraduate students at Mekdela Amba University, Ethiopia. In the intervention, which lasted for six weeks, the participants were taught target language features for speaking via data-driven learning approach. Tests, questionnaires, and the students' reflective journals were used to collect the data. ANOVA and a one-sample t-test were used to analyze the quantitative data, while a qualitative analysis was employed for the students' reflective journals. The findings indicated that the data-driven learning approach improved the speaking skills of EFL students. Additionally, participants felt that data-driven learning was beneficial to their speaking skill development and had positive attitudes on the utilization of DDL approach in speaking instruction. Finally, considering the results, it was recommended that data-driven learning approach ought to be included into EFL speaking instruction.

***Keywords*:** data-driven learning, speaking skills development, authentic language data, computer-assisted approach, speaking instruction

Resumen

La aplicación del corpus en la enseñanza de idiomas ha fomentado el uso del aprendizaje basado en datos (Data-Driven Learning, DDL). Este enfoque, asistido por tecnología informática, emplea datos auténticos del lenguaje como base para la instrucción lingüística. Sin embargo, estudios previos han prestado poca atención al uso de herramientas de corpus en la enseñanza de la expresión oral. Por ello, este estudio tuvo como objetivo examinar los efectos del enfoque de aprendizaje basado en datos en el desarrollo de las habilidades orales de los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL). Se empleó un diseño de investigación cuasi-experimental con una serie temporal interrumpida y un solo grupo de participantes. Los participantes fueron estudiantes de último año de la licenciatura en inglés como lengua extranjera en la Universidad de Mekdela Amba, Etiopía. Durante la intervención, que tuvo una duración de seis semanas, se enseñaron características lingüísticas específicas para la expresión oral mediante el enfoque de aprendizaje basado en datos. Para la recolección de datos se utilizaron pruebas, cuestionarios y diarios de reflexión de los estudiantes. El análisis de datos cuantitativos se realizó mediante ANOVA y una prueba t de una muestra, mientras que los diarios de reflexión de los estudiantes fueron analizados cualitativamente. Los resultados indicaron que el enfoque de aprendizaje basado en datos mejoró las habilidades de expresión oral de los estudiantes de EFL. Además, los participantes percibieron que este enfoque fue beneficioso para el desarrollo de sus habilidades orales y expresaron actitudes positivas hacia su uso en la enseñanza de la expresión oral. Finalmente, en función de los resultados, se recomendó la inclusión del aprendizaje basado en datos en la instrucción del habla en inglés como lengua extranjera.

Palabras clave: aprendizaje basado en datos, desarrollo de habilidades orales, datos auténticos del lenguaje, enfoque asistido por computadora, enseñanza de la expresión oral

Resumo

A aplicação de corpus no ensino de idiomas tem incentivado o uso da aprendizagem baseada em dados (Data-Driven Learning, DDL). Essa abordagem, assistida por tecnologia computacional, utiliza dados autênticos da linguagem como base para a instrução linguística. No entanto, estudos anteriores prestaram pouca atenção ao uso de ferramentas de corpus no ensino da expressão oral. Portanto, este estudo teve como objetivo examinar os efeitos da abordagem de aprendizagem baseada em dados no desenvolvimento das habilidades orais dos alunos de inglês como língua estrangeira (EFL). Foi utilizado um desenho de pesquisa quase-experimental com uma série temporal interrompida e um único grupo de participantes. Os participantes eram estudantes do último ano da graduação em inglês como língua estrangeira na Universidade de Mekdela Amba, Etiópia. Durante a intervenção, que teve duração de seis semanas, foram ensinadas características linguísticas específicas para a expressão oral por meio da abordagem de aprendizagem baseada em dados. Para a coleta de dados, foram utilizados testes, questionários e diários reflexivos dos alunos. A análise dos dados quantitativos foi realizada por meio de ANOVA e um teste t de uma amostra, enquanto os diários reflexivos dos alunos foram analisados qualitativamente. Os resultados indicaram que a abordagem de aprendizagem baseada em dados melhorou as habilidades de expressão oral dos alunos de EFL. Além disso, os participantes perceberam que essa abordagem foi benéfica para o desenvolvimento de suas habilidades orais e expressaram atitudes positivas em relação ao seu uso no ensino da expressão oral. Finalmente, com base nos resultados, recomendou-se a inclusão da aprendizagem baseada em dados no ensino da expressão oral em inglês como língua estrangeira.

Palavras-chave: aprendizagem baseada em dados, desenvolvimento de habilidades orais, dados autênticos da linguagem, abordagem assistida por computador, ensino da expressão oral

Introduction

Utilizing computer technology in language learning and teaching contexts involves an innovative application of methods and tools that are appropriate for language instruction. Currently, computer technology is widely acknowledged as an essential educational tool in various teaching and learning contexts. This is especially true regarding teaching English language, as computer technology provides several opportunities to improve pedagogy and content (Alqahtani, 2019). Using this computer technology in the classroom ensures that students understand English better by giving them quick access to a range of real language samples (Ludeling & Kyto, 2008). One of the products of this computer technology is the corpus which is regarded as an important tool for English language teaching (Romer, 2010).

According to Reppen (2010), a corpus is defined as "a large, principled collection of naturally occurring written or spoken texts stored electronically" (p.10). The use of corpus in the classroom promoted the application of data-driven learning (DDL) to the instruction of various language skills (Braun, 2007). DDL is an approach of language learning where students use authentic language materials, such corpora, as a basis for their language learning and practice. For teaching English purposes, DDL provides students access to a wide variety of structured and focused written and spoken texts. With the help of digital technologies, learners can access vast databases of texts pertinent to their needs and numerous examples of target elements in context.

Applying DDL in EFL classrooms

According to Romer (2011), there are two ways that DDL can be used in the classroom: direct application and indirect application. By using computer corpus data to examine and internalize the target language, learners can employ corpora directly in an inductive manner. On the other hand, indirect applications are deductive in nature and include students using second-hand corpus data with the help of paper-based examples prepared by teachers. Low-proficiency learners are flooded with the large amount of confusing and unfamiliar language used in direct DDL (hands-on DDL). When learners with limited language skills are directly exposed to authentic language use, the complex and unfamiliar language may hinder their comprehension of the text. Therefore, as teachers work to adapt corpus data to match students' needs and levels of expertise, the indirect approach may help alleviate the concerns raised above (Boulton, 2010). Accordingly, in this study, the researchers used hands-off DDL, in which learners were exposed to concordance outputs and activities in the form of printed handouts.

DDL in speaking instruction

Through exposure to authentic language in DDL instruction, learners acquaint themselves with natural and contextually suitable expressions (Boulton, 2017). A corpus presents valuable resources for language learners aiming to enhance their speaking skills, as it provides numerous examples and language usage patterns. Likewise, instruction based on data-driven learning (DDL) can effectively enhance language learners' speaking skills by offering them genuine language data.

Speaking instruction can benefit greatly from data-driven learning, especially when utilizing a rich corpus such as Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE). Spoken language corpora show actual, authentic, natural speech that occurs in a variety of settings. According to Baker et al. (2006), many English language learners are interested primarily in learning the language for practical purposes. Thus, it is imperative that students be exposed to as much authentic speech as possible. Similarly, Thornbury (2007) argued that students' speaking abilities improve when exposed to authentic speaking contexts. To expose learners to natural speech patterns and vocabulary used in specific contexts, DDL utilizes real-life language from the corpus. Students can experience features of spoken languages such as small talk, discourse markers, formulaic sequences, vague language, ellipsis, and hedges through DDL-based approaches activities.

Teachers can use existing corpora such as MICASE or compile a corpus based on classroom interactions, activities, or findings from studies such as interviews (O'Keeffe, McCarthy, & Carter, 2007) for speaking instruction. For teachers interested in corpus data, recording classroom interactions is a great way to begin creating a corpus. The procedure may prove to be useful for preparing activities, monitoring the development of learners, and tracking their professional development. Teachers can critically assess their instruction and classroom practices by compiling a teaching corpus (O'Keeffe et al., 2007).

When using corpora for classroom speaking instruction, teachers need to consider the learners' English level and the skills they need to carry out tasks with them. In addition, the proposed corpus activities must match the learners' needs and background knowledge. It may appear at first that corpus data are limited to students at the upper intermediate or advanced levels, but this is not true (O'Keeffe et al., 2007). The teacher can prepare activities by manipulating and organizing the data according to the students' proficiency level and the objectives established.

Using corpus-based materials becomes more important in countries where English is taught as a foreign language because learners in those countries have limited access to the target language (Esayas, 2019). In line with this idea, Yilmaz and Koban Koc (2020) reported that in countries where English is taught as a foreign language, students can produce target language items more quickly and seem more natural by utilizing corpus-based materials. By providing authentic language examples for

language learners and aiding language instruction, this approach allows students to learn how language works through access to authentic language data that are stored electronically (Braun, 2007).

Nevertheless, corpora are not commonly used as a means of language instruction in EFL contexts in Ethiopia (Lakew et al., 2021); consequently, learners have insufficient exposure to authentic English. The classroom material serves as the source of linguistic input for language instruction, and learners are only given examples of a target structure that the teacher has made up. Therefore, adapting speaking instruction to real-world communication may be challenging if it relies too heavily on textbook English or is taught in controlled environments. A study by Adem and Berkessa (2022) confirmed that actual speaking practices in the classroom did not align with the principles of communicative language instruction, which include using and practicing authentic language.

Despite its importance, the applications of corpus-based research have remained limited in spoken learner corpus research (De Cock, 2010). Studies that have previously been conducted have paid little attention to using corpus tools in speaking skills instruction. As mentioned, there is clearly an empirical gap; studies on corpora have failed to consider speaking skills. Many of them have attempted to conduct studies by combining corpus with grammar (Johns, 1991; Boulton, 2009), collocation (Vyatkina, 2016), prepositions (Boontam & Phoocharoensil, 2018), writing (Levchenko, 2017; Birhan et al., 2021; Yoon & Hirevela; 2004, Boulton, 2010) and vocabulary (Geluso &Yamaguchi, 2014). A local study by Lakew et al (2021) aimed to examine the effect of corpus-informed spoken grammar instruction on EFL learners' oral language production, and the findings of the study revealed that corpus-informed spoken grammar instruction enhanced EFL learners' oral language production.

Regarding the researchers' reading, few studies have focused on the effect of the DDL approach on learners' speaking skills (Geluso & Yamaguch, 2014; Sahin Kizil & Savran, 2018). For this reason, studies on the application of corpus into speaking instruction need to be conducted. In the same vein, De Cock (2010) suggested that further must be done on spoken learner corpora. In addition, Cobb and Boulton (2015) highlighted the necessity of conducting research that integrates corpus techniques into speaking skills instruction in an EFL context and suggested that this area of study is a gap to be filled by future research. Therefore, the objective of the current study was to address this gap by employing DDL in speaking activities for EFL students. Consequently, this research aimed to answer the following questions:

1. Does implementing the DDL approach affect undergraduate EFL learners' academic speaking skills?

2. What are undergraduate EFL learners' perceptions of using the DDL approach in EFL speaking skills instruction in an academic context?

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed quasi-experimental research with an interrupted time series design in single group participants. An interrupted time series design involves studying one group, obtaining multiple pre-test measures for a period of time, administering an intervention, and then measuring outcomes (or post-tests) several times. In other words, this design involves repeated observations before and after the intervention and allows the researcher to observe behavior across time (Bordens & Abbott, 2011). In the present study, both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques were employed. Thus, the study used the mixed methods approach, which helps the researchers use quantitative and qualitative data to better understanding the research problem.

Research setting and participants

The current study participants were fourth-year undergraduate EFL students at Mekdela Amba University in the academic year of 2023. They were registered for the course 'Seminar on Selected Topics'. A total of 17 participants were included in the study. The sample consisted of 11 males and six females. They ranged in age from 23-26 years old. The participants were from diverse cultural, socioeconomic, and L1 backgrounds. They had exposure to English only through formal education. They used English to study courses at undergraduate level, and they could comprehend and carry out oral and written activities in English despite noticeable difficulties. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): Learning, Teaching, and Assessment (Council of Europe, 2020), the students' level of proficiency can fit into B2 (upper intermediate). The intact group was directly taken for the purpose of the research because the study employed a quasi-experimental study which relies on intact group randomization (Creswell, 2012).

Data collection instruments

Tests

In this study, oral presentation tests were the major data collection tools. Each participant was asked to make four consecutive pre-intervention oral presentations and four post-intervention oral presentations on academic issues. The pre-intervention oral presentations were aimed to examine the students' current level of oral proficiency. Similarly, post-intervention oral presentations were administered to determine the

effect of the intervention on the dependent variable. The oral presentations were informative and argumentative. The time allotted for each oral presentation was seven minutes. The topics of the oral presentations include: 'reasons for university students' drop out' and 'living in countryside versus living in urban areas', 'factors for students' failure in university entrance examination,' and 'controlling university students' way of life'. It was supposed that the contents of these topics of the oral presentations were familiar to students at university level. The contents of the pre- and post-intervention presentations were related but not identical topics. The interval between each pre-test is one week, which is deemed sufficient to establish a baseline measurement and assess any natural fluctuations or trends in the dependent variable. Similarly, the interval between the subsequent post-tests was one week, considered appropriate for tracking immediate changes. Moreover, there was a 6-week gap between the pre and post-intervention oral presentation test because the DDL intervention took 6 weeks, and the first post-intervention was administered immediately after the intervention. Prior to the intervention, the oral presentation tests were piloted to a pilot group to identify any discrepancies in the difficulty level and make possible improvements. Then, the reliability of the pre-test and post-test results was assessed using test-retest reliability. Accordingly, the Cronbach's alpha test of reliability results (for the pre-test, $\alpha = .901$, and for the post-test, $\alpha = .861$) showed that the tests were reliable.

The students' academic oral presentations were audio recorded during the test administration, and their scores were assessed using rubrics that focus on speaking performance. A rubric based on the descriptors of the speaking band of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (British Council, 2024) was used to assess the students' speaking performance. The speaking band descriptors include fluency and coherence, grammatical range and accuracy, lexical resources, and pronunciation. Two senior EFL university lecturers were given the recorded oral presentations of the students to score. Based on the speaking band descriptors, the two raters marked the students' oral presentations independently. Orientation was given to raters regarding the speaking band descriptors to help them develop a shared understanding of the scale. Additionally, inter-rater reliability was computed using Pearson's correlations (Pearson's, r), and the result was 0.75, indicating that it was reliable.

Post-instruction questionnaire

This study used a post-intervention perception questionnaire to gather learners' perceptions of the DDL approach in speaking skills instruction. The perception questionnaire was adapted from Yoon and Hirvela (2004), who assessed ESL student attitudes toward corpus use in L2 writing. The questionnaire for perception consists of 18 items that deal with the use of DDL in learning speaking, and the difficulties in the use of the DDL approach. The majority of the items (16 of 18) were positively worded. All the questionnaire items were closed-ended questions which could yield

quantitative data. After the questionnaire items were constructed, it was reviewed by two scholars who were specialized in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) for content validity. The reviewers basically agreed on the contents of most of the questionnaire items. Their degree of agreement was estimated to be 78%. Among 18 items, improvements were made on four of the questionnaire items. According to their feedback, two items were found unnecessary, left out, and replaced with relevant ones. The other two items were revised in a way that was simple to understand. In addition, the questionnaire's internal reliability was checked using the Cronbach's alpha test, and the result ($\alpha = .861$) showed that the perception questionnaire was reliable. The questionnaire items were presented as Likert scales, and participants were asked to indicate their levels of agreement on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represents strongly disagree and 5 represents strongly agree.

Students' reflective journals

Reflective journals were used to collect qualitative data about students' feelings, thoughts, and experiences on DDL instruction. The students' reflective journals were collected throughout the intervention, which lasted for six weeks, to obtain data on students' reactions while working on corpus-based DDL tasks. The participants (N=17) were requested to keep regular records of their daily experiences regarding the DDL intervention. This helped to understand the participants' perceptions of the DDL approach in their own descriptions. In addition, students' reflective journals provided a means to identify the hindering and contributing factors of the intervention process. Accordingly, a checklist containing six questions was designed to guide students' reflections on the effectiveness of the DDL intervention, major problems encountered during intervention, and ways to improve the intervention.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure started with selecting the conveniently available university (Mekdela Amba University) for the study and obtaining permission from the university through a formal letter approved by Bahir Dar University. This was followed by receiving participants' consent for participation. Once participants were given necessary orientation, pre-intervention oral presentations were administered to determine the learners' speaking skills/oral presentation skills before the intervention. Then, the intervention was given for six weeks. After the completion of the intervention, post-intervention oral presentations were administered to determine the effects of the DDL intervention on the learners' oral presentation skills. In addition, the study participants completed a post-intervention perception questionnaire immediately after the intervention. To substantiate the perception questionnaire, qualitative data were

collected via students' reflective journals. Learners recorded their daily experiences of learning speaking through the DDL approach. The English version was used for both the questionnaire and the reflective journals because the participants had different L1 backgrounds.

Corpus material design and intervention

The corpus selection was the first step that had been performed before the actual intervention began. A specialized corpus that focuses mainly on the academic genre is necessary to study academic spoken English. Accordingly, the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE, 2002) was selected for the study under investigation. This corpus contains a total of 152 speech events, containing examples of virtually every kind of speech event that occurs on a university campus. This wide variety of speeches was recorded and transcribed. It is a corpus composed entirely of academic spoken English, providing the best possible snapshot of the language used in a university context. The corpus was used as a source for two types of information: expression frequency and expression context. Frequency of the expressions was used to select common expressions as models for the students. The corpus also provided contextualized, authentic examples of the expressions used.

After selecting the corpus, the next step was identifying target expressions using the course material and other instructional materials. We collected a list of the formulaic academic expressions for greeting audiences, introducing oneself, introducing the topic, illustrating points, sequencing ideas, expressing opinions, signalling conclusions, summarizing, and thanking, which are commonly used in different sections of an academic oral presentation. Based on the lower cut-off limit for an expression to be considered frequent, which is 10 occurrences/million words, according to the guidelines proposed by Bardovi-Harlig et al. (2015) and Biber et al. (1999), the following frequency counts of the formulaic expressions were taken from the MICASE.

Table 1. Frequency count of formulaic sequences from MICASE

Focus	**Expressions (Occurrences pmw in MICASE)**
Greeting audience	Good morning ladies and gentlemen (14), Good afternoon (17)
Introducing oneself	My name is (18), Let me introduce myself (11), I would like to introduce myself (10)
Announcing the topic	I'm going to talk about (12+), I want to talk about (10)
Illustrating points	To illustrate this point (15), Let me give you an example (12), for example (381)
Sequencing ideas	First/ second/ then/ next I will explain about (11), let's now take a look at (10)
Expressing opinion	Personally, I think (11), I believe that (27)
Signalling conclusion	To conclude (16), as a final point (10+)
Summarizing a point	To summarize (12), Let me briefly summarize (11)
Thanking audience	Thank you (455), Thank you for your attention (10+)

After identifying the target expressions, contextualized examples from the MICASE corpus were extracted. Accordingly, examples of each of the target expressions were selected. The examples were in the form of a concordance line containing the target language feature in context. Moreover, the students were provided with extracts of model oral presentations. For example, the following concordance outputs and sample extracts, which indicate topic introduction expressions, were taken from the corpus.

Concordance line for 'I want to talk about'

Transcript ID: (click to view)	Left context	Match	Right context	View context
LES425SU093	inal as well. so it's kind of a combination of the two. are there any questions...? okay, then, what	i want to talk about	is um, a little bit about the processes of rivers, and understanding and understanding more about wh	view
LES355SU009	ts classical form, although this is not the immediate form that would underlie the Romance form that	i want to talk about	. uh this is the verb that meant to speak or to talk. alright originally you could tell fables to te	view

Sample extract for the topic introduction expression: 'what I want to talk about'

> *Okay, then,* ***what I want to talk about is*** *um, a little bit about the processes of rivers, and understanding more about what the purpose of a river is. Therefore, rivers are basically they're great, levellers that transport material from high in the landscape, and they wash it out to lower in the landscape. So they're moving this material from upward, down, to lower grounds and water basins and then...*

Transcript ID: LES425SU093

Once the language samples were selected and adapted for use in the classroom, the next step was to develop classroom materials and activities. Lessons that provide learners with input and production activities were designed. The lesson included both production and focused-noticing activities.

For the actual intervention, two kinds of activities were designed: consciousness-raising activities and production activities. First, based on the inputs from the corpus, consciousness-raising and noticing activities were designed. These activities contained concordance evidence and model oral presentation extracts from the MICASE corpus. The consciousness-raising activities were designed to make learners aware of the target formulaic expressions found in the authentic language use, and learners were asked to identify and analyse target formulaic sequences used in the spoken transcripts taken from the MICASE corpus. Moreover, they were told to notice the language features presented in the concordance lines and extracts of model oral presentations. For example, learners worked in groups of three to identify how the speakers in the model extracts used the formulaic expressions in the different stages of the oral presentations. Moreover, they were ordered to underline the formulaic expressions that the speaker uses in the different stages of the oral presentations. In another focused noticing activity, learners were given model oral presentation excerpts and concordance lines, which contained highlighted and bolded target formulaic expressions, engaged in noticing the target formulaic expressions to observe how native speakers use these target formulaic expressions in speaking. The consciousness-raising and focused noticing activities generally provided learners with an explicit knowledge of the target language features. Besides, these corpus-based activities could help learners understand essential language to improve their speaking skills/ oral presentations.

In the production activities, speaking activities were designed so that learners could have an opportunity to use knowledge of the target language features or declarative knowledge in communication through repeated practice. This section of the DDL lesson took relatively longer time. For example, in the first section of the DDL lesson, learners worked on practicing how to greet the audience; in the second section, they were asked to announce the oral presentation topics using appropriate formulaic expressions, and so on. For the first time, learners consciously retrieve formulaic sequences to produce speech or to make oral presentation because this is a rehearsal stage in which learners get the opportunity to practice presentation with their new formulaic sequences. However, through repeated exposure and use, learners became more familiar and gradually developed the ability to retrieve and produce them automatically. This leads them gradually to acquire procedural knowledge, possibly forming implicit knowledge.

The corpus-based teaching of target formulaic expressions in speaking instruction improved the sub skills of speaking. When learners are exposed to a wide repertoire of formulaic sequences through corpus-based noticing and production activities, the

formulaic sequences may help improve fluency in speaking because repeated exposure to formulaic sequences allows speakers to retrieve and produce language chunks more quickly, facilitating speech fluency (Wood, 2009). In the current intervention, learners were exposed to formulaic expressions via model oral presentation excerpts from the MICASE corpus, and they had repeated oral presentations using the target formulaic expressions, and this made students' academic presentations more fluent.

Moreover, corpus-based teaching of formulaic sequences introduces learners to a wide range of vocabulary items and other fixed expressions, increasing learners' vocabulary diversity. Studies also confirmed that corpus-based teaching of formulaic sequences positively affects the improvement of lexical resources, which is the main component of the speaking performance. Learners who were treated with DDL approach improved their lexical resources in spoken English (Pan, 2024; Tosun & Sofu, 2023).

Using corpus-informed spoken materials also helps learners to observe how grammar is used in context, allowing learners to observe and internalize correct grammar patterns. When learners are exposed to corpus-based formulaic sequences, they can access different grammatical structures that they may not be able to produce accurately on their own. Moreover, using prefabricated chunks of language reduced the rate of making mistakes that might occur when producing language word by word. Regarding this, Wood (2009) found that ESL learners who used formulaic sequences exhibited increased fluency and a wider range of grammatical structures.

Data analysis methods

In this study, quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques were employed to analyse the data obtained from the research participants. The one-way repeated-measures ANOVA was employed to determine whether there were any differences in the academic oral presentation scores of the students before and after the intervention. The repeated measures ANOVA used include descriptive statistics (mean scores of the participants' in the four pre-intervention oral presentations and four post-intervention oral presentations), and tests of within-subjects effects (assessing the statistical significance of the effect of the DDL approach across different time periods within the same participants). Additionally, a corpus-based analysis of participants' academic oral presentations was used to determine the frequencies of using the target formulaic sequences before and after the intervention. To do this, oral presentations were digitally recorded and then transcribed into word and text files for use in the data analysis. Then, the transcripts were scanned and converted into an electronic file, and then the Laurence Anthony's Ant Conc (Anthony, 2024) version 4.3.0 software was applied to obtain the frequencies of using the target formulaic sequences from the learners' oral presentations. Moreover, one-sample t-tests and descriptive statistics

were used to analyze the post-intervention perception questionnaire data. This statistical technique compares the sample's observed mean score to the population mean to analyze data from a single sample group. The statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to conduct the study's descriptive and inferential statistical operations. Furthermore, in this study, thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data that was gathered from student-reflective journals. This analysis involved identifying and reporting significant themes from the qualitative data. The steps followed in the thematic analysis include reading the students' reflective journals repeatedly to make sense of the data, taking significant quotes from the data, developing themes, and finally analysing and narrating the data.

Findings and discussion

Test results

Each participant delivered eight oral presentation tests (four pre-intervention presentations and four post-intervention presentations). These oral presentation tests were used to examine the effect of the data-driven learning approach on the academic oral presentations of EFL learners. The oral presentation test results analysed via one-way repeated measures ANOVA are presented.

The descriptive statistics

Table 2. Students' test scores before and after the intervention

	Mean	Std Devation	N
Pre-test 1	37.65	2.714	17
Pre-test 2	38.41	3.022	17
Pre-test 3	40.65	2.999	17
Pre-test 4	41.82	2.651	17
Post-test 1	46.12	2.956	17
Post-test 2	48.88	3.018	17
Post-test 3	51.29	2.640	17
Post-test 4	52.41	2.265	17

The descriptive statistics result in Table 2 shows the potential differences in the students' test scores for academic speaking skills before and after the intervention. Accordingly, the mean scores of the students' speaking test results before the intervention were (Pre-test-1, M = 37.65; Pre-test-2, M = 38.41; Pre-test-3, M = 40.65,

and Pre-test-4, M = 41.82). Likewise, the mean scores of the students' speaking skills performance post-test scores were (Post-test-1, M = 46.12; Post-test -2, M = 48.88; Post-test-3, M = 51.29, and Post-test-4, M= 52.41). From these test results, one can understand that the students' mean scores in the pre-tests were slightly increased from Pre-test 1 to Pre-test 4. Similarly, there is a slight increment in the students' mean scores from Post-test 1 to Post-test 4. However, there is a significant difference in the mean scores of the pre-tests and post-tests. In other words, the students' mean scores in the post-tests were higher than those of the pre-tests. It implies that the students' academic speaking skills have been improved after the intervention.

Tests of within-subjects effects

The test of within-subject effects assesses the statistical significance of the effect of the independent variable across different situations or time periods within the same subjects. In this study, the performance of the sample students on tests revealed a notable mean effect of data-driven instruction on their academic oral presentations ($F (3.908, 62.534) = 166.537$; $p < 0.05$). The obtained p-value signifies a statistically significant effect of data-driven instruction on the students' academic oral presentations. Additionally, the partial eta squared (ηp2) indicates the magnitude of the effect on the sample students' oral language production. As shown in Table 3, the intervention yielded an effect size of .912, signifying a large effect size greater than the usual cut-off point of .14.

Table 3. Tests of within-subjects effects

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Test	Sphericity Assumed	4019.228	7	574.175	166.537	.000	.912
	Greenhouse-Geisser	4019.228	3.908	1028.360	166.537	.000	.912
	Huynh-Feldt	4019.228	5.330	754.144	166.537	.000	.912
	Lower-bound	4019.228	1.000	4019.228	166.537	.000	.912
Error(Test)	Sphericity Assumed	386.147	112	3.448			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	386.147	62.534	6.175			
	Huynh-Feldt	386.147	85.272	4.528			
	Lower-bound	386.147	16.000	24.134			

Corpus analysis results

In addition to the above quantitative analysis, a corpus-based analysis of participants' academic oral presentations was used to determine the frequencies of using the target formulaic sequences.

This method enabled the researchers to note the effect of the DDL intervention on the participants' oral presentations by comparing their use of the target formulaic sequences before and after the implementation of the DDL intervention. Table 4 below presents the frequency of using the formulaic sequences.

Table 4. Frequency of using formulaic expressions in pre-tests and post-tests

Focus	**Formulaic sequences**	**Pre-tests**	**Post-tests**
Greeting audience	Good morning	6	14
	Good afternoon	12	18
Introducing oneself	My name is	10	10
	Let me introduce myself	5	7
	I would like to introduce myself	2	3
Announcing the topic	I am going to talk about	2	11
	I want to talk about	8	14
Illustrating points	To illustrate this point	-	3
	Let me give you an example	4	6
	For example	23	25
Opinion	Personally, I think	6	16
	I believe that	4	3
Conclusion	To conclude	3	17
	As a final point	-	4
Summary	To summarize	5	13
	Let me briefly summarize	1	9
Thanking	Thank you	14	27
	Thank you very much for your attention	8	29

Each study participant delivered four consecutive pre-intervention and four post-intervention oral presentations. This means that we have 136 oral presentations from the 17 participants. The above-mentioned frequencies of formulaic sequences are obtained by analysing the oral presentations delivered by the research participants. Based on the data, the participants used a total of 113 formulaic sequences in the pre-tests and 228 formulaic sequences in the post-tests. Formulaic sequences used for greeting, illustrating a point, and thanking the audience are the most used. The number of formulaic sequences in the post-tests is much greater than the formulaic sequences used in the pre-tests. This indicates that the quality of oral presentations after the intervention was better, as learning formulaic expressions contributed to improving students' speaking, particularly oral presentation (Dickinson, 2019).

Post-intervention questionnaire results

Table 5. Participants' perceptions of the DDL-based intervention

Items	Statements	Mean	SD
1	The DDL instruction was interesting	3.71	.686
2	The presentation of the DDL tasks and activities were good	3.59	.507
3	The DDL instruction helped you improve your oral presentation skills	3.88	.600
4	The DDL tasks were not difficult to complete	3.88	.485
5	If you attend a speaking lesson, you should always use the DDL units	3.53	.624
6	The concordance-based activities were not relevant to the course seminar on selected topics	2.47	.514
7	The concordance inputs helped you discover new patterns	3.59	.507
8	New vocabulary and formulaic expressions were taught in the DDL instruction.	3.65	.702
9	The DDL instruction helped you learn how to greet audiences in your oral presentation	3.59	.507
10	The DDL instructionw helped you learn how to introduce yourself and your topic of presentation	3.59	.507
11	The DDL units helped you learn how to express the purpose of your presentation	3.59	.507
12	The instruction in DDL helped you learn how to outline your points of presentation.	3.41	.507
13	The units helped you learn how to illustrate a point in a presentation	3.35	.493
14	The DDL based instructions were easy to follow	2.71	.470
15	The language points selected in the DDL instruction were useful	3.35	.493
16	The concordance lines were easy to understand	2.65	.493
17	The concordance lines were well chosen (e.g. vocabulary not too difficult)	2.35	.606
18	Noticing of language features in concordance lines was an interesting way of learning English	3.00	.500

According to Table 5, four of the items (items 6, 14, 16, and 17) have mean scores that are less than 3, and most of the items (items 14 out of 18) have mean scores that are greater than the average (i.e., 3). The mean score of item 6 is below the average, but it doesn't mean it should be interpreted negatively. Most participants did not agree with the item, as indicated by the statement, "The units are not relevant to the course seminar on selected topics." Consequently, this item suggests a positive interpretation, and the researchers see a lower mean score as positive. The lower mean scores of the other items (items 14, 16, and 17) are taken negatively, indicating that participants do not think the concordance lines and instructions are easy. This suggests that the participants faced difficulty comprehending the input presented in the concordance lines due to the difficulty of the vocabulary.

According to the responses of the participants of the study, the implementation of DDL activities in the classroom helped the students learn formulaic expressions that helped them use various sections of their academic oral presentations. In addition, most of the learners responded that the corpus helped them improve their academic oral presentation skills.

Generally, by examining the intervention and questionnaire findings, it was observed that students benefited from DDL-based activities and held positive attitudes towards using the corpus in the classroom. Thus, instructional materials for speaking instruction should be corpus-informed to include real-life practices and to teach learners actual language use. The findings of the study also align with the findings of Sahin Kizil and Savran (2018). These authors conducted a small-scale study on the integration of corpus into speaking instruction, specifically explored students' perceptions towards the instruction, and found that students benefited from concordance-based learning activities and held positive attitudes towards using it in learning speaking.

To determine whether the mean scores of the Likert scale were significantly greater than the expected mean, the researchers computed a one-sample t-test. The descriptive statistics reveal that the majority of the sample students' responses have mean scores that are above the average point, but they do not indicate whether these mean scores are significantly greater than the average value. Table 6 below presents a summary of the t-test results.

Table 6. The descriptive statistics of the students' questionnaire

One-Sample Statistics				
Perception score	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	17	3.3465	.48600	.11787

Table 6 depicts the mean and standard deviation scores of the participants were 3.3465 and 0.48600 respectively. The participants' mean score (i.e., 3.3465) was slightly greater than the population mean (i.e.,3.00). However, a one-sample t-test was carried out because the descriptive statistics results by themselves were insufficient to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the sample mean and the hypothesized mean, and the results are shown below.

Table 7. The one-sample t-test results for the student questionnaire

	Test Value = 3					
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Perception score	2.939	16	.010	.34647	.0966	.5964

As shown in Table 7, the perception score (t (16) = 2.939, p = 0.010, MD = 0.34647) was greater than the hypothesized mean score, and the difference was statistically significant (p = 0.010). Thus, it can be concluded that the participants' perceptions of learning speaking through the DDL-based approach were positive.

Data from student-reflective journals

The students' reflective journal results showed that students' academic oral presentation skills improved after implementing the data-driven instruction. The students reported that the method is helpful for their oral presentations. For instance, Student 4 said:

> Compared to the strategies I utilized previously, the DDL approach is beneficial for my academic oral presentation because it gives me the chance to observe crucial linguistic features for my presentation. I developed my presentation with the assistance of the sample oral presentation extracts that were given in class. The linguistic inputs in the form of concordance lines helped me enhance my presentation by providing me with significant expressions.

Furthermore, students in the reflective journal reported that they had problems in their academic presentations before the current intervention. They stated that their problems were due to a shortage of formulaic sequences used in different sections of oral presentations. To this end, the students reported that they liked the DDL approach because the data-driven instruction helped them to ease their oral presentation problems. One of the students put his view this way:

> Compared to the previous teachers' methods of teaching speaking skills through oral presentations, I felt comfortable with the data-driven instruction because this instruction provided me with authentic input and guided me to improve my academic oral presentation skills. I am now better at my oral presentation.

As the students stated in the student-reflective journal, the inputs given to them in the form of concordance lines and model extracts were helpful to know more about formulaic sequences that are used to make academic oral presentations. The students mainly stated that the noticing and consciousness-raising activities used in the corpus-driven instruction helped them identify target linguistic features used to improve their academic oral presentation skills. In the same vein, the learners stated that the concordance helped them improve their understanding of formulaic sequences, and they suggested that it was useful approach for learning formulaic sequences.

Regarding the difficulties faced during DDL-based instruction, one of the learners mentioned the following:

> At the very beginning of the intervention, I faced many challenges. For example, the unfamiliar vocabulary and the cut-off sentences in the concordance output challenged me to understand the target language feature. However, the teacher's mediation helped me to understand and enjoy the instruction.

In summary, the data obtained from the students' reflective journal showed that despite some difficulties, the DDL unit helped enhance students' academic oral presentation skills.

Discussion

This study aimed to examine the effect of data-driven instruction on EFL learners' speaking skills. The research findings confirmed that data-driven instruction significantly improved EFL learners' speaking skills. As indicated in the data analysis section, there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test results. The mean scores from the pre- and post-tests verified that the mean differences were statistically significant. The post-test scores were greater than the pre-test scores, implying that the intervention significantly affected the participants' academic oral presentations. Moreover, the tests of within subjects effects result ($F(3.908, 62.534) = 166.537$; $p < 0.05$) indicated that the DDL intervention brought a significant effect on learners' academic speaking skills.

The results obtained from this study agree with those of previous investigations. For example, a study conducted by Sahin Kizil and Savran (2018) proved that corpus-based activities were beneficial for EFL learners' speaking skills development and that there was a positive attitude toward web-based concordancing. In the same vein,

Pan (2024) confirmed that the DDL approach significantly improved the vocabulary production of EFL learners in their spoken English. The effectiveness of corpus-based instruction for improving pragmatic and speech act knowledge was also demonstrated by Sabzalipour et al. (2017) and Bardovi-Harlig et al. (2017), the latter of which revealed that both direct corpus searches and teacher-developed materials were effective.

Regarding the perception of participants, the descriptive statistics result showed that the participants' perception mean score (3.34) was greater than the hypothesized population mean score (3.00). Moreover, the one sample t-test result, (t (16) = 2.939, p = 0.010, MD = 0.34647) confirmed that participants had favourable perception towards learning speaking through DDL approach. In support of this, results obtained from reflective journals revealed that the DDL approach helped learners with their academic speaking skills. Participants noted that the corpus data provided for learners as input, and the concordance-based activities helped them to enhance their academic speaking. Participant clearly stated that the DDL intervention effectively taught the target language features. They noted that their academic speaking has improved and they became more aware of formulaic sequences for speaking. Moreover, they were pleased to be exposed directly to authentic real-life language or corpus data.

These findings obtained from the perception questionnaire were also consistent with previous studies. The results of the study by Geluso and Yamaguchi (2014); students believe DDL to be a useful and effective tool in the classroom for speaking skills instruction. As a result, these authors concluded that for speaking skill, which is an area in language in which learners have various types of difficulty, providing students with corpus-informed materials can improve their oral communication. In their studies, Lakew et al. (2021) and Birhan et al. (2021) also reported that students exhibiting significant achievements and showing a favourable attitude toward the instruction.

In addition to the speaking tests, learners in their reflective journals indicated that their lexical resources, which are basic speaking components, improved due to the paper-based DDL instruction. This, in turn, helped them develop their speaking skills. This finding is also consistent with the study of Lay and Yavuz (2020), who found that, at the B2 level, paper-based DDL instruction is more effective than conventional instruction using academic lexical bundles.

Collectively, the results of this study and previous studies indicate that data-driven learning can help EFL learners improve their speaking abilities, including in Ethiopia.

Conclusion and pedagogical implications

This study examines the effect of incorporating corpus-based DDL instruction into teaching academic speaking, particularly academic oral presentations. Teacher-prepared paper-based DDL instruction helps learners improve their academic oral presentation skills. The clear pedagogical implication of this study is that a careful combination of teacher-developed DDL materials for speaking instruction helps learners notice that formulaic sequences would be ideal. Moreover, teachers can supplement classroom teaching materials through the use of corpora containing language samples for speaking instruction. This study also shows that a corpus-informed approach has an important impact on learning spoken features of a language and micro skills of speaking.

The findings of this research also carry different implications. First, the findings suggest that a computer-aided DDL approach is beneficial for discovering formulaic sequences that can be used for speaking in natural contexts. Second, the findings indicate that English language teachers should consider empirical language data when preparing academic speaking materials to meet students' academic speaking needs instead of relying on teacher-made examples; teachers should depend on authentic examples and linguistic resources content.

Limitations

Despite the effective attempts to conduct this study, it was not without limitations. Activities and tasks for the intervention material were designed depending on an academic spoken English corpus (MICASE) because the problem under investigation is academic speaking English. However, taking speech transcripts did not contribute to improving participants' pronunciation, which is an important component of speaking. If an audio corpus had supplemented the preparation of activities and tasks, participants could have observed native speakers' pronunciations. Moreover, the application of DDL approach can be better if the combination of direct DDL and indirect DDL is applied. However, logistic constraints prevented the researchers from applying the direct approach. For this reason, the preparation of DDL activities becomes time-consuming and tiresome.

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Book review:

Building a Culture of Research in TESOL-Collaborations and Communities

Jessie Hutchison Curtis, Özgehan Uştuk (Eds.)

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The topics in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) have been undergoing significant changes over the years. It is particularly evident in recent years that themes of impact such as Teaching in the Post -Pandemic Era (Cahapay, 2020), Technology for Communication (Amalia, 2023), Creativity (Heidari, 2024), Formative Assessment (Zhengdong Gan, 2020), Translanguaging (García, et al, 2016), Mindfulness in EFL classes (Zeilhofer, 2023), Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (Thomas et al, 2020), among others have been readings that have gained eminence. Despite the relevance of these trending sources, there still has been the need to review, trace back, inquire, interpret, and research many broader trends in TESOL.

In accordance with this trend, there is now a need for a text that provides an opportunity to learn more about the realities of research in TESOL. Research in TESOL is an opportunity to explore, analyze, and find similarities/differences in learning/teaching processes in the ELT field, it also gives a chance to educators, students, and educational directors to provide contextual and critical insights of the realities of the field. This research dives beyond inquiries, going in depth into an analytical and critical focus of the many facets of language education. The book *Building a Culture of Research in TESOL* holds great value in these times, as it highlights research as a medium of dialogue, exploration of new horizons, and application of the inner daily thoughts that occur inside and outside of the EFL/ESL classrooms. The objectives of the book are to provide guidance to help educators incorporate research into teaching through mentorship and professional development and encourage collaboration between researchers, practitioners, and teachers. These goals are difficult tasks for the academic community that require heavy workloads with generally limited access to contextually relevant research.

This book is also complementary to other works in the discipline, particularly Farell's *Research on Reflective Practice in TESOL* (2017) book. Farrell uses a detailed analysis of recent research on encouraging reflective practices in TESOL and demonstrates how the embrace of research within TESOL has continually impacted the field. In highlighting how analytical methods have been embraced, the book does a thorough analysis of recent research on promoting reflective practices within TESOL which prompt researchers, academics, and educators to self-reflect and further shape the future of this field. This book is an innovative compilation of key research on philosophy and ideals, study tools, theory, and practice that offers a comprehensive picture of reflection.

It is important to state that this review focuses on providing a critical evaluation of the book *Building a Culture of Research in TESOL-Collaborations and Communities,* demonstrating its contribution to the field, its validity, and its relevance within specific contexts from daily experiences as an educator, student, and researcher in TESOL. Additionally, the book review also includes certain criticisms of the structure and

some of the authors' arguments. The review is intended for academics who are actively engaged in TESOL research, including educators, researchers, students, directors, and others within the field. Readers will find value in the book's insightful observations and contextually relevant examples. Furthermore, this offers readers a chance to identify the relevance of researching in TESOL by citing examples from the book as well as the reviewer's personal experiences; thus, being a way to prompt dialogues between colleges in various contexts of the field. The purpose of this book is to emphasize the value of collaborations and communities, exploring the realities of education, within the discipline of TESOL.

As an ELT educator, researcher, and reader, it is a pleasure to offer this review from the book *Building a Culture of Research in TESOL- Collaborations and Communities.* This book consists of tables, charts, names of ELT teachers from around the world, countries, quotes, and headlines, among other insightful elements which can help ELT researchers around the world to reflect, inquire and (co)learn about the dynamics of TESOL educational research, as well as its options and challenges in diverse real-world contexts.

Building a Culture of TESOL of Research in TESOL, edited by Curtis and Ustuk, from a natural and challenging overview encourages the reader to broadly reflect upon their research practices and analyze the ways of researching TESOL. The book is divided into two parts, each with diverse articles related to the book's core. The foreword, written by Barkhuizen, introduces three pivotal questions that are constantly placed into research practices: *Who, Where*, and *When*. These questions identify the subjects of research, the settings of inquiry, and the time of acquiring knowledge of the research. Barkhuizen creates a need to explore these elements of research to provide meaningful impacts within the ELT field.

The first part of the book, *What Does It Mean to Build a Culture of Research in TESOL?* is divided into four chapters.

The first chapter, "Fostering a Culture of Research in TESOL: A Review and a Look Ahead", provides a challenging yet fruitful insight to explore. Part of this chapter includes a review of studies done about TESOL between the years 2000 and 2022. Using combinations of these key terms, such as teacher-researcher, TESOL, professional development, teacher education, teacher-researcher partnerships, and lesson study, the authors conducted searches through Scopus and EBSCOhost databases, discovering 50 research publications. The findings in this study provide an opportunity to explore Conceptual Approaches for building a culture of research, highlighting aspects related to Research Engagement in several countries which emphasizes that Action Research (AR) studies impact research procedures. The impact is presented through a professional development component in six different countries, mainly from the Global South. Using this, the authors built their arguments from paradigms of Professional Identities and Purposes of Research, Building Collaborations in Research,

and Understanding Teachers' Beliefs about Research and The Culture of Research in TESOL Today and Tomorrow. This chapter provides a great opportunity to examine the complex ways that national and regional policy can both support and hinder research done by teachers.

The second chapter, titled "Towards Equitable, Bi-directional, and Reflexive Research Collaborations in English Language Teaching", discusses how research topics, questions, and design are decided, how human subjects are protected in a culturally appropriate manner, how access research venues are, and how participants are compensated and fostered. The chapter draws examples of these from research collaborations in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Myanmar. A notable focus of the chapter is the special emphasis placed upon Intentional and Transnational Collaborations. This emphasis allows the reader to identify ideas to find and use solid and pertinent research findings in English language classrooms and among international communities involved in language education. The authors propose a few tactics to find and foster collaborative partnerships, negotiate ethical dilemmas in international research, and participate in more equitable collaborative processes in intercultural collaborations.

In continuation of the book, the following chapter is called "Cultivating Co-learning in Participatory Design for Translanguaging Pedagogies". This chapter is based on a participatory design research (PDR) experiment conducted in a U.S. English-medium school. It also explores ideas of sustainable and equitable cooperation by examining how co-learning was present and encouraged in our research partnership and co-teaching. It is based on critical and feminist approaches of collaborative and design research. There are two main aspects to keep in mind during the reading of this chapter. The first is the research methodology employed in this chapter is called Ongoing Positionality. This concept reiterates that as we develop throughout time and, ideally becoming more aware of our identities, power dynamics, and the structural injustices present in educational settings, positionality is a concept that should be constantly studied. The second aspect is the recommendations for institutions and organizations looking to create and foster fair, longer-term teacher-researcher partnerships that promote fruitful co-learning.

"Maintaining Our Integrity as Teachers and Human Beings: How Dialogic Research Partnership Created a Humanizing Space for Early Career Teachers of Multilingual Students" is the final chapter of the first section. It is evident from reading this chapter that educators need assistance implementing equity-based alongside culturally sustainable practices. So, according to the chapter's findings, ECTs (Early Career Teachers) can benefit from spaces that allow them to ask insightful questions about their own work, feel comfortable sharing their doubts and obstacles, think deeply about humanizing pedagogy, exchange ideas and resources, remain connected to the university, have a voice, and feel like they are becoming independent.

This comes to the second part of the book, "How Are Collaborations and Communities Building a Culture of Research Globally?" which consists of five chapters.

The first chapter, "How Establishing an Inclusive TESOL Research Community in Chile", illustrates the creation and upholding grassroots, self-governed, non-profit TESOL research community of practice in Chile-Red Chilena de Investigación en English Language Teaching (RICELT). Something challenging to keep in mind in this chapter is the importance of identifying very local research assumptions as well as exploring practical and initiatives in research. In essence, the reader can dive right into the concept of establishing a research network. The RICELT network aims to create programs that (a) improve relationships between experienced researchers and student teachers performing research in Chile and (b) allow researchers with different backgrounds and affiliations an opportunity to share their work.

The next chapter, "Blurring Boundaries: A Longitudinal Teacher-Researcher Collaboration in South Korea", deals with the process of building researcher communities. The chapter examines teacher-research collaboration developed around a shared objective and by the development of group standards and ideals that united and inspired participants. The authors draw attention to how the community changed over time to better accept their constantly changing identities as teachers, researchers, and authors. It is also important to note that the chapter closes with a discussion of the difficulties faced during research and provides for creating TESOL research communities that support and encourage classroom teachers, particularly those who are new to teaching.

The third chapter of the second part is titled "Understanding the Teaching-Research Nexus in the Saudi EFL Context: Insights from an Intercultural Language Teaching Project" by Alharbi and Aslan. They focus on a project conducted at a public English Language Institute where two in-service teachers and a researcher worked together to modify and apply an Intercultural Communicative Language Teaching (ICLT) framework. A focus of this project highlighted by the authors include the institutional leaders' active support, organizational time devoted to research, financial assistance, and communication of expectations for teachers' research involvement as forms of institutional investment in research. This part of the book offers a critical insight into the reality of disparities in access to these resources for many TESOL researchers, making it difficult to conduct more research and reflections.

Continuing the reading, the chapter, "'We Are Learning So Much Together!': A Sustained Teaching-Research Collaboration", focuses on partnership to modify and instruct two online MA programs in TESOL for aspiring teachers. Their findings highlight the significance of creating and maintaining university-school research relationships as well as producing and disseminating knowledge in the context of a higher education climate that encourages collaborative action research between professors and K–12 teachers in the United States.

The final chapter of the book, "College Writing Teachers as Co researchers: Promoting Faculty Understanding of Multilingual Writers Through Collaborative Program-Wide Assessment", highlights the importance of localized teacher-researcher collaboration, the value of including the voices of TESOL practitioners, and the need to provide more opportunities for institutionally marginalized faculty members to access research collaborations as a means of professional development, and to challenge and enhance research approaches to student learning. These findings are based on polyvocal reflections from co-researchers in a college writing program assessment project.

The book concludes with "Afterword: Collaborative Turns in Building a Research Culture", written by Anne Burns. In this edition, she is invited to act as a discussant for the book's earlier chapters. Since the concepts of community and collaboration in research have long been important to her interests and goals for TESOL due to her extensive work over the past 25 years in relation to practitioner action research, she enthusiastically accepted the editors' invitation. She offered advice for future directions in this afterward in addition to synthesizing some of the deeper ideas about the relevance of research communities of practices, the action research as a key process in Education and new challenges for research educators at TESOL lands, from the chapters in this book.

One final and relevant aspect to mention regarding an area to improve in this book consists of incorporating the terminology that is used in each of the chapters. A glossary may be included in the book to help readers, particularly novel teachers/researchers, follow the reading and access all the research findings, even if many EFL teachers struggle to understand the different concepts that are presented. Aside from that, I am pleased to have finished reading this outstanding book, which showcases research applications both inside and outside of the classroom, explores government policies in educational research, offers strategies for research communities of practice, and highlights the significance of the subject who is involved in these lands: the researcher. A warm invitation is extended to all who wish to learn next/for/with the entire educational community and want to immerse themselves in research, since this formidable book B*uilding a Culture of Research in TESOL-Collaborations and Communities* is a must-read for the TESOL community.

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c. Placing reference citations within the text (and not as a footnote).
d. Spacing in-text references according to the example: (Johnson, 2003).
e. Keeping direct quotations to a minimum. When included, following the APA guidelines for short quotations (less than 40 words, identify the quotation with quotation marks as part of the main text format, and include the page number of the source), and long quotations (more than 40 words, use block paragraph format for the quotation and include the page number of the source).
f. Placing punctuation *within* quotation marks, according to the example: ...word."
g. Using the 12 point Times New Roman font, for readability.
h. Double-spacing the entire text.
i. Utilizing commas before the word *and* or *or* in a series of three or more items.
j. Using digits (e.g., 10; 78; 394) only for numbers 10 and above. Other numbers under 10 may be written out (e.g., four, nine, seven).
k. Differentiating in the format used with a *table* and a *figure* in the graphics which accompany one's article.
l. Implementing the editorial "we" or "I" (with the active voice), which is perfectly acceptable nowadays, and even preferred over the use of the passive voice.
m. Using the five levels of APA heading, (which are not to be numbered).

Although we encourage authors to use the reference lists of previously published GiST Journal articles as a model, seven general examples follow. Please notice that each reference includes the authors name, date of publication, title of the work, and publication data.

Martínez, A. A., Jones, B. B., & Schmidt, C. C. (1997). Título de artículo en español [Title of article translated into English]. *Name of Journal*, *8*(3), 492-518.

Chang, F. F., & Donovan, P. P. (Eds.). (1985). *Title of work*. Location: Publisher.

Martínez, A. A. (2009). Title of chapter. In E. E. Godoy (Ed.), *Title of book* (pp. xx-xx). Location: Publisher.

Martínez, A. A., & Jones, B. B. (2010). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, 24, pp. xx-xx. doi:xx.xxxxxxxxxx

Martínez, A. A., & Jones, B. B. (2010). Title of article. *Title of Periodical*, 24, pp. xx-xx. Retrieved from http://name.of.website

Chang, F. F (2000, July). *Title of paper or poster*. Paper or poster session presented at the meeting of Organization Name, Location.

Martínez, A. A. (2002, October 12). Title of article. *Name of Newspaper*, pp. B2, B6.

Graphic Aides. Original tables, figures, photographs, graphics, or other digital files which are necessary for comprehension are encouraged. Graphics should be original and may not be reproduced from copyrighted material. Graphics may be included in the text of the article in the place where they should appear. All figures and tables should be black and white.

Title. The article's title should be brief and allow readers to identify the topic and content easily.

Origin of the Article. It is necessary to specify if the article is the result of research, a graduation thesis, an essay, or critique. In the case of it being a product of a research project, the author should indicate the project title, the financing source, sponsoring institution, and project phase.

Abstract. All abstracts should be in English and in Spanish. The abstract should include the scope and intention of the paper, with a concise description of the methodology, supporting theories, general results, and main conclusions.

Keywords. There is a maximum of seven keywords, which must be presented in English as well as Spanish.

Types of Articles

1. **Scientific or technological research article:** A document which presents in detail the original results of a research project. The structure generally contains seven important sections: and abstract, an introduction, a review of the literature, the methodology, the outcomes, the conclusions, and a reference list.
2. **Reflective article:** A document which presents in detail the results of a research project from the analytical, interpretive, or critical perspective of the author, on a specific topic, with clear references to the original sources.
3. **Review Article:** A document which is the result of research in which the results of certain research projects which have or have not been published are analyzed, systematized, and integrated together with the objective of demonstrating advances and developmental tendencies. This type of manuscript is characterized by its presentation of a careful bibliographic summary of at least 50 references.

Peer Review Process

As GIST is a bi-annual publication, the Editorial Committee publishes two calls for papers, in approximately April and November of each year. GIST then receives submissions until the published deadline, and carries out the following process with each submission:

The Editor carries out a preliminary evaluation before assigning peer reviewers, with the purpose of verifying that the article complies with the established criteria and guidelines for presentation of articles. This revision is usually completed within a three-week period.

In the case of articles that do not comply with the standards for presentation, according to the specifications of the journal, the Editor requests that the authors adjust the article in order to prepare it to be reviewed by peer reviewers. Authors are given a two-week period to make the requested modifications, and re-send the manuscript again to the Editor for consideration. Once the Editor has verified that the article fits the standards of presentation and specifications of the journal, the process of peer review may begin.

The Editor informs authors of the decision to submit the article to peer review or not within one month.

Articles that fulfill the presentation requirements are submitted to anonymous, double-blind peer review by experts in the field. This means that authors do not know the identity of the reviewers, and vice versa.

The Editor, with the help of members of the Editorial Committee, assigns peer reviewers according to the specific topic of each article. The Editor then invites peers to conduct the review, and once these individuals accept, they are informed as to the procedure for accessing articles in the OJS. In this same message, reviewers are informed of the expected time period and proposed deadline for the review, approximately one month after a reviewer agrees to conduct the evaluation. It is the hope to always conduct the peer reviews in a timely fashion; nevertheless, adjustments may be made to ensure reviewers' participation.

In order to carry out the evaluation, peer reviewers complete the evaluation form, and in this way, recommend the article for publication or not as well as specifications for revision, if this is recommended. The results of this evaluation serve as input for the Editor and Editorial Committee to decide if the article is publishable, publishable with minor adjustments, publishable with major adjustments, or not publishable.

Once the evaluation is complete, the Editor communicates with the author(s) and informs them of the decision that has been made, indicating whether or not the article will continue in the revision process. Authors have a one-month period to adjust the article and send the revision once again to the Editor. The Editor then reviews the article and reaches the final decision as to whether the revised version will be accepted for publication, bearing in mind its revision according to the input received from the peer reviewers, and the Editor's own independent criteria.

The Editorial Committee will decide on the publication of an article according to the following criteria: the fulfillment of the above stated conditions, methodological and conceptual rigor, originality, scientific quality, and relevance.

If the article is accepted for publication, the Editor proceeds with the editing and proofreading process. Once the final version of the article is completed, it is sent to the author for final approval, and is then forwarded to the design team for its preparation.

Relinquishing of Rights and Distribution of Published Material

The publication of articles in GIST implies that authors relinquish all rights to the article and its content. Authors also authorize GIST to promote and distribute the article via the means it deems appropriate, be it in print or electronically. For this purpose, authors should sign and send both the letter of relinquishment, and the declaration of conflict of interest upon submission of the article. These formats are available in the OJS platform of the Journal.

Code of Ethics and Good Practices

The Editorial Committee of GiST Education and Learning Research Journal, as part of its commitment to the scientific community, strives to guarantee the ethics and quality of its articles. The publication takes the code of conduct and good practice of the Committee of Ethics in Publications (COPE) as its point of reference, which defines standards for editors of scientific journals, as well as the legal and ethical standards of the American Psychological Association (APA) in the sixth edition of its Style Manual.

All parties involved in the publication of the journal (Editor, Committees, Authors, and Peer Reviewers) must accept and adhere to the ethical guidelines and principles outlined here.

Editor Obligations and General Responsibilities

The Editor of the journal is responsible for ensuring strict compliance with the policies and principles of the journal. Specifically, the Editor is expected to act in an ethical manner in the following aspects:

Decision making. The Editor guides all decisions regarding articles submitted and published according to verifiable criteria of impartiality and fairness, taking into consideration the primary objectives of the journal.

The works submitted are evaluated objectively, based solely on the scientific merit of their content, without discrimination in regards to race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnic background, nationality or political persuasion.

Confidentiality. The Editor is committed to the principle of confidentiality and anonymity in communications between Editor and Authors, and Editor and Peer Evaluators. The Editor shall not disclose information related to the article or its process with third parties or colleagues not related to the journal, except in cases when

an expert opinion is required, and in which the express permission for this purpose is granted by the author(s). The Editor shall not use the results of research of articles not accepted for publication for his or her own benefit or that of others, except with express permission from the author(s).

Communication. The Editor shall receive and respond to complaints, petitions, and comments in a reasonable amount of time. This also applies to the publication of corrections or modifications stemming from the editing process of published articles.

Compliance. The Editor strives to comply with the editorial policies of the Journal, and the publication of each online and print issue according to its established publication schedule.

In the same fashion, to:

- Consult the opinion of the members of the Editorial Board and Committee.
- Generate initiatives of support and constantly improve editorial practices.
- Support initiatives to educate researchers on issues of publication ethics and other ethical aspects of the journal.
- Take responsibility for the process of all articles submitted to the Journal, and develop mechanisms of confidentiality and peer evaluation up to the point of publication or rejection by the journal.

Other principles to follow include:

Peer Review Process and Editorial Decisions. The decision to publish or not shall be established via the process of peer evaluation, according to the "double blind" method in order to guarantee that the evaluation process that is free of conflict of interest between the parties. This rigorous procedure allows peer reviewers to value the technical quality, originality, and scientific contribution of the articles, among other aspects, and at the same time provides authors with the means to improve the article. For this revision process, a sufficient number of peer reviewers will be provided, selected from qualified area experts, with the intention of allowing for a more critical, expert, and objective editorial decision- making process.

Editing and Publication Schedule. The Editor provides for the fulfillment of the editing and publication schedule of articles accepted for publication. Upon the publication of each issue, the Editor and the editorial team accept responsibility for the promotion and distribution of the journal to its readers, subscribers, authors, peer reviewers, and other organizations with whom the institution holds agreements, as well as the data bases and national and international indexing services.

General Editor Obligations and Responsibilities

Authors must present their articles in the link indicated on the OJS-web page, according to the guidelines for the presentation of articles established by the journal. Authors are responsible for the ideas expressed in the articles, and for the ethical appropriateness.

Originality, plagiarism and exclusivity. Authors must explicitly state that the article is original in its creation, and that every effort has been taken to respect the intellectual

property of those third parties cited within. Articles must not be reprints, nor published in other journals. Further, authors must declare that the findings are original in nature, that no plagiarism exists, nor distortion or manipulation of the facts.

Exclusivity. Articles submitted to the journal must not be simultaneously submitted to other publications.

Citations and references. Authors must ensure that they have received express permission for the use of material they do not own, including the reproduction of charts, graphs, maps, diagrams, photographs, etc. All sources must be cited appropriately, with complete references provided.

Authorship. Articles with more than one author should order authors' names in hierarchical fashion, indicating by this the degree of function, responsibility, and contribution to the article. By the same token, mention must be made to any individuals who have made significant scientific or intellectual contributions to the research, composition, and editing of the article.

Responsibility. All authors submitting articles must assume full responsibility for their work, and ensure that it presents an exhaustive review and discussion of the most recent and relevant literature.

Research ethics. Research studies must use methodology that ensures that subjects are treated with respect and dignity. In addition to those principles of the code of conduct of the American Psychological Association (APA), GIST highlights the following: discussion of the limitations of confidentiality and the safekeeping of the same, minimization of the intrusion and invasiveness in individuals' privacy, conservation of data and informed consent to research, record, or film. Further, the names of institutions or individuals should be avoided, even if the author has gained permission for their use. If their mention is considered necessary, the author must submit signed authorization for their inclusion. The names of the researchers and participants shall likewise be omitted from the article. It is suggested that authors use pseudonyms, for example in case studies.

Conflict of interest. The Editor shall not consider articles that possibly represent a real or potential conflict of interest, resulting from financial or other relationships of competition or collaboration between authors, companies, or institutions mentioned in the article.

Errors in articles published. Any error or imprecision shall be communicated by the editorial team, and the necessary corrections in the online version of the article made.

Obligations and General Responsibilities of Peer Reviewers:

In the revision process, peer reviewers shall adhere to the following principles:

Confidentiality. Peer reviewers shall not share any information with third parties related to the article or its publication process. In such case that an external opinion may be necessary, reviewers shall seek express written authorization from the Editor in Chief, explaining the reasons. By the same token, reviewers shall not use the content of non-published articles for their own benefit or that of others, except with the

express authorization of the authors. The violation of the principle of confidentiality constitutes bad practice by the reviewers.

Contribution to quality. Individuals who commit to evaluating articles submitted to the Journal shall carry out a critical revision, without bias, using clear, non-offensive language, with the intention of guaranteeing scientific and literary quality, according to the area of expertise.

Time management. Although the Journal has a maximum time allotted for the revision process, articles should be evaluated as soon as possible in the hopes of optimizing the revision and editing process. At the same time, peer reviewers who feel that they are unable to fulfill their function as evaluators, either because of lack of expertise, time or possible conflict of interest, shall communicate this immediately to the Editor or editorial team through regular channels.

Detection of errors and bad editorial practices. Reviewers shall pay particular attention to gaps in references to literature or authors that they feel need to be included. At the same time, if in the process of revision, it is possible to detect bad practices on the part of authors, peer reviewers are under the obligation to inform the Editor so that he or she may proceed in accordance with the ethical principles of the journal.

Additional Information

Compensation. The author will receive three copies of the edition in which his/her article shall appear.

Concerns. Communicate with the Editor through e-mail or by telephone, please. Institución Universitaria Colombo Americana, International: (57-1) 281-1777 ext. 1296; In Colombia: (05-1) 281-1777 ext.1296

Waiver. Every article shall be subject to the review of the Editorial Committee. The Editor reserves the right to make formal modifications to articles through the editing process.

Editorial Norms. The contents of the articles are the exclusive responsibility of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of GiST or ÚNICA. Any article published in GiST may be quoted as long as the source is clearly referenced.

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Reviewers

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