“Omani youth must demonstrate a serious desire to work and make use of the many opportunities which are open to them. The country is in serious need of their efforts in innumerable fields.”

18/11/1992
From the Dean

It gives me immense pleasure to congratulate the editorial team of the Oman Journal of ELT. More so for remaining undeterred and carrying on with the process of publishing this latest volume of the journal. The journal is published with a variety of articles that cover different domains of ELT. More importantly, the articles mirror the hard work, sincerity and academic soundness of its contributors. I am sure the research articles in the journal would invoke critical thinking and appeal to the faculty of reason, especially in the young readers. I hope OJELT will become a leading platform for sharing research findings in the area of ELT and Education for the young and professional researchers alike. I look forward to seeing many more improved volumes of the Journal in future.

Dr. Azzah Al-Maskari
Amidst disruption in educational systems and closure of schools due to the pandemic, the launch of fifth volume of OJELT underscores continuity of learning and research in varied modes. This continuity is not just run-of-the-mill but marked by a host of innovative practices employed in the education sector. These practices, supported by digital tools, have not only changed our learning landscapes but also provided us with more scope for research and development in education. The OJELT team, like all other academic endeavors in the face of the pandemic, continues to propel research to newer heights.

This issue consists of five research papers, which are from different disciplines. The first paper entitled “Teaching English Literature for English Proficiency” investigates whether or not teaching literature to English major students studying at Sultan Qaboos University has an effect on their language proficiency. The next paper entitled “Side-talking in Omani EFL Classrooms” examines the reasons behind side-talking during classes and provides possible solutions to curb it. The third paper entitled “The Impact of Culturally Familiar Supplementary Reader on L3 Students of Ibra College of Technology: A Pilot Study” explores the impact of locally-relevant and culturally-familiar reading texts in enhancing interest and motivation among the L3 students of Ibra College of Technology who study English as a foreign language. The fourth paper entitled “Using Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) with Multimedia Instructional Approach in Teaching English Language” highlights the importance and efficacy of integrating technology in teaching English. The last paper entitled “Thousand Faces of Night: A Journey of Transformation in Indian Perspective” depicts different faces of women’s suffering, position of women in the traditional Indian society and the emergence of new women amidst traditional setting.

We would like to thank all the contributors and the ICT administration for their continuous support. We are now welcoming submissions for the next issue.
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Teaching English Literature for English Proficiency

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Abstract

This research investigates whether teaching literature to SQU English students has an effect on their language proficiency or not. It seeks to demonstrate how literature helps them not only improve their level of English proficiency, but also provides them with the opportunity to understand different facets of life. Initially, the paper introduces the topic, providing much information about its position in the field of language learning. Then, it focuses on the different areas literature could have an effect on as long as English is concerned, such as literature's role in developing students' communicative skills, giving them an insight into other cultures, and illuminating life related issues. The paper presents and analyzes the data obtained through a questionnaire distributed to a total of 60 SQU male and female students and two interviews done with two instructors from the English Department at SQU. The findings show that literature is educationally significant and students are able to improve their English level through the exposure to literary texts.

Keywords: literature, literary genres, SQU, literature students, language skills, education.

Introduction:

Literature is not really a new term that literature student cannot define, yet it might not be taken into account or even viewed as being an important tool of learning English. Nevertheless, Obediat (as cited in Keshavarzi, 2012, p.558) states "Literature helps students acquire a native-like competence in English, express their ideas in good English." It is, in fact, a good opportunity for students to seize in order to develop their English level brilliantly and acquire knowledge on different facets. The question whether teaching literature to SQU English students affects their language proficiency looms again and is not really easy to get an answer for.
Nonetheless, this research seeks to study the influence of literature on students learning process, focusing on a set of specific points.

Learning English effectively relies on the sorts of subjects taught to students as well as the literary texts teachers select for them. Teachers and instructors in general are aware of the educational goals and the fields they should focus on to help their students improve their English level. Consequently, Pinter (as cited in Babaee & Yahya, 2014, p. 80) finds "The language instructors are undeniably a crucial factor in language education for learners." To put that in different words, teachers spare no effort to assist their students become knowledgeable in their learning experience and even in their daily lives. In order to fulfill all of these aims, many of them place much emphasis on the inclusion of literature in language curricula. On the other hand, there is a negative view in relation to the use of literature in language teaching since "Literature is often remote from learners, whether historically, geographically, socially, culturally or linguistically" (Sell, 2005, p.86). Supporting that, a research by Tehan, Yuksel and Inan (2015) equally finds that even the teachers cannot make use of the literary texts in the teaching process due to the linguistic uneasiness and the need of the exposure to the culture of the language.

Since literature has been regarded as being a vital and facilitative vehicle to learn the language through, there are several good reasons to justify its position in developing the language skills. McKay (as cited in Tehan et al., 2015, p.46) states "Literature presents language in discourse." For example, according to Babaee & Yahya (2014), students are exposed to authentic texts written in good English which means that they come across different sentence structures and the basic application of grammatical rules. In addition, literary texts address universal issues and themes which illuminate humans' perceptions, ideas and experiences. A research by Labo-Popoola (2010) explains that literature mirrors the cultures of the native speakers, so that learners get to know the experiences they have gone through and, accordingly, have a better understanding of their attitudes. The interest towards teaching literature is based on its potential to give students motivation (Sell, 2005). In other words, the presence of enthusiasm is an integral part of language enrichment because "Literature has the capacity to create authentic conditions for the learners to practice and learn a foreign language with motivation" (Babaee & Yahya, 2014,
That is, students will enjoy reading the literary genres and will, consequently, be more able to engage with the emotional and thematic impacts through which they get familiarized with the different figures of speech.

"Literature's major role is to stimulate learners' imagination – both literary and creative" (Al Mahrooqi & Roscoe, 2012, p.13). It, in fact, widens their ability to critique and respond to literary texts through sharing their feelings and attitudes. Parallel to this, Keshavarzi (2012) observes that literature takes them into the world of visualizing the events happening in a story or a play which will stimulate their engagement with them in order to successfully interpret their central conflicts and understand characters' attitudes and reactions.

One major factor that makes literature educationally insignificant is the lack of students' interest towards it. In many cases, this stems from the fact that teachers do not select appealing materials that attract students' attention. Labo-Popoola (2010, p.55) stresses that stating, "If difficult authors are chosen, students will not enjoy reading their works." As a result, they definitely will not be able to comprehend the main ideas. In the same manner, this disallows them to think about these texts critically and learn the language efficiently. Through difficult texts, they become unable to understand the structural forms of sentences and the grammar as well. Therefore, literary texts have to be chosen carefully, so that teaching and learning them will help teachers and students fulfill the pedagogical goals greatly.

A lot of opponents might wonder how literature paves the way for learning English language skills. Babaee and Yahya (2014, p.80) come up with a good answer in which they say, "Literature is composed of language and it provides space for the application of language." As an illustration, students are exposed to different literary texts through which their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills improve. The readings and materials assigned to students make them good readers. Through these readings, they come across a lot of vocabulary which helps them understand how it is used in the context. In addition to that, students can also learn how to skim and scan texts and train themselves to guess the meanings of words from the context. Interestingly, Babaee and Yahya (2014) explain that students are also given the opportunity to develop their writing skills. Literature deals
with interesting themes and controversial topics on which students are required to write a critical and analytical essay where they can express their ideas creatively and independently. Equally, Atherton et al. (2013, p.172) state "Trough writing, students can both explore their own and others' responses to literature, and learn what it feels like to be a writer, making the kinds of choices made by the writers they are studying." Not only this, but literature helps them write in a formal style and use interesting words most students would rarely think of.

A number of researchers place much emphasis on literature's role in developing learners' speaking skills (Al Mahrooqi & Roscoe, 2012, Babaee & Yahya, 2014, Kashavarzi, 2012). For example, students are assigned to do presentations where they discuss and share their ideas with the rest of the class. They also get into groups where they find themselves among different points of view to comment on. Supporting that, McGee (as cited in Kashavarzi, 2012) finds that a group discussion enables students to come across different opinions and come up with ideas that one student would not think about alone. And this, as a result, does not only provide them with the chance to verbalize their own thoughts, but also to criticize others' ideas. These discussions, at the same time, develop their listening skills through training themselves to focus on what is being said about that particular topic. In support of that, Al Mahrooqi and Roscoe (2012, p. 252) find "Effective listening results in effective speaking as students acquire traits from their teacher who is initially the role model."

Keshavarzi (2012, p.556) mentions "Literature helps in incorporation of linguistic competence into communicative competence by putting language into use in different social situations." More clearly, literature deals with social issues which encourage students to initiate and engage in student-teacher conversations in which everyone participates and communicates with the rest freely. Since there is a mutual sharing of ideas and opinions, this boosts their confidence and provides them with the ability to interact with others and discuss these issues in their own communities. Furthermore, Al Mahrooqi and Roscoe (2012, p. 87) provide a further illustration stating, "Students learn how to introduce themselves and how to appropriately use expressions and idioms of the target language." In this case, their communicative competence helps them practice the language in better ways.
As Labo-Popoola (2010, p. 52) puts it, "Literature helps learners develop their understanding of other cultures, make them aware of the differences in cultures as well as enable them tolerate and understand other peoples' cultures." When exposed to literary texts, learners improve their perceptions of other societies including their traditions, experiences and history. Large numbers of authors write their works out of personal experiences intending to reveal their cultures to the world. This, in fact, helps learners have a better understanding of these cultures and appreciate their achievements as well. In the same manner, Keshavarzi (2012, p. 555) verifies that "Narrations are often built upon the perspective of one main character who is experiencing the pains of growing up." In other words, literature explores the situations through which learners understand peoples' feelings and sympathize with them.

Since literature reveals the lives of English speaking people, it deals with real life issues and concerns and, therefore, "The language employed in literature is the language of its audience, so it cannot be inaccurate" (Keshavarzi, 2012, p. 554). Literary texts give accounts of authentic disastrous events that took place thousands of years ago mirroring human problems. By assuming that people might encounter similar incidents, learners will know how to deal with such issues properly. According to Saricoban (2004), for instance, drama makes it possible for students to comprehend life situations as it is a reflection of human experiences (as cited in Babaee & Yahya, 2014, p. 83). A similar view is echoed by Sell (2005, p. 7) when he adds "Literature's contents may well be truer to life and more relevant to learners than the typical textbook topics."

Literature is the real means through which language skills are practiced. It is thought of to be largely beneficial in teaching and learning the language where learners are equipped with all of the opportunities to become native-like speakers. In this chapter, literature is not only considered as an effective tool of learning the language skills, but also as a mirror of life-related problems. Literature's role in the exposure to other cultures and the development of learners' communicative skills is considered, too.

**Methodology**

The main focus of this research is to find out whether teaching literature to English students affects their language proficiency. Here, I aspire to study
the common assumptions English students have about literature in general and its position in learning the language. Basically, this chapter gives an account of the methods used to collect the data through. It is composed of three major sections: participants, data collection instruments, and eventually the challenges.

Through distributing a questionnaire, a total of 60 SQU English student from the College of Arts and the College of Education will contribute to this study. This number will again be divided into 30 questionnaires given to literature male and female students, and the 30 remaining ones will be distributed among Education students. In case something goes wrong, I have extended the number of the questionnaires to around 80 considering that some of the questions will be left unanswered or students might even not respond to the whole questionnaires at all. Because the topic dealt with in this research is important in the field of language learning, this method targets only students because it is the easiest and fastest way to get as many responses from them as possible. Not only this, but students feel more comfortable with questionnaires rather than any other instruments.

The interviews, which will basically be two in number, are the second data collection instrument. The target sample of them is only two literature professors from SQU English department.

Findings:

Relating the findings to my hypotheses, I observe that the findings do not fully meet with my expectations. They indicate that a large number of students have a positive attitude towards literature. Basically, these findings are divided into several sections according to the research sub-topics and under each section are the findings of the questionnaire and the interviews.

Of all the parts of the questionnaire, the following figure presents the findings of statement 2 only, while the findings of the statements 1, 8, 11, and 12 are available in the appendix (pp.29-31) and will be referred to in the analysis section. The findings of statement2 are presented in the following figure:
The findings here are dissimilar to the hypotheses because all students, both male and female, from both colleges strongly agree that literature improves their language. Despite that, the number of the female students in both colleges is higher than the number of the male students. Equally, the following figure presents the number of the students who strongly agree with literature's role in developing the writing, reading, and speaking skills (the listening skill is not included here):
It shows that students from both colleges strongly agree with the effectiveness of literature on developing their language skills. This is again different from the hypotheses, but similar to what many researchers have found regarding this as mentioned in the literature review. In addition, when it comes to the second open-ended question, we find that the number of students who have been able to develop their language skills is 47 out of 60 (see figure 14 in the appendix p. 31), while the rest have had difficulties developing their English for reasons similar to the ones mentioned in the hypotheses and the literature review.

As for the interviews, both professors have almost similar responses saying that literature is educationally beneficial. P1 says that teachers' role is to teach students the language properly and literature enables them to do so. She also states, "Literature makes is possible for students to understand how language is applied in the literary texts which develop students' reading and writing skills." In the same manner, p2 finds that studying literature is very important for language development saying that reading and writing skills are directly influenced, while speaking and listening skills may be indirectly influenced. More than that, she mentions that literature helps students not only know the meaning of words in a literary text, but also the meaning behind these words.
In the questionnaire’s second section of part one, the findings are shown based on the three following statements:

Figure 3

![Bar chart showing the distribution of responses among different student groups. The chart includes bars for strongly agree, agree, neutral, and disagree categories. The chart shows that the majority of Education female students strongly agree, while Arts male students have the least number of strongly agree responses.]

Similar to the literature review, the findings show that the students agree on this statement and they believe that literature is a mirror that illuminates certain ideas about life. However, the number of Art students is higher than the number of Education students. Equally, both interviewees believe that literature deals with different issues concerning humanity either at a personal or social level.
The findings are similar to the literature review. However, the figure shows that the number of students from the College of Arts who agree with the statement is higher than the number of students from the College of Education. Also, P1 believes that literature carries cultural values, knowledge and information about other countries. Equally, P2 states that every time students read on literature, they become in contact with other cultures including their thoughts and values.

Similar to the literature review, the following figure finds that almost most of the students from both colleges strongly agree with literature's role in developing their communicative skills. However, students from the College of Arts perceive more improvement than Education students.
As for the interviewees, P1 finds "Part of literature is dialogues where students learn how to speak and communicate with others." Equally, P2 says that communicative skills can be influenced depending how literature courses are taught and whether teachers encourage their students to discuss ideas.
Discussion:

The previous section presents the findings of the questionnaires and interviews. Here, these findings will be analyzed on the basis of the researcher's hypotheses and the sub topics in the literature review.

Babaee and Yahya (2014, p.80) find "Literature is composed of language and it provides space for the application of language." Though my hypotheses regarding students' attitudes towards literature do not fully match with the actual findings of the research, most of the participants hold positive attitudes towards it and agree with most of the statements related to language skills development. As for the literature review, the results are also similar to what researchers have found in this field. However, those who have perceived no improvement in their language skills have negative attitudes which are similar to hypotheses and the second sub-topic of the literature review which discusses the cases in which literature is educationally ineffective. Based on the results, literature has educationally helped students and their language skills have improved since they started taking literature courses from the department. As already mentioned in the first two chapters, students' positive attitudes can be explained for many reasons. Teachers' interest in what they are teaching affects the level of students' inspiration towards the courses they study. That is, if the teaching methods used to explain the material attract their attention, they are more likely to be interested in what they are being exposed to. Labo-Popoola (2010, p.55) states "If difficult authors are chosen, students will not enjoy reading their works." Because the findings as in figure1show that most students have been able to develop their language skills, this is attributed to the sorts of texts selected for them. Many participants also provide good reasons for this saying that some of the literary texts and genres are written in sophisticated English; therefore, their reading and writing skills have greatly developed especially their vocabulary and their writing styles. For instance, one of the students says "Literature is the language and it is the tool through which we are exposed to different structures that enable us improve our skills." The effectiveness of the instructors' teaching methods could be another reason why all students strongly agree with statement 8 (see figure7, p.29). Clearly, because instructors use good teaching strategies, the sorts of assignments students are asked to do will be equally beneficial. Not only this, but students also say that they could figure out
their weaknesses in English (see figure8, p.30) and work on them to enhance their English level. Also, when P1 was asked the fifth question during the interview, she said that she notices that her students improve every semester she teaches literature courses and that they participate and perform well in classes, which was not the case before. For instance, she mentioned that she always assigns readings to students which help them learn much vocabulary, guess the meanings of words from the context, apply these words in their writing, and use them in their speech and discussions as well. Interestingly, she notices that the more she exposes them to literary texts, the more critical they become which comes to be true in the findings of statement 12 (see figure9, p.30) where the largest number of students from both colleges demonstrates that they become good critical thinkers. Moreover, P2 perceives the gradual development in her students' English level because most of the courses, if not all, are appealing and students get inspired by them. Taking that into account, this explains why in figure13 (49) students out of 60 are inspired by the literature courses in the English Department. Therefore, this shows that students know their weaknesses every semester because of the instructors' teaching strategies and the sorts of texts they expose their students to.

On the contrary, the hypotheses come to be true when it comes to the 13 remaining students who perceive no advancement in their language skills. They say that some teachers rarely give them feedbacks on their writing and performance in general. And this is because of the ineffective selection of some literary texts which make it difficult for them to understand how language is applied.

Sell (2005, p.7) finds "Literature's contents may well be truer to life and more relevant to learners than the typical textbook topics." With reference to the findings, the largest number of the participants, specifically students from Arts, suggests that literature reveals ideas connected to everyday life. The high number of Art students accounts for the fact that they take more literature courses than Education students; therefore, the influence on them will be higher. This is mainly because literary texts deal with issues and problems concerning humanity. Many of the participants believe that the texts they are exposed to enable them know the experiences other cultures have gone through. Authors also discuss personal issues and through these matters, they convey different messages and morals to readers. Equally, P1
accounts for this saying that literature allows students to understand themselves better, view life positively and objectively in many ways, and respect humanity as well. P2, similarly, mentions that literature makes the world become more tolerant because students are exposed to different facets of life through which they become wise and understand life much better.

Similar to what is mentioned in the literature review, the findings highlight the fact that literature really exposes them to other cultures and communities. The number of Art students is higher than the number of Education students because they are more exposed to literature and the courses they take are somewhat different from the ones Education students take. They are taught texts which reflect the tradition, values, and ideas of a culture and its people. P1 explains this saying that what encourages student to know about other nations is the way the texts are taught to students. She also adds that most of the texts are written by native speakers out of personal experiences that are basically a reflection of what was going on in their cultures long time ago. Consequently, students aspire to learn about other nations and gain much knowledge about how life was in the past and how it is perceived now. Moreover, P2 finds "When students learn about other cultures, literature makes them live the events happening there and sympathize with people."

The fact that most of the students strongly agree with this statement demonstrates that literature is communicatively significant. As seen in the literature review, literature deals with many universal issues which encourage students to talk about. When students read novels, stories, or even plays in class, this allows them to initiate conversations with their classmates thereby they share different opinions. Not only that, but when they are discussing serious issue, as P1 says, this makes them continue their discussion even outside the class and, thus, this improves their communicative competence. Moreover, one of the participants in the second open-ended question states that the idea of being assigned to do presentations enhances their communicative skills and, more than that, gives them much confidence to stand in front of their classmates discussing different issues. And this again accounts for the high number of the students who think their language skills have developed through literature.
Recommendations

There are other fields to be considered about literature and I really recommend others to shed light on them in their coming studies. Throughout the findings, the lack of students' interest towards literature is a result of the weak teaching methods and the sorts of materials selected by teachers. However, much can be done to boost their interest in literature such as:

- Instructors must be careful when it comes to selecting materials.
- They should be able to create an educationally effective teaching and learning environment through using inspiring teaching strategies.
- They should always provide their students with feedback about their performance.

Limitations:

This research covers a limited number of participants to demonstrate the effect of literature on students' language proficiency. Although there are a lot of students in the English Department, having only 60 participants is not enough to get the best findings in such a field. If there were more participants, the findings will be more accurate to know how literature is viewed as an educational tool. Through the findings, most of the students from both colleges hold positive attitudes towards literature, but this actually makes it difficult to identify whether Art students have more positive attitudes towards literature than Education students or not.

Conclusions:

The whole research aims to examine the effectiveness of literature on students' English language. The first chapter introduces the topic focusing on literature's importance in learning English. It examines its role not only in education, but also in different facets of life. The chapter also lists the hypotheses of the researcher aiming to detect how literature is viewed by students at SQU. As an important educational tool, the researcher provides some reasons for choosing such a topic focusing not only on its role in the language, but also on the education system in Oman.
In the literature review, the research question looms again and its significance is much more elaborated with reference to a number of studies. It is broken into sub-sections as the key elements used to examine the significance of literature as a useful educational tool. In this chapter, not only is the positive side of literature considered, but also different studies are used to detect the cases in which it becomes insignificant. Basically, the purpose of dividing the main topic into other sub-topics is to use them in the data collection instruments aiming to study students' attitudes on literature generally and on these areas particularly.

Examining the effect of literature on students' language efficiency will be done through collecting data by means of a questionnaire distributed to 60 student and two interviews with two instructors from the English Department at SQU. The questionnaire aims to ask students about literature and how well in has served them not only educationally, but also in other different aspects. First, the questionnaire was piloted to check that it was clear enough and perfectly designed. After this stage, it was distributed to the participants returned again for the analysis. The interviews, however, seeks to ask the interviewee almost similar questions which will be used later in the analysis.

Presenting and analyzing the data collected through the instruments constitute the most important part in this research. They are shown according to the research sub-sections and analyzed through comparing students' and professors' responses with the hypotheses and these main areas again. The findings show that students from both colleges consider literature as a useful teaching instrument. In spite of that, there appear to be some limitations in the research which make it difficult to examine the accurate position of literature among SQU English students. Also, the research provides some recommendations directed to teachers in general in order to enhance the teaching process as long as English language is concerned.
References:


Appendix

Figure 6 of statement 1:

![Chart showing responses to statement 1 by gender and subject area.]

Figure 7 of statement 8:

![Chart showing responses to statement 8 by gender and subject area.]

Figure 8 of statement 11:

- Strongly agree: Education female students = 12, Arts female students = 6, Education male students = 4, Arts male students = 3
- Agree: Education female students = 11, Education male students = 9, Arts female students = 3, Arts male students = 1
- Neutral: Education female students = 8, Education male students = 4, Arts female students = 3, Arts male students = 2

Figure 9 of statement 12:

- Strongly agree: Education female students = 14, Arts female students = 6, Education male students = 4, Arts male students = 3
- Agree: Education female students = 13, Education male students = 5, Arts female students = 3, Arts male students = 1
- Neutral: Education female students = 10, Education male students = 2, Arts female students = 2, Arts male students = 1
- Disagree: Education female students = 2, Education male students = 2, Arts female students = 1, Arts male students = 1
- Strongly disagree: Education female students = 1, Education male students = 1, Arts female students = 1, Arts male students = 1
Findings of the open-ended questions:

Figure 13:

![The inspiration towards literature](image)

- Inspired: 49
- Not inspired: 11

Figure 14:

![Language skills development](image)

- Developed: 47
- Did not develop: 13
Side-talking in Omani EFL Classrooms

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Abstract

This paper examines the reasons behind side-talking during classes and the possible solutions that could curb side-talking during classes. The data was collected through two different instruments, the first one was a questionnaire that was distributed to 80 participants (70 were students from grade five and 10 were teachers from Musab Bin Al-Zubair School in Al-Khoud). The questionnaire examined the reasons behind side-talking and the possible solutions of reducing side-talking during classes. The second was by conducting interviews with four students from grade five who were talking privately with their classmates during classes more than the rest of the students. The results of this paper reveal that there are many reasons behind side-talking during classes and this issue can be reduced through using creative solutions. At the end of the research paper, recommendations, limitations, and further research are discussed.

Keywords: Sid-talking, classroom, management, EFL Classrooms, reasons, solutions

Introduction

Over the last centuries, the whole universe has been developing in almost all of the fields such as health, economy, education, and other infrastructures. However, the development in the field of education has a greater impact upon the lives of students and teachers alike. Some people don’t admit that school plays a massive role in shaping students’ lives especially their dreams, opportunities, and even their behaviors. In addition, one of the important aspects that every teacher must give it a great consideration is classroom management which has to do about everything related to the process of education inside the classroom such as the atmosphere of classroom, creative methods and strategies of teaching, the activities related to lessons, motivating students, and dealing with the misbehaved students. Thangarajathi and Enok (2010) states that, “The ability of teachers to organize classrooms and manage the behavior of their
students is critical to achieving positive educational outcomes”. Managing students’ behaviors is so crucial for the educational process and it leads to achieving the expectations and the outcomes of both sides teachers and students. One of the biggest concerns every teacher face is misbehaved students, those who are fighting, side talking, breaking tables, using bad words, etc… There is only one misbehavior which distracts the educational process inside classroom which side talk. There are different reasons of side talking between students during classes such as boring lessons, the environment of classroom, and bad teaching. Furthermore, there are effective solutions to curb this issue such as using creative methods of teaching (games, competitions), changing the atmosphere of classroom, giving students chances to participate, using a poster of misbehaved students. To know more about side talk, its reasons and possible solutions to solve it, literature will be reviewed below.

Literature Review

There are many teachers around the world who don’t know the right meaning of classroom management, what means is that those teachers only think about it from the side of controlling the classroom which is a big misunderstanding. However, classroom management is about everything that has a connection with the process of teaching and learning inside the classroom. In addition, “classroom management is a critical ingredient in the three-way mix of effective teaching strategies, which includes meaningful content, powerful teaching strategies, and an organizational structure to support productive learning” (Larrivee, 2005 cited in Sethurajan & Joel, 2010). Borko & Putnam (1995) states that “Successful teachers employ strategies “for establishing rules and procedures, organizing groups, monitoring and pacing classroom events, and reacting to misbehavior.” Classroom management has to do with creative ways or strategies of explaining lessons and delivering pieces of information to students and it has a deep relationship with attracting students’ attention and keep them focused. Sethurajan & Joel (2010) indicate that classroom management has to do with the ability of teachers to organize classrooms and manage the behavior of their students is critical to achieving positive educational outcomes. Moreover, classroom management deals with disruptive behaviors and teaches students how to manage their behaviors such as side talking, chewing gum, and drinking. Sethurajan & Joel (2010)
adds to that “Although sound behavior management does not guarantee effective instruction, it establishes the environmental context that makes good instruction possible.” Rahman (2011) assures that classroom management requires teachers to use activities that defuse attention-seeking behaviours, like group- and pair-work because these keep students busy working rather than side-talking.

There are many common behaviors among students that distract the process of teaching and learning inside classroom. Prichard & Sawyer (1994) state that there is an increasing concern – both nationally and among individual faculty members – about student behavior that is, at the least troublesome, and at the most, disruptive. So what kind of behaviors that affect the process of teaching and learning? According to an interview study of professors at a liberal-arts college, Appleby (1990) found that there were specific disruptive behaviors among students. “Behaviors were sorted into three categories: (1) immature behaviors such as talking during lectures, chewing gum, eating or drinking noisily, being late, and creating disturbances; (2) inattentive behaviors such as sleeping during class, cutting class, acting bored or apathetic, not paying attention, being unprepared, packing books and materials before class is over; and (3) miscellaneous behaviors such as cheating, asking “Will it be on the test?” and expressing more interest in grades than in learning.”( Prichard & Sawyer,1994). According to the previous statement, side talking was mentioned as an example of immature behaviors which shows how this disruptive behavior has a negative impact on the process of teaching and learning at the same time. In addition, there are different conflicts that stem from students’ inattentiveness and appear more passive, such as students arriving chronically late to class, engaging in side conversations, or acting apathetic and bored (Appleby, 1990; Kearney & Plax, 1992, cited in Meyers , Steven, et al,2006). Prichard & Sawyer (1994) assure that students’ behavior which is talking out loud eventually became disruptive since it leads to directing the attention of the teaching and other students away from the topic at hand.

**The definition of side talk**

The majority of the researchers state that side talking means a quiet conversation that takes place between people who are sitting beside each other during some kind of committee meeting or official gathering. When
enough goes on, and as sound grows exponentially, it can be loud enough to distract the chairperson or whoever is speaking, as well as annoy those who want to carry the meeting's agenda forward. In addition, Silvestri (2013) says that students may hold private conversations, side talk, during class that revolve around course related material or topics unrelated to the class and these private conversations may be particularly easy to ignore; however, they may be disruptive to other students nearby the students who are having the side conversation.

Every problem has a source because there isn’t any issue coming out of a scratch. There are many researchers around the world agreed on a certain reasons that lead to side talk. The majority of the researchers especially those who are experienced the field of education once they remember this behavior, side talking, from their own classrooms, they find it frustrating because a chatty class is challengeable for them. The resources of this issue differ from one country to another and even from one school to another. The next reasons are common around the world.

1- **Failing to meet students` interest**: “Asking students to approach tasks beyond their reach results in student objection and dissatisfaction, whereas easy tasks leave no option to students but side talking to pass the time” (Shawer, Gilmore & Banks-Joseph, 2009, cited in Rahman, 2011). The researcher assures that once the activities fail to meet the interest of students that leads to side talking between students because the activities or tasks are boring and don’t meet with the students’ expectations. Therefore, Rahman (2011) states that teachers need to choose tasks which students genuinely need (relevance criterion of pedagogy), so when teachers ignore students' needs, they cannot expect them to comply or attend to learning activities. One final recommendation was set by Rahman (2011) that teachers must make tasks realistic, meaningful, manageable, and achievable (task suitability to student schemata). All the expert teachers confirm that once the lessons or the activities don’t meet with students` interests, they start to act differently such as chatting with group members about or classmates about unrelated topics to the lessons which leads to distraction to the process of education and learning.

2- **The unattractive design of classroom**: Researchers assure that the design of classroom plays a significant role in attracting the students' attentions and keep them away from issues. Wilson (2012) states that “A
positive classroom environment is essential in keeping behavior problems to a minimum. It also provides the students with an opportunity to think and behave in a positive manner. Positive classroom environments help to enhance, promote, and encourage students’ learning in all academic settings.” The boring design of classrooms leads to distraction and keep students busy with things unrelated to their lessons such as talking privately with their classmates. A researcher says that attractive colors of classrooms increase the attention of students but unfortunately many schools around the world don’t care about colors of classrooms.

3-Less movement around class:

According to the website (https://www.responseclassroom.org/do-you-have-a-chatty-class-2/) that “considering teaching lessons in one area and then having students do work at their seats. A change of scenery and movement can help them stay focused.” Once the teacher moves around the class to check students understanding or to make sure that students do their work without talking; however, less movement leads to side talking between students since they guarantee that nobody is watching them while talking privately.

4-Boring teaching: There are many scholars and researchers in the field of education believe that when the styles of teaching are too boring, that will lead to many bad consequences such as side-talking, fighting, showing less respect to the teacher, carelessness, and etc.... According to Wiggins (2014) that talking in the same tone of voice all the time leads to creating a boring atmosphere which is an easy chance for chatty students to take and start distracting others through talking with their classmates. Moreover, Wiggins (2014) adds that keeping the routine and class flow the exact same, every single day, all day long such as going over homework with students as a part of morning routine every day; that would lead to boredom inside classrooms and students start to react differently such as engaging in private conversations with their classmates while the teacher is explaining the lesson. In addition to that, Wiggins (2014) states that one of the biggest habit of highly boring teachers is not being able to relate your students and their interests or lives and that will be beyond the students expectations and needs which will be more dangerous for both the teacher and his/her students since it is causes many issues during classes.
like side-talking, misbehaviors, and other movements unrelated to the classroom atmosphere.

5- **Having unclear consistent way of responding to misbehaviors:** Anderson (2009) shares his experience about this point through saying that “Sometimes, even when we state our expectations clearly and use lots of the proactive strategies listed above, students will still talk when they shouldn’t. When this happens, get them back on track through logical consequences. Most of all, though, remember that students need to talk for the same reasons we need to talk: to interact with others, to share ideas, to meet their needs for belonging, significance, and fun, to ask questions. Think of how hard it is for us as teachers to not have side conversations at staff meetings!

**Why middle school students can`t stop talking:**

Schools are the foundation of education and improvement for student from being a child to adults so parents are amazed because of mental changes that happened during their children ages. Schools challenge all these changes of students and play significant role for student growth and teach them essential principles and values.

According to National Education Association there are several changes for students during time for example:

1- Transforming from specific ideas to high metaphysical thought procedure.

2-High demand for communication skill so students start to have more friends and create their individual identity. This leads to increase the interaction during class which is rejected in the classroom conduct.

3-The rise of more elevated amount power over perception. This may incorporate the capacity to screen thinking procedures and critical thinking. These basic reasoning capacities add to understanding loquacity and inclination to challenge instructors.

4-Absence of full grown frontal projections. The frontal projection is the mind locale in charge of repressing wrong practices, controlling motivations and organizing complex designs. The frontal flaps are the last
cerebrum zones to create, coming to full development in the mid-20s. Up to that point, understudies may experience issues controlling driving forces or socially improper practices, for example, talking in class.

Schools not responsible for students brain development. Thus, students’ shortage in psychological and communication ripeness share in talking in the class so being active with students can be more effective to teach them. (The room 241 team (2013) from Concordia University Portland)

How to stop side talking behavior in class?

There are many different solutions teachers use to curb the phenomenon of side talking with students since it distracts the process of teaching and learning. However, the schools, students, teachers and even the educational systems are different from one place to another, so the teacher has to look for suitable solutions for his/her students. The next solutions are selected from different articles according to expert teachers:

**Reduce information overload:** According to a team of teachers from Concordia University Portland (2013) that “Chattiness begins when the teacher loses the attention of one or more students in the class. In many cases, this occurs because of information overload. Middle school students have attention spans limited by their incomplete brain development because most can retain only five to seven pieces of information at a time. To work within these constraints, break down a complex lesson into its component parts. By providing three or four key points, you’ll keep students’ attention focused on your class, rather than surrounding distractions.”

**Provide a varied learning environment**

If students tend to talk during class more, one way is to encourage their chattiness within the bounds of a classroom is asking them to do a project. A team of teachers from Concordia University Portland (2013) consider new ways to present information to make it more interactive, including:

- Small group projects. Rather than lecturing about the founding fathers, divide students into small groups to dig up their own fun facts and create a creative presentation in terms of speaking about different facts that are linked to the lesson. This plays to students’ emerging abstract-
thinking abilities and allows them to engage with material in new ways and this will make the students critical thinkers.

- Guest lectures. Bringing in a local expert to engage with students grabs their attention in one side and allows them to ask a lot of questions and in other words to keep them busy.
- Visual or auditory resources. Watch a film clip or listen to an audio recording relevant to classroom material which means try to use technology in teaching students some pieces of information linked to their lessons. Then, ask students to think critically about what they saw or heard through encouraging them to work with their pairs to answer critical-thinking questions.

**Give students a pep talk**

Middle school students’ growing independence often causes them to be rebellious against teachers and other authority figures because they are sensitive to being treated like younger children. Instead, get talkative students on your side when you’re in danger of losing control of the classroom. Rather than punishing them, talk to them as adults. Treating students in a more adult-like way makes them feel valued and may rectify behavior problems, so the teacher must make his/her rules from the beginning and talk to the students about the consequences of talking during classes.

**Changing the design of classroom**

Anderson (2009) states that “Creating extra space between tables and desks can help students stay more focused on their work because breaking up the work areas so that tables or clusters of desks are spread out. For example, a teacher could move a table for four students against a wall and put a supply shelf or bookshelf (not too tall) in the middle of the room. Also there are many scholars believe that colorful classes provide interesting environment for students to study since it makes them more comfortable.

**Adding more movement while teaching students**

According to Anderson (2009) that considering teaching lessons in one area and then having students do work at their seats in another area help them stay focused and keep talkative students focused. Also a teacher can
also include some energizers and game breaks throughout the day to keep students energetic and engaged.

**Making the learning activities enjoyable**

Anderson (2009) raises a question that ‘If you were a student in your class, would you be having fun with the assignments? Make sure students have some power and control over their learning by giving them some choices about what they learn or how they learn it because that will give them more space to enjoy doing their activities. Also, once the activities are full of fun and entertainment the students will be creative in terms of answering the activity.

**Having a clear, consistent way of responding to misbehavior**

According to Anderson (2009) that when students continue talking when they shouldn’t, a teacher should get them back on track through logical consequences. He adds that students need to talk for the same reasons we need to talk: to interact with others, to share ideas, to meet their needs for belonging, significance, and fun, to ask questions. Moreover, a teacher must have a clear and consistent way of dealing to talkative teachers so that will curb side talking during classes.

**Methodology**

The data analyzed and presented in this study come for quantitative study through doing a questionnaire survey that investigates the reasons behind side talk during classes and what are the possible solutions to curb this issue. Also for the quantitative study is used in this research through conducting four interviews with four students from grade five and theses interviews investigate the reasons of why they talk during classes.

**Aims**

The aims of this study are to answer the next questions.

1- What are the reasons behind side-talking between students during classes?

2- What are the possible solutions to curb side-talking during classes?
Participants

In order to understand the resources of side-talking during classes and the possible solutions to reduce side-talking during classes, the current study relies on the data that I gathered from the students of grade five and teachers of English Language through the questionnaires. Among the respondents, 35 were male students from grade 5/3 and 34 were male students from grade 5/4. In addition to that, eight male teachers were English Language teachers. Moreover, four students from both grades 5/3 and 5/4 were interviewed about why they talk during classes.

Instruments

Two types of data collection instruments are used in this study. The first is a questionnaire which is divided into 2 sections. In the first section, I ask students to indicate their grade, name, and gender. For students, the second section, I ask students to address the reasons behind side-talking during classes. However, the questionnaire of English Language teachers will be different. In the first section, I ask teachers to indicate the grades there are teaching, their names, and gender. For the second section, I ask teachers to address the possible solutions to reduce side-talking during classes. The second instrument is interviews with four students from grade five, those are talking so much during classes, asking them about the reasons of why they talk privately during classes. The interview includes 5 questions, 4 of them are open-ended questions and 1 of them is agree or disagree question.

Data Analysis

Four tables were created for the second section, two tables were reasons behind side-talking during classes and the other two were for the solutions of side-talking during classes. The data is collected in the different timeline to investigate the reasons and resources of side-talking and possible solutions of reducing this phenomenon during classes. The questionnaires were distributed to the students were divided into two sections which are personal information, and the reasons behind side-talking during classes but the questionnaire were distributed to the teachers were divided into three sections which are personal information, the solutions of side-talking
during classes, and An open-ended question for adding more possible solutions.

*Table 1: The reasons behind side-talking during classes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The reason</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teacher fails to meet students' interest so the students start to talk with their classmates during classes.</td>
<td>67(96%)</td>
<td>3(4%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When teachers ignore students' needs, they cannot expect them to comply or attend to learning activities.</td>
<td>38(54%)</td>
<td>8(12%)</td>
<td>24(34%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The unattractive design of classroom leads to side-talking during classes because students are distracted with uncomfortable atmosphere of learning.</td>
<td>52(74%)</td>
<td>8(12%)</td>
<td>10(14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less movement leads to side talking between students since they guarantee that nobody is watching them while talking privately.</td>
<td>68(97%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>2(3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The styles of teaching are too boring which lead to many bad consequences such as side-talking, fighting, showing less respect to the teacher, carelessness, and etc.</td>
<td>62(89%)</td>
<td>2(3%)</td>
<td>6(8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first research question seeks to examine the reasons behind side-talking during class. The data in table 1 shows that there are different sources and reasons behind the phenomenon of side-talking during classes especially while the teacher is explaining the lessons. It is clearly seen that the majority of the respondents (97%) reported that less movement of the teacher leads to side talking between students since they guarantee that nobody is watching them while talking privately as well as 96% of them indicated that The teacher fails to meet students’ interest so the students start to talk with their classmates during classes. Also, it was shown that 62 respondents (89%) that the styles of teaching are too boring which lead
to many bad consequences such as side-talking, fighting, showing less respect to the teacher, carelessness, and etc.

A significant portion of respondents (72%) responded that the unattractive design of classroom leads to side-talking during classes because students are distracted with uncomfortable atmosphere of learning. More than quarter of the students (54%) indicated that when teachers ignore students' needs, they cannot expect them to comply or attend to learning activities, so that leads to side-talking during classes.

Table 2: The reasons behind side-talking during classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The reason</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>keeping the routine and class flow the exact same, every single day, all day long such as going over homework with students as a part of morning routine every day; that would lead to boredom inside classrooms and students start to react differently such as engaging in private conversations with their classmates while the teacher is explaining the lesson.</td>
<td>64(92%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>6(8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having unclear consistent way of responding to misbehaviors leads to side-talking.</td>
<td>64(92%)</td>
<td>2(3%)</td>
<td>4(5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the biggest habit of highly boring teachers is not being able to relate your students and their interests or lives and that will be beyond the students expectations and needs which will be more dangerous for both the teacher and his/her students since it is causes many issues during classes like side-talking, misbehaviors, and</td>
<td>56(80%)</td>
<td>10(14%)</td>
<td>4(5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
other movements unrelated to the classroom atmosphere.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attractive colors of classrooms increases the attention of students’</td>
<td>58(83%)</td>
<td>8(12%)</td>
<td>4(5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but unfortunately many schools around the world don’t care about colors of classrooms.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking in the same tone of voice all the time leads to creating a</td>
<td>58(83%)</td>
<td>8(12%)</td>
<td>4(5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boring atmosphere which is an easy chance for chatty students to take</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and start distracting others through talking with their classmates.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 refers to the reasons and sources of side-talking during classes. As can be seen, a large percentage of students (92%) believe that once the teacher is keeping the routine and class flow the exact same, every single day, all day long such as going over homework with students as a part of morning routine every day; that would lead to boredom inside classrooms and students start to react differently such as engaging in private conversations with their classmates while the teacher is explaining the lesson. Indeed, (92%) of them assures that once the teacher is having unclear consistent way of responding to misbehaviors that will lead to side-talking. In addition, a large proportion (83%) of them responded that when the teacher is talking in the same tone of voice all the time that leads to creating a boring atmosphere which is an easy chance for chatty students to take and start distracting others through talking with their classmates. In addition, the same portion of students (83%) believed that attractive colors of classrooms increases the attention of students’ but unfortunately many schools around the world don’t care about colors of classrooms. Surprisingly, a large percentage of students (80%) assure that one of the biggest habit of highly boring teachers is not being able to relate your students and their interests or lives and that will be beyond the students’ expectations and needs which will be more dangerous for both the teacher and his/her students since it is causes many issues during classes like side-talking, misbehaviors, and other movements unrelated to the classroom atmosphere.
Table 3: The solutions of side-talking during classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The solution</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Once the teacher reduces information overload that will keep students more focused and avoid talking with his classmates.</td>
<td>8(80%)</td>
<td>2(20%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dividing complex lessons to different parts keeps students focused and quite during classes.</td>
<td>8(80%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>2(20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dividing students into small group projects rather than lecturing all the time to dig up their own fun facts and create a creative presentation in terms of speaking about different facts that are linked to the lesson. Thus will keep students busy doing their projects.</td>
<td>9(90%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>1(10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing in a local expert, guest lectures, to engage with students grabs their attention in one side and allows them to ask a lot of questions and in other words to keep them busy.</td>
<td>9(90%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>2(3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using visual or auditory resources in teaching such as watching a film clip or listen to an audio recording relevant to lessons curbs side talking during classes.</td>
<td>9(90%)</td>
<td>1(10%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second research question seeks to examine the possible solutions of reducing side-talking issue during classes. As can clearly be seen on the table that the majority of the previous solutions are used by English Language teachers to curb side-talking during their classes. A large portion of teachers (90%) assured that once the teacher divide students into small group projects rather than lecturing all the time to dig up their own fun facts and create a creative presentation in terms of speaking about different facts that are linked to the lesson, thus will keep students busy doing their projects. Also, the same portion of teachers (90%) believed that bringing
in a local expert, guest lectures, to engage with students grabs their attention in one side and allows them to ask a lot of questions and in other words to keep them busy. In addition, (90%) of them indicated that Using visual or auditory resources in teaching such as watching a film clip or listen to an audio recording relevant to lessons curbs side talking during classes. Yet, more than three-quarters of the teachers (80%) assured that once the teacher reduces information overload that will keep students more focused and avoid talking with his classmates. Moreover, the same percentage of teachers (80%) dividing complex lessons to different parts keeps students focused and quite during classes but less than quarter (20%) of teachers disagreed with this solution.

Table 4: The solutions of side-talking during classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The solution</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giving students a pep talk through treating them as adults leads to reducing the behavior of side-talking during classes.</td>
<td>7(70%)</td>
<td>2(20%)</td>
<td>1(10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing the design of classroom through creating extra space between tables and desks can help students stay more focused on their work.</td>
<td>8(80%)</td>
<td>2(20%)</td>
<td>1(10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding more movement while teaching students leads to keep the students more focused and engaged during the process of learning.</td>
<td>8(80%)</td>
<td>2(20%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making sure that activities are enjoyable that students have some power and control over their learning by giving them some choices about what they learn or how they learn it because that will give them more space to enjoy doing their activities</td>
<td>9(90%)</td>
<td>1(10%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 refers to more solutions of side-talking during classes. As can be seen clearly, similar to table 3 that there are different solutions used by teachers to reduce side-talking during classes and that is too obvious on the high percentages of teachers who agreed with those solutions. About (70%) of the respondents agreed that giving students a pep talk through treating them as adults leads to reducing the behavior of side-talking during classes while about (20%) of the respondents were neutral with this solution whether they support or not. Also more than three-quarters of the respondents (80%) assured that changing the design of classroom through creating extra space between tables and desks can help students stay more focused on their work. Moreover, the same portion of teachers (80%) believed that adding more movement while teaching students leads to keep the students more focused and engaged during the process of learning. The highest portion of respondents (90%) indicated that once the teacher makes sure that activities are enjoyable that students have some power and control over their learning by giving them some choices about what they learn or how they learn it because that will give them more space to enjoy doing their activities as well as 90% of them indicated that having a clear, consistent way of responding to misbehavior reduces side-talking.

### More solutions for side-talking during classes

More than three-quarters of the teachers (80%) agreed that warning students to deduce grades if they talked during classes and giving students who don’t talk during classes gifts are the best solutions to stop side-talking while teaching students. Also, half of the respondents (50%) indicated that integrating the students in discussion activities and making them busy doing extra activities are considered as effective solutions to curb side-talking during classes. According to the statements of the teachers that making the students active and engaged in the process of teaching and learning through using creative ways of teaching such as using games, using competitions, and using technology; all of them lead to reduce side-talking during classes because the creative ways will keep the students focused and busy. Only about three teachers assured that making groups and asking good students to take care of low achievers since they are the
once who talk privately with their classmates more than other students and this solution leads to have a quite classroom. One of the interesting respondents of one of the teachers that once any teacher discusses with his/her students some rules about discipline at the beginning of the semester will keep on the mind of the students to follow these rules or they will get themselves into bad consequences. Therefore, few of the teachers stated that inviting the parents of talkative students to come to school can be considered as one of solution that leads to curb side-talking during classes.

**The two solutions that I created by myself according to my teaching experience**

According to my experience in the field of education (I taught in three different training institutes) that, I came up with two different effective solutions that helped me so much to curb side talking during my classes. The first solution is “Poster” as shown in the picture. The idea behind this poster is that I created a list of the names of students and beside the names the week days. The rule of this poster is that every single student has three chances and if they talked privately with their classmates during the class they will get a red point beside their names. Once the student is done with three chances, I take him to the administration of the school. Luckily none of the students got three points, only three students who reached two points. This poster is very effective and efficient that it curbed the phenomenon of side-talking
during my classes. The second solution that I used during the teaching practice semester is I ask talkative students to set in my desk, so I can pay more attention on them and that reduced side-talking during my classes a lot. Since I am familiar to those students who are talking privately during my classes through my observation, there were only three students in each grade I was teaching and all of them were low achievers in the subject.

**Four interviews with four students who are talking privately during my classes to ask them about the reasons behind this phenomenon**

I selected four students carefully according to the consistent repetition of their misbehavior of side-talking during my classes. When I asked the students individually about the reasons behind side-talking during side-talking, two of the students (A and B) told me that they failed grade five and they are careless and hopeless about studying at school because all the teachers are treating them strangely and don`t care about encouraging them to work harder to overcome the challenges he is facing in different courses. Surprisingly, the other two students (C and D) indicated that their families are facing difficult situations like financial issues and nobody in their families help them in their study that`s why they get involved easily in side-conversations with their classmates while the teachers are explaining the lessons. In addition, student (A) stated that one of the biggest habit of highly boring teachers is not being able to relate your students and their interests or lives and that will be beyond the students’ expectations and needs which will be more dangerous for both the teacher and his/her students since it causes many issues during classes like side-talking, misbehaviors, and other movements unrelated to the classroom atmosphere. Moreover, student (D) added that the unattractive design of the classroom keep the students distracted and engage themselves in side-conversations with other students during classes. Therefore, student (B) confirms that the majority of the students fail to meet students` expectations and interests that`s why some students talk with their friends privately during classes.

**Discussion**

After analyzing the data collected by two different questionnaires and four interviews, it is obvious that there are many different reasons behind side-talking during classes and there are various solutions to it. Some of the
findings of this study are in accord with those that are mentioned in the literature review. There are many reasons behind side-talking during classes mentioned in the literature review are similar to the findings of this study. For example when the teacher fails to meet students’ interest so the students start to talk with their classmates during classes as it is mentioned in (Shawer, Gilmore & Banks-Joseph, 2009, cited in Rahman, 2011). Also one of the reasons is that when teachers ignore students' needs, they cannot expect them to comply or attend to learning activities as found by (Rahman, 2011). Moreover, the unattractive design of classroom leads to side-talking during classes because students are distracted easily by anything in this boring environment and this finding is mentioned by (Wilson, 2012) especially that positive classrooms play a significant role in attracting the attention of students. According to the finding of the website (https://wwwponsiveclassroom.org/do-you-have-a-chatty-class-2/) that when teachers move less during classes students will take that chance to talk privately with their classmates during lessons and a significant portion of respondents in the students` questionnaires assure that. Therefore, when teachers keep the same daily routine of boring teaching every day without being creative in teaching students by using different creative strategies that leads to side talking during classes and this finding is mentioned in (Wiggins, 2014). According to the findings, the reason behind side-talking during the classes is mostly due to the unclear and inconsistent way of responding to misbehaviors of students by teachers. This finding is in alignment with Anderson’s research findings (2009).

There are different solutions that play significant roles in reducing side-talking during classes and all the solutions were experienced by expert researchers and teachers. One of the significant solutions to reduce this issue is that the teacher has to reduce the overload of information explained to his/her students and this solution is mentioned by a team of teachers from Concordia University Portland (2013). In addition, once the teacher divides the complex lesson to small easy parts that will keep the students focused and quite during classes because it is will be easier for the brain of students to pieces of information easily. Also dividing students into small group projects rather than lecturing all the time to dig up their own fun facts and create a creative presentation in terms of speaking about different facts that are linked to the lesson; thus will keep students busy doing their
projects as found by a team of teachers from Concordia University Portland (2013). Moreover, using creative ways of teaching attracts students` attention and curb side-talking during classes and this finding is similar to findings found by a team of teachers from Concordia University Portland (2013). Another findings that really important for every teacher to apply while he/she is teaching students is that they have to add more movement around the students, so that will keep students quiet and focused to their explanation and this solution is recommended by Anderson (2009). Moreover, an interesting solution was suggested by expert teachers to deal with side-talking during classes is any teacher must warn students to deduce grades if they talked during classes and giving students who don`t talk during classes gifts are the best solutions to stop side-talking while teaching students but I leave this solution at a final option and I prefer to use the poster I made as mentioned in the section of solutions I created by myself. Another amazing solution that every teacher must apply and they are supposed to do it is that once any teacher discusses with his/her students some rules about discipline at the beginning of the semester will keep on the mind of the students to follow these rules or they will get themselves into bad consequences.

Recommendations and Further research:

Although many studies have explored the reasons behind side-talking with students during classes and the possible solutions that curb side-talking while teaching students, this study focused on resources of side-talking inside the classes of the Omani schools and looked for possible solutions that will help reduce this phenomenon.

The results of this study are beneficial for all the teachers because of many reasons. First, it gives the teachers a hard push to investigate the reasons and sources of side-talking during classes because there might be reasons which have not been mentioned in all the studies and this teacher will get the opportunity to discover that. Second, it provides the teachers with interesting solutions to curb side talking during classes and these solutions have been experienced by expert teachers and researchers and its results were amazing. Third, since this piece of research is the first one of its kind that is investigating an issue related to Omani students, I am sure this study will provide valuable information for different teachers and researchers. Fourth, it encourages teachers to find creative solutions to curb this issue.
inside their classes. Fifth, this piece of paper will make the student critical thinkers and care about the needs of their students through meeting their expectations and using creative teaching methods.

This study is not free from limitations. The first limitation is that the study only focused on the reasons behind side-talking during classes and possible solutions that reduce side talking during classes and it didn’t focus on the psychological reasons behind side-talking with students. As well, the number of participants was another limitation as it was difficult to find participants from inside the school.

For the recommendation, I recommend that all the teachers work hard to teach their students using creative methods. Also, I recommend teachers to be creative in finding solutions that curb side-talking during classes. In addition to that, a significant recommendation is that teachers must be careful in investigating the sources of side-talking and don’t throw judgments on his students. Further research could involve more participants from different ages and gender. Indeed, conducting four interviews with four students who are talking privately during classes were enough to generalize the results. Thus further research could study all the reasons behind side-talking and come out with solutions that reduce side-talking during classes.

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The Impact of Culturally Familiar Supplementary Reader on L3 Students of Ibra College of Technology: A Pilot Study

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English Language Centre, Ibra College of Technology

Abstract

The study investigates the impact of locally-relevant and culturally-familiar reading texts with graded vocabulary in enhancing interest and motivation among the L3 students of Ibra College of Technology who study English as a foreign language. Two texts with two different contents (local and global) with post-reading activities were given to two groups of L3 containing a total of 31 students and later a close-ended questionnaire was administered to collect their feedback. The findings of the study showed that majority of the students preferred the locally-relevant text since they found the text more appealing and easy-to-comprehend due to proximity principle and simpler vocabulary. It was observed that the contents of prescribed textbooks were quite unfamiliar and the target vocabulary was far beyond their grasp. This pilot study was conducted to verify the aforementioned assumptions and test the workability of the proposed solution i.e. culturally familiar supplementary reader.

Key words: Culturally familiar, locally-relevant, reader, proximity principle

Introduction

Reading skills have always been deemed vitally important to academic advancement and success. Moreover, in second language acquisition, reading as a skill has always been accorded more importance than listening. The more the learners are exposed to the target language, the faster and deeper will be the language acquisition. Since reading skills are fundamental to second language acquisition, a lot of research has been
done on the various aspects that affect reading. Contemporary research has demonstrated beyond doubt that reading is an interactive skill that requires simultaneous cognitive processing of lexical items, syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Though the degree of influence of these factors remains a moot point, there is no gainsaying the fact that these factors do affect the reading process. Hence, any serious research on reading cannot do away with them. CoTs in Oman are using Pathways series for the reading program. These textbooks are well structured and exhibit academic rigor. The aim of this series i.e. Pathways is to make students global citizens with critical and analytical thinking. Indeed, a laudable aim. Nonetheless, it is felt that these reading texts fail to create requisite interest and motivation among the students many a time. This is emphatically true of Ibra College of Technology. The researchers believe that the lack of interest and motivation is caused by the gap that exists between the learners and the text. This gap is twofold i.e. content & context familiarity and overly difficult vocabulary items. Most of the reading texts deal with global problems about which the learners have little knowledge. As a result, the interest and motivation level drops drastically. The difficult vocabulary items, though mapped with global standards, aggravate the problem. The researchers strongly believe that bridging this gap would bring about a dramatic change and result in greater student participation and learning.

**Literature review**

Numerous studies were conducted with a view to exploring the fundamental issues related to reading related problems among the EFL learners and the findings reveal that various factors affect the process of reading comprehension. This literature review intends to analyze some crucial reading problems faced by EFL learners in general and Arab learners in particular.

Khatee suggests that reading comprehension problems are primarily caused by unfamiliar content and difficult vocabulary. This study used a mixed method design to investigate the major comprehension problems encountered by Iranian EFL advanced learners through reading comprehension process. Participants were 63 students from an institute in Mashhad, Iran. First, the participants took reading comprehension tests,
the purpose of which was to determine their level of reading comprehension. After a comparison between their scores and the mean score of the whole group and also the teacher's determination during a specified term, good comprehenders and poor comprehenders were identified. Second, they were asked to fill in a questionnaire about their difficulties through the process of reading comprehension. Good comprehenders faced problems such as difficulty of the content (82.35%) and unknown vocabulary (64.70%). Poor comprehenders had problems with unknown vocabulary (100%) and shortage of time (89.13%) (Khataee, 2018). Another study suggests that difficult vocabulary items coupled with unfamiliar content make reading 'cognitively challenging and frustrating' (Sharma, 2018). This finding is further cemented by the following research article, which affirms that the teaching materials used for EFL classes in the Arab world are quite often 'culturally inappropriate and biased'. The article emphatically argues that these culturally inappropriate texts could 'alienate the students'. In addition, 'the level of the teaching material is often higher than the level of the students'. This, naturally, 'frustrates many students and reduces their motivation' (Fareh, 2010). There are too many difficult vocabulary items in one unit and they are difficult as well. The number of words students learn varies greatly: 2 vs. 8 words per day, 750 vs. 3,000 per year (Springer, 2013). EFL students in Oman are to be placed somewhere in the middle of the spectrum and that is approximately 4-5 new words a day. Nevertheless, the ground realities seem to negate these important facts. The college textbooks provide diverse global themes using difficult vocabulary and thereby create a precarious situation where the students stand twice removed from the textbooks.

In Jordan, according to a survey done by Al Khawaldeh (2012) that investigated the reading difficulties of the secondary school students, the most complicated areas in reading were lack of familiarity with vocabulary items, mismatch of some reading material with the students' life and incongruence between learner's pre-knowledge and existing ideas in the passage. In Yemen, Balfakeh (2009) found that dealing with unknown words was by far the most problematic area among secondary school students. The reading textbooks that EFL Arab learners generally study contain unfamiliar vocabulary and foreign cultural context, which dampen their interest in reading. Akanda et al. (2013) demonstrates lack
of interesting reading materials as the most dominant factor for the lack of students’ interest in his study. The investigators of this study evaluated several school textbooks in Oman and some samples of international thematic readers that were used in Ibra college. During the investigation, it was felt that both groups of textbook contain excessive use of difficult vocabulary. Though these textbooks were prepared in accordance with Common European Framework of Reference, the stipulated standards do not reflect the reality of our classrooms and the problems faced by the students. This, according to the researchers, is a classic case of idealism hampering real progress. This issue is further substantiated by Al Ajmi (2003) who investigated the reading difficulties of Omani students who graduated from secondary schools. According to her study, the most frequently encountered difficulties were lack of content/background knowledge and the lack of automatic recognition skills that enable students to recognize sounds and words. At the university level, Al Brashdi (2002) reports that difficult vocabulary was the biggest challenge faced by Omani university students.

The importance of culturally familiar texts i.e. principle of proximity is well recognized in the teaching and research world. Researcher, Jing Wei affirmed, “…using local culture-based material in language teaching classroom is a great advantage to both students and teachers” (Wei Fu, 2018). Another research study conducted in Turkey (Erten and Razi, 2009) reaffirms the conclusions of the researcher Jing Wei. The researchers chose the short story “The Girls in their Summer Dresses” by Irwin Shaw (2000), a popular classic first published in 1939. The story was contextualized for research purposes. In the contextualization process, the names of the characters were changed to Turkish names. Apart from these changes, some conceptual cues also had to be changed in order to complete the process. The groups that received the contextualized version of the story scored higher than the other groups. The results unequivocally and categorically proved that context and cultural familiarity play a vitally important role in enhancing interest and participation.
Pilot Study

The students at Ibra college are mostly first generation learners and they do not at all seem to practice extensive reading. Exposure to English language outside classroom is almost nonexistent. In fact, an article published in 2016 titled, ‘Establishing a Reading Culture in Arabic and English in Oman’, reports that Arab learners only read books (not counting school and religious materials) for around six minutes a year. In other words, reading is limited to the classroom activities and a lot needs to be done to effect a change in this deep-seated habit. Therefore, it is vitally important that a workable solution is found for this problem. Interviews conducted with different teachers appear to second the hypothesis. In addition, most of the teachers opined that the inclusion of locally relevant themes and characters would infuse life and enthusiasm in the classrooms. Therefore, it was decided that a pilot study ought to be conducted in order to verify the hypothesis. The researchers chose the theme of innovation which was also a chapter in the prescribed text book in L3. The researchers identified an Omani innovator i.e. Hilal AlSiyabi and interviewed him. He is fondly called the junk genius thanks to his brilliant inventions. His innovations are indeed an inspiration to the students. Based on the interview, a reading text with post-reading activities was drafted by the researchers. The researchers asked the students to go through both the texts i.e. locally prepared & the prescribed text and do the post-reading activities. After that, a close-ended questionnaire was given to them and the questions were asked both in English and Arabic.
The questionnaire is given below:

**Choose the answer that you think is appropriate**

اختر الإجابة التي تعتقد أنها مناسبة

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<tr>
<td>1. Which of the two texts interests you the most?</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Prescribed text</td>
<td>b. supplementary</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Which of the two texts is relevant to you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Prescribed text</td>
<td>b. supplementary</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Which of the two texts is easy-to-follow?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Prescribed text</td>
<td>b. supplementary</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Which of the two texts has vocabulary that is not very difficult?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Prescribed text</td>
<td>b. supplementary</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Which text motivates you the most?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Prescribed text</td>
<td>b. supplementary</td>
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**Feedback Questionnaire - Theme-based Reader**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choose the answer that you think is appropriate</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Which of the two texts interests you the most?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Prescribed text</td>
<td>b. supplementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Which of the two texts is relevant to you?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Prescribed text</td>
<td>b. supplementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Which of the two texts is easy-to-follow?</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Prescribed text</td>
<td>b. supplementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Which of the two texts has vocabulary that is not very difficult?</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Prescribed text</td>
<td>b. supplementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Which text motivates you the most?</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Prescribed text</td>
<td>b. supplementary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students’ responses are quite encouraging and point to the relevance of the principle of proximity.
As you can see, 77.5% students found the supplementary i.e. culturally familiar text more motivating than the prescribed text and 67.7% students found the supplementary text more interesting. More importantly, 87% students are of the opinion that supplementary is more relevant to them and 80.4% students think that the supplementary is easy to follow. However, on the vocabulary front, only 61% students opine that the supplementary text is not very difficult.
Out of the 155 responses, 116 responses appear to be enthusiastic about the locally-relevant and culturally-familiar text. In other words, almost 75% students preferred the locally-relevant text to the prescribed text. The results of the pilot study make it abundantly clear that the hypothesis of the researchers is firmly grounded in well-informed experiential reality.

All these clearly and categorically indicate and affirm that culturally-familiar and locally-relevant readers would help enhance students’ interest and might build the bridge between the global and the local. Besides, this academic exercise not only gives the teachers an opportunity to pursue action research but also brings them closer to the learners’ culture, which would in turn improve teaching quality. In addition to that, CDRF (Curriculum Development and Review Framework) QAD Version 4.1 clearly states that academic departments and colleges may choose their own teaching materials and teaching methodologies to suit the needs, level and interests of the students. All things considered, it would indeed be a good idea to prepare culturally-familiar and locally-relevant supplementary readers for the foundation students of Ibra college.

References


Using Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) with Multimedia Instructional Approach in teaching English Language

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Abstract

The study aims to utilize a Multimedia Instructional Approach with cognitive tools in teaching English Language for the students studying in IX standard. It was an experimental study with variables like Multimedia Instructional approach and cognitive tools. The study involves pre - test and post - test design with treatment in between. Research evidence indicates that the Multimedia Instructional Approach with cognitive tools can improve student’s performance in English language. “Learning a second language with multimedia materials” By: Center for implementing technology in education (CITEd) emphasizes that the multimedia teaching system can fully mobilize the students’ audio - visual and other sensitive organs and thus let the best of the cognitive effect.

Keywords: Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Multimedia Instructional Approach, Cognitive Approach, Cognitive tools, Second Language Acquisition.

Introduction

In the age of Information and Communication Technology a vast amount of information comes to the student in an encapsulated form. This enables him to learn fast and attain a great deal of knowledge. In a way this reduces the workload of the teacher in the sphere of imparting information. However, it also shifts the teacher’s responsibilities from mere transmission of information to guiding the students in utilization of this information in real life situations. The process of understanding and utilizing of this information from the computer by the student’s, becomes
the new responsibility of the teacher of today. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) – 2005 states that effective use of technology (Multimedia and ICT) can enrich the educational program, facilitate management of the system. Teachers classroom technology interaction is usually passive, teacher – centered, and treats technology as a *learn from tool* similar to the way students *learn from* classroom teacher. This approach has yielded low or no significant impact on student’s outcomes (Kim & Reeves, 2007). Researchers have been advocating a more constructivist, student – centered technology approach, encouraging students to use technology as a *learn with tool* (Jonassen & Reeves, 1996; Lajoie & Azevedo, 2000). This approach has also been referred to as the mind tool or cognitive tool model (Jonassen, 2000). Classroom technology resources have increased in the past decade, giving teachers increased flexibility to allow students to use technology as tools to extend their cognitive skills. Traditionally, teachers have taken the “learn more” technology approach and used computers primarily as a different type of media for delivering content to student’s in a passive manner similar to how students might learn from textbooks or T.V. programs. If learning passively from computers (e.g., reviewing information on web site, or viewing a You tube video clip about a scientific concepts), has failed to enhance student learning, such practices must be changed. Language is a conceptually rich domain that requires students to deploy various metacognitive strategies (Azevedo, 2005b), and technology as a cognitive tool can facilitate students’ metacognitive processes in problem solving. In 2013, the National Research Council release the Next Generation science standards (2013), encouraging teachers to provide students with the metacognitive strategies opportunities to practice enquiry using cross curriculum knowledge such as engineering, math and technology. The avocation of these core ideas is based on the need to promote enquiry in the classroom and to prepare students for *New literacy skills* (also known as 21st century skills, digital literacy, or ICT literacy). Students must be potential in *ICT skills, literacy and cognitive skills* in order to be considered as fluent in New Literacy. The goal is to develop core competencies that allow them to maintain and develop social relationships and communicate ideas. The cognitive approach emphasizes how the learner interacts with knowledge. An effort is made to make language acquisition a more active process. Instruction is based on activating prior knowledge and allowing the learner to build the cognitive skills required to understand, process and interact with a language. Effective opportunities to learn a second language
and interact with the cognitive approach can be divided into three stages: (a) comprehensible input, (b) interaction, (c) comprehensible output (Plass and Jones, 2005). An overview of the stages for effective instruction using the cognitive approach to acquiring a second language is brought to light. Students practice new literacy skills through the enquiry process. It is vital to evaluate the usefulness of the information and citing credible resources, locating multi model information (text, images, graphs, diagrams, charts, videos, hyperlinks and maps) and synthesizing multi model formats of information and communicate their research findings on the social networking sites. Most importantly, students can apply the transferrable skills learned from one project across subjects, topics and grades. These transferrable new literacy skills can support not only students learning but also important skills to succeed in the future workforce. The present paper emphasizes on using cognitive approach in a digital multimedia environment to support a Second Language Acquisition (SLA). This unique approach has made language learning more effective, communicative and many researchers have conducted studies in this particular topic.

Definition of the terms used in the study

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education is the mode of education that use information and communications technology to support, enhance, and optimize the delivery of information. Worldwide research has shown that ICT can lead to an improved student - learning and better teaching methods.

Multimedia Instructional Approach: Multimedia Approach uses a number of media, devices, techniques in the teaching-learning process. Multimedia Approach aims at providing meaningful learning experience via a mix of media in order to achieve predetermined objectives. It provides the opportunity to gain mastery of competencies and skills.

Cognitive Approach: The cognitive approach in psychology is a relatively modern approach to human behavior that focuses on how we think. It assumes that our thought processes affect the way in which we behave.
Cognitive Tools: Cognitive tools refers to technologies that enhance the cognitive powers of human beings during thinking, problem solving and learning (Jonassen & Reeves, 1996). The human cognitive system has weaknesses and limited capacity but can be enhanced through the use of cognitive tools (Jensen, 2011). Using a “cognitive tools” approach is distinctly different from the traditional approach of using technology in which information is designed by subject experts or instructional designers and then transferred to the students. By using cognitive tools in a constructive framework, learners engage in a variety of critical, creative and complex thinking. The reformed technology integration approach extends students cognitive skills by encouraging to access multi-modal resources, organize and analyze data, and interpret and evaluate information and communicate the knowledge they have constructed to others.

Second Language Acquisition: Second Language Acquisition, or SLA, has two meanings. In general sense, it is a term to describe learning a second language. More specifically it is the name of the theory of the process by which we acquire or pick up a second language. This is mainly a subconscious process which happens while we focus on communication. It can be compared with second language learning, which describes how formal language education helps us learn language through more conscious process.

Using Multimedia Instructional Approach with Cognitive Tools in Second Language Acquisition:

1. In the first stage of the comprehensible input for second language acquisition, comprehensible input means that the support embedded in a Multimedia Instructional Approach, when an assignment is given by the teacher. The student’s ability to evaluate and revise her work increases using multimedia glossary for problematic vocabulary. The learners understand task directions and focus on pertinent information to comprehend and revise. In a digital environment, students have access to images, sentences and pronunciations for vocabulary terms, their comprehension of the content increases. Effective multimedia recognizes that memory has a limited capacity to process information.

2. The second stage of Multimedia Instructional Approach needs scaffolding to process information. The teacher scaffold student
comprehension of content area facts, concepts and generalizations and the links between them. It is important to ensure that new information is linked to previous learning. Effective multimedia presentation takes advantage of both the auditory and visual channels in working memory to deliver content. Using multiple channels increases the overall amount of information the brain can process. This stage of cognitive approach includes “information links that provides simplification, elaboration, definitional support or redundancy”. If reading fluency in the target language is required, involvement of both visual and auditory channels is appropriate.

3. The third stage comprehensible output, is the need for use of language in meaningful context to develop the learners’ communicative competency. Effective multimedia presentation recognizes that long term memory organizes information into meaningful chunks called schema. Presenting information in a way that makes use of existing organizing structure (schema) or that helps students organize the information can greatly assist the learner incorporating information into Long Term Memory.
Good multimedia instruction is driven by an understanding of how the brain processes information. The most effective multimedia applications take advantage of this knowledge.

The Information Processing Model of Mayer (2005) explains that only the Multimedia teaching system can fully mobilize the student’s audio-visual and sensory organs, and thus get the best of cognitive effect. Chun and Plass (1996) emphasize that associating lexical items with different types of media fosters richness of recall cues and increases the likelihood of retention. The rationale is that because words are dually coded in two modes, they are learnt better than those coded in only one mode. Dual coding provides more path for retrieval and helps learner to build two types of recall cues in memory. Piaget also emphasize the commonalities between language and cognition and proposed that language emerged out of the same broad cognitive changes that transform the sensorimotor processing of infants into the formal and logical minds of adults. It is an urgent need of the society that we produce knowledge that is useful for social purpose. The goal is to develop core competencies that allow them to develop and maintain social relationships and communicate ideas.

Need and Importance of the study

The ultimate goal of English Language Teaching is to develop the four language skills namely- listening, speaking, reading and writing. Language learning is a skill that can be perfected only through constant practice and continuous exposure of the target language, the available resources should be tapped so as to provide an encouraging atmosphere for learning and practicing the language. “Learning a second language with Multimedia materials – By: Center for Implementing Technology in Education (CITEd) emphasizes that the multimedia teaching system can fully mobilize the students’ audio-visual and other sensory organs and thus get the best of cognitive effect. Therefore, Multimedia Instructional Approach with cognitive tools is very necessary, especially in English Language Teaching; only effective coordination of multimedia can better complete the teaching task.
About this study

The purpose of the study is to utilize a Multimedia Instructional Approach with cognitive tools in teaching English Language for the students studying in IX standard. The present study was an experimental study with variables like Multimedia Instructional approach and cognitive tools. The study involves pre - test and post - test design with treatment in between. Research evidence indicates that the Multimedia Instructional Approach with cognitive tools can improve student’s performance, therefore Multimedia Instructional Approach being an innovative approach to teaching learning process, endless drill and practice without repetition, and provides immediate feedback to the learner on his/her progress. Thus the study assumes its significance and relevance in the present context.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the significant difference in achievement mean score between the pretest of control group and the pretest of experimental group.

2. To find out the significant difference in achievement mean score between the posttest of control group and the posttest of experimental group.

Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were framed for the study:

1. There is no significant difference in achievement mean score between the pretest of control group and pretest of experimental group.

2. There is no significant difference in achievement mean score between the posttest of control group and the posttest of experimental group.

Methodology

Parallel group experimental method was adopted in the study. The true experimental design employs randomization to provide for control of the equivalence of groups and exposure to treatments. The pretest – posttest equivalent groups design was used.
Population and Sample

The study was confined to 210 students in High school from Patidar International School, Maxi Road, Ujjain. 105 students were considered as controlled group and another 105 students were considered as a tool for study. The control group was not allowed to get any exposure on the subject matter than the traditional classroom teaching but the experimental group students were given treatment with Multimedia Instructional Approach with cognitive tools in teaching English language.

Tools

1. Achievement test in English Language constructed and validated by the investigators.

2. The achievement test consisted of objective type questions which carried one mark for each question and contained 20 marks.

Statistical Technique Employed

The data was collected and analyzed keeping the objectives and the design of the study in view. Descriptive statistics such as Mean and Standard deviation were worked out to describe the nature of data. In order to find the perceived influence of Multimedia Instructional Approach with cognitive tools in teaching English Language on rural adolescents, t-test was employed. The controlled group was taught by the traditional method for a week. But the experimental group was taught using Multimedia Instructional approach for teaching English Language for a week. Thus, the effectiveness of Multimedia Instructional approach was determined.

t- value- significant at .01 level**

significant at .05 level*

Data Analysis

The table below shows the pretest results of control and experimental group of rural adolescents in teaching English Language.
Table No. - 1

Comparison of the difference between the means of pretest scores of experimental and control groups of rural adolescents in teaching English Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
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<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Critical Ratio</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>10.66</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.79</td>
<td>1.63</td>
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</table>

The table below shows the posttest scores of control group and experimental group of rural adolescents in teaching English Language

Table No. - 2

Comparison of the difference between the means of posttest scores of experimental and control groups of rural adolescents in teaching English Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Critical Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>14.27</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>7.39**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.87</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In pretest, the obtained value of critical ratio for the experimental and control group was 0.53. The obtained value is less than the table values and is not significant at .05 level, (C.R. = 0.53, df = 104). From this it is clear that the students of the two groups do not differ significantly in their initial achievement before experiment. In posttest, the obtained value of critical ratio for the experimental and control groups is 7.39. The obtained value is greater than the table values and is significant at .01 level, (C.R. = 7.39, df = 104). From this it is clear that the students of the two groups differ significantly in English Language after experiment. The experimental group was better than the control group. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected.
Findings:

✓ Researchers have investigated the benefits of students actively using Second Language Vocabulary versus passively receiving information. The students in the former group were more engaged in the learning process and retained more information (Nikolova, 2002).

✓ Richard Mayer (2005) *People learn better from words and pictures than from words alone.* In this context, words include written and spoken text, and pictures include static graphic images, animation and video. That using words and pictures is more effective than words alone should not be surprising in light of what we know about how the brain processes information.

✓ Research tells us that the use of both words and pictures lets the brain process more information in working memory (Sweller, 2005). Psychologists drawn from the information processing movement were frequently inspired by the work of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, who emphasized the commonalities between language and cognition.

✓ The findings of this study indicate that teachers and administrators have strong desire for the integration of ICT into education but they have encountered many barriers to it. The effective integration of ICT into classroom practices poses a challenge to teachers and administrators. The integration of technology had a successful impact on the teacher’s role.

The Impact of Technology Education on Teacher Roles

The impact of technology and technology education on teacher’s roles and identities is equally important.

1. The teacher who was more comfortable with a student - centered and communicative approach to language learning seemed to be the most successful in integrating technology into the class.

2. Teachers have the potential to be much more than consumers, and have the capacity for research and development in CALL and performing in functional rates beyond practitioners.
3. Learning is a process that allows people to explore their understanding of the knowledge they have gained and to develop a layer of knowledge that allows for transformation of learning - at - a - time into learning - over - time.

4. Video clips proved to be more effective in aiding comprehension and retention because they facilitated "conceptualizing language" that is linking form to meaning.

5. Technology facilitates information processing, reduce error and information loss, and increase recall.

Suggestions:

Approaches such as project learning, situated learning, online courses, collaborative development, computer - mediated communication, collaborative online learning, integration of ICT education through degree programs, communities of practice in Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) education and learner autonomy can be adapted in pre - service and in - service teacher education program depending on the availability of human and technological resources and institutional support.

Multimedia Instructional Approach provides students with opportunities to represent and express their prior knowledge. Allow students to functions as designers, using tools for analyzing the world, accessing and interpreting information, organizing their personal knowledge, and representing what they know to others. Multimedia applications engage students and provide valuable learning opportunities. Empower students to create and design rather than “absorbing representatives created by others”. Encourages deep - reflective thinking. Create personally meaningful learning opportunities. Finally, students should be given opportunities to actively engage with the Second Language Acquisition rather than passively receive information through drill and practice.

Bibliography:


Emergence of New Women amidst Traditional Setting in Githa Hariharan’s “The Thousand Faces of Night”: A Journey of Transformation in Indian Perspective

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Abstract

The image of women in Indian English Novels went through many changes in recent years. Women are taking the centre stage in the novels. Githa Hariharan is a serious, fearless, and sensitive novelist. She has a huge creative output to her credits. She works for the upliftment of women, explores women and their experiences in a traditional society with a deep understanding. Women are leading figures in her novels. The novel “The Thousand Faces of Night” depicts different faces of women’s suffering and portrays the position of women in traditional Indian society. It serves as her inquiries about the old patriarchal dominance over women. She, through her writing, shows what was never said. She presents the internal lives of women. She seeks to lay open the confined social structure of society which does not accept women’s role apart from their conventional role. Her characters struggle for an inner liberation. She deals with the changing scenario of human relationships. Modern women have realized that they are not helpless nor dependent. Her character Sita in the novel advocates women’s autonomy through education and self-employment. The novel presents women from three generations to show that the legacy of suffering is all the same. Although they may hold different social positions; within the walls of the home, they all have the same sufferings. This paper discusses emergence of new women amidst traditional milieu in Githa Hariharan’s “The Thousand Faces of Night”.
Keywords: Indian English Novels, Tradition, Liberation, Patriarchal.

Introduction

Tradition is a term that may be interpreted in many different ways. But in the Indian context, it is normally understood as the old customs related to familial and societal values. Modernism is associated with westernization, even globalization in a broader sense. The problem with the post-independent Indian society is the cultural transition. Sociologists describe it as tradition modernizing itself. Most of the characters, especially the women characters are victims of the casualties caused by such a transitional condition.

Postcolonial Indian English Women Novelists, in their novels, question the deep-rooted patriarchal system and also show signs of resistance to the same. The image of women in Indian novel has undergone a great change; from traditional self-sacrificing women characters to characters that introspect and urge for identity, stand for herself without thinking of societal norms and give us a new definition of modern women. The growing number of writers like Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Githa Hariharan, Nayantara Sehgal, Manju Kapoor, Namita Gokhale, and many others writers have questioned the culture where women are caught between tradition and modern norms of society. The entire focus is on the woman's role in the family: as a wife, mother, and daughter-in-law. The women characters now are financially independent and assertive. So, these writings become a collective consciousness that impacts their presence in society and make it aware of their concerns and demands.

Feminine Sensibilities in Hariharans’ Creative World

Indian-English women novelists have successfully analysed the psychological, emotional, and spiritual crises experienced by women. They present the problems of Indian womanhood. The women novelists of the present century have the same thematic concerns but treatments are their own. It presents a conflict between tradition and modernity. In the works of women novelists, it is shown that women who are traditional in their way of living but modern in their outlook and have the capacity to retain their individuality.

Hariharan has a huge creative output to her credit. She observes human life with detail and care. With her writing and committed activism, she has
earned a unique place in the English literary world. She has received Commonwealth writer’s award in 1993 for her work, *The Thousand Faces of Night*. Her other novels include *The Ghost of Vasu Master, When Dream Travel, In Times of Siege,* and *Fugitive Histories*. In the novel *The Thousand Faces of Night*, she depicted patriarchal dominance and how women have been marginalised in Indian society in the name of tradition and custom. The novel depicts reality of contemporary women in today’s society. She firmly believes in the freedom of thought. She is considered as inspiration for the upcoming writers. She spends most of the time in welfare and social work and finding new opportunities for the betterment of the women in society. Her skill in expressing her thoughts right from a young girl to old women make her different kind of the feminist which is beyond the welfare of women. She must be given credit for truly reflecting women’s agony, grief, and sorrow.

**The Journey of Sita, Devi and Mayamma: Searching for the real meaning of womanhood**

*The Thousand Faces of Night* is a tale about three women Sita, Devi, Mayamma. Through this novel, the writer depicts the position of Indian women in traditional male-dominated Indian society. Hariharan narrates the stories of Devi, Sita, and Mayamma through connecting them to mythological characters. The stories of the three women uncover the different dimensions of women’s oppression: the battle of Devi with men and society, her inner and outer dilemma, tensions that a woman had to face in her life. She very beautifully intermingles the lives of a foreign return young girl Devi, her self-sacrificing natured mother Sita, and an old caretaker woman Mayamma.

Sita, the mother of Devi is married at the age of twenty. Once, while she was playing the veena very keenly, forgetting everything, her father-in-law gave a mild, but firm warning against her not giving enough care and attention towards her household chores and duties. He shouted with anger at Sita “put that veena away, are you a wife, a daughter in law?” (TFN, 30)

After hearing these words from her father-in-law, Sita was shocked and for some time she stares over the veena, and finally, she pulled the strings out of the wooden base. Through her grandmother, Devi heard the story of her mother as an act of killing one’s interest which was similar to the vow taken
up by Gandhari\textsuperscript{1} by blindfolding herself. From that day onwards, Sita stopped touching her veena and gave her time and energy to make her husband, a successful man. She sacrificed everything and devoted herself to keep up the prestige of the family. Her behaviour and attitude were well appreciated by her husband Mahadevan.

In the meantime, Sita learned that her husband lacked high hope of life and was opposite to her. At this stage of life, a daughter was born and she was Devi. For her, the baby was a new veena\textsuperscript{2} she could play. Besides, this time she was not going to abandon it easily. At one time, Sita, along with Mahadevan went to Africa on a prestigious overseas assignment with proper arrangements of the journey. And on the other hand, Devi was made to go to America for higher studies. On reaching Africa, Mahadevan proved to be more exhausted than what Sita had thought. In his fifties, he was a sick old man and he had no taste of his time of beauty and energy. One day Sita saw her husband on his chair with his head resting upon some papers on his desk and found him dead. She saw everything silently and without uttering a single word she burnt the papers and "in a modern, sanitized crematorium" the body was also burnt. (Hariharan 1992,106)

Devi belongs to a Tamil Brahmin Family. She has been sent to America for studies. There she develops a relationship with Dan. She was happy with him but cannot take her relationship with Dan to a marriage. On her mother’s call, she was back to India as suggested in lines - “Amma’s letters brought with them an unspoken message of loneliness, poignant in its quiet dignity… But the image of her alone by the sea teased me like a magnet. (Hariharan 1992, 16)

Devi’s stay in the U.S. makes it impossible for six prospective grooms to accept Devi as a wife. Marriage is a sacred and important custom. Devi recalls her grandmother’s stories at the time of her marriage. Devi’s grandmother narrates stories from Ramayana and Mahabharata that includes an ideal woman who follows the footprints of her husband. In

\textsuperscript{1}Gandhari-One of the female characters in the Epic Mahabharat. She is known for the vow to spend the rest of her life in a blindfold as her husband was blind.

\textsuperscript{2}veena- A type of musical instrument.
Devi’s grandmother’s stories, there are only heroes and heroines, the sun shines brightly and everything is done in pomp and splendour. Devi is happy that her grandmother is not active to see her wedding. She declares, “I am glad she is not here to see me at my Swayamvara, the princess robe she lovingly stitched for me frayed round the edges and two sizes too large” (Hariharan 1992, 20).

When she returns to Madras from America. Firstly, she confronts difficulties in making adjustments to the realities in Indian society. She realises that it was difficult to change the older norms with her radical thinking and ideas. Her mother wishes to arrange her marriage. Then Devi is married to Mahesh. He is a Regional Manager in MNC. Devi tries hard to fit in the new role of wife and daughter-in-law. Mahesh is an eligible man having a good job, a big house in the city like Bangalore and he comes from a well sound family. Devi is provided with everything but she finds that something is lacking. Mahesh’s cold behaviour upsets Devi. Her marital life lacks the colour that she expected. Devi told about Mahesh’s attitude towards her. “He is far too civilised to raise his hand and bring it down on my rebellious body. He snarls instead about women’s neuroses and my faulty upbringing.” (Hariharan 1992, 74).

“Devi was not allowed to work outside the house. Mahesh discourages her and asks what will you do when the baby comes?” (Hariharan 1992, 64) It seems that Mahesh is completely insensitive towards Devi possessing a personality because of long tours of her husband and total absence of sexual desire. Devi finally decides and walks out of Mahesh’s life. She is drawn to Gopal, who was a singer and a visitor to her neighbourhood. Devi elopes with Gopal. Initially Devi’s relationship with Gopal was affectionate but the later he shows his true colour, Devi found that Gopal is not any better than Mahesh. Her feeling is described in the following lines. “The power unleashed by Gopal’s voice, the promises his music had made, had lost very little of their earlier potency. The images of his music evoked in her were no longer uplifting, or even neutral.” (Hariharan 1992, 129)

Devi thinks that her walking out of Mahesh’s life is her solution. But, after her disappointment with Gopal she decided to run no further and return to her mother to start a new inning of life. “Devi knew the time was right, if she did not act now, she would be forever condemned to drift between
worlds, a floating island detached from the solidity of the mainland.” (Hariharan 1992,138)

Devi’s journey back to her home is a sign of self-assertion. She has a tale of her own, she is free to reach her new world now, as Mayamma says ‘...go, Devi, search for the forest you crave in your delirious youth. Go deep, deep, into its hollows, and into the wild terrors of its dark stretches. You’re thirsty, seek the river, miles away, where the dim forest gives way to a clear, transparent flood of light.’ (Hariharan 1992, 126)

Mayamma is an old housekeeper in Mahesh’s house, she has not got a proper education. She is the greatest sufferer in the novel, she never complained of the grief and suffered silently and is tortured by her mother in law for not bearing a child. Finally, after a long time, she gave birth to a baby boy, one day her husband takes all the money and leaves the house. His son grew up in a bad company and indulge in gambling. At last, she was left with nothing. Then she came to Mahesh’s house as a maid cum caretaker and lived there. All her life Mayamma has sacrificed her desire and suffered mutely to attain ideal womanhood in a patriarchal world. “Mayamma had been thrown into the waters of her womanhood well before she had learnt to swim. She had learnt about lust, the potential of unhidden bestial cruelty, first-hand. She had coveted birth, endured life, and nursed death.” (Hariharan 1992,136)

The novel ends in an impressive way, as Devi returns to her mother. She decides to start a new life and this time Sita is there to give her all her support. “Suitcase in hands, Devi opened the gate and looked wonderingly at the garden, wild and overgrown, butlush in spite of its sand choked roots. Then she quickened her footsteps as she heard the faint sounds of a veena, hesitant and childlike, inviting her into the house.” (Hariharan 1992,139) The novel ends in an impressive way, as Devi returns to her mother. She decides to start a new life and this time Sita is there to give her all her support. Thus, she found out her own way of living on her own terms.

**Concluding Remarks**

The novel has the entire space to discuss the women related issues. Hariharan analysis of the traditional myth and legends are fantastic quite unique, and modern, defending the individuality of women as human beings and approving them to struggle oppression. It is believed she wanted to be her husband’s equal. Partner in marriage, not slave. The novel
portrays the three female characters Devi, Sita and Mayamma, who fights with societal norms and have their way of living as suggested in the lines: “Three of the women who walked a tight rope and struggled for some balance; for some means of survival they could fashion for themselves.” (Hariharan 1992, 135)

“Devi” in Indian Mythology may be understood as a name to mean ‘goddess.’ Added as a suffix to the names of all goddesses. Githa Hariharan’s Devi, when positioned in this tradition, attains symbolic position and her quest becomes attribute of the whole community of women. It presents a voyage to the geocentric past, a time when the goddess was representing Devi as the centre of all creation. She can liberate her from the desire of attaining motherhood. The desire to conquer herself is the strongest in her. She is educated and knows that she needs to find her own identity before motherhood. She is marginalized and alienated to such an extent that she loses faith in herself. She is completely exhausted by giving her desire, her self-respect. Finally, decided to introspect and work upon her strength.

Work Cited


GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

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- Using a wide range of appropriate sources and integrating the key ideas from the sources into a coherent and analytical framework.
- Examining the issues from more than one perspective.
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- Having clear research questions.
- Justifying the data collection method.
- Having clear research findings, conclusion and evaluation.
- Having a consistent quality of the writing, expression of ideas and references required for publication.

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- not have been published previously,
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- conform to the latest edition of the MLA style manual,
- use sub-headings.
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- Position and affiliation,
- Current mailing address,
- Abstract of the paper in not more than 200 words, font size 12.

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